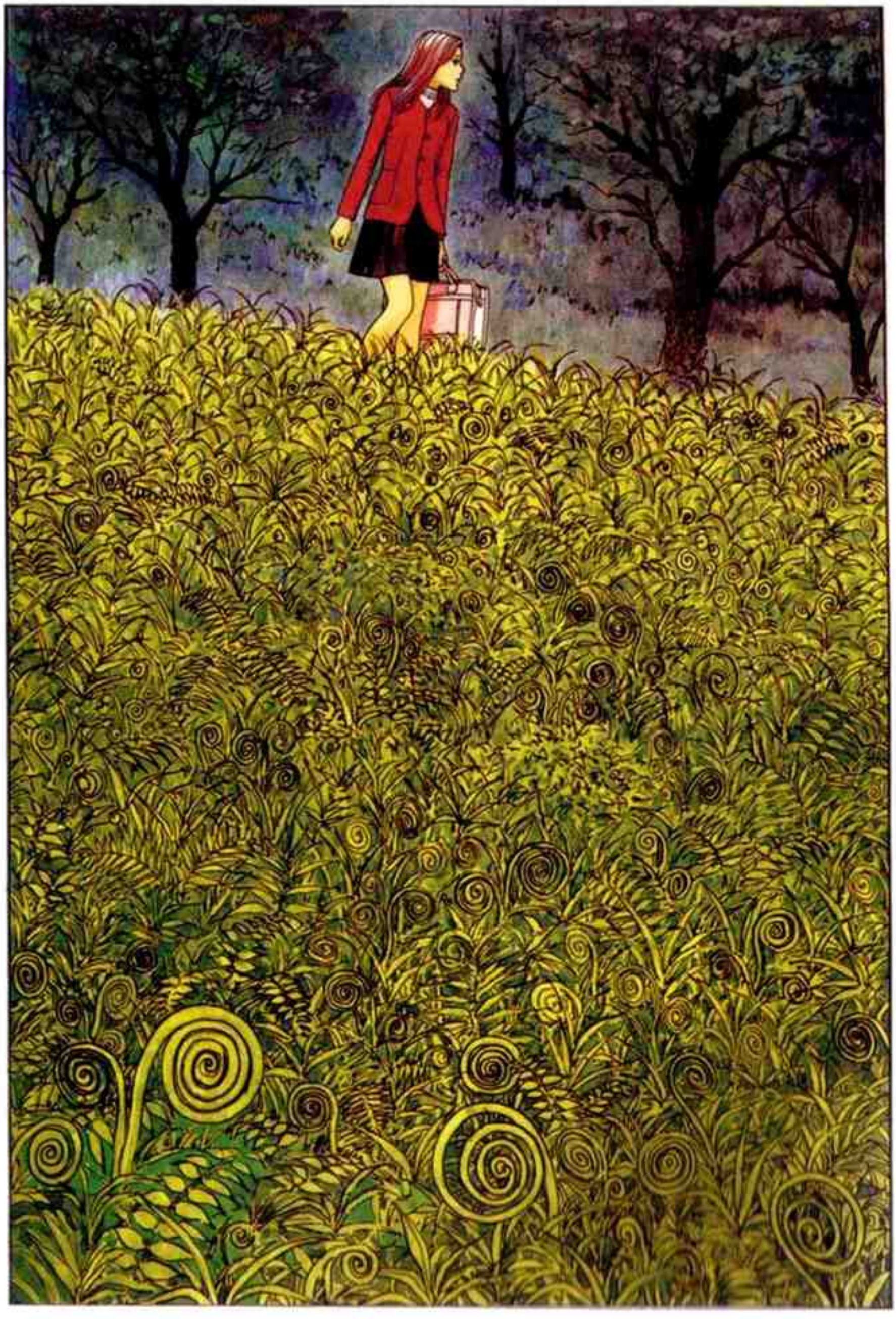
CHAPTER I
THE SPIRAL OF FATE
...THE STRANGE EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE HERE.



UZUMAKI

by Junji Ito

1

MY NAME IS KIRIE GOSHIMA.

I ATTEND KURÔZU HIGH SCHOOL LOCATED HALFWAY UP THE MOUNTAIN OVERLOOKING OUR TOWN.

I LIVE WITH MY FATHER WHO IS A POTTER, MY MOTHER AND MY YOUNGER BROTHER...

...IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF THE TOWN.

OH NO... I'M LATE! I MIGHT MISS SHUICHI AT THE STATION!

FWEEEE
AIEE!
A WHIRL-WIND ...

WHAT?

WHY, THAT'S SHUICHI'S FATHER.

WHAT'S HE DOING THERE?

HELLO, SIR.

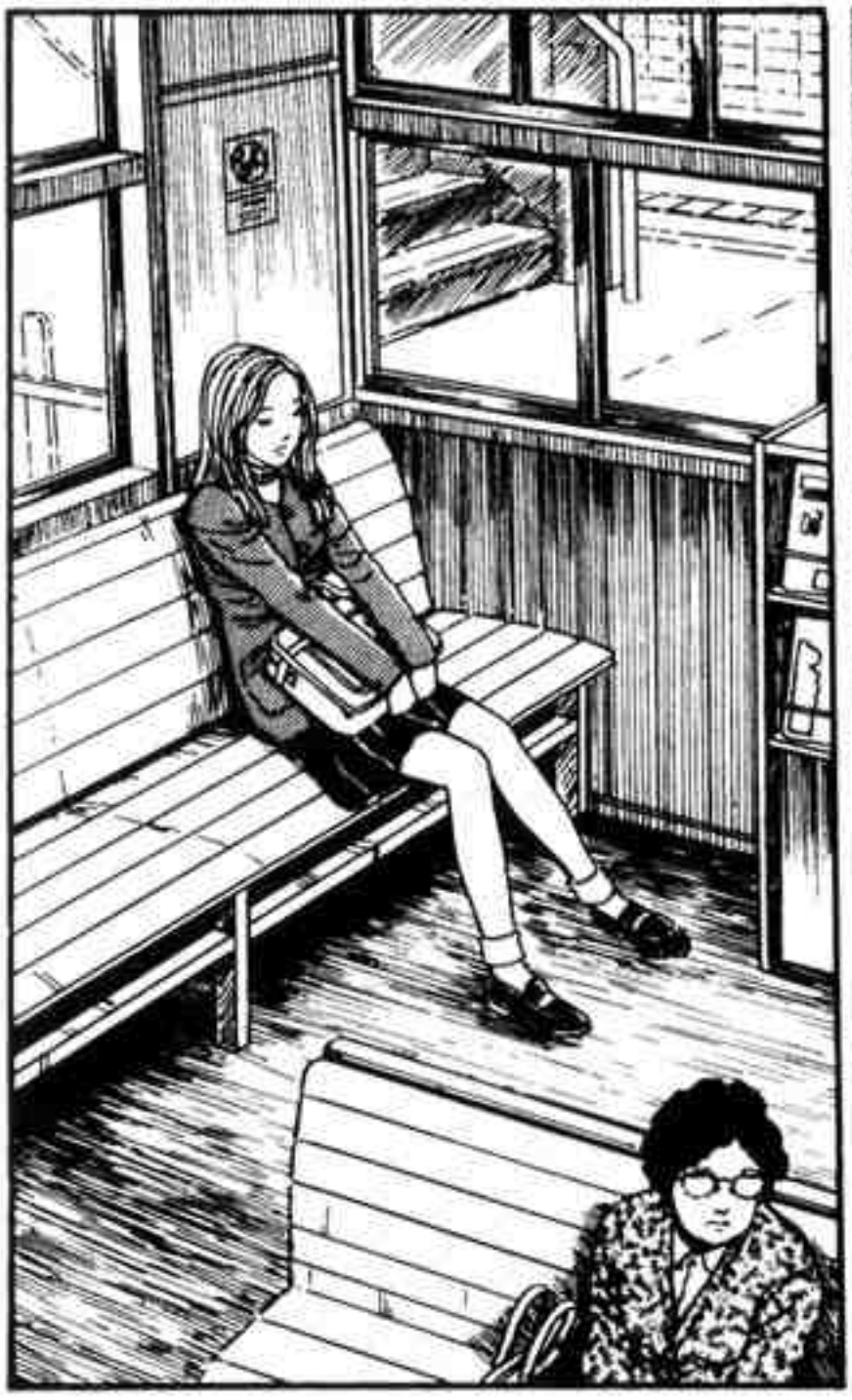
...

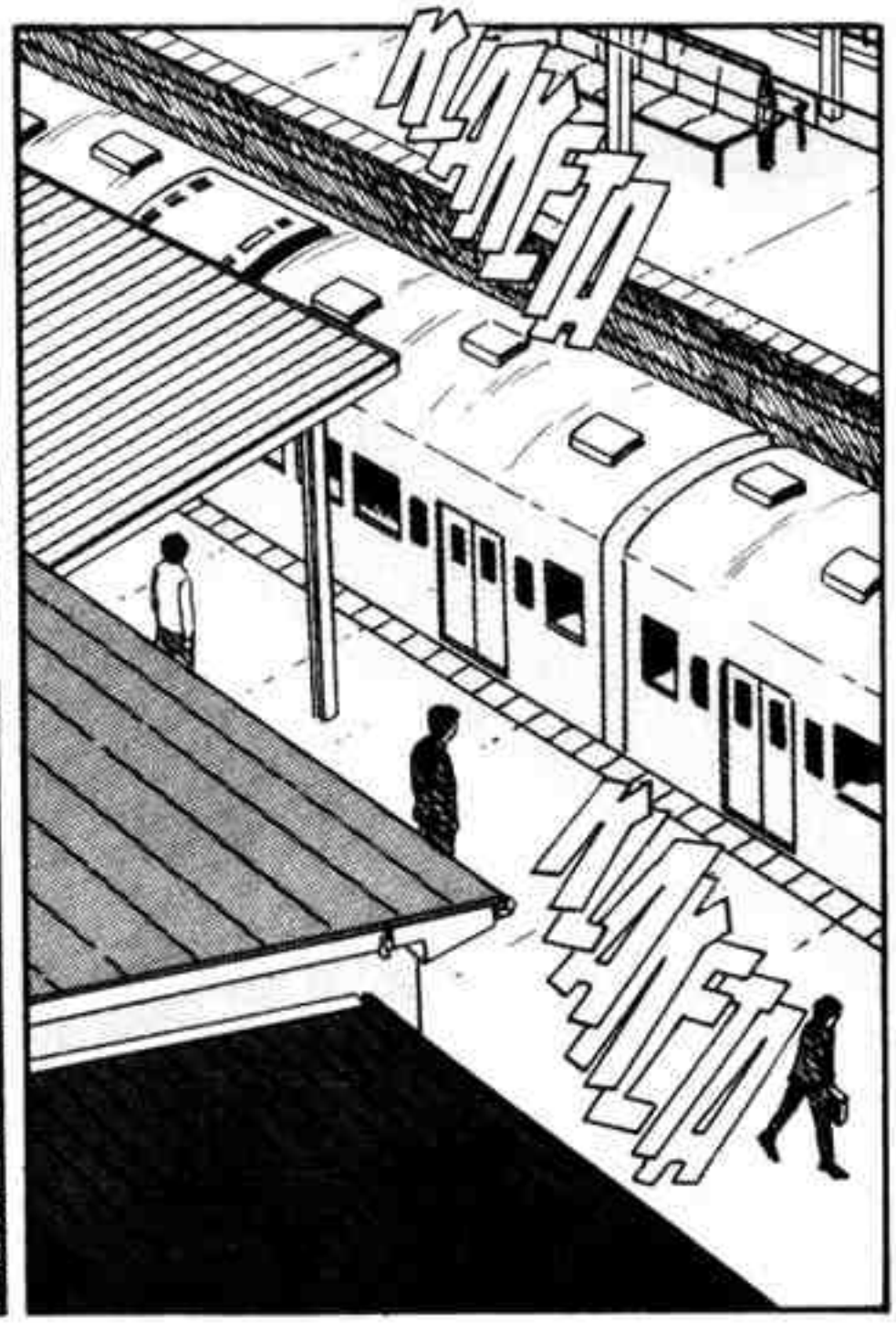
MAYBE IT'S NOT HIM.

...

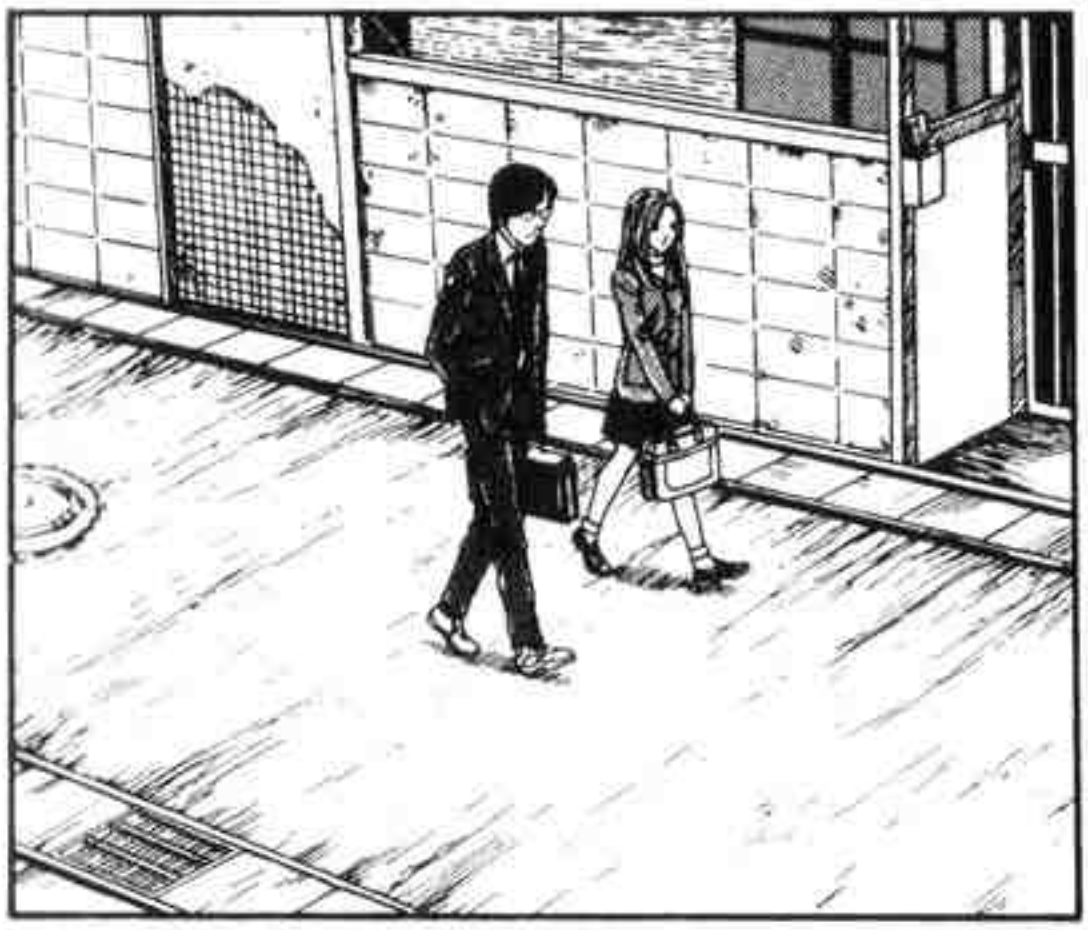
WEIRD...

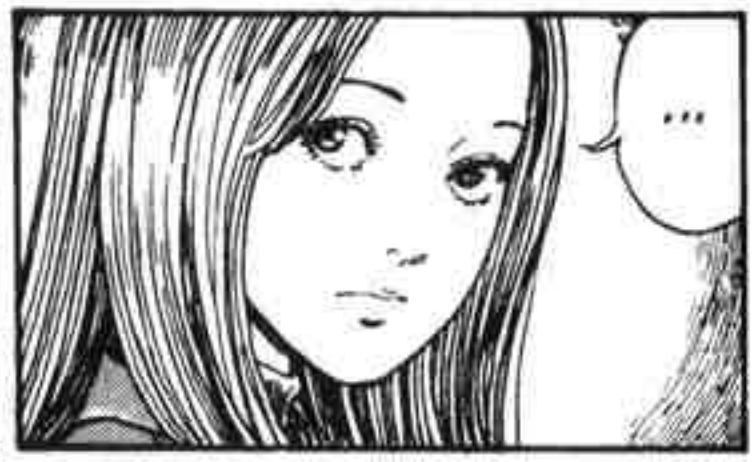
KURÖZLI STATION

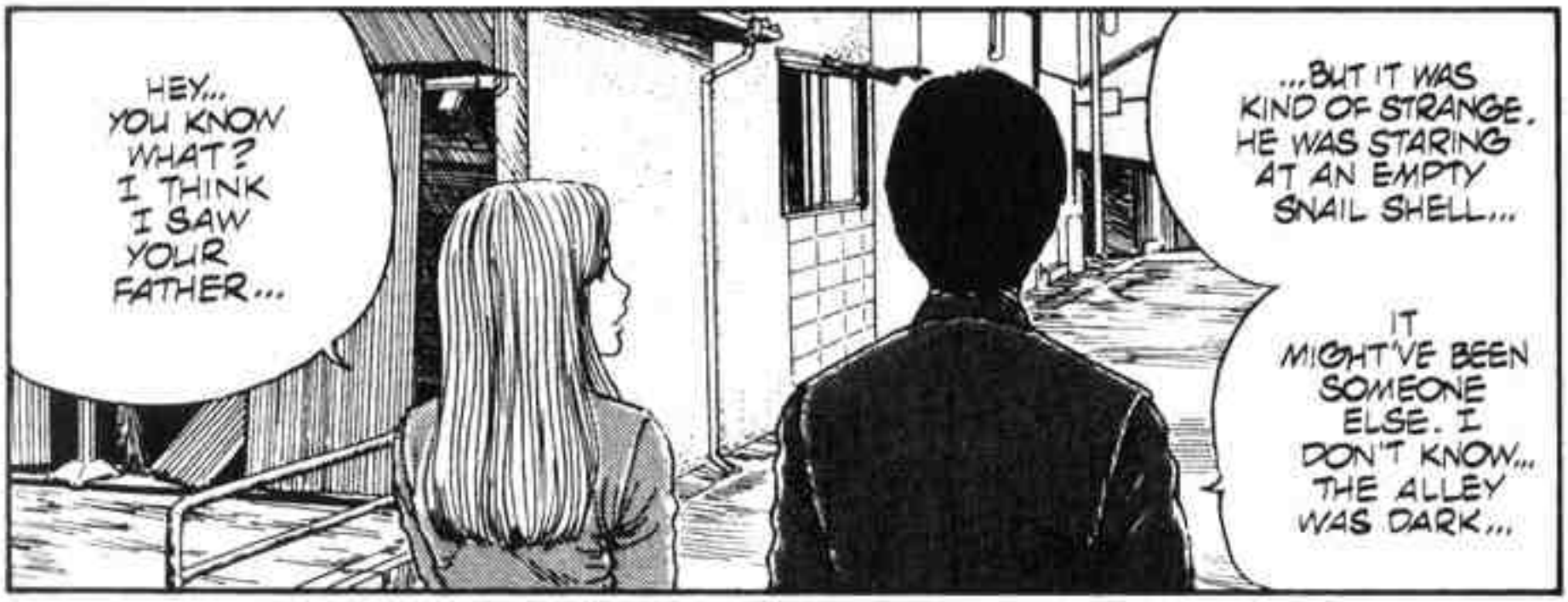




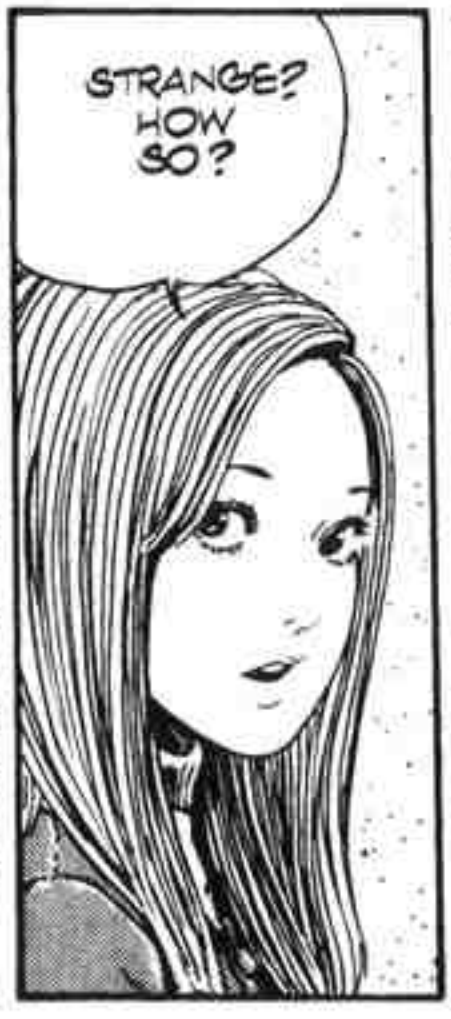
FSSHHH
SHUICHI SAITO AND I USED TO BE CLASSMATES BUT NOW HE GOES TO HIGH SCHOOL IN THE NEXT TOWN.
HEY SHUICHI.



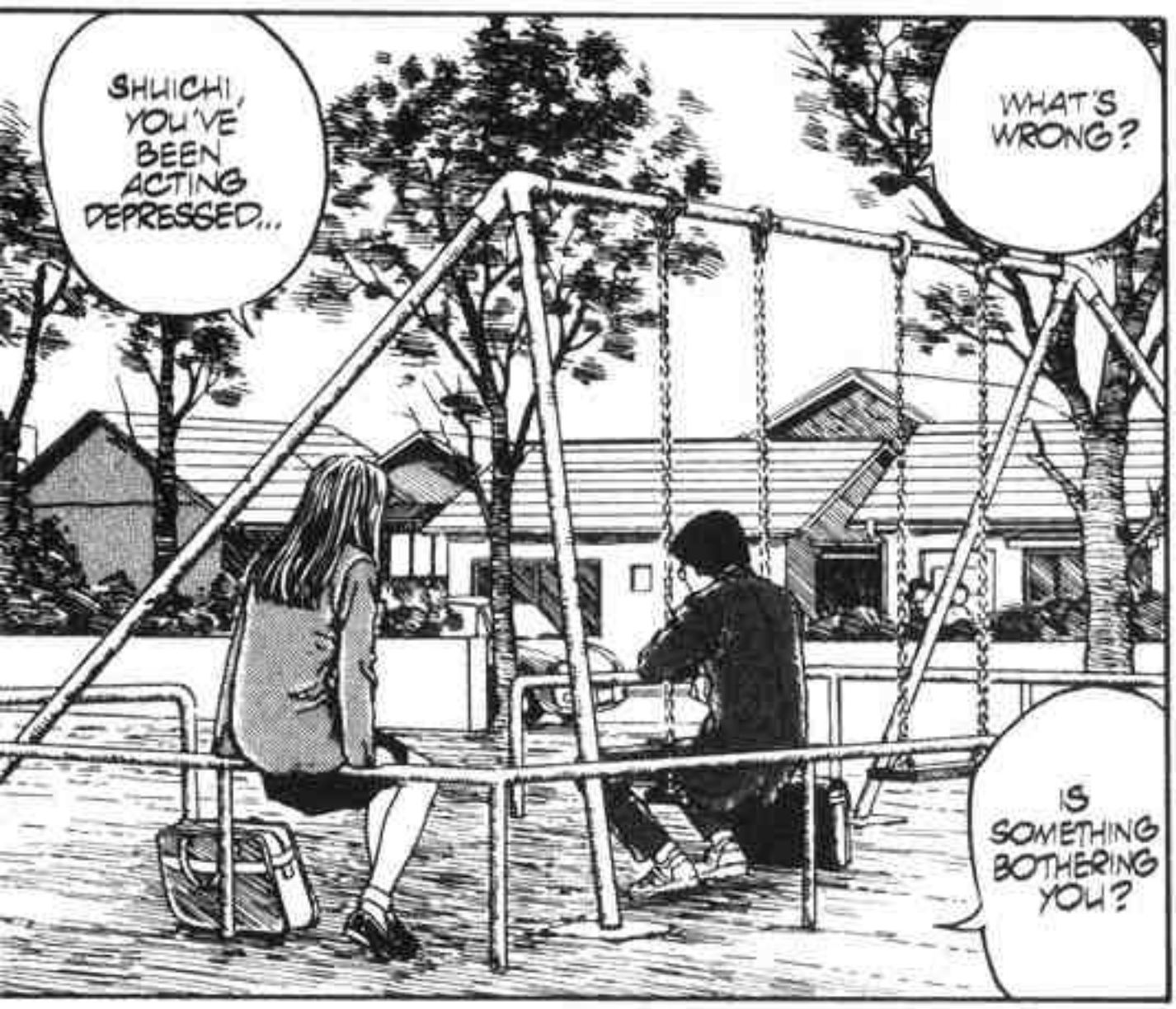

...


HEY... YOU KNOW WHAT? I THINK I SAW YOUR FATHER...
...BUT IT WAS KIND OF STRANGE. HE WAS STARING AT AN EMPTY SNAIL SHELL...
IT MIGHT'VE BEEN SOMEONE ELSE. I DON'T KNOW... THE ALLEY WAS DARK...

OH... YEAH, THAT'S DAD.
HE'S BEEN STRANGE LATELY.


STRANGE? HOW SO?

JUST...
...STRANGE ...


SHUICHI, YOU'VE BEEN ACTING DEPRESSED...
WHAT'S WRONG?
IS SOMETHING BOTHERING YOU?

...

KIRIE...
LET'S LEAVE THIS TOWN TOGETHER.

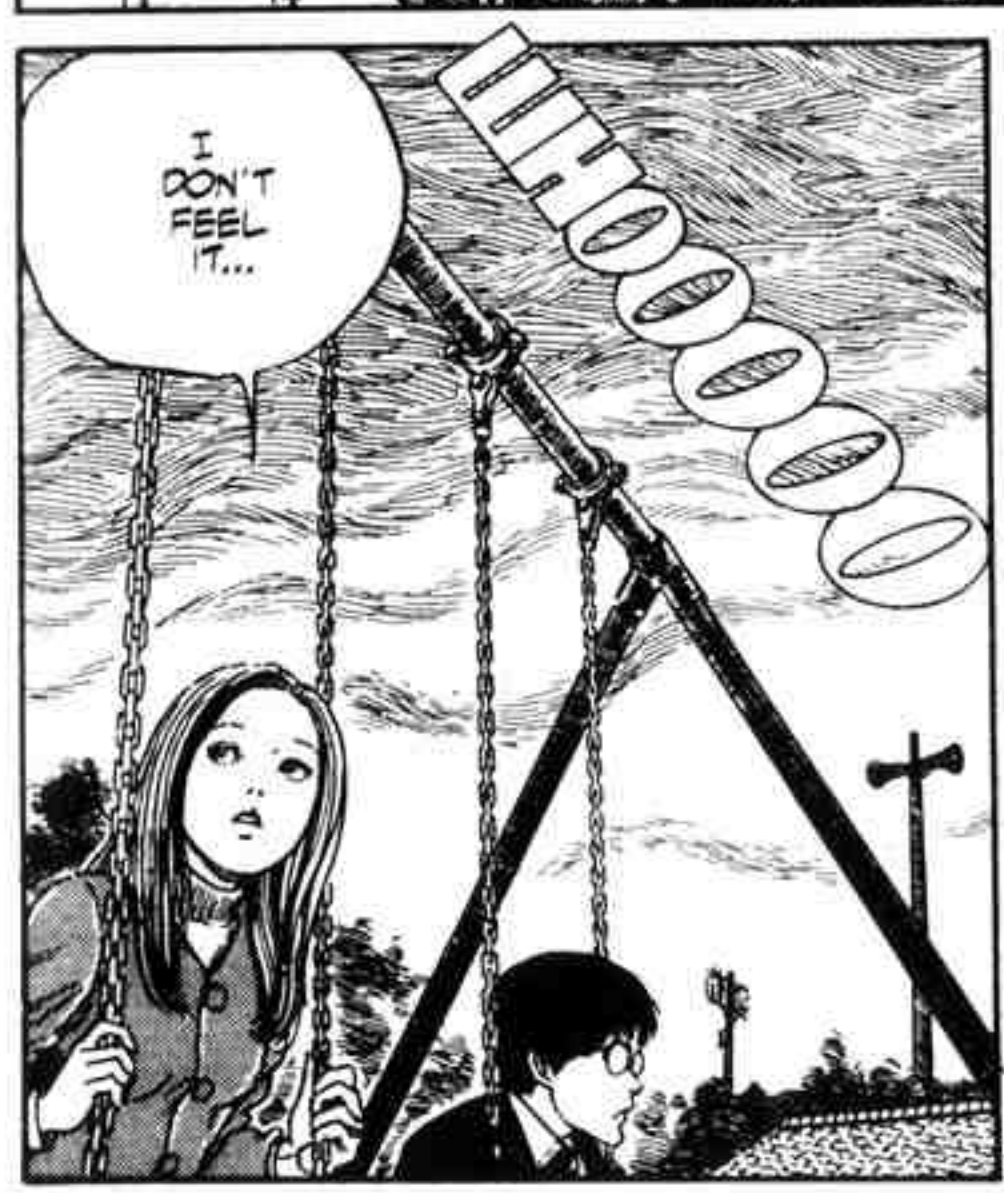
LEAVE?
WHAT? YOU MEAN RUN AWAY?

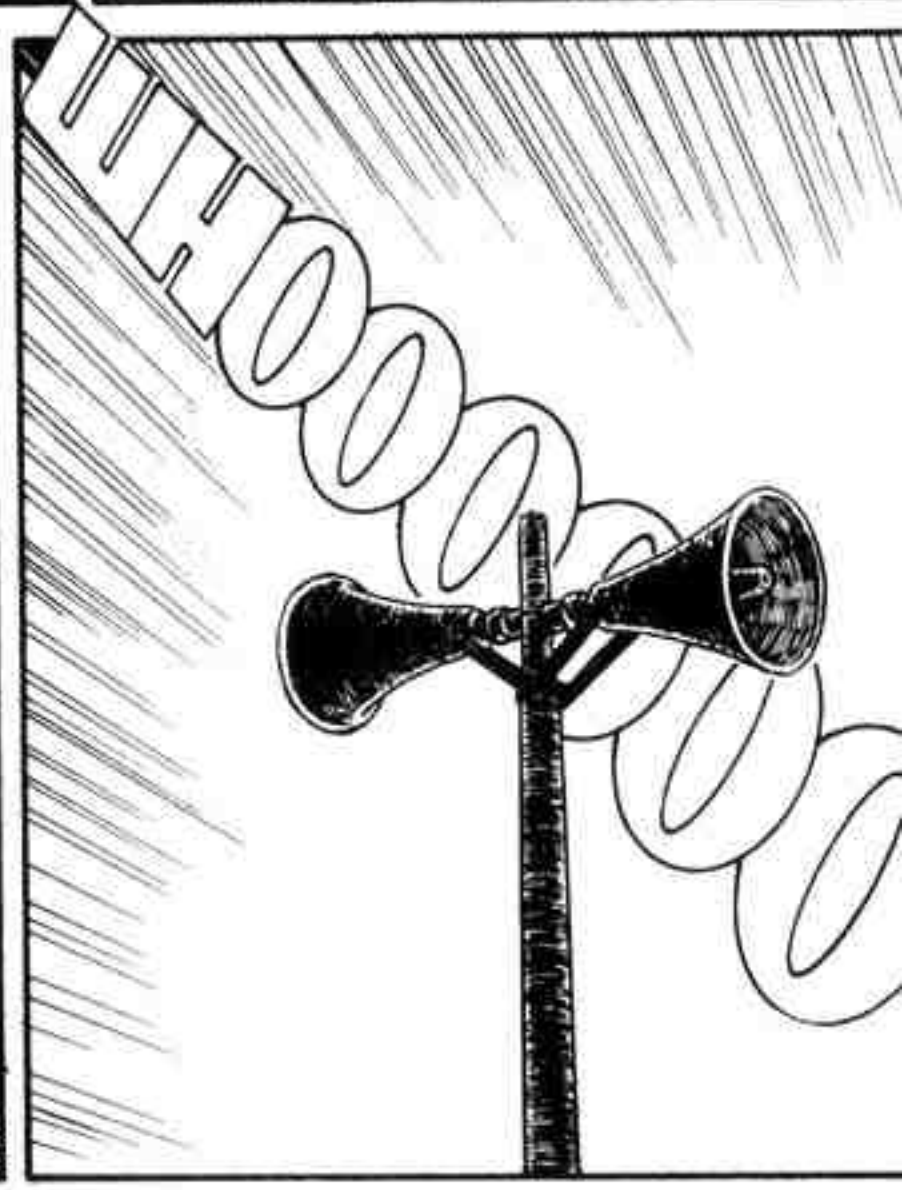
I'M SERIOUS.
I WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE.

I CAN'T STAND THIS PLACE.
WE'LL GO CRAZY IF WE STAY HERE.

I DON'T GET IT.
BUT... DON'T YOU FEEL IT?

IT'S SO OBVIOUS TO ME BECAUSE I SPEND THE DAY AWAY FROM HERE.
I FEEL DIZZY EVERY TIME I GET OFF AT THE STATION PLATFORM.
THIS TOWN IS DRIVING ME INSANE!

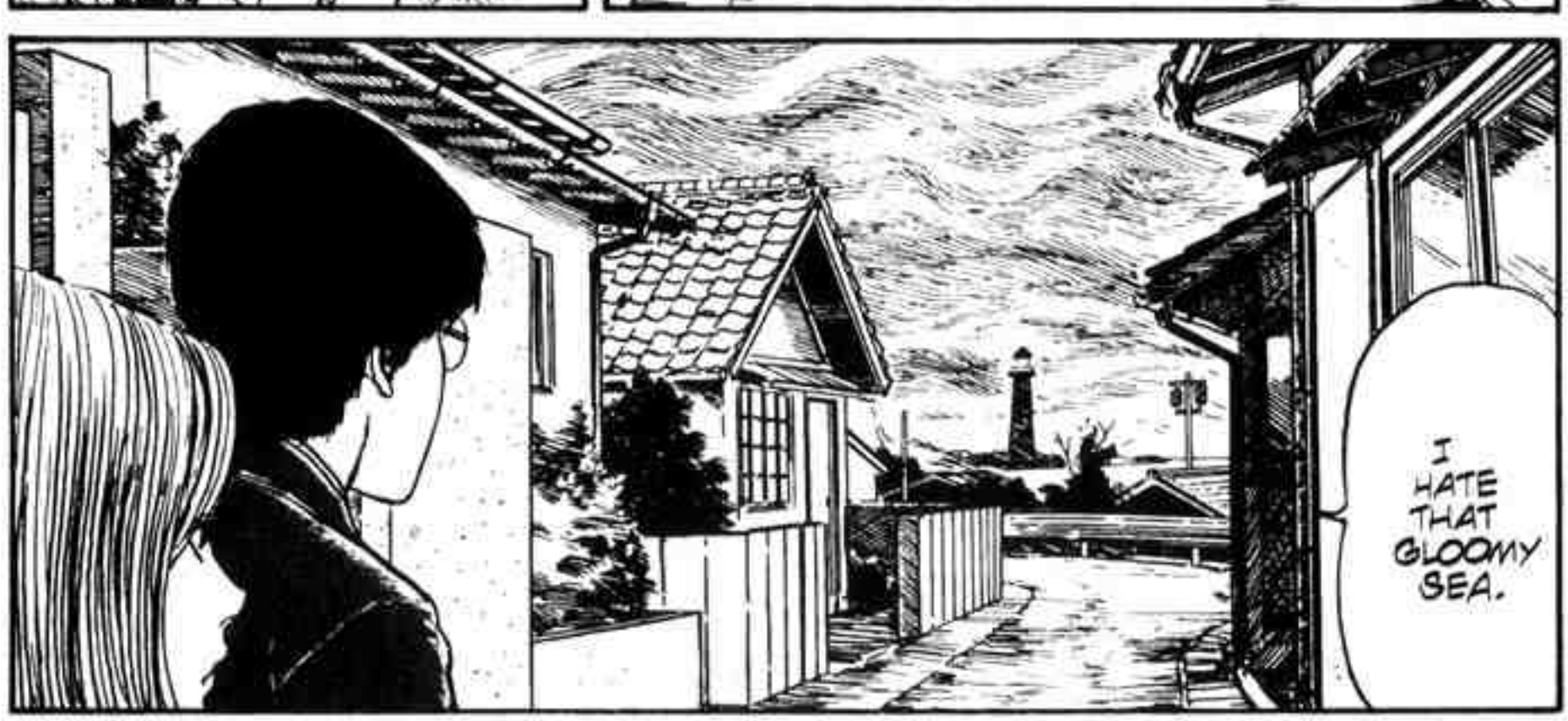

I DON'T FEEL IT...
HOOOOOO


HOOOOOO

WHOOOO
HEY... IT'S ALREADY FIVE...

I HATE THAT SOUND!
I HATE IT!
IT JUST PIERCES THROUGH MY EARS!

I... I HAVE TO GO HOME.

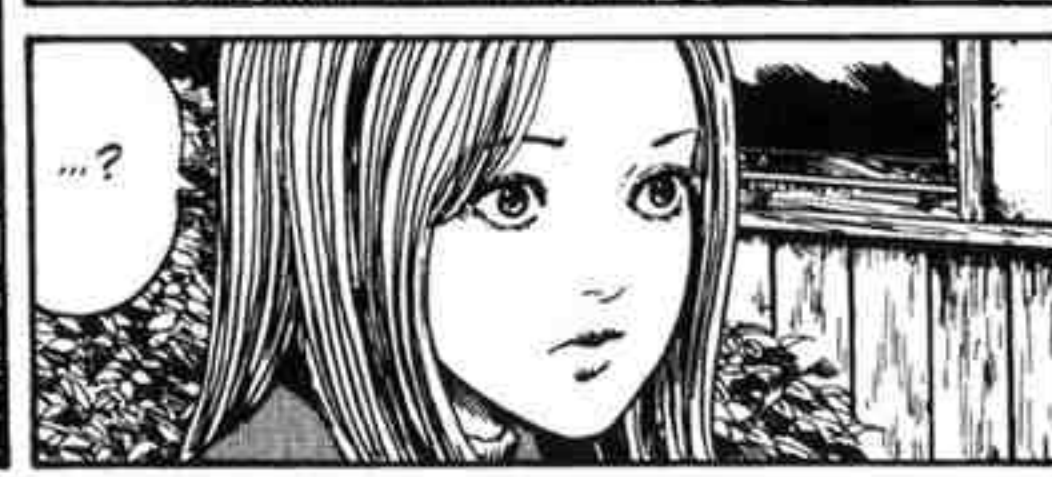

I HATE THAT GLOOMY SEA.

THE OCEAN LOOKS NOTHING LIKE THIS IN MIDORIYAMA-SHI, WHERE I GO TO SCHOOL.
THAT BLACK LIGHTHOUSE IS EVIL, TOO.

THE LOOMING MOUNTAINS BEHIND US.
THE WINDING STREETS... IT GETS ON MY NERVES...

YES, WINDING ...I'M GETTING WOUND UP...
SPIRALS... THIS TOWN IS CONTAMINATED WITH SPIRALS ...

HUH... WHAT? WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?
OH...
...NO-NOTHING ...


...?

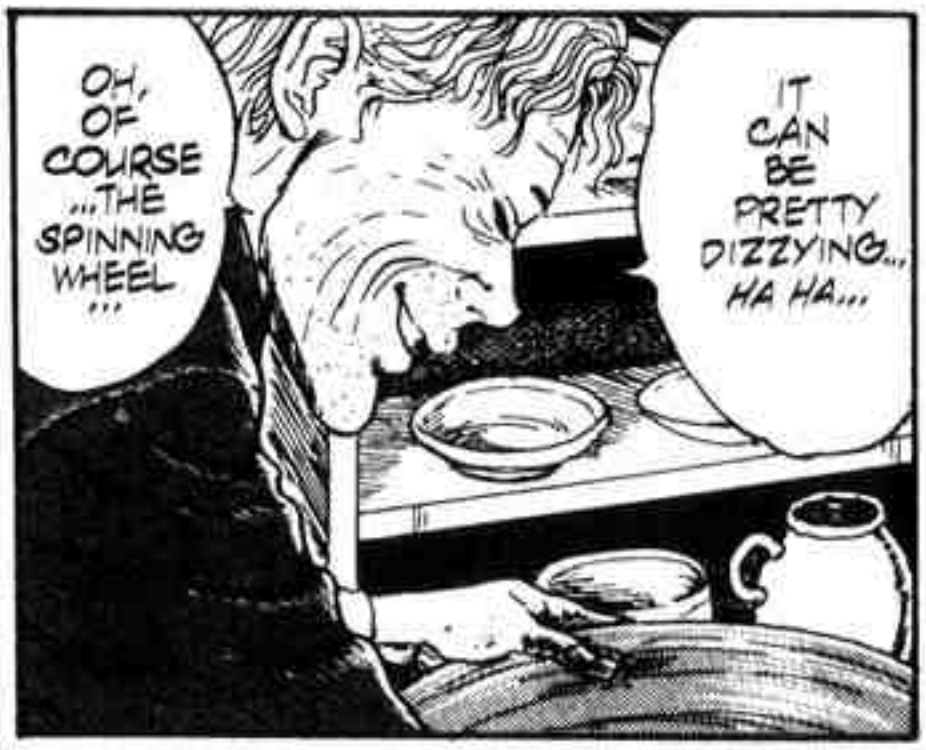
THE NEXT DAY, SHUICHI'S FATHER VISITED MY FATHER AT WORK.

MR. GOSHIMA, YOU'RE ALWAYS WORKING SO HARD...
WELL, YOU KNOW...

...IT'S MORE "WORKING SLOW" THAN WORKING HARD.
IT'S NOT EASY BEING A CRAFTS-MAN.

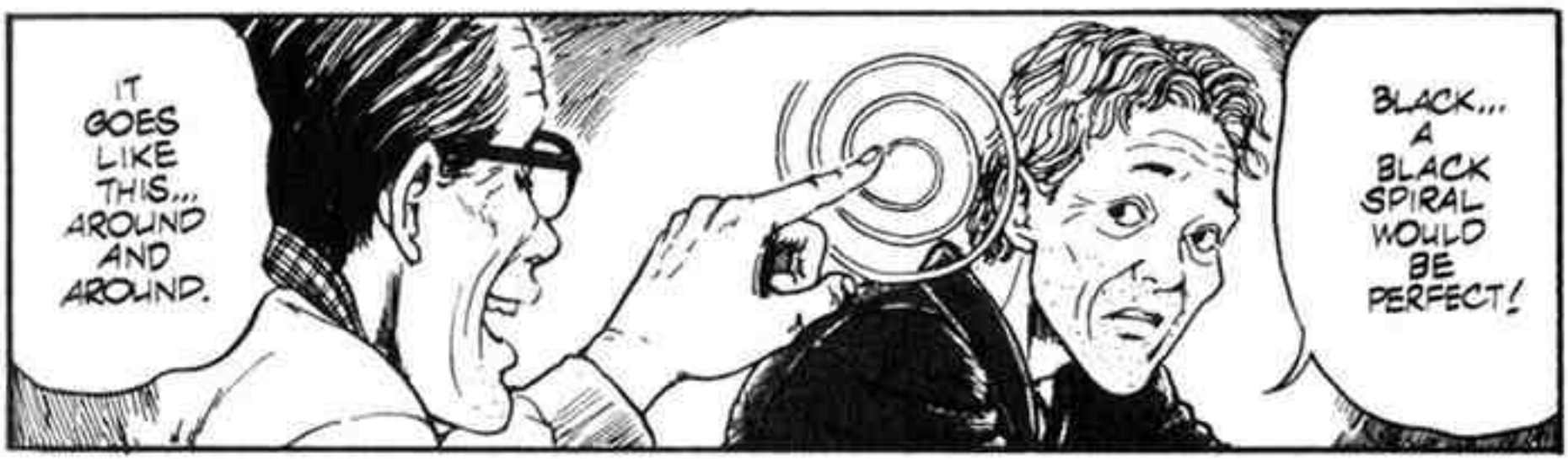
NO, NO! I TRULY RESPECT YOU. MAKING THESE TRADITIONAL CERAMICS ...
IT'S REALLY THE ART OF THE SPIRAL!

I'M SORRY?
THE ART OF THE SPIRAL?

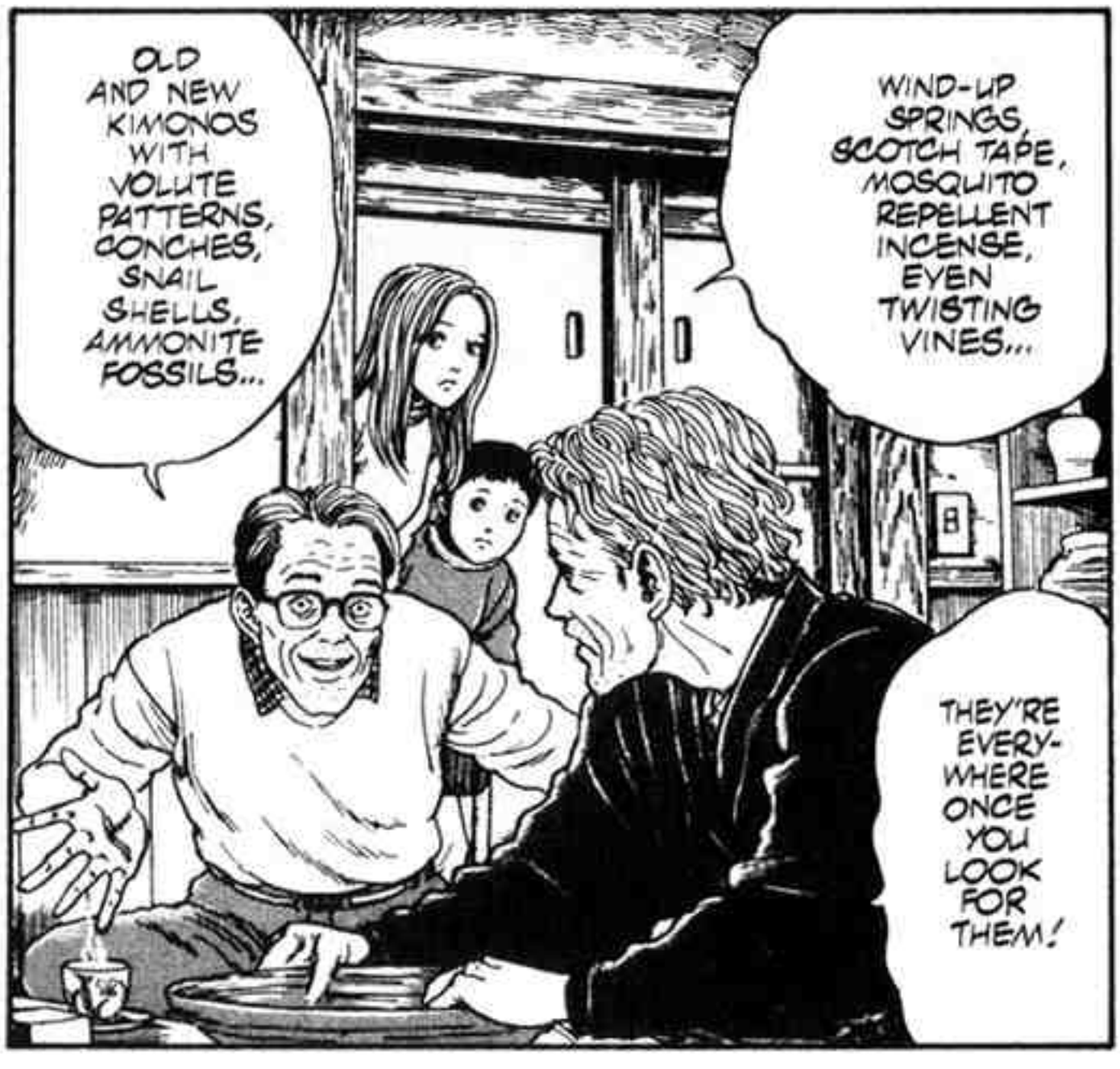

OH, OF COURSE ...THE SPINNING WHEEL ...
IT CAN BE PRETTY DIZZYING... HA HA...

YES! PLEASE! CAN YOU MAKE ME ONE?
I WANT ONE THAT WILL MAKE ME DIZZY.

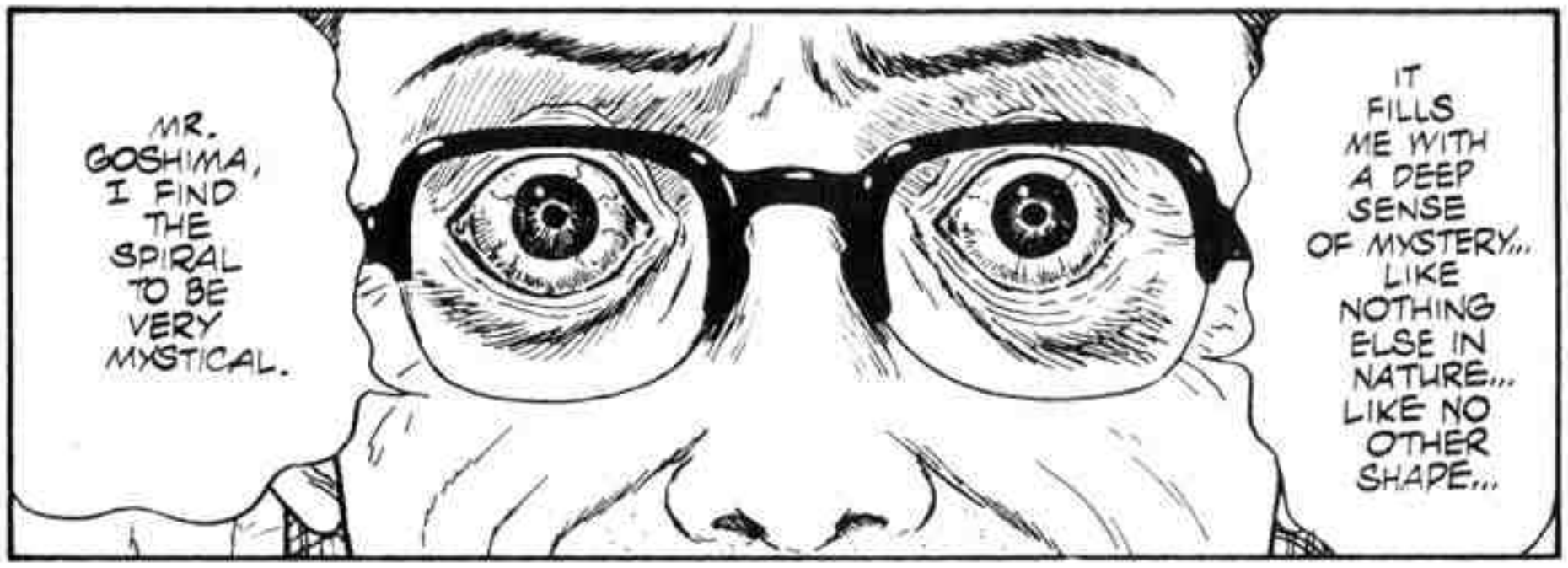
I WANT ONE WITH A SPIRAL PATTERN.
THE SPIRAL PATTERN IS CRUCIAL!

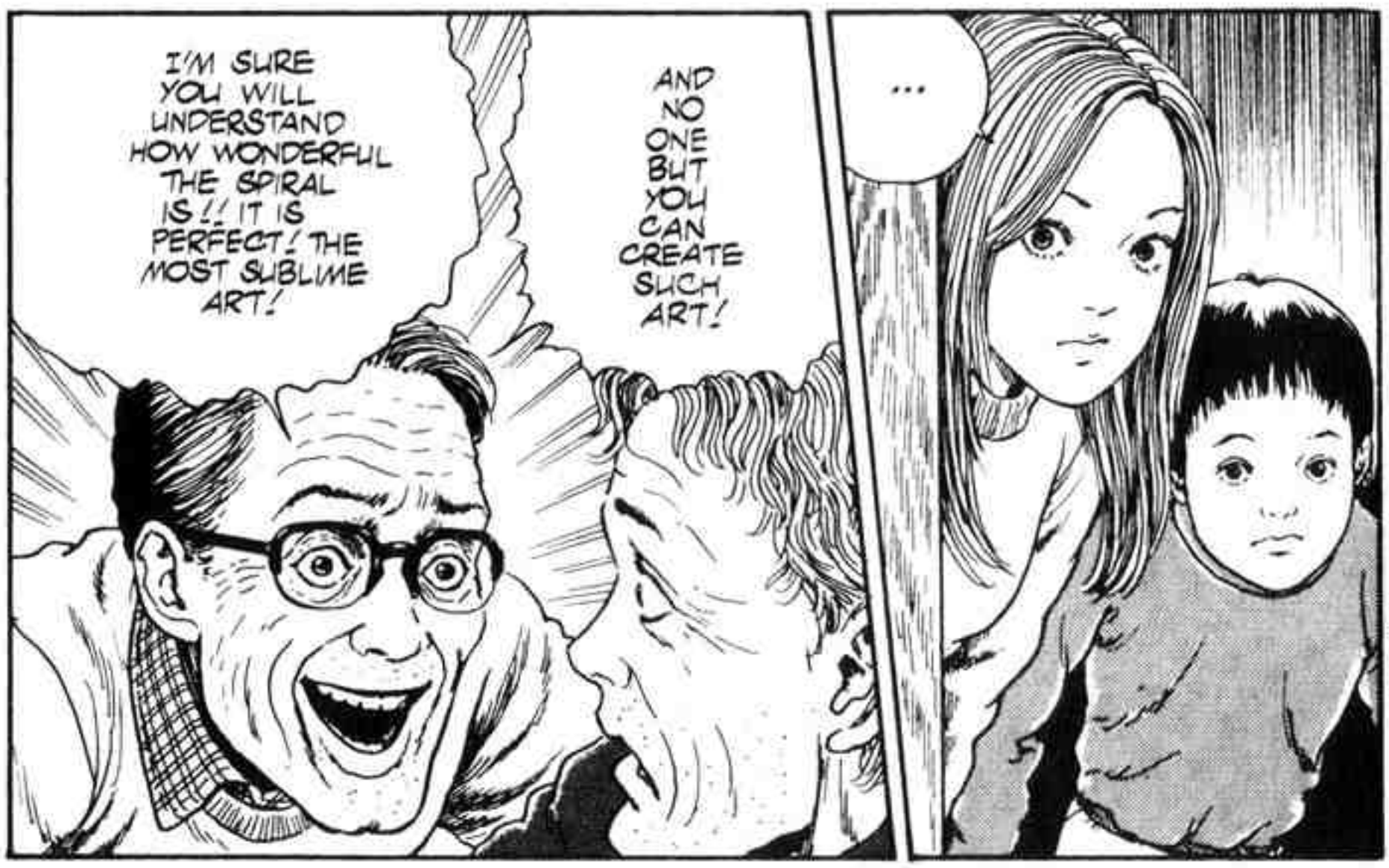

IT GOES LIKE THIS... AROUND AND AROUND.
BLACK... A BLACK SPIRAL WOULD BE PERFECT!

LATELY I'VE COME TO LOVE THAT PATTERN.
I'M COLLECTING EVERYTHING THAT HAS SPIRALS.


OLD AND NEW KIMONOS WITH VOLUTE PATTERNS, CONCHES, SNAIL SHELLS, AMMONITE FOSSILS...
WIND-UP SPRINGS, SCOTCH TAPE, MOSQUITO REPELLENT INCENSE, EVEN TWISTING VINES...
THEY'RE EVERYWHERE ONCE YOU LOOK FOR THEM!

SO I THOUGHT, "WHY NOT ASK THE TOWN'S BEST POTTER TO MAKE ME A SPIRAL BOWL?"
MONEY IS NO OBJECT. NAME YOUR PRICE.


MR. GOSHIMA, I FIND THE SPIRAL TO BE VERY MYSTICAL.
IT FILLS ME WITH A DEEP SENSE OF MYSTERY... LIKE NOTHING ELSE IN NATURE... LIKE NO OTHER SHAPE...


I'M SURE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND HOW WONDERFUL THE SPIRAL IS!! IT IS PERFECT! THE MOST SUBLIME ART!
AND NO ONE BUT YOU CAN CREATE SUCH ART!
...

DIDN'T MY DAD VISIT YOUR HOUSE YESTERDAY?

UMM, YEAH... HE FREAKED ME OUT A LITTLE.

I'M SORRY YOU SAW THAT. HE'S BEEN WEIRD LATELY.

WHY WOULD HE BE FIXATED WITH SPIRALS?

ANYWAY, HE CALLED MY DAD AN ARTIST...

WHICH GOT MY DAD GOING. HE'S ALREADY WORKING ON IT.

I DON'T THINK IT'S THAT WEIRD TO BE INTO SPIRALS.

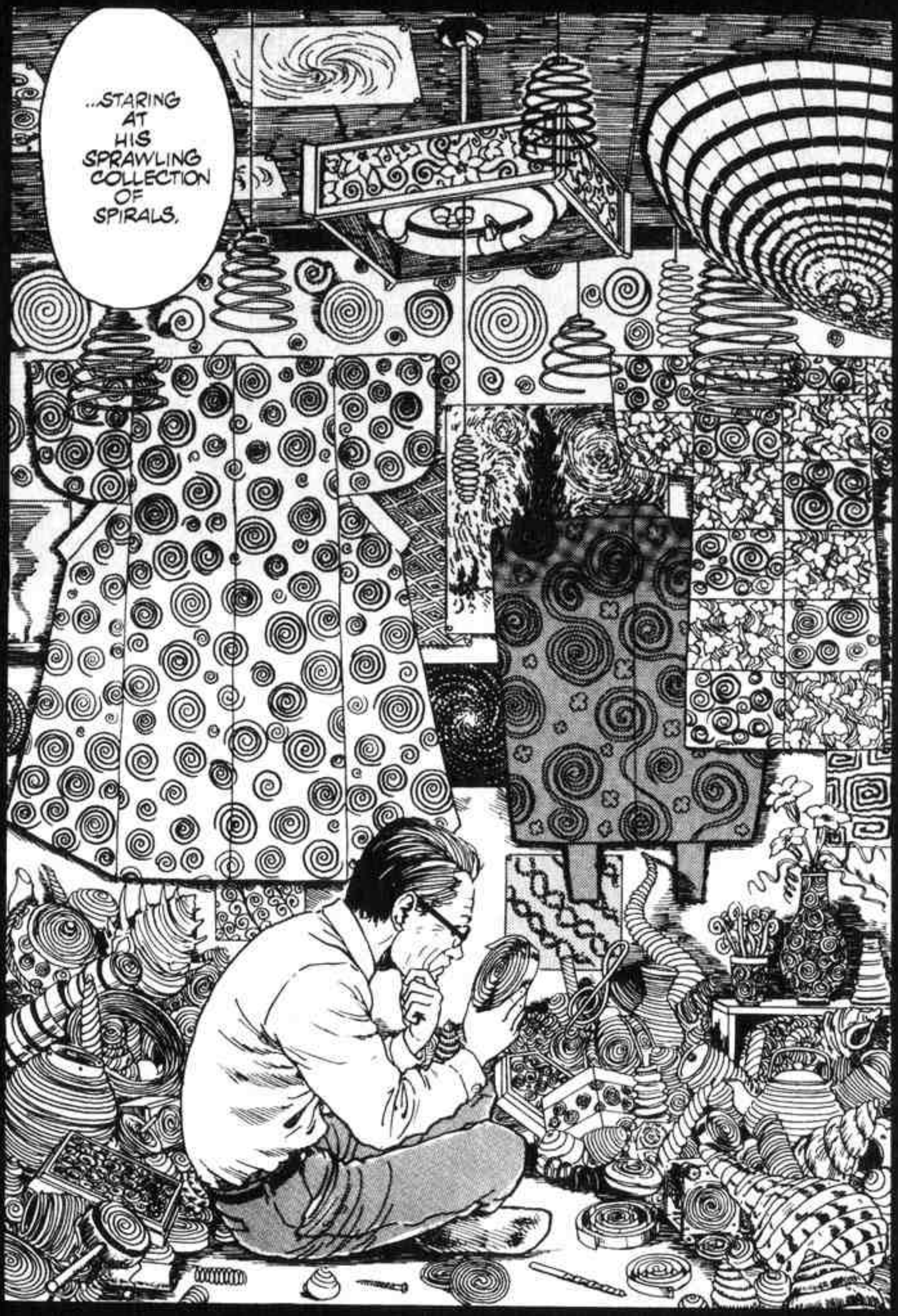
I MEAN, THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO COLLECT MUCH STRANGER THINGS.

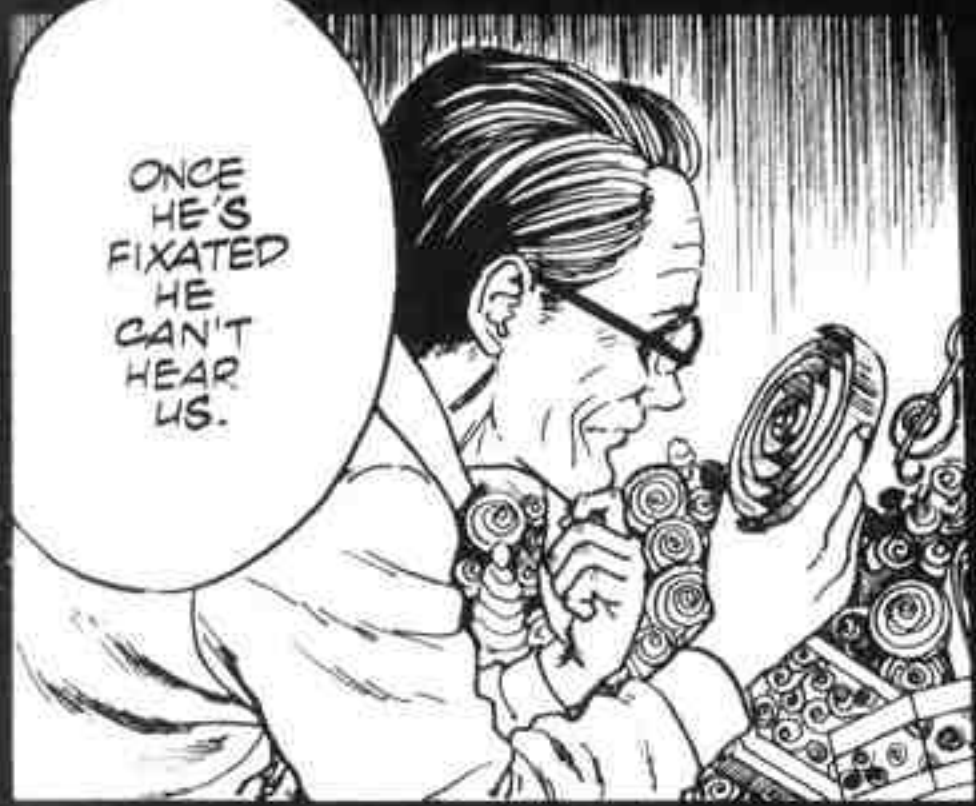
LIKE CIGAR-ETTE BUTTS.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND BECALISE YOU DON'T KNOW...

...HOW ABNORMAL HIS OBSESSION'S BECOME.

HE STOPPED GOING TO WORK. NOW HE JUST SPENDS ALL DAY IN HIS STUDY...

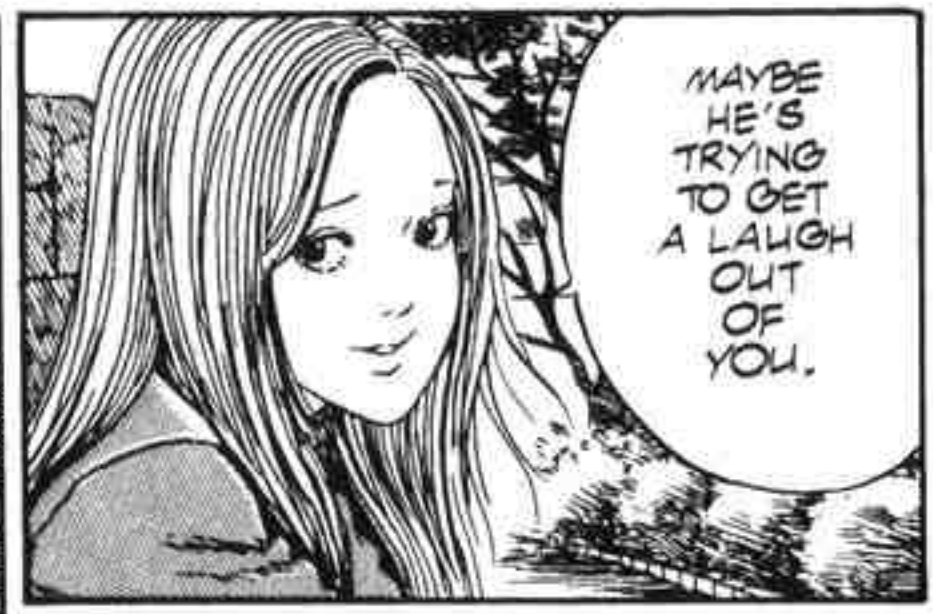

...STARING AT HIS SPRAWLING COLLECTION OF SPIRALS.


ONCE HE'S FIXATED HE CAN'T HEAR US.

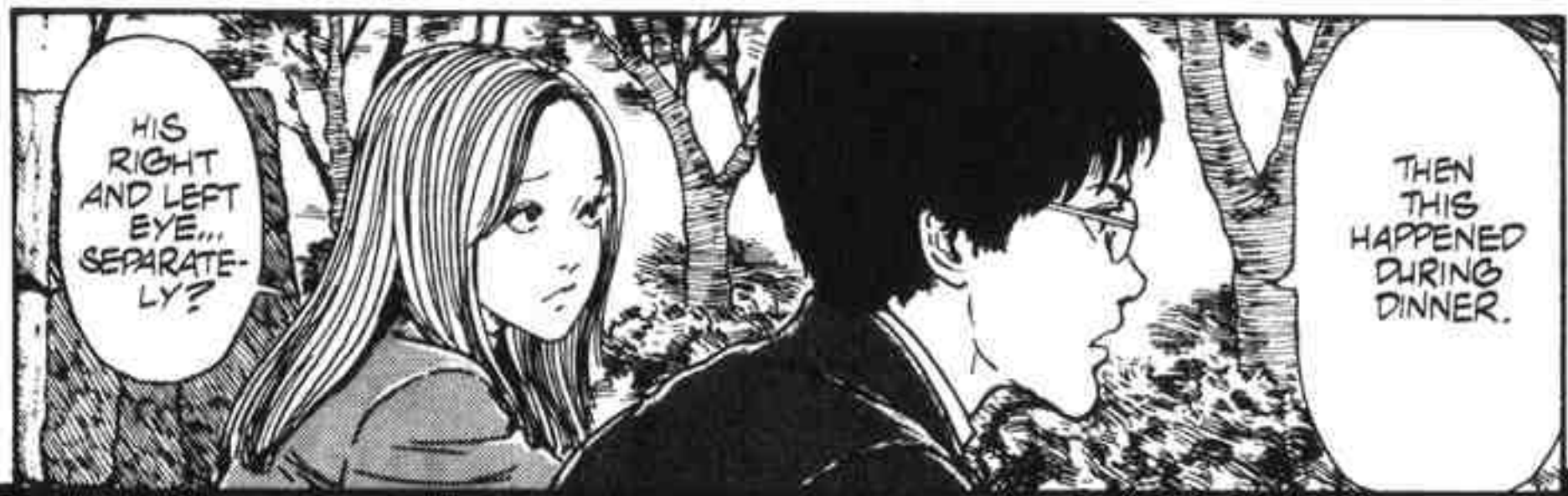
HE JUST STARES INTO THE SPIRAL.
AND WHAT'S WEIRD IS THAT ...

...HIS EYES START SPINNING AROUND... AROUND AND AROUND... IT'S SO STRANGE.
WHAT ?

HIS EYES SPIN?
THEY SPIN LIKE THEY'RE FOLLOWING THE SPIRAL.


MAYBE HE'S TRYING TO GET A LAUGH OUT OF YOU.

NO, IT'S NOT FUNNY AT ALL!
HIS RIGHT AND LEFT EYE MOVE INDEPENDENT-LY OF EACH OTHER!


HIS RIGHT AND LEFT EYE... SEPARATELY?
THEN THIS HAPPENED DURING DINNER.

HE GOT REALLY ANGRY BECAUSE THERE WEREN'T SPIRAL PATTERNED FISHCAKES IN THE MISO SOUP.
MY MOM EXPLAINED THAT SHE RAN OUT OF THEM.

HMPH!
I CAN'T EAT MISO WITHOUT THOSE FISHCAKES!

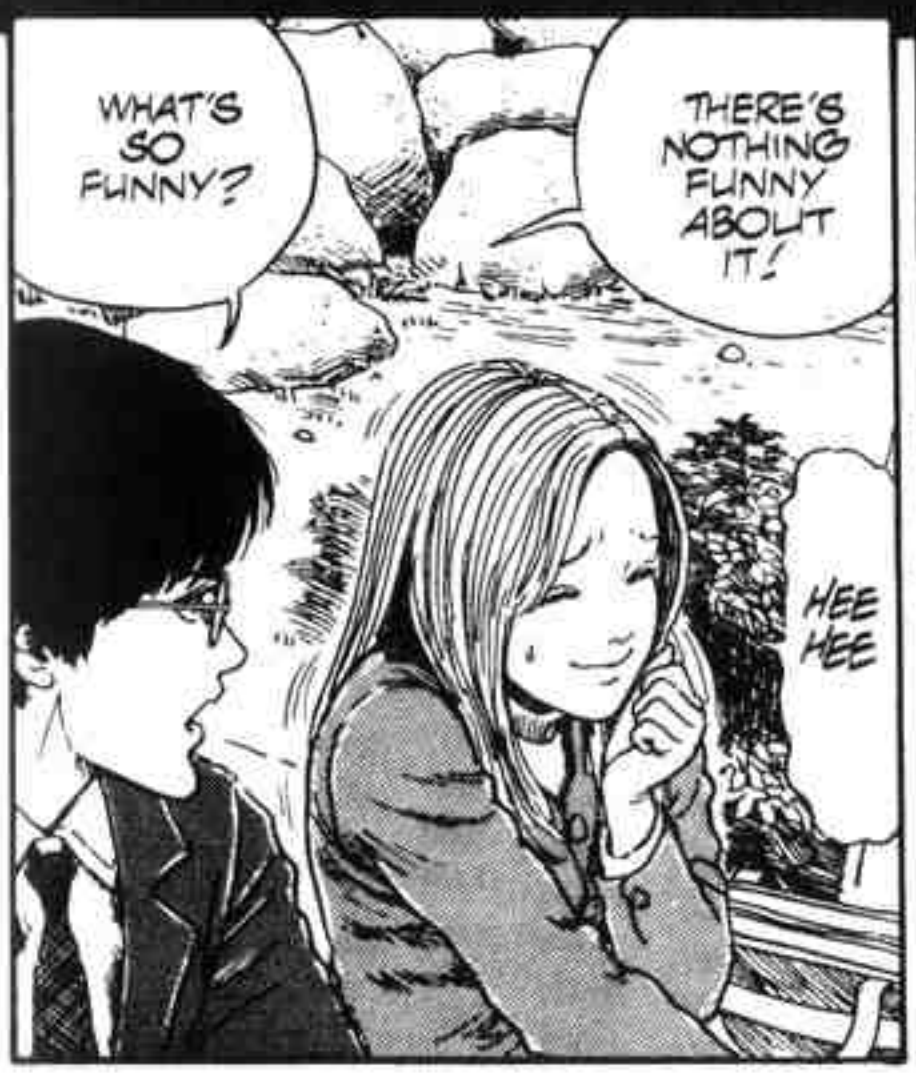
SUDDENLY HE STARTED TO STIR THE MISO, VERY FAST...
TAK TAK TAK

SHHRRRRRR

HE WAS SATISFIED.

NOW HE ALWAYS STIRS A WHIRLPOOL BEFORE HE BATHES.
SPLISH SPLISH

Hhnnn...
PLASH

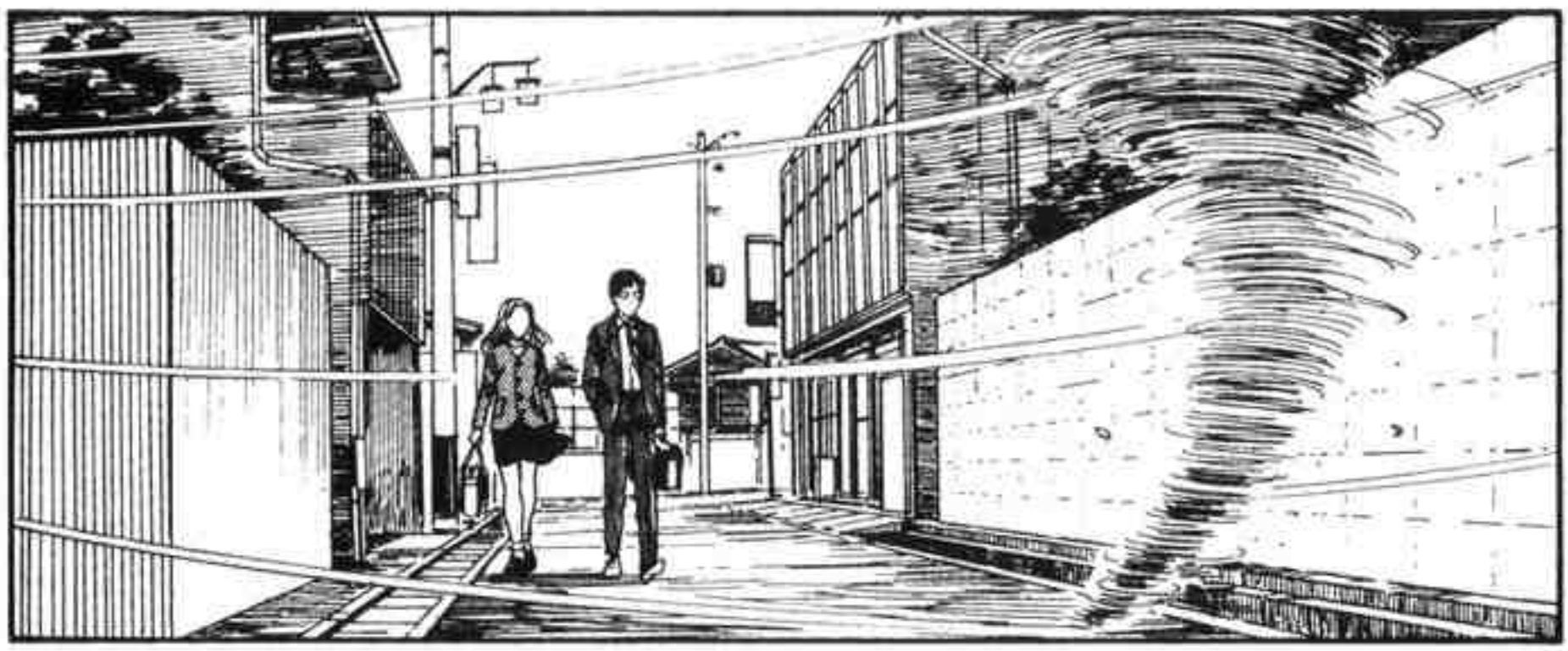

WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
THERE'S NOTHING FUNNY ABOUT IT!
HEE HEE

YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, DO YOU?
I'M SORRY, IT'S JUST...

I DON'T BLAME YOU. I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT, EITHER.

WHY DON'T YOU COME OVER AND SEE FOR YOUR-SELF?
THEN YOU'LL SEE HOW SERIOUS THIS IS.
THEN ...

...YOU MIGHT HATE THIS TOWN AS MUCH AS I DO.



WHY WOULD I HATE THIS TOWN?
...

I THINK IT'S BECALISE OF THIS TOWN THAT MY DAD'S GETTING STRANGE.
BUT WHY?

WELL ...
LET'S SEE...

DO YOU SEE SOMETHING ODD?
LOOK AT THIS STREAM.

ODD?
LOOK AT ALL THOSE WHIRLPOOLS.

OH... WELL... THAT'S PROBABLY DUE TO THE FLOW.
YEAH WELL ...IT COULD BE.

BUT I DON'T SEE THAT MANY WHIRLPOOLS IN MIDORIYAMA-SHI.

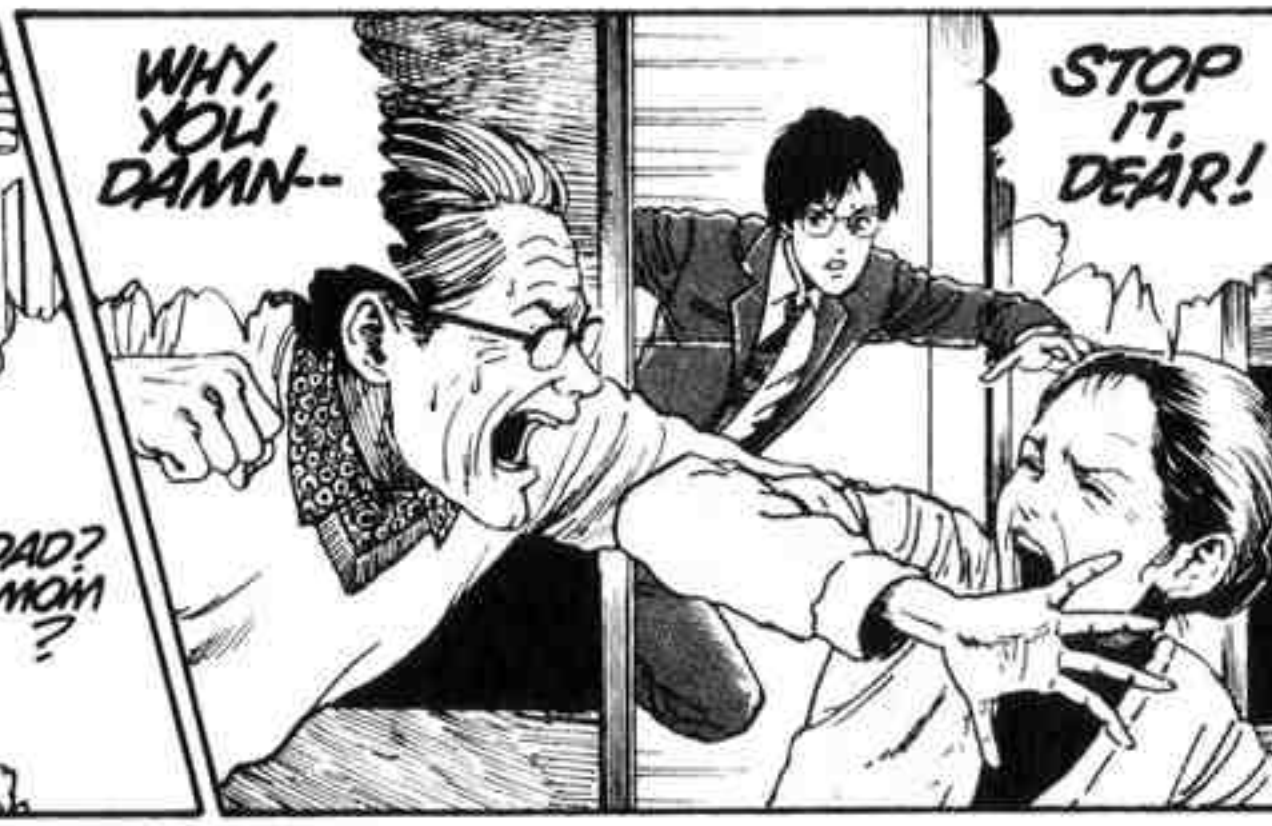
AND THEN THERE'S THE WHIRLWINDS.
THESE DUST DEVILS.

BUT WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH YOUR FATHER'S OBSESSION WITH SPIRALS?

...
I'M NOT SURE, BUT...

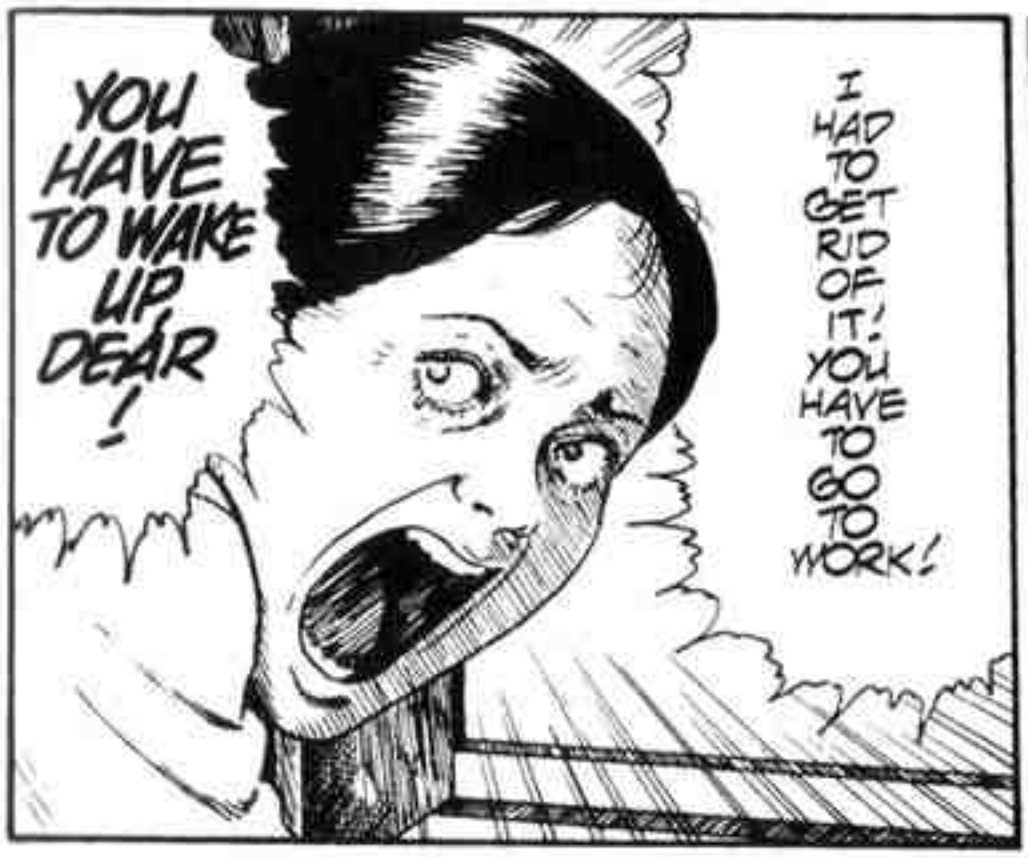
HOW COULD YOU?
AAAAH!
?!

WHAT'S GOING ON?
DAD? MOM?


WHY, YOU DAMN--
STOP IT, DEAR!

STOP IT, DAD!
WHAT HAPPENED?

SHE THREW AWAY MY COLLEC-TION!
SHE THREW IT AWAY WHILE I WAS OUT!


YOU HAVE TO WAKE UP DEAR!
I HAD TO GET RID OF IT! YOU HAVE TO GO TO WORK!

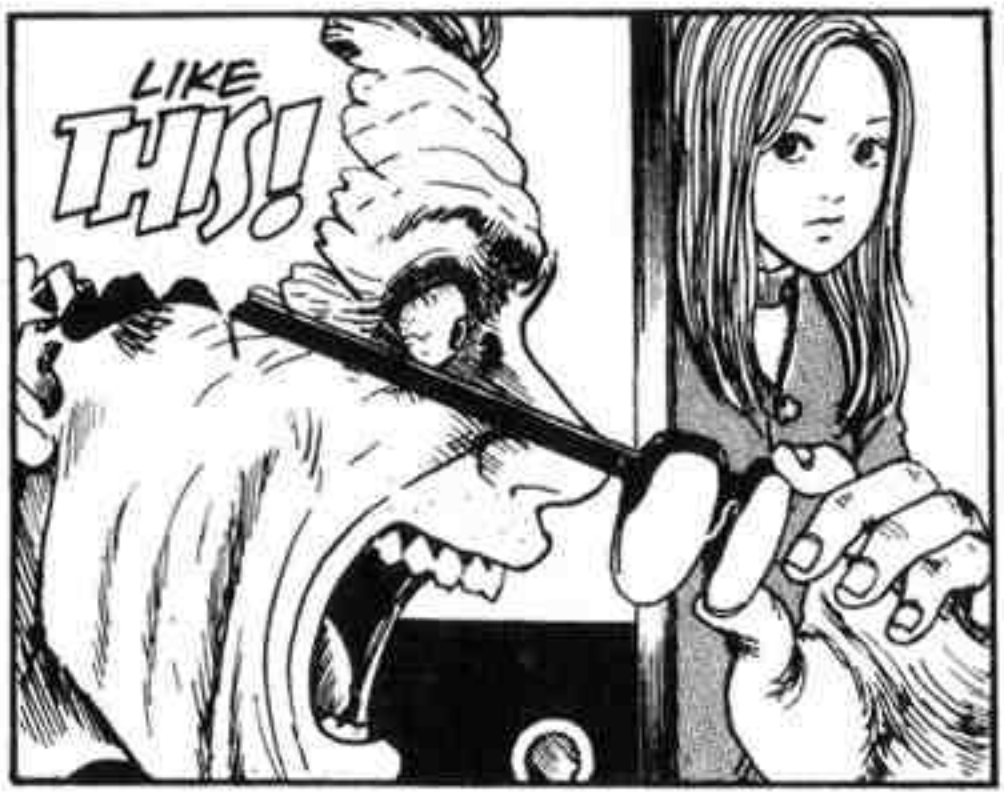
HUFF...
HUFF...
HUFF...

HAH!

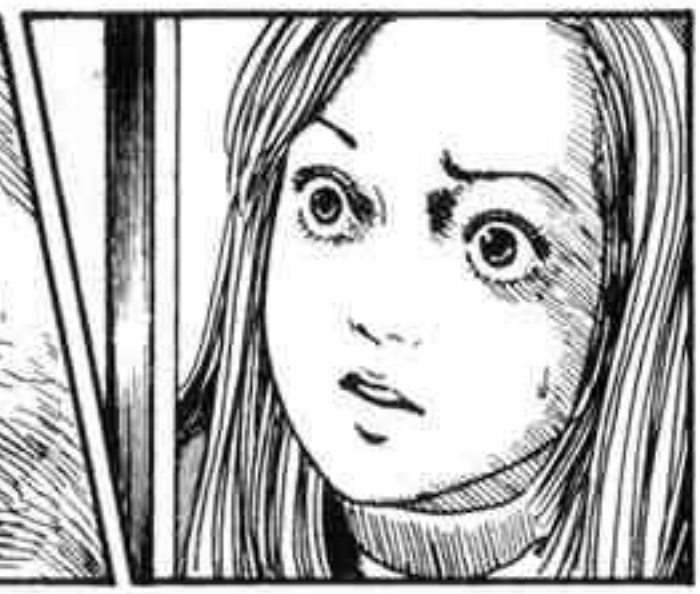
SO IT'S GONE, THEN.
I DON'T CARE.

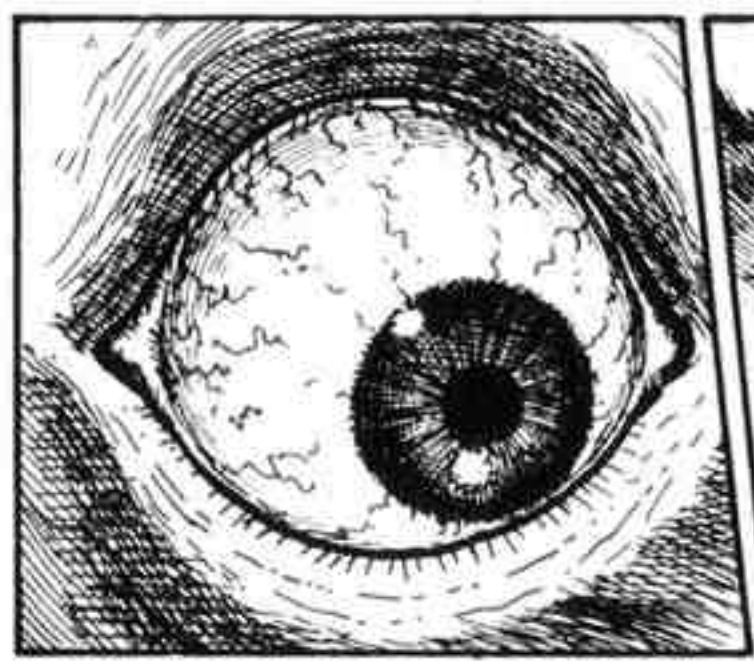
I DON'T NEED TO COLLECT SPIRALS ANY MORE.
I FINALLY REALIZED THAT YOU CAN MAKE SPIRALS YOURSELF!

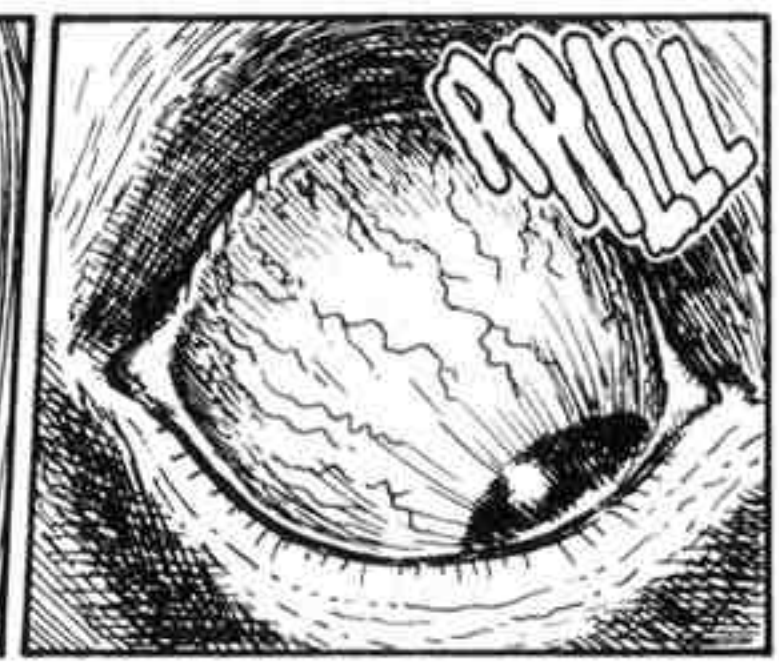
YOU'LL SEE!
YOU CAN EXPRESS THE SPIRAL THROUGH YOUR OWN BODY!!


LIKE THIS!

RRL



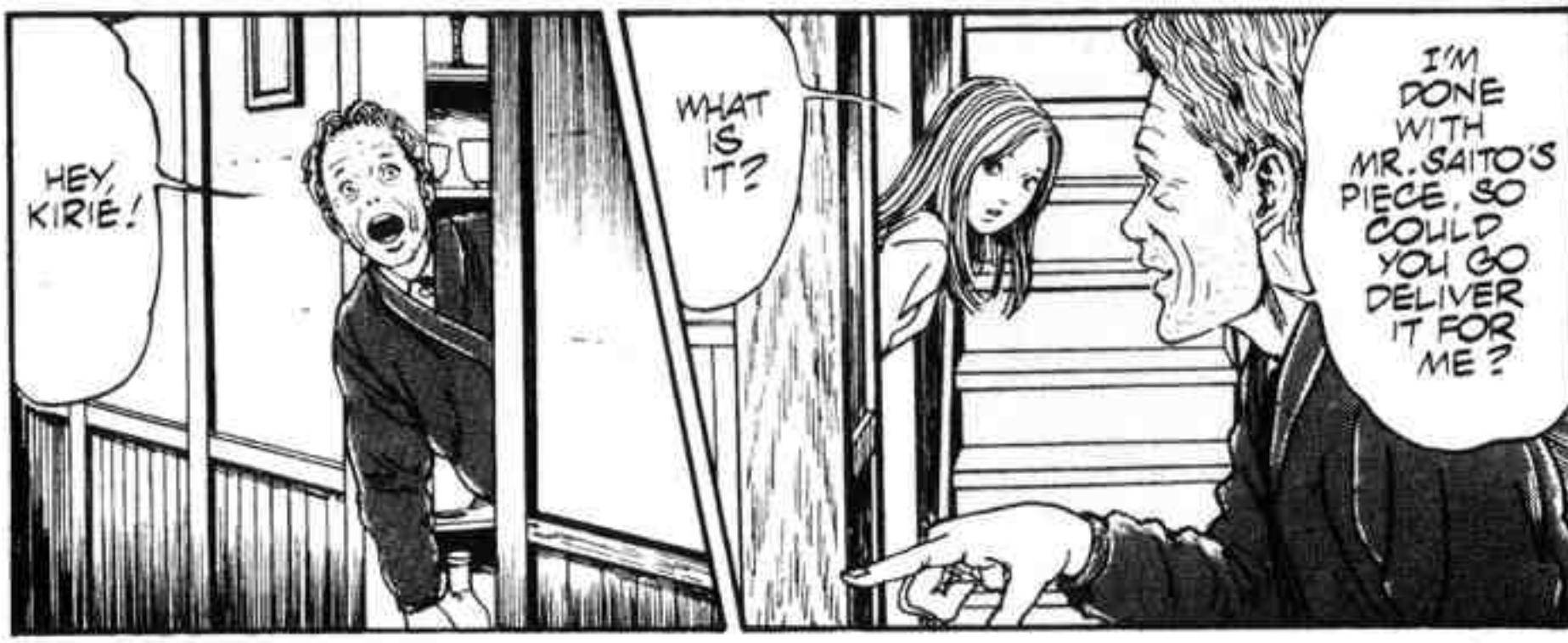


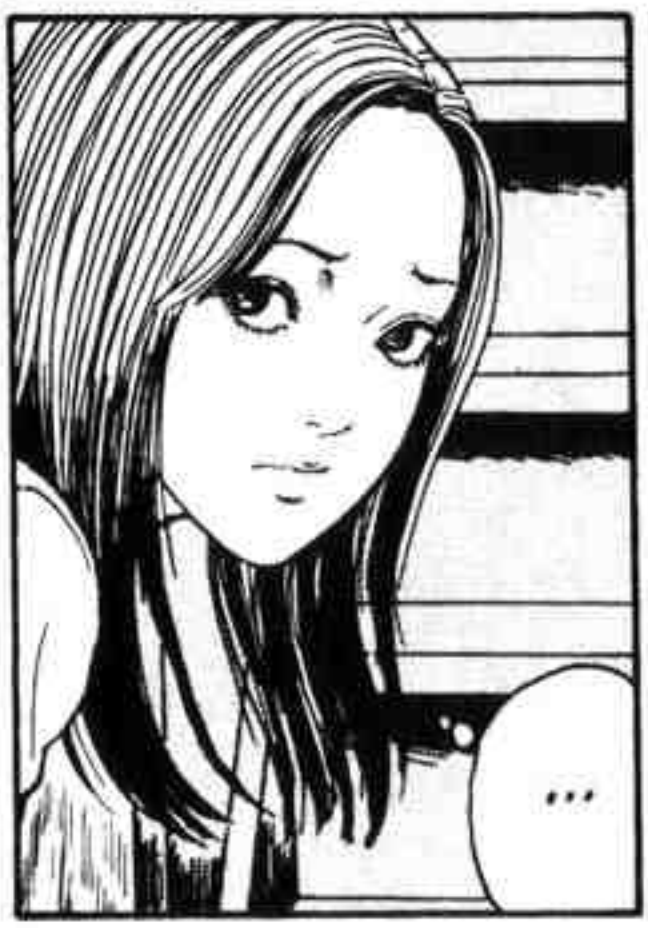

RRLLL

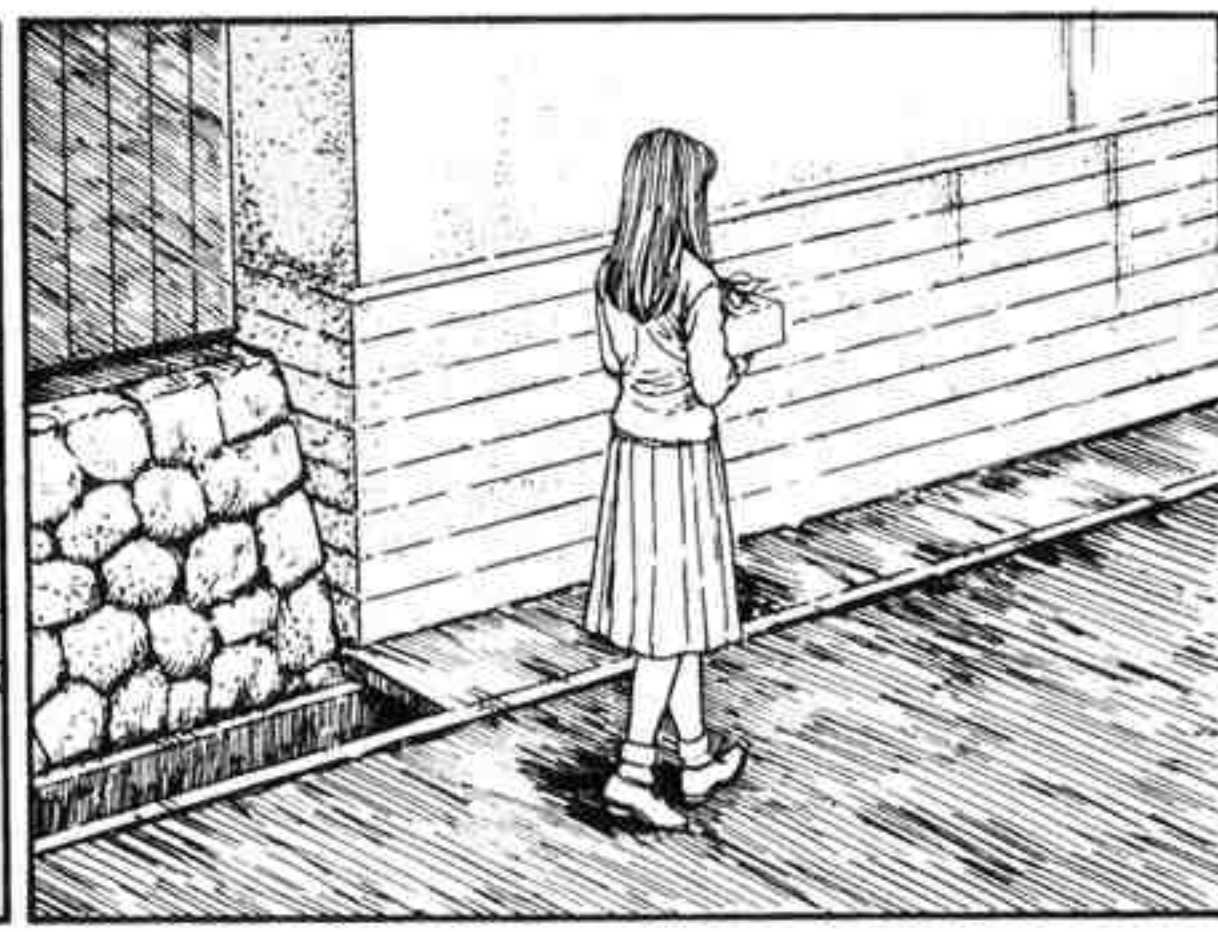
RRRR
RL RR
LL LL

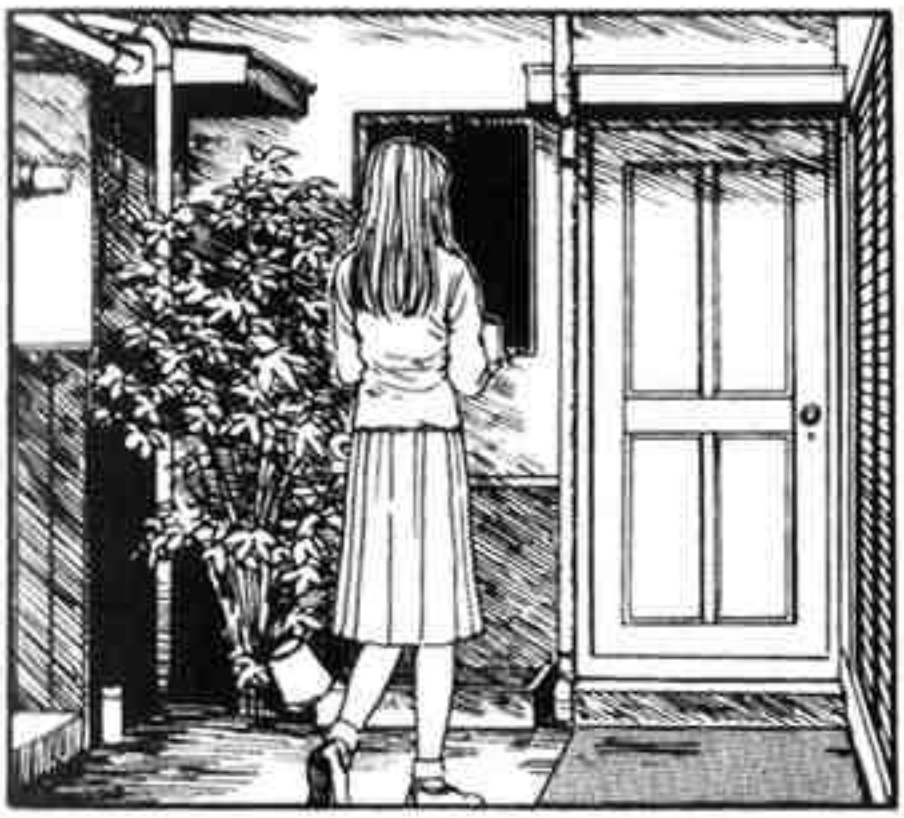
HA HA HA
I SAW IT MYSELF NOW.
HA HAHA HAHA HA!
HIS EYES WERE SPINNING AROUND AND AROUND ...
...SEPARATELY ...

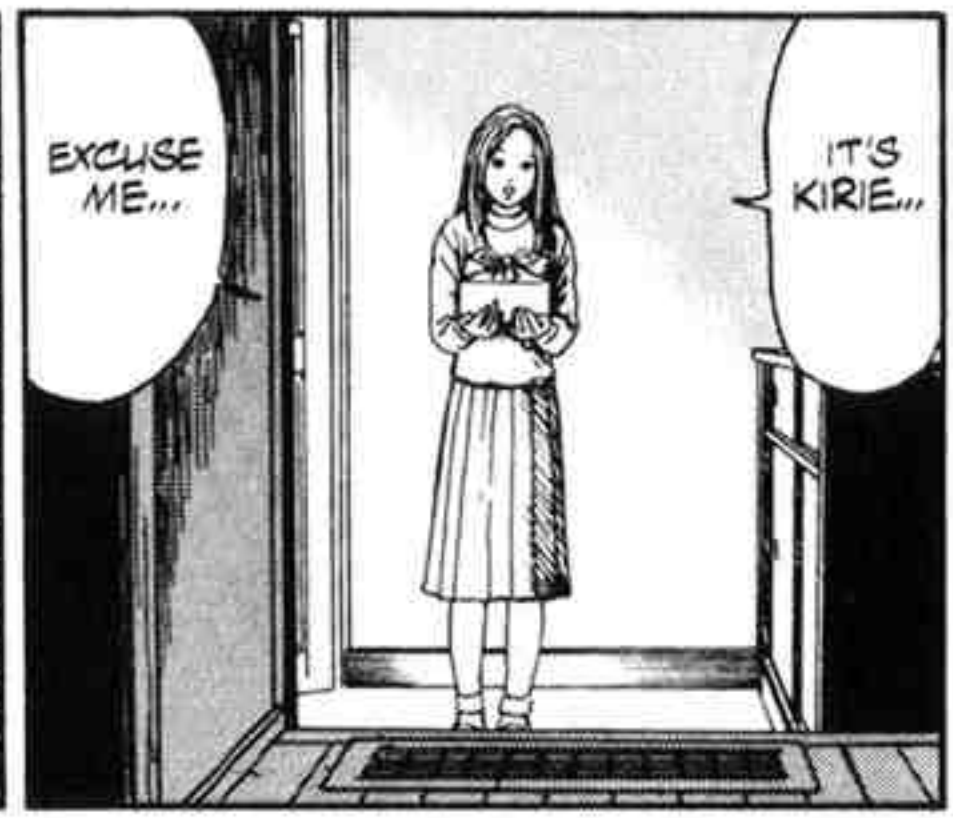
FOR SEVERAL DAYS AFTER THAT...
...SHUICHI DIDN'T SAY A WORD ABOUT HIS FATHER.

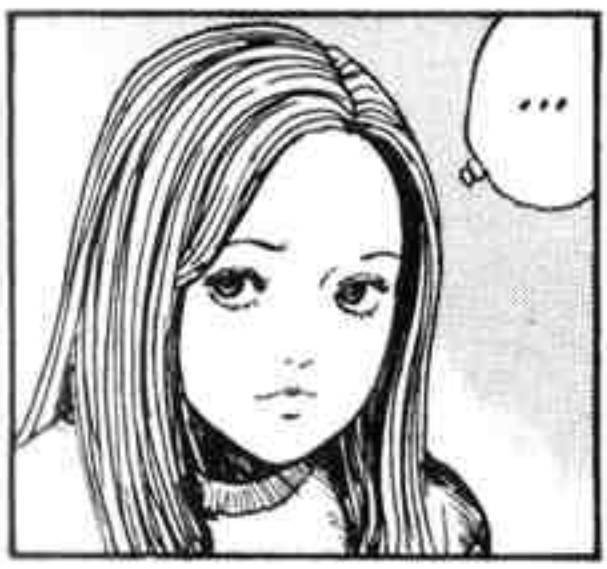

HEY, KIRIE!
WHAT IS IT?
I'M DONE WITH MR. SAITO'S PIECE. SO COULD YOU GO DELIVER IT FOR ME?


...

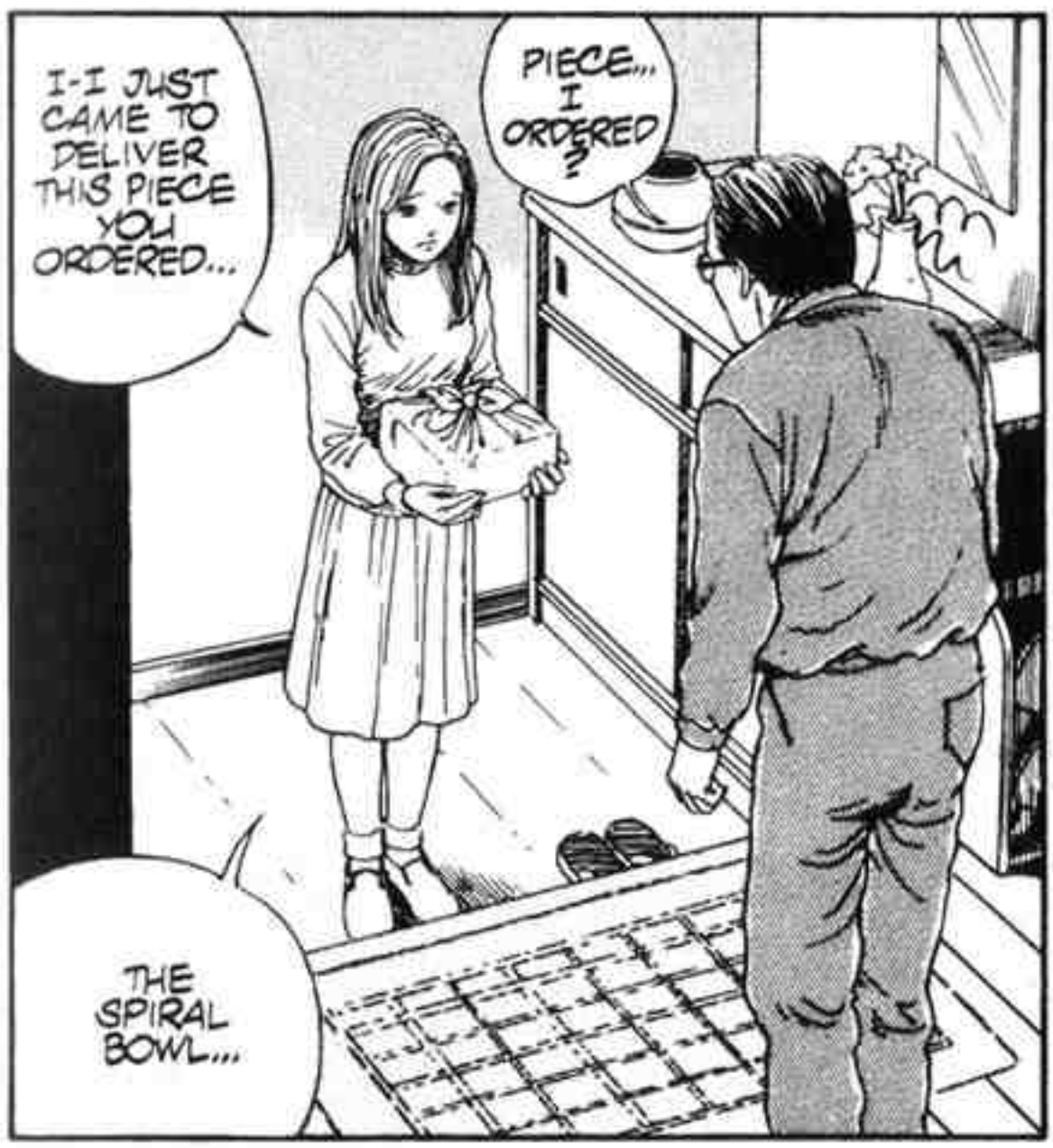





EXCUSE ME...
IT'S KIRIE...


...

FWM
OH, HI. SHUICHI'S OUT.


I-I JUST CAME TO DELIVER THIS PIECE YOU ORDERED...
PIECE... I ORDERED?
THE SPIRAL BOWL...

OH, YES, OF COURSE.
I'M SORRY BUT I DON'T REALLY NEED IT ANYMORE.

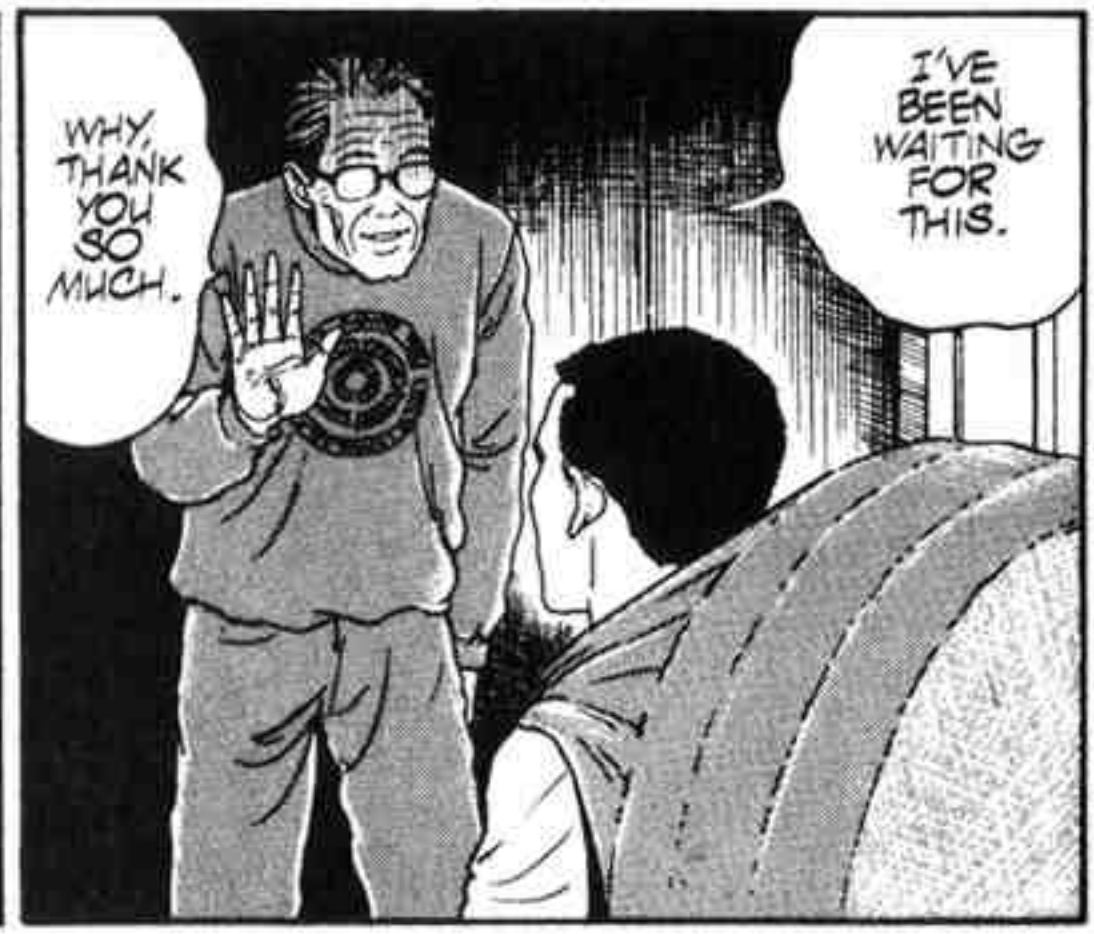
WHAT?

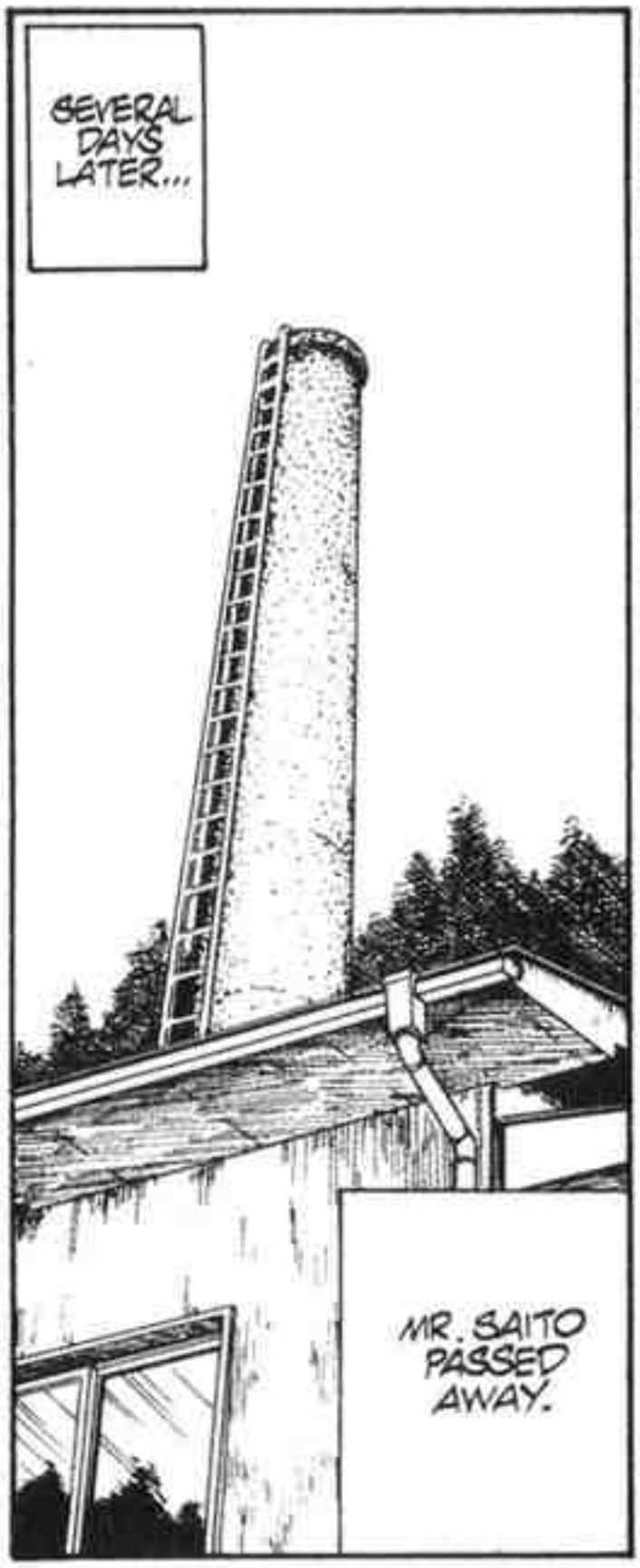
BUT THIS...
KIRIE... AS I SAID BEFORE...
I DON'T NEED THOSE THINGS.

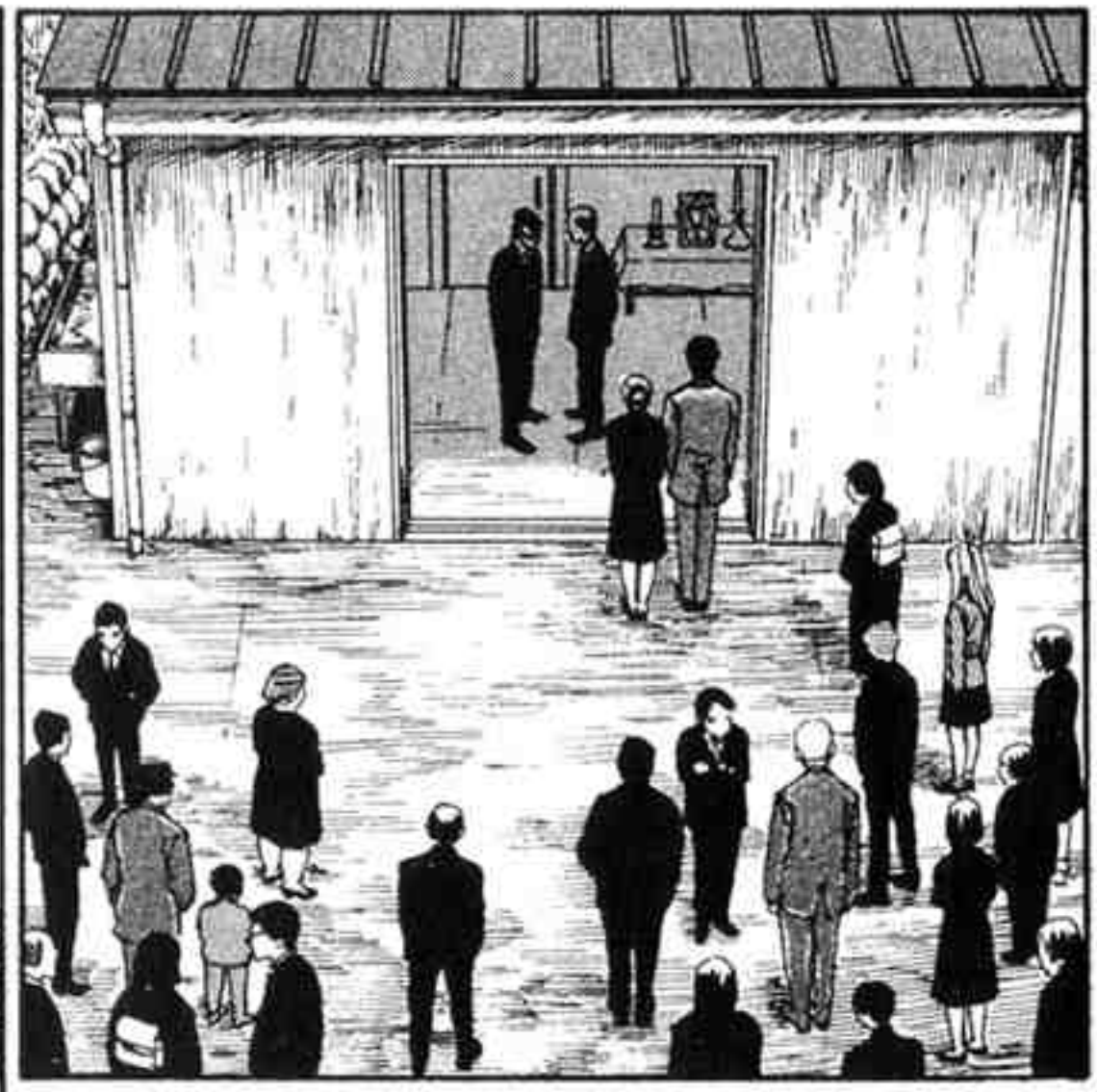
YOU CAN CALL THE SPIRAL FROM WITHIN YOURSELF.
LOOK AT WHAT I CAN DO NOW.

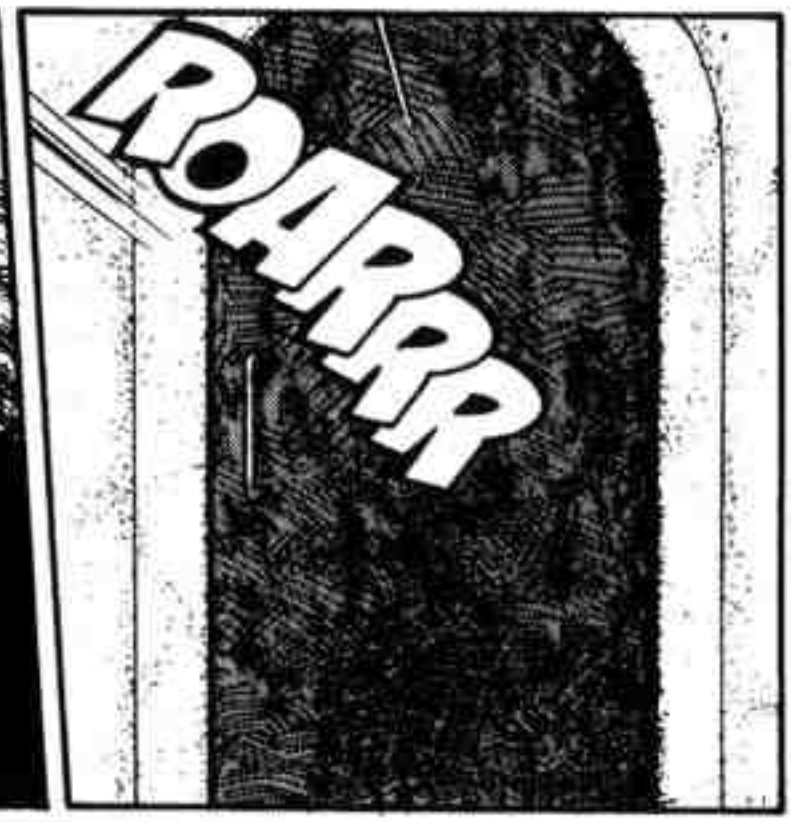
UR...
UNN...
URGH!
AHEE!
AAAAIEEEE!
?

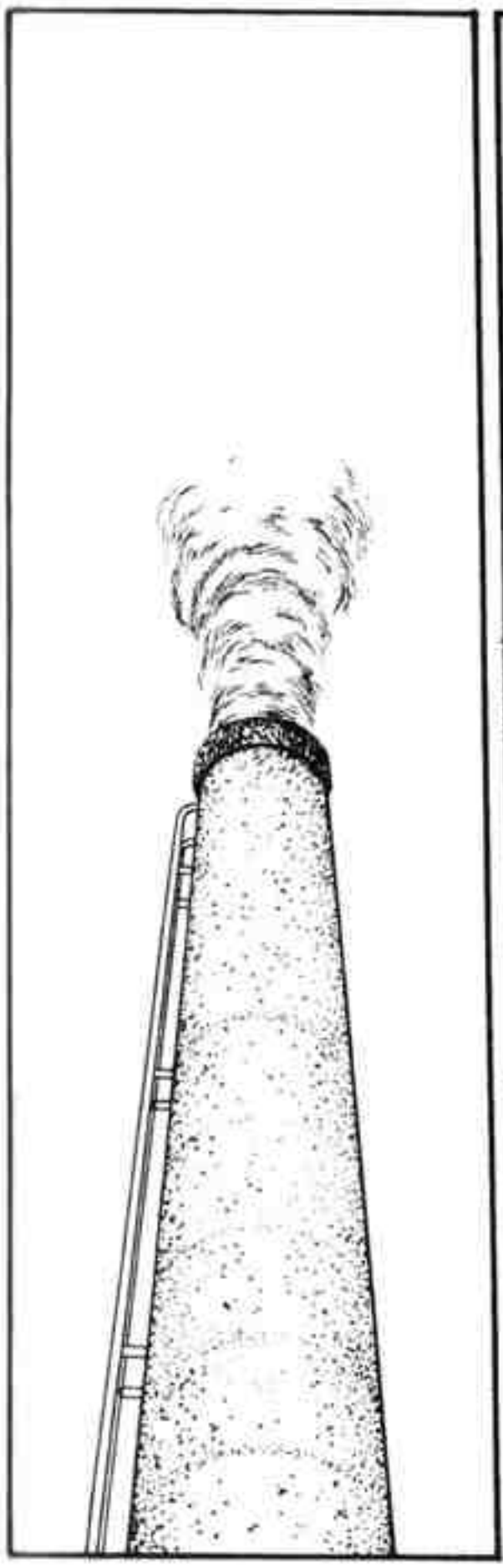
HELLO! DELIVERY FROM TANAKA COOPER.
WE HAVE THE ITEM YOU ORDERED.


WHY, THANK YOU SO MUCH.
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS.


SEVERAL DAYS LATER...
MR. SAITO PASSED AWAY.



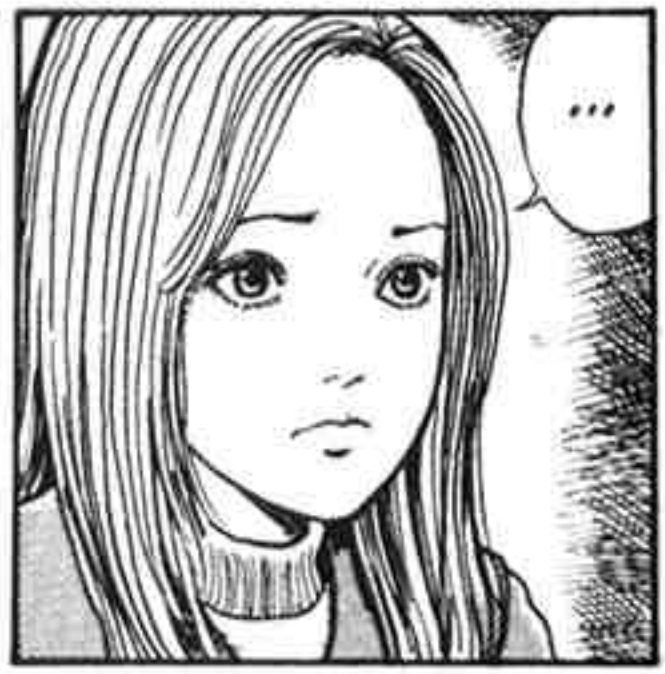

ROARRR



KIRIE...
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW MY FATHER DIED?

HM?
I THOUGHT HE FELL DOWN THE STAIRS?

THAT'S WHAT WE TOLD EVERY-ONE!
BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED!


...

BECAUSE MY DAD WAS BECOMING SO ABNORMAL...
MY MOM AND I WENT TO THE HOSPITAL. WE CONSULTED A DOCTOR WITHOUT TELLING HIM.

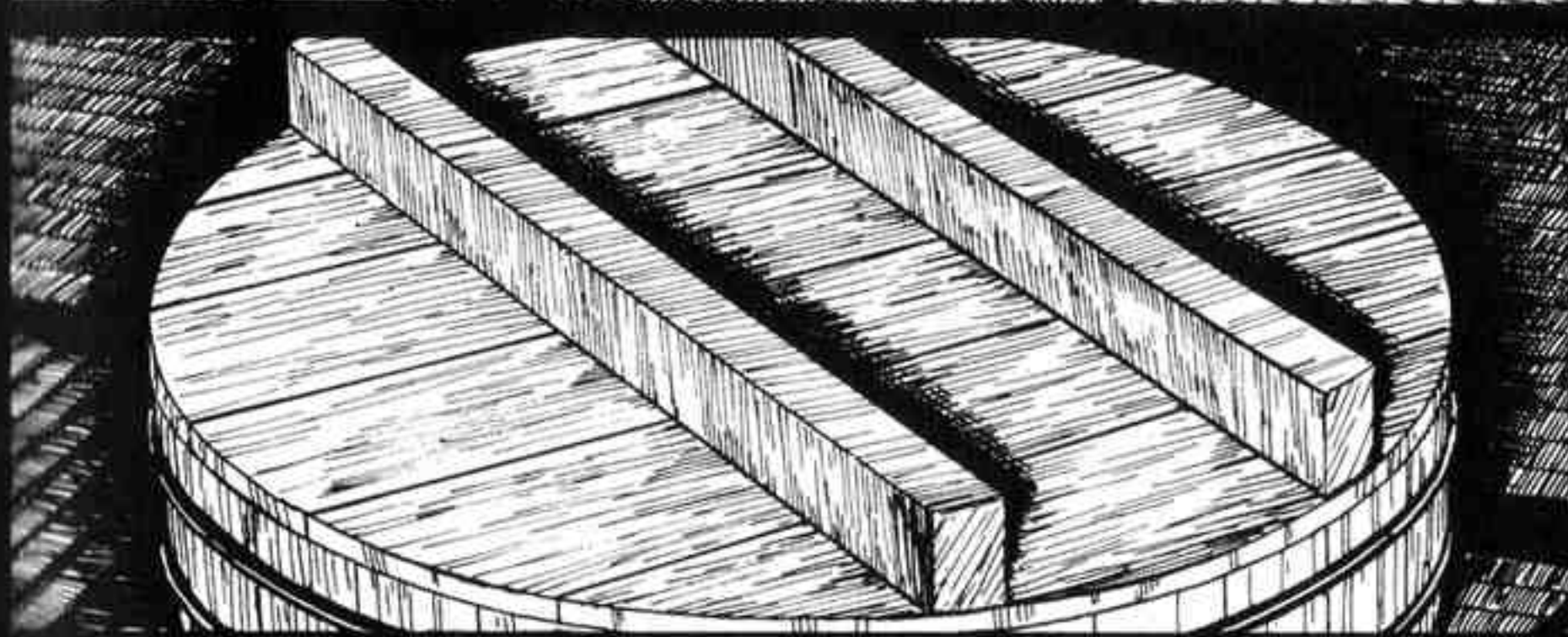
WE ALL AGREED THAT HE SHOULD BE HOSPITALIZED. WE CAME HOME LATE THAT NIGHT BUT...
...WE COULDN'T FIND HIM...

...ANYWHERE...

THEN...
LLLH

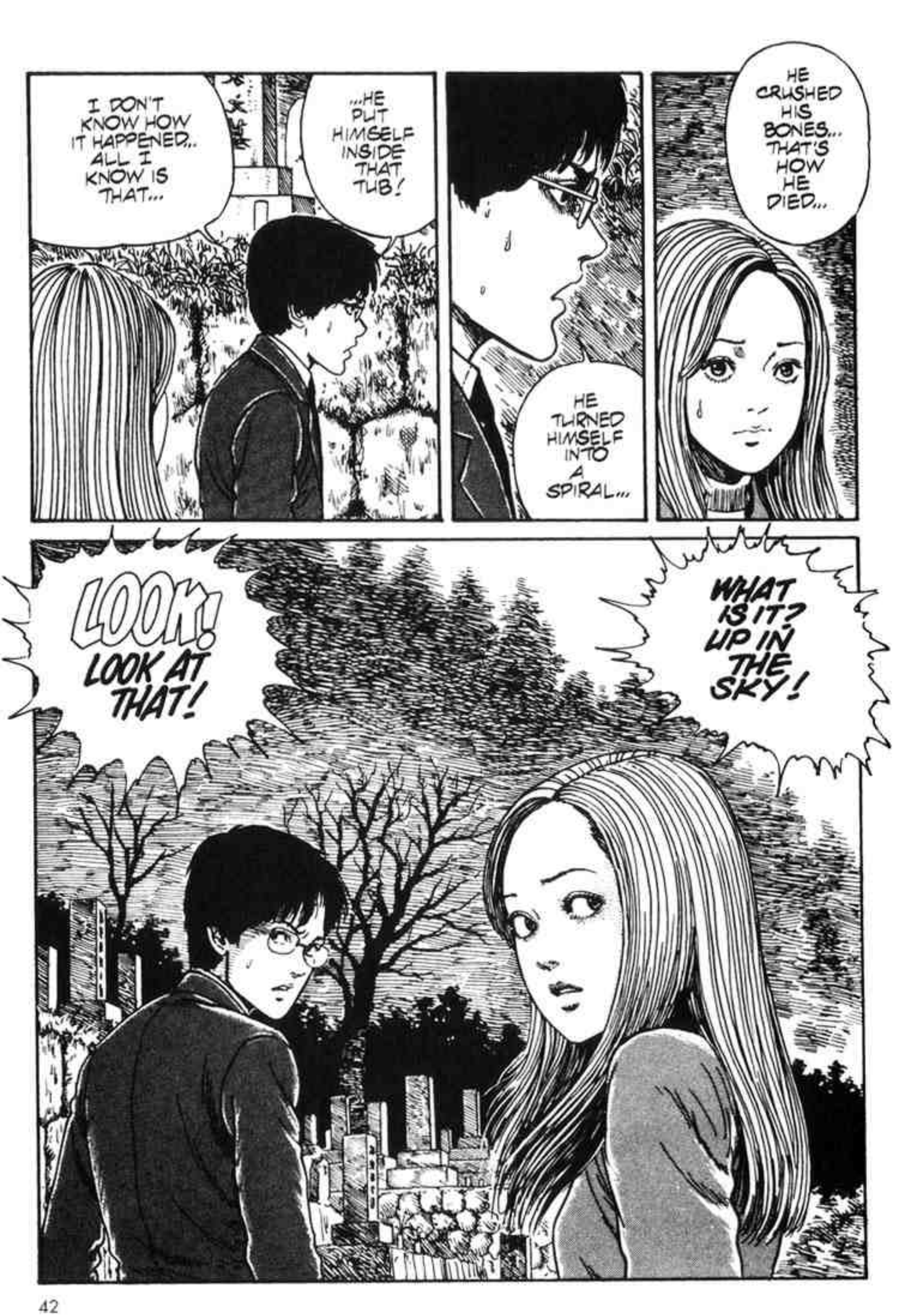
WE FOUND THIS LARGE TUB WE'D NEVER SEEN...

...IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS STUDY.



I WONDER...

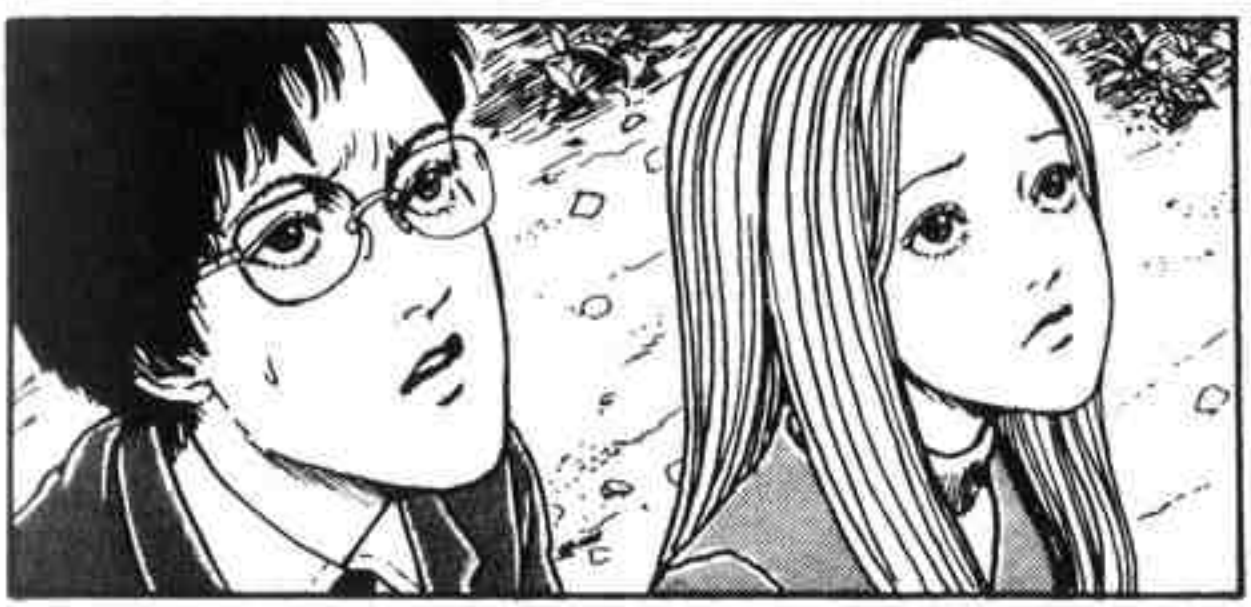
...WHAT THIS IS...


I DON'T KNOW HOW IT HAPPENED... ALL I KNOW IS THAT...
...HE PUT HIMSELF INSIDE THAT TUB!
HE TURNED HIMSELF INTO A SPIRAL...
HE CRUSHED HIS BONES... THAT'S HOW HE DIED...
LOOK! LOOK AT THAT!
WHAT IS IT? UP IN THE SKY!

WHAT IS THAT?!

WHAT?! WHERE?!

RIGHT UP THERE. UP IN THE SKY!



CHAPTER 2

THE SPIRAL OBSESSION

PART 2

LOOK! THE SMOKE IS SETTLING!

IT'S SWIRLING DOWN TOWARDS THE WATER!

IT'S GOING INTO DRAGONFLY POND!

THE POND IN THE CENTER OF TOWN.

IT'S TOO STRANGE...

DRAGONFLY POND...

...IS RIGHT BEHIND OUR HOUSE, RIGHT NEXT DOOR.

AHEE!
PLEASE STOP IT, DEAR!
GO AWAY!

EEEE!
MRS. SAITO, PLEASE!

MOM! MOM! YOU HAVE TO CALM DOWN!
SHUICHI!

THAT'S YOUR FATHER!
N-NO... THIS IS JUST A COINCI-DENCE.

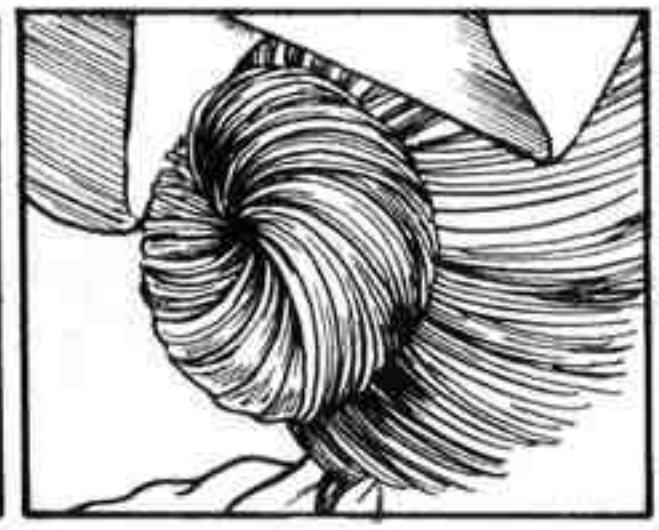
B-BUT... LOOK... OVER THERE...

THE DRIFTING SMOKE, FOR A SPLIT SECOND...
...BECAME THE FACE OF SHUICHI'S FATHER...

IYAA!
EEYAAH!
AHH HA HA HA
MOM?!
HA HA HA HA
HA HA HA HA
SOME-ONE CALL AN AMBU-LANCE!
eeyoo
eeyoo
KURŌZU HOSPITAL

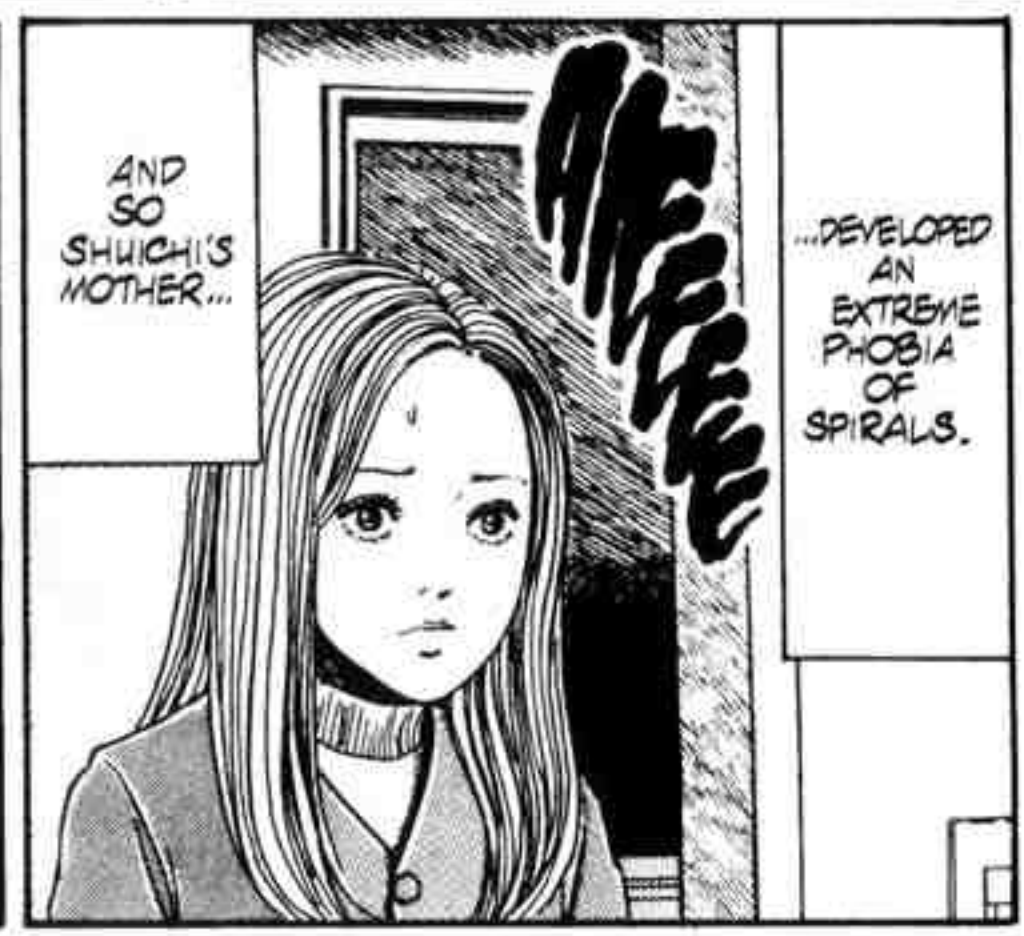
NO! NO! DON'T LET HIM NEAR ME!
AIAA!
PLEASE, MRS. SAITO, THE DOCTOR WILL COME SOON.

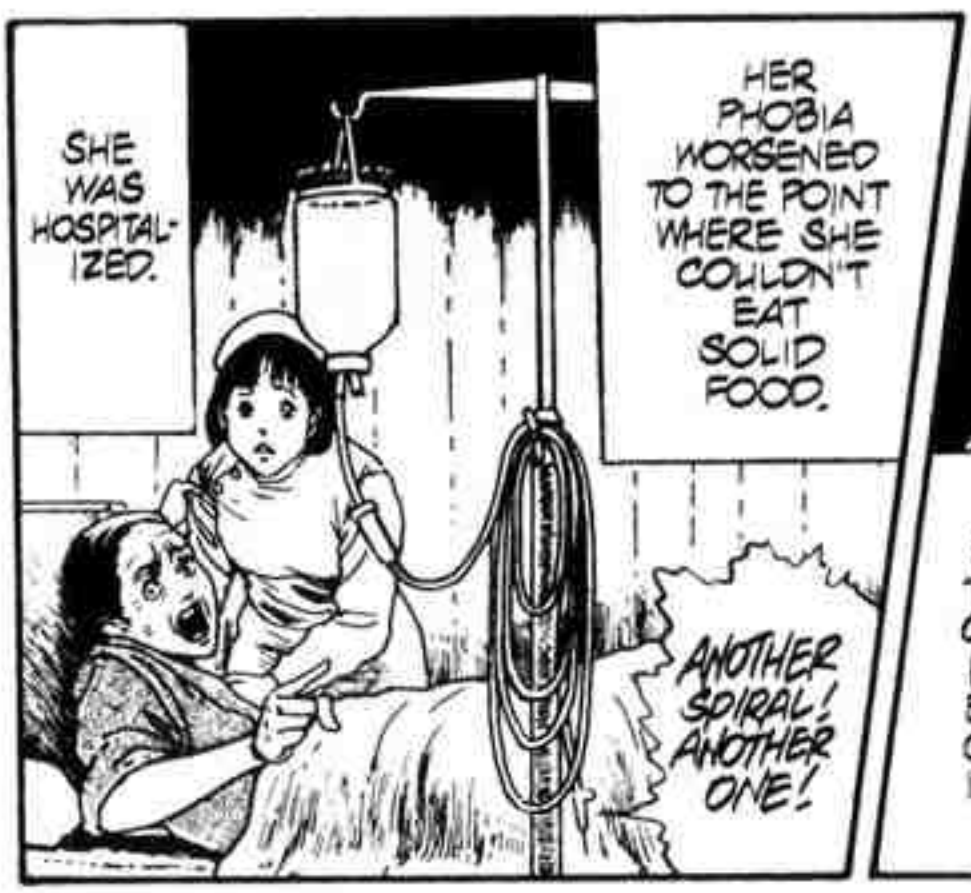
NO... NO...
IN THE SKY...

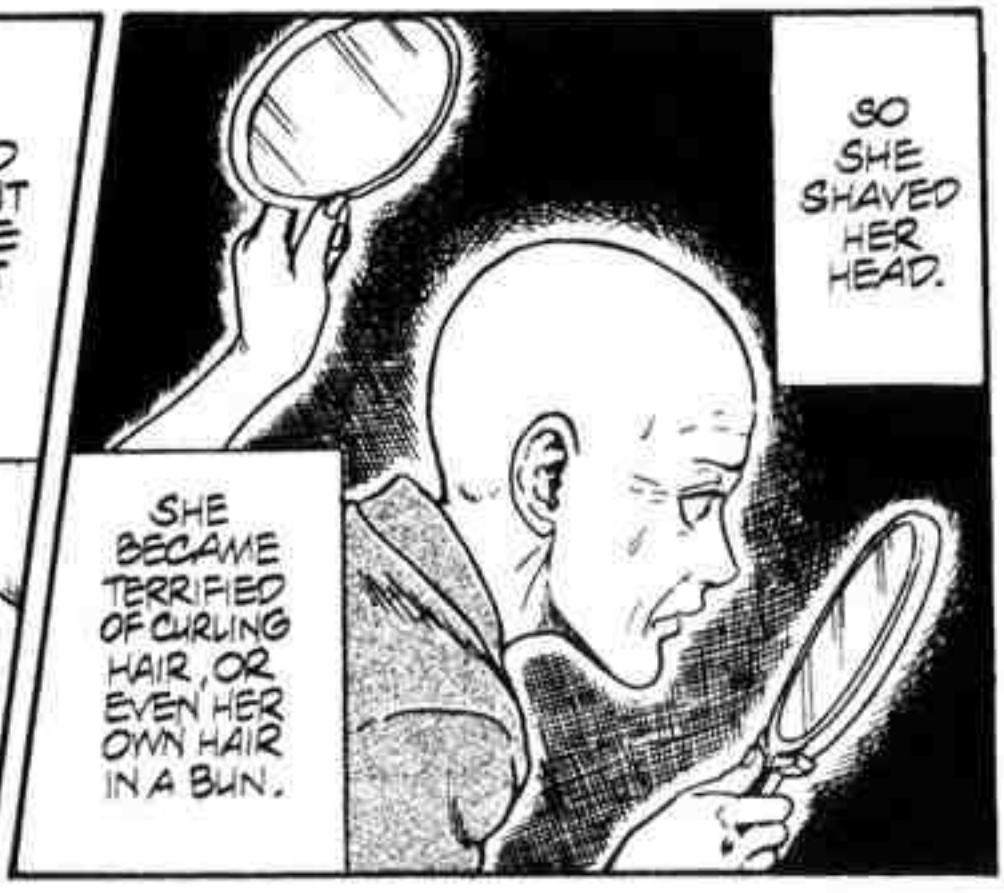


AIEE!
A SPIRAL!

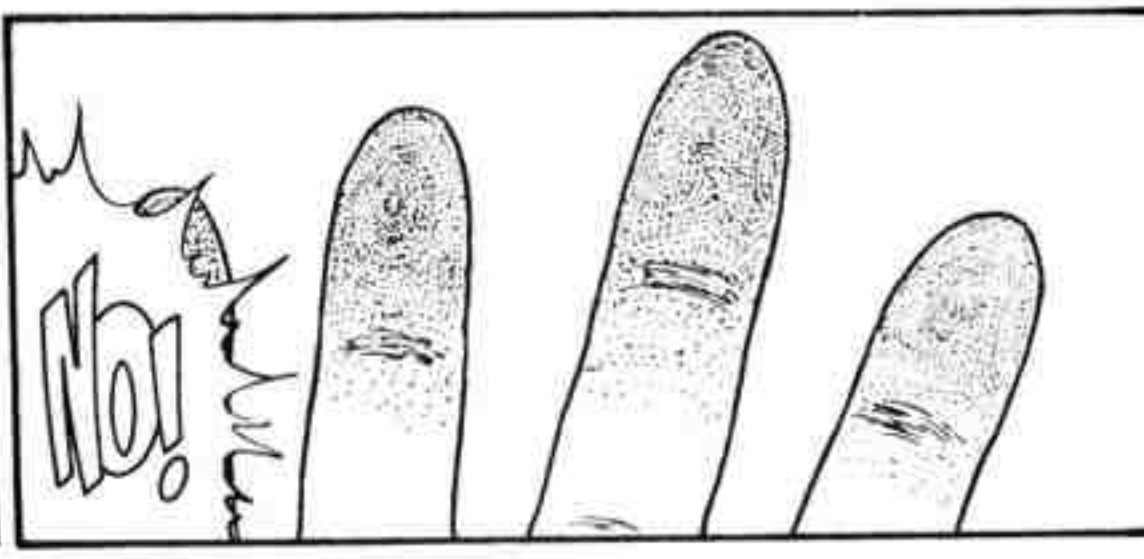
AIEE!
SPIRAL! SPIRAL! TAKE IT AWAY!
MRS. SAITO!!

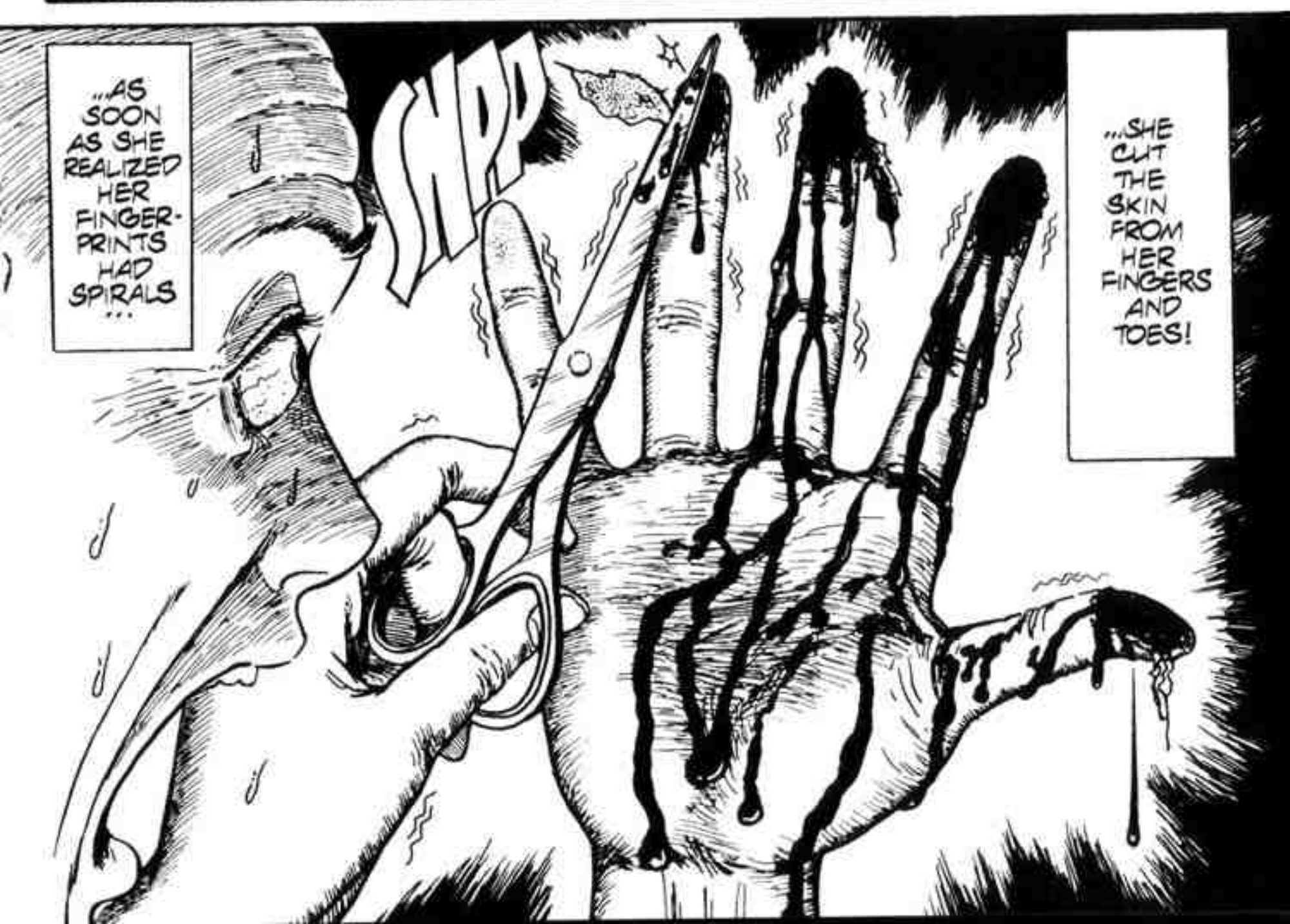

AND SO SHUICHI'S MOTHER...
AIEEEE
...DEVELOPED AN EXTREME PHOBIA OF SPIRALS.


SHE WAS HOSPITAL-IZED.
HER PHOBIA WORSENED TO THE POINT WHERE SHE COULDN'T EAT SOLID FOOD.
ANOTHER SPIRAL! ANOTHER ONE!


SO SHE SHAVED HER HEAD.
SHE BECAME TERRIFIED OF CURLING HAIR, OR EVEN HER OWN HAIR IN A BUN.

AND THEN...


No!


...AS SOON AS SHE REALIZED HER FINGER-PRINTS HAD SPIRALS ...
SNIP
...SHE CUT THE SKIN FROM HER FINGERS AND TOES!

SHUICHI TOLD ME...
MY MOTHER ...

TO MY MOTHER, EVERY SPIRAL LOOKS LIKE ...
...MY FATHER WHEN WE FOUND HIM DEAD.

BUT HE'S NOT DEAD. AND HE LOOKS AT HER...
...AND HE SAYS...

YUKIE DEAR ...
...COME JOIN ME IN THE SPIRAL.

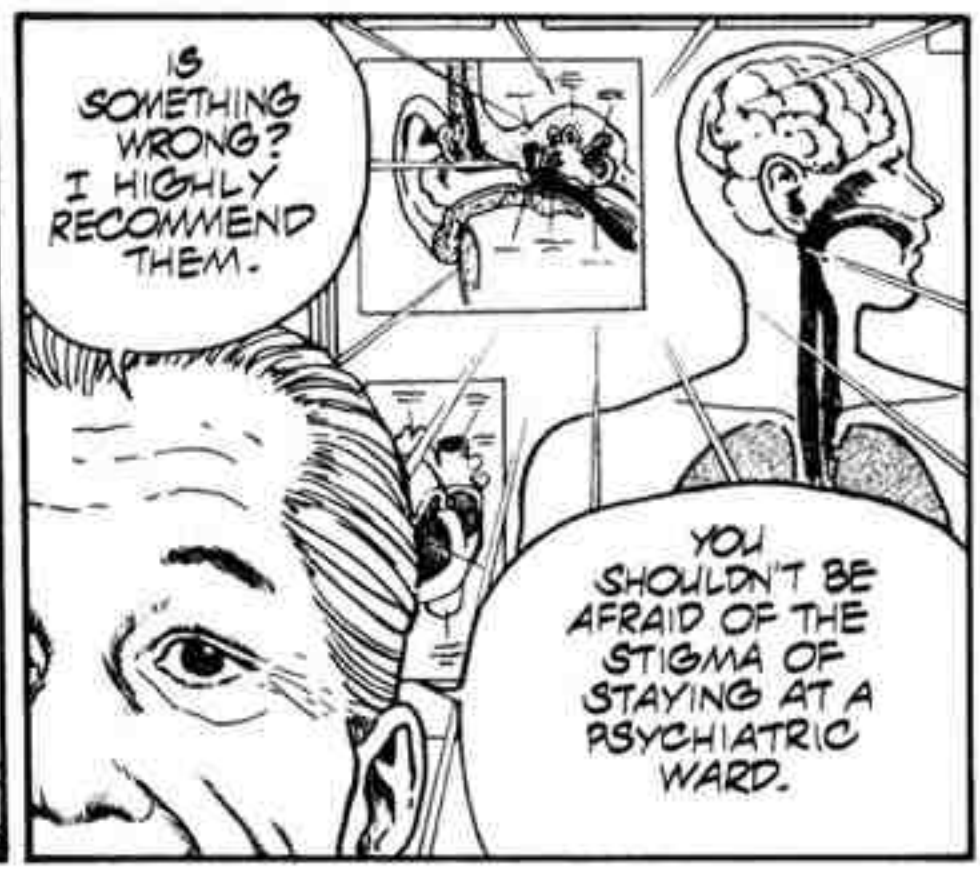
SHE'S COMPLETELY DELUSIONAL...
I WEAR THIS HAT AND GLOVES SO SHE WON'T SEE MY FINGERTIPS OR THE WHORLS IN MY HAIR.
THE DOCTORS AND NURSES ARE BEING CAREFUL, TOO.

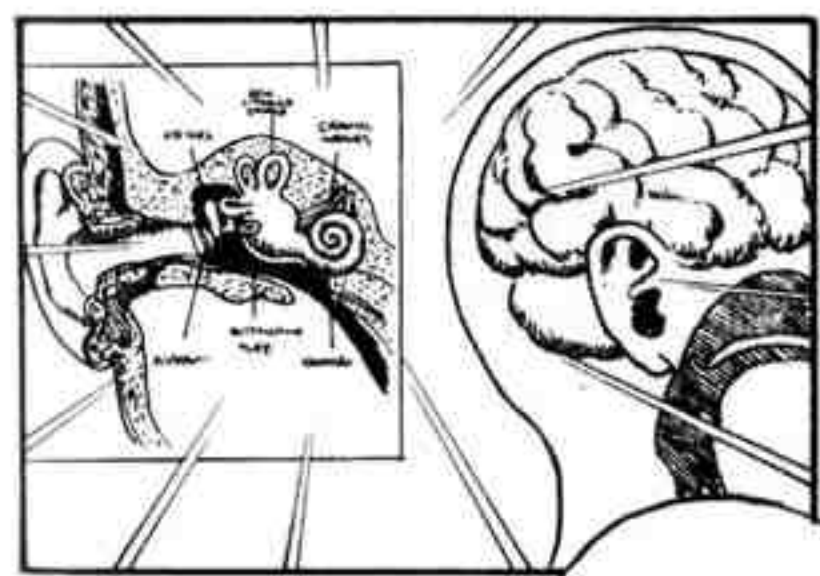
THANKS TO THESE PRECAUTIONS SHE SEEMS TO BE CALMING DOWN.
SHE GOT RID OF ALL THE SPIRALS IN HER BODY.
NOW WE JUST HAVE TO CURE HER OF THIS PHOBIA.
DIRECTOR
HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY, MRS. SAITO?
PRETTY GOOD, DOCTOR.
ARE YOU STILL AFRAID OF SPIRALS?
YES, I AM.

I SEE.
THEN HOW ABOUT THIS?

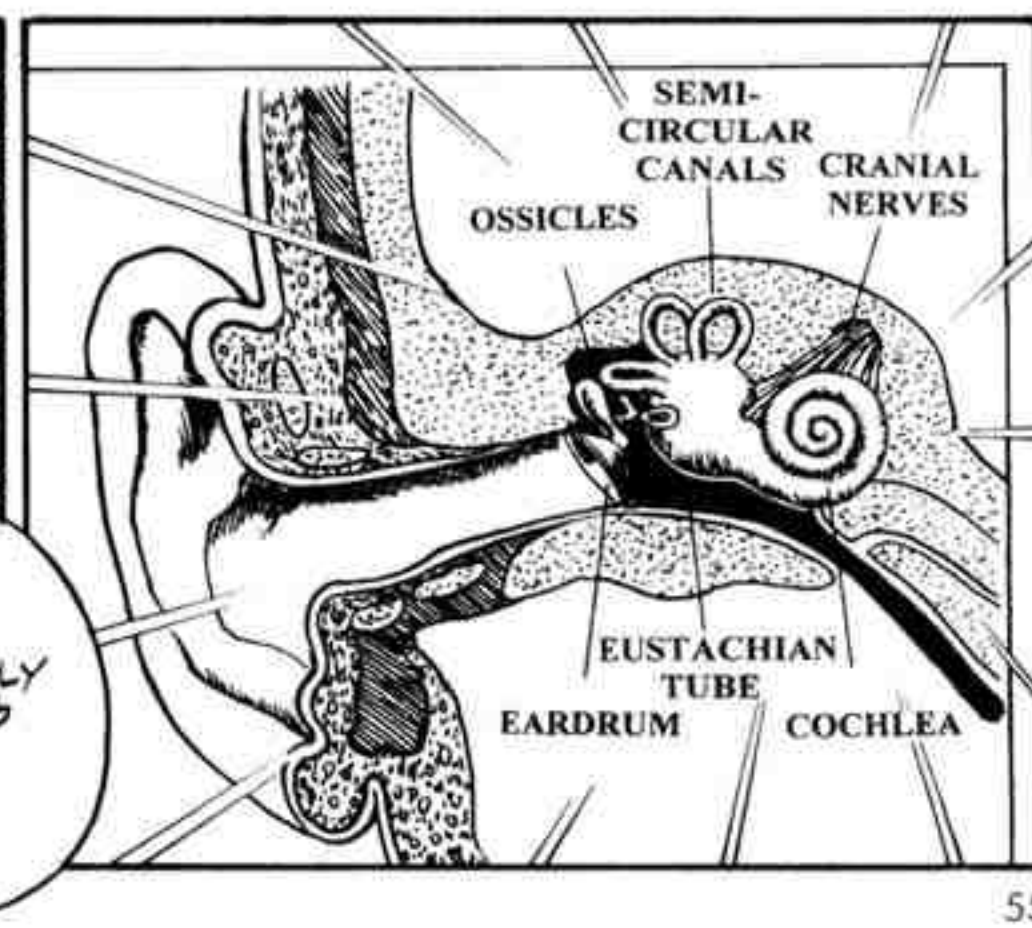
I'D LIKE TO TAKE YOU FOR OBSERVATION TO THE MIDORIYAMA-SHI PSYCHIATRIC WARD.

I-I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT HOSPITAL ...
SHUICHI ...?


IS SOMETHING WRONG? I HIGHLY RECOMMEND THEM.
YOU SHOULDN'T BE AFRAID OF THE STIGMA OF STAYING AT A PSYCHIATRIC WARD.



THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO FEAR.


SEMI-CIRCULAR CANALS
CRANIAL NERVES
OSSICLES
EUSTACHIAN TUBE
EARDRUM
COCHLEA

WHAT DO YOU THINK, SHUICHI?

SHUICHI?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

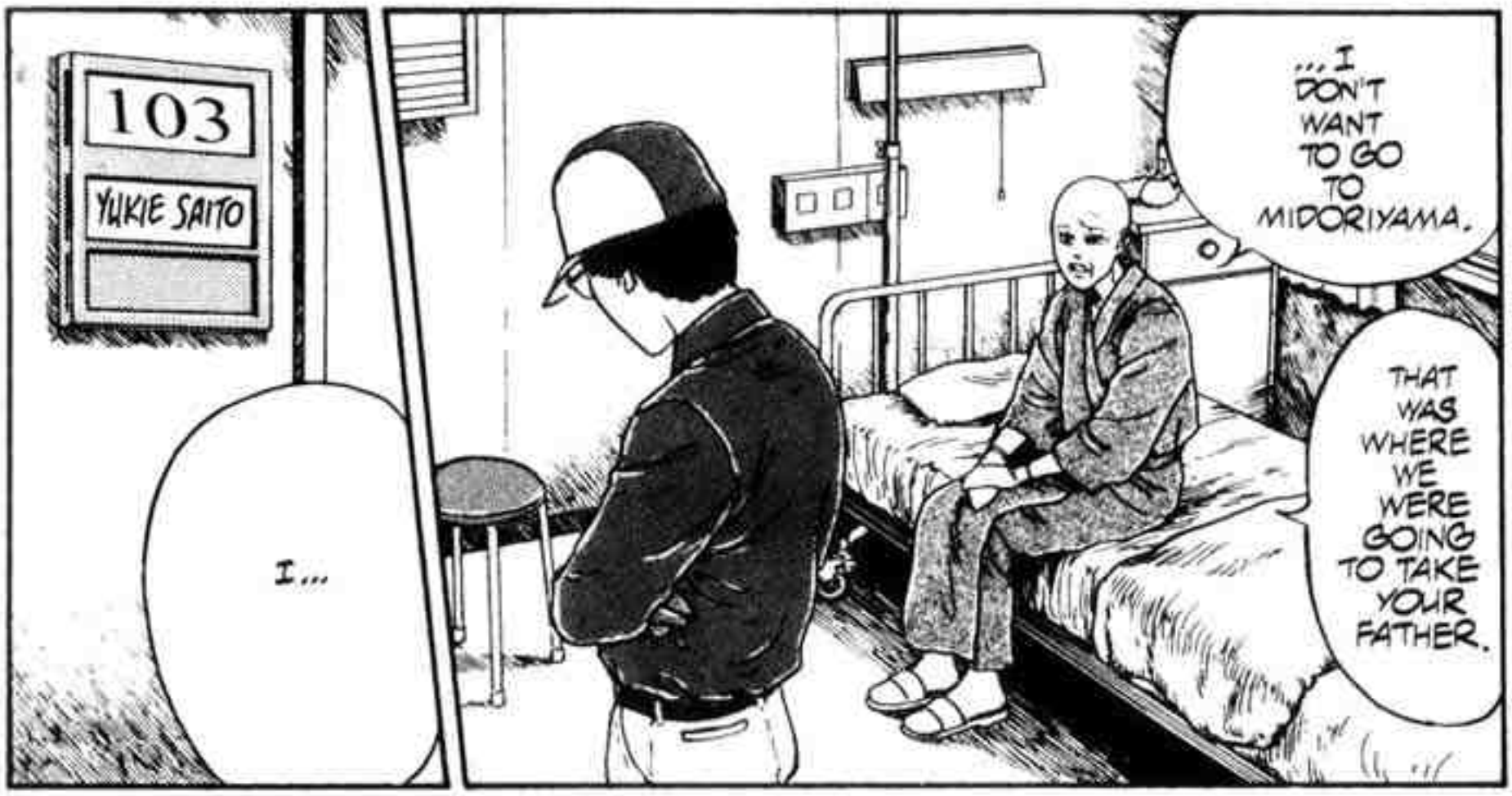
SHUICHI!
HUH?
urk!

OH...
...SORRY.

SOMETHING ON THIS WALL THAT BOTHERS YOU?

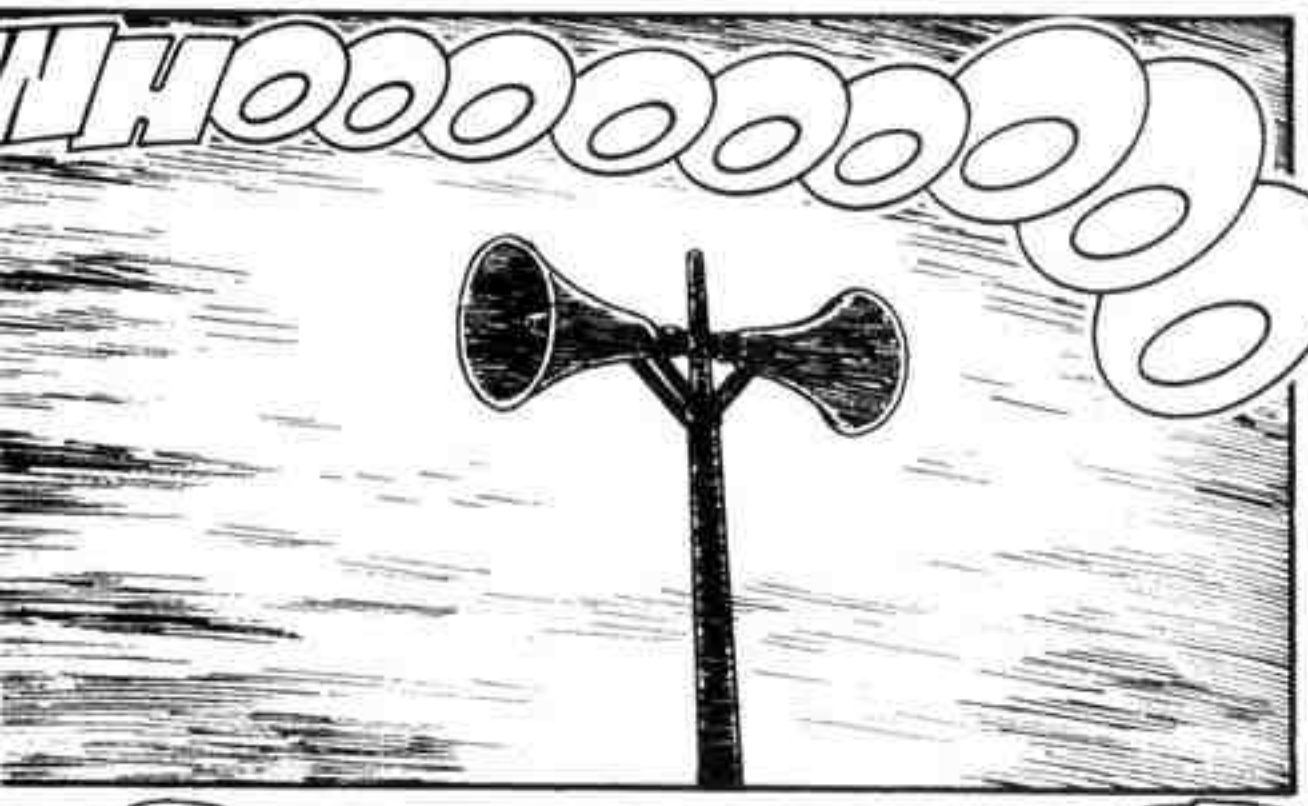
OH, NO!
IT'S NOTHING, DOCTOR!

WHAT'S THE MATTER?
YOU CAN BE SO STRANGE.


103
YUKIE SAITO
I...
...I DON'T WANT TO GO TO MIDORIYAMA.
THAT WAS WHERE WE WERE GOING TO TAKE YOUR FATHER.

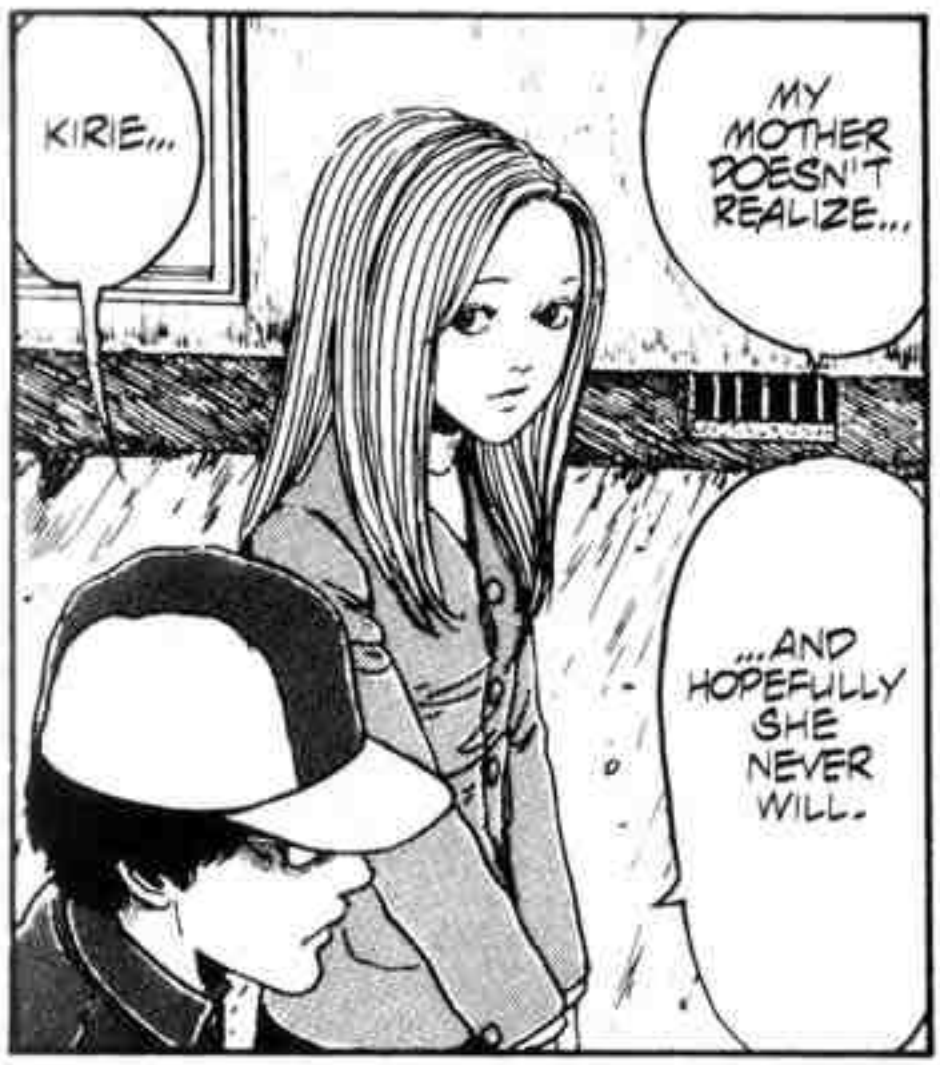
BUT YOU SHOULD GO WHERE THEY HAVE SPECIAL FACILITIES.
DON'T YOU WANT TO GET BETTER?
YOU DON'T WANT TO KEEP HURTING YOURSELF, DO YOU?
OF COURSE, BUT...
...I WON'T HURT MYSELF ANYMORE.

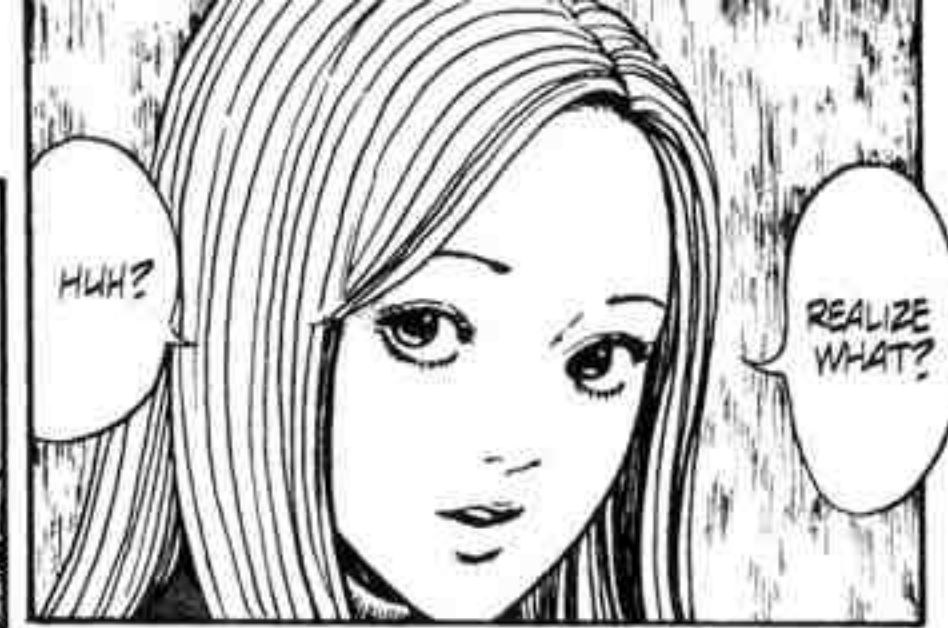
I TOOK ALL THE SPIRALS OFF MY BODY.
YEAH... YEAH, THAT'S TRUE.
...WHOOOOOOOOO


WHOOOOOOOOOOOO

AARGH... IT'S THE FIVE O'CLOCK SIREN.

I HATE THAT SOUND!
IT JUST PIERCES THROUGH MY EARS!


KIRIE...
MY MOTHER DOESN'T REALIZE...
...AND HOPEFULLY SHE NEVER WILL.


HUH?
REALIZE WHAT?

I THOUGHT THAT HAIR AND FINGERPRINTS WERE THE ONLY SPIRALS ON THE HUMAN BODY...
...BUT THERE'S MORE.

THERE'S THE SENSOR FOR SOUND, THE COCHLEA IN THE INNER EAR.

I SAW IT IN THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE WITH THE ANATOMICAL CHART ON THE WALL.
IT'S PROBABLY THE MOST OBVIOUS SPIRAL IN THE HUMAN BODY.

WHAT WILL SHE DO IF SHE FINDS OUT THERE'S A SPIRAL INSIDE HER?
NO ONE CAN TELL... BUT SHE CUT OFF THE TIPS OF HER FINGERS...

...

KURÔZU
HOSPITAL

103

zzz
zzz

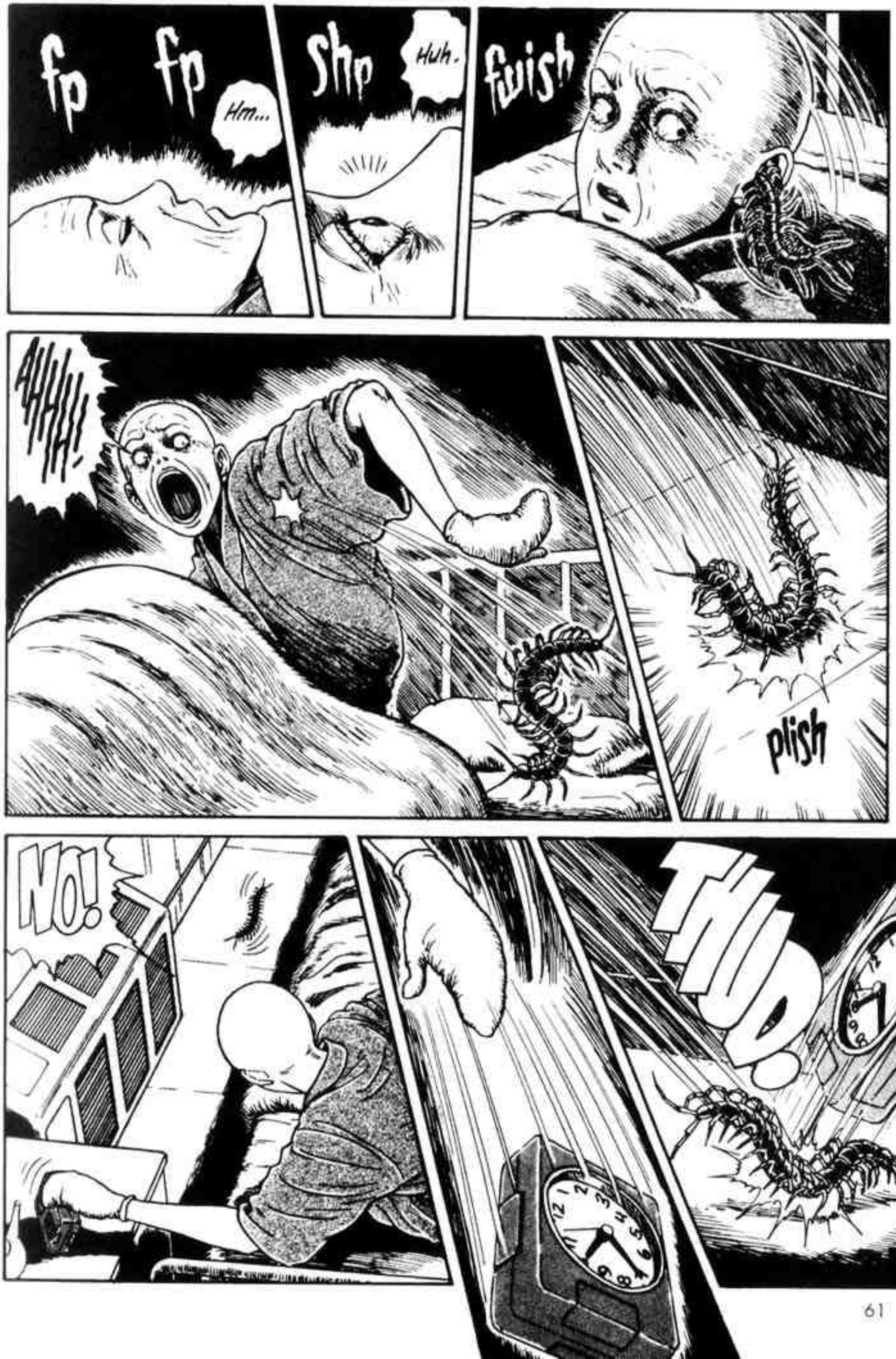
fp
fp

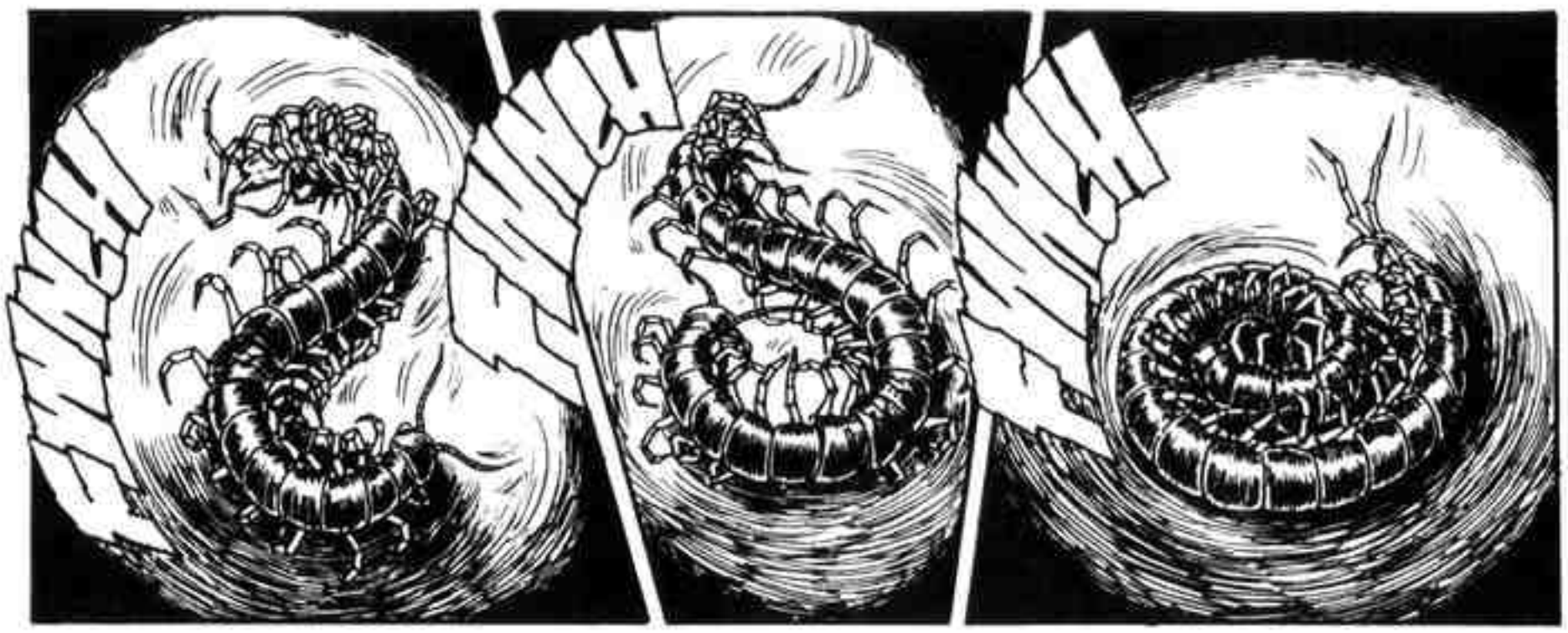
fp

shp

shp
shp

shp


fp
fp
Hm...
Shp
Huh.
fwish
AHHH!
plish
NO!
THUD



...
AHAH!

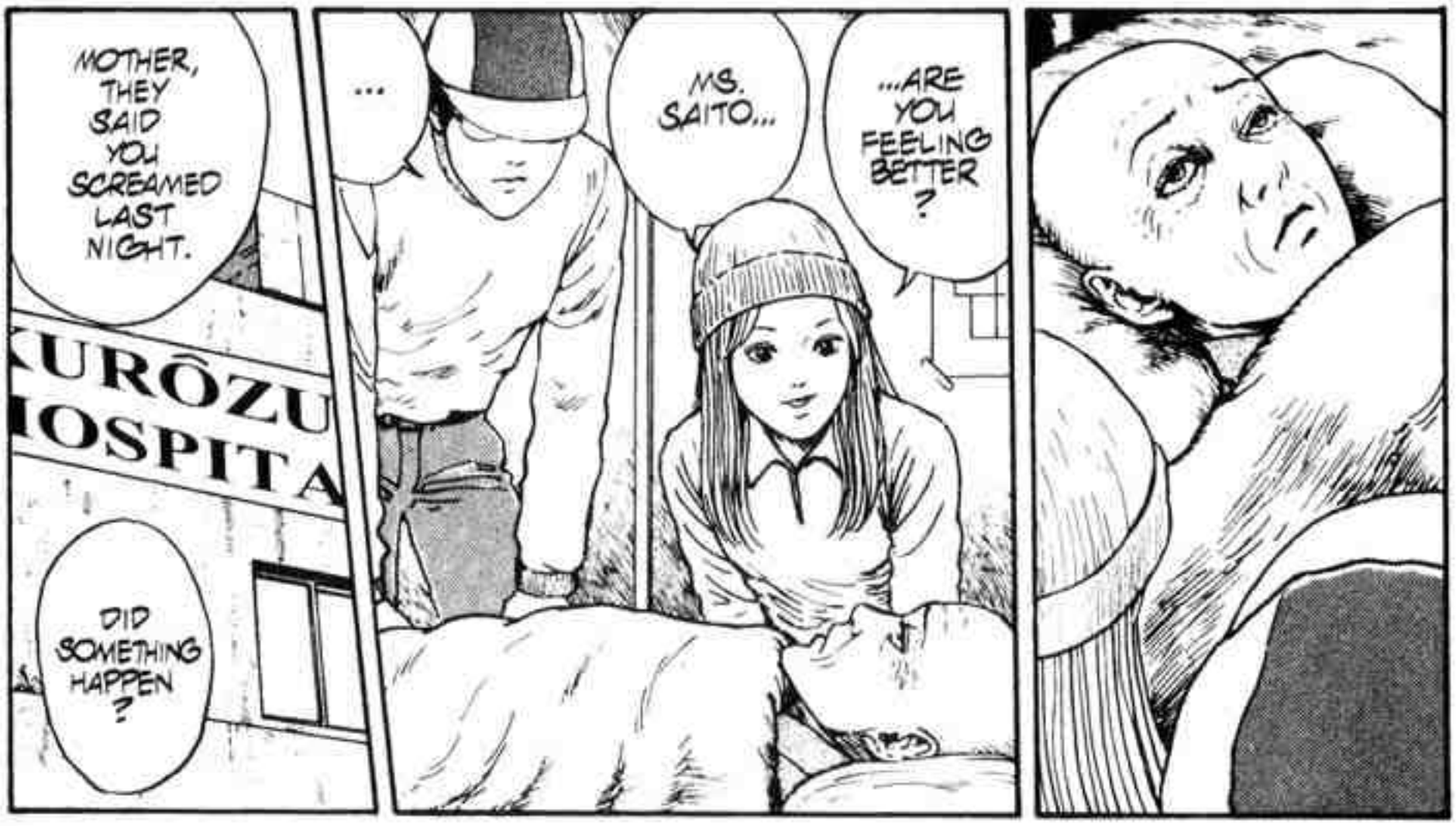
YUKIE, DEAR...
COME JOIN ME IN THE SPIRAL...

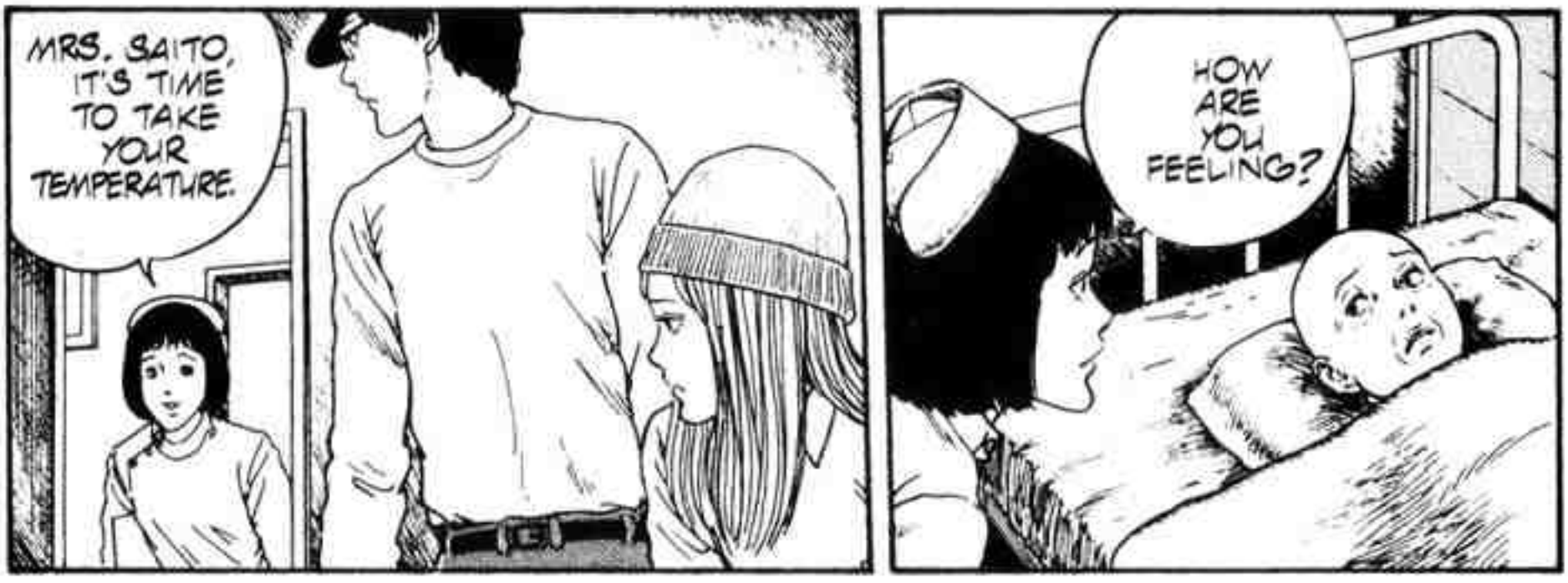
NO--
NO!

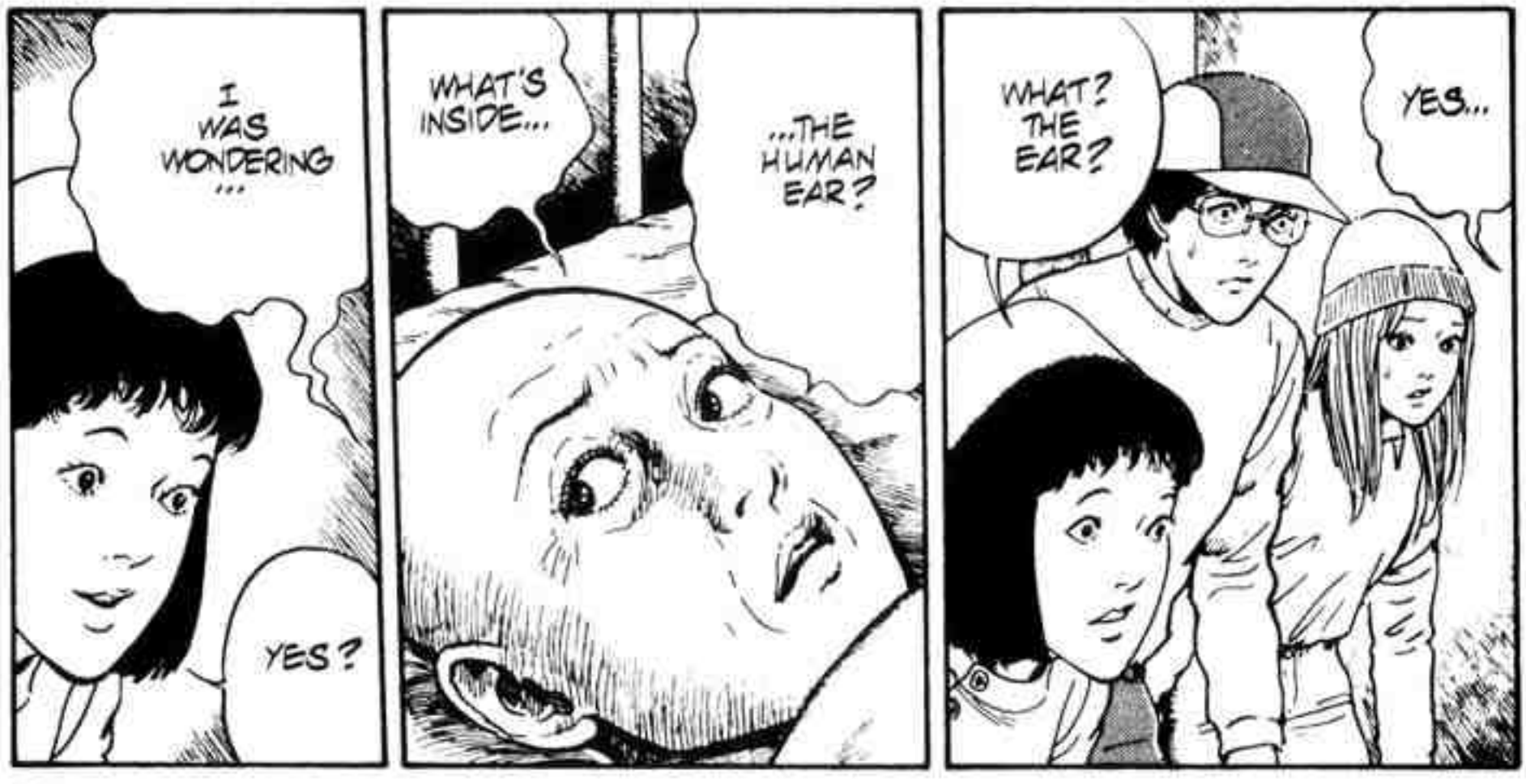
WHY DO YOU HATE THE SPIRAL SO?
YOU STILL HAVE THEM IN YOUR BODY!

AAA... I WANT TO CRAWL INTO YOUR EARS SO BADLY.

I WANT TO CURL UP INSIDE YOU AND SLEEP THERE...
...DEEP INSIDE YOUR EARS...


MOTHER, THEY SAID YOU SCREAMED LAST NIGHT.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
...
MS. SAITO...
...ARE YOU FEELING BETTER?


MRS. SAITO, IT'S TIME TO TAKE YOUR TEMPERATURE.
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?


I WAS WONDERING...
YES?
WHAT'S INSIDE...
...THE HUMAN EAR?
WHAT? THE EAR?
YES...

DON'T TELL ME...
...THERE'S A SPIRAL.

A SPIRAL ?

REALLY?
OF COURSE NOT.
YES.

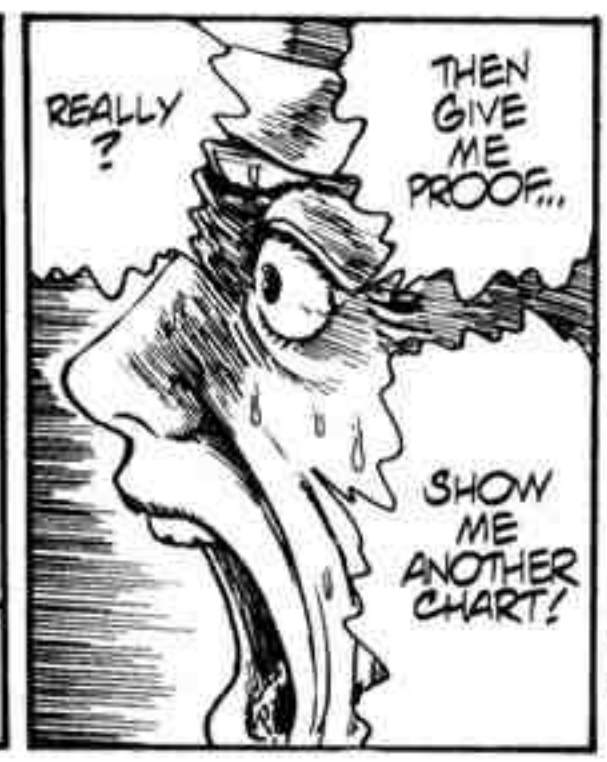
IS IT REALLY TRUE...
I WON-DER.

YOU HEARD THE NURSE! SHE CAN'T BE LYING!!
GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM, MOTHER!
YOUR LEG HASN'T HEALED YET!
EMERGE EXIT

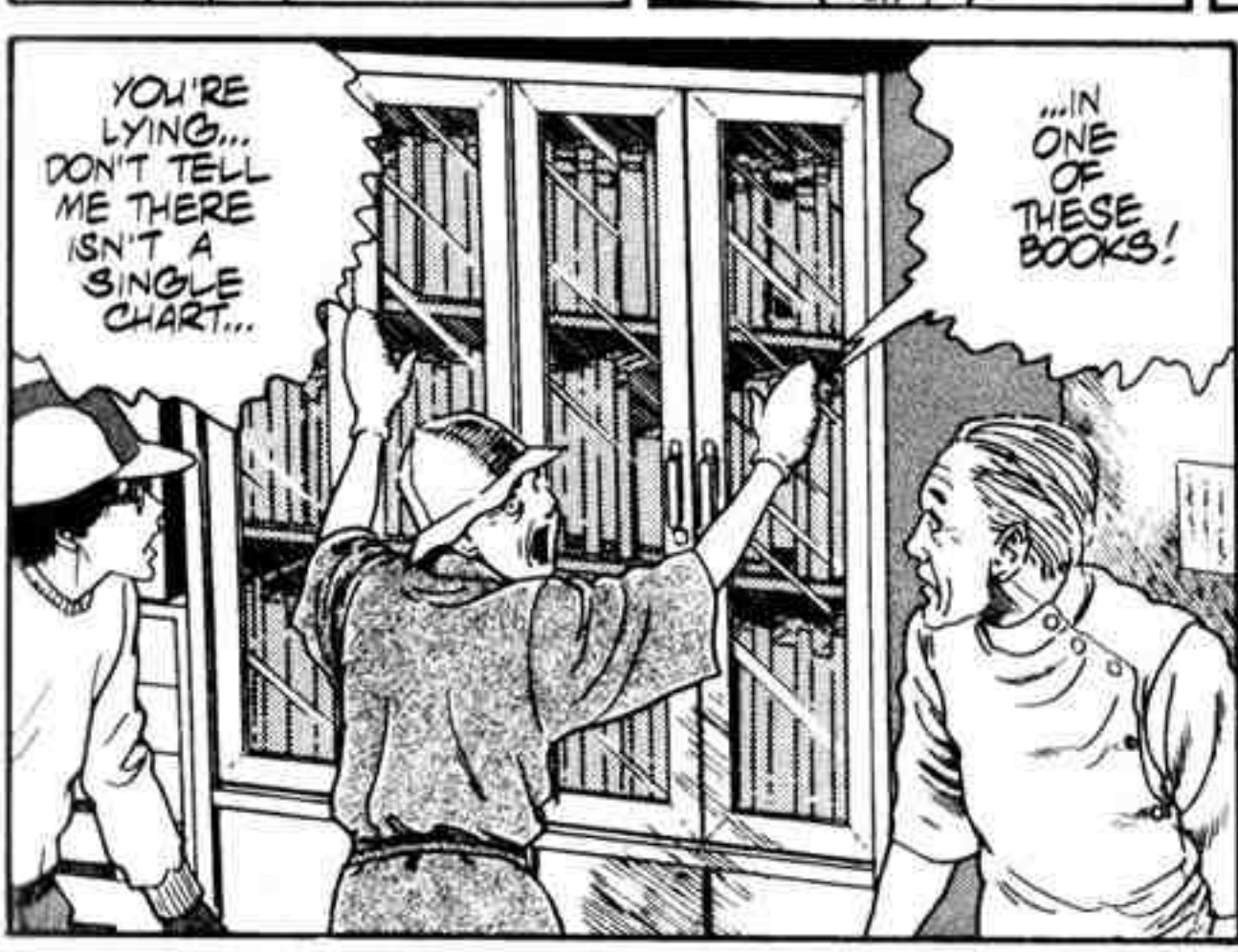
WASN'T THERE AN ANATOMICAL CHART IN THE DIRECTOR'S ROOM?
I WANT TO CHECK IT!

MOTHER!

A SPIRAL IN THE EAR?
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF SUCH A THING.


REALLY ?
THEN GIVE ME PROOF...
SHOW ME ANOTHER CHART!

I'M SORRY, MRS. SAITO, BUT...
...THAT'S THE ONLY ONE I HAD.

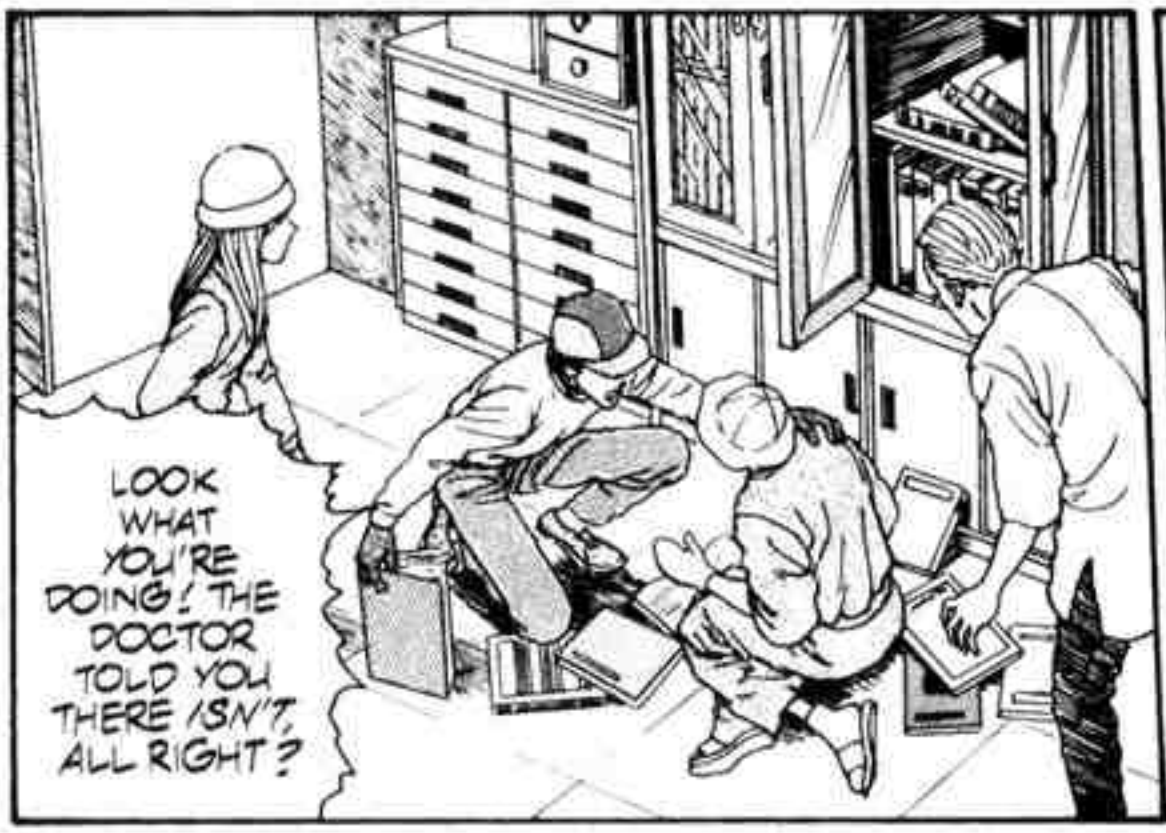

YOU'RE LYING... DON'T TELL ME THERE ISN'T A SINGLE CHART...
...IN ONE OF THESE BOOKS!

SHAA
I NEED TO LOOK!

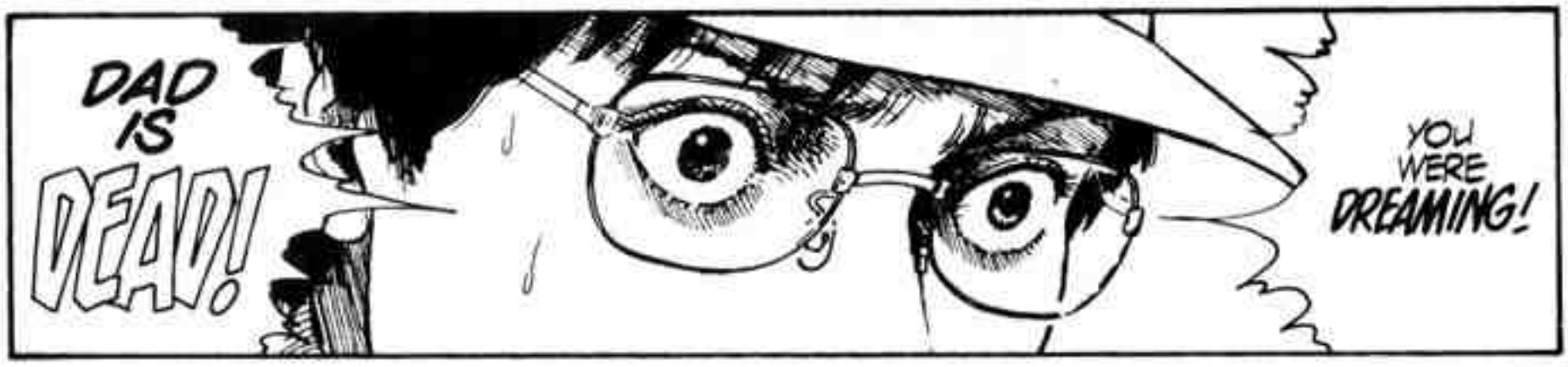
WHIP
WHIP

MOTHER!

THAT'S ENOUGH!


LOOK WHAT YOU'RE DOING! THE DOCTOR TOLD YOU THERE ISN'T ALL RIGHT?

BUT SHUICHI... LAST NIGHT...
...YOUR FATHER SAID SOMETHING VERY STRANGE...
...ABOUT MY EARS.


DAD IS DEAD!
YOU WERE DREAMING!

LET'S GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM...
DIRECTOR
A- ALL RIGHT...

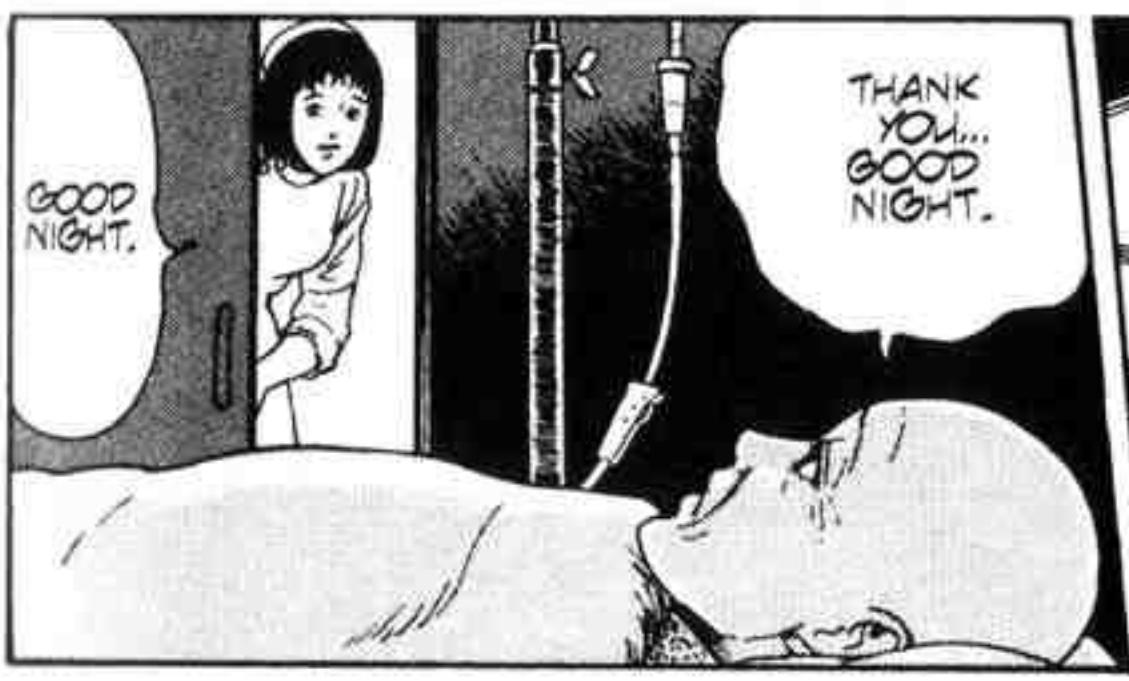
GOOD THING I TOOK THE CHART DOWN...
THANK YOU, DOCTOR.

WE NEED TO HAVE A SPECIALIST TREAT HER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
OTHER-WISE, AS YOU SAID, SHE'S IN DANGER.

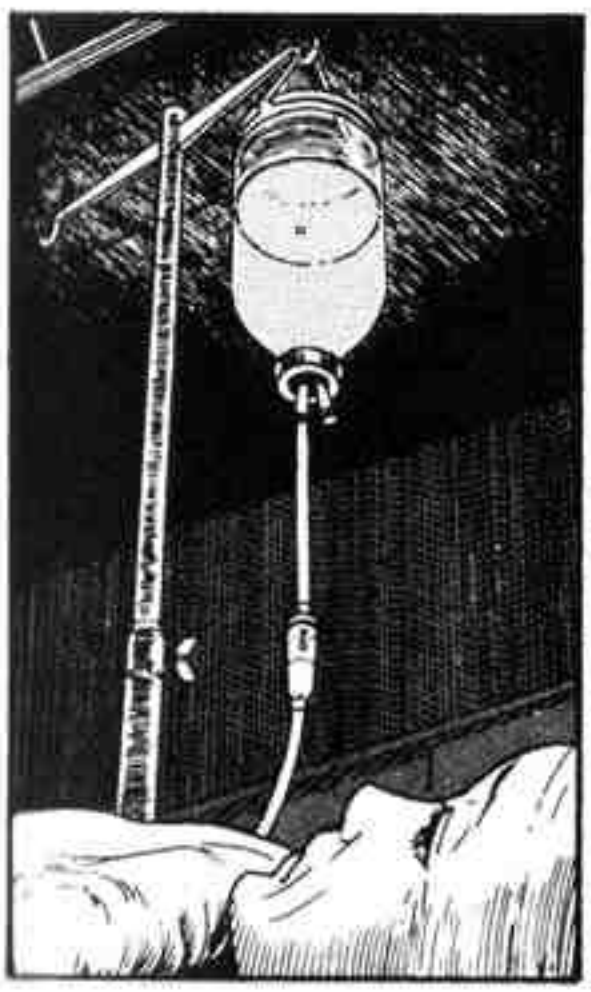
KURÔZU HOSPITAL

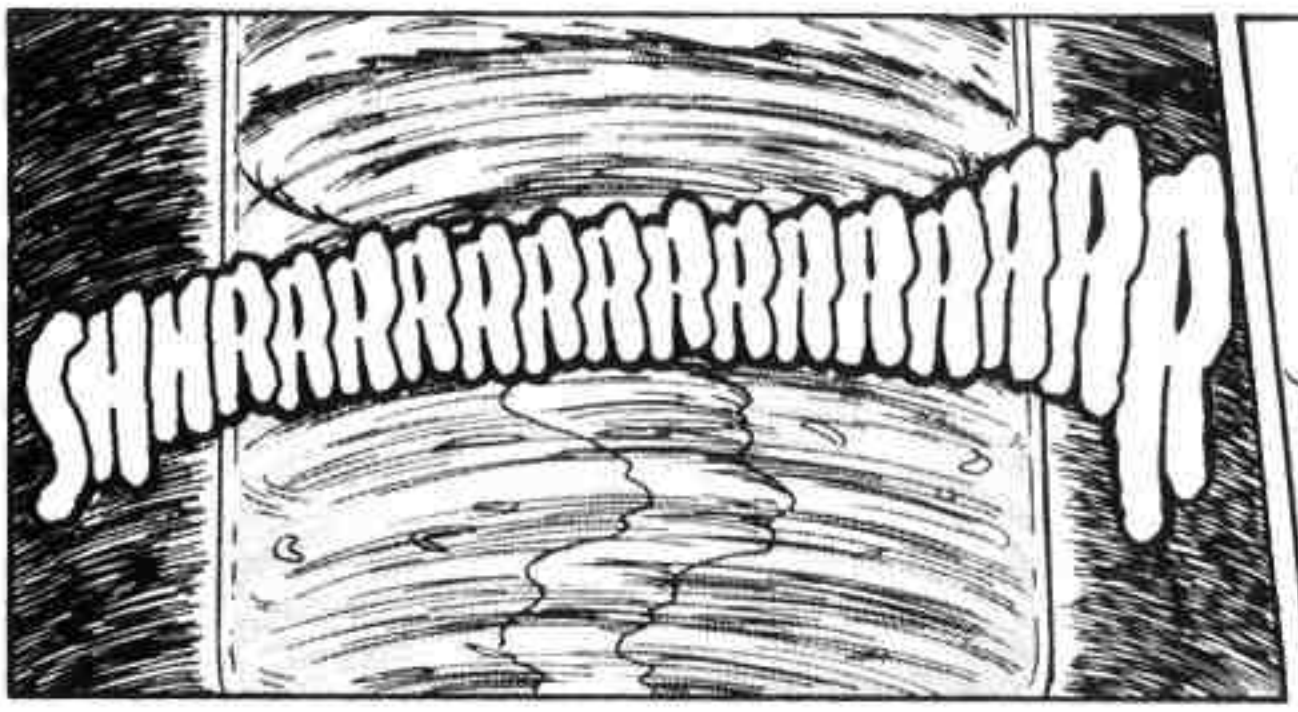
MRS. SAITO, THIS IS YOUR LAST NIGHT ON IV.

AS THE DIRECTOR SAID, TOMORROW YOU'LL BE TRANSFERRED TO MIDORIYAMA-SHI.
SO GET SOME REST TONIGHT, OKAY?


GOOD NIGHT.
THANK YOU... GOOD NIGHT.

CHUD




SHRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRP

Oh...
NO... NO!

NO!

TARAP
TUP!
EYAHH!
THERE ARE SPIRALS...
...IN YOUR EARS.
I CAN STILL HEAR HIM!
IT'S IN MY EARS!
HE'S IN MY EARS!
HE SLID INTO THE SPIRALS IN MY EARS!

NO...
NO!
RIZ
I'LL GET THEM OUT!
GRIP
HH...
AHH...
AAAAAA

SHUICHI'S MOTHER WAS HAUNTED BY SPIRALS UNTIL THE MOMENT SHE DIED.

HHH! I'M SPINNING!

MY BODY... SPIRAL...

BY STABBING HER EARS, SHE DESTROYED NOT ONLY HER HEARING BUT HER SENSE OF BALANCE.

AS A RESULT, SHE WAS IN A CONSTANT STATE OF VERTIGO...

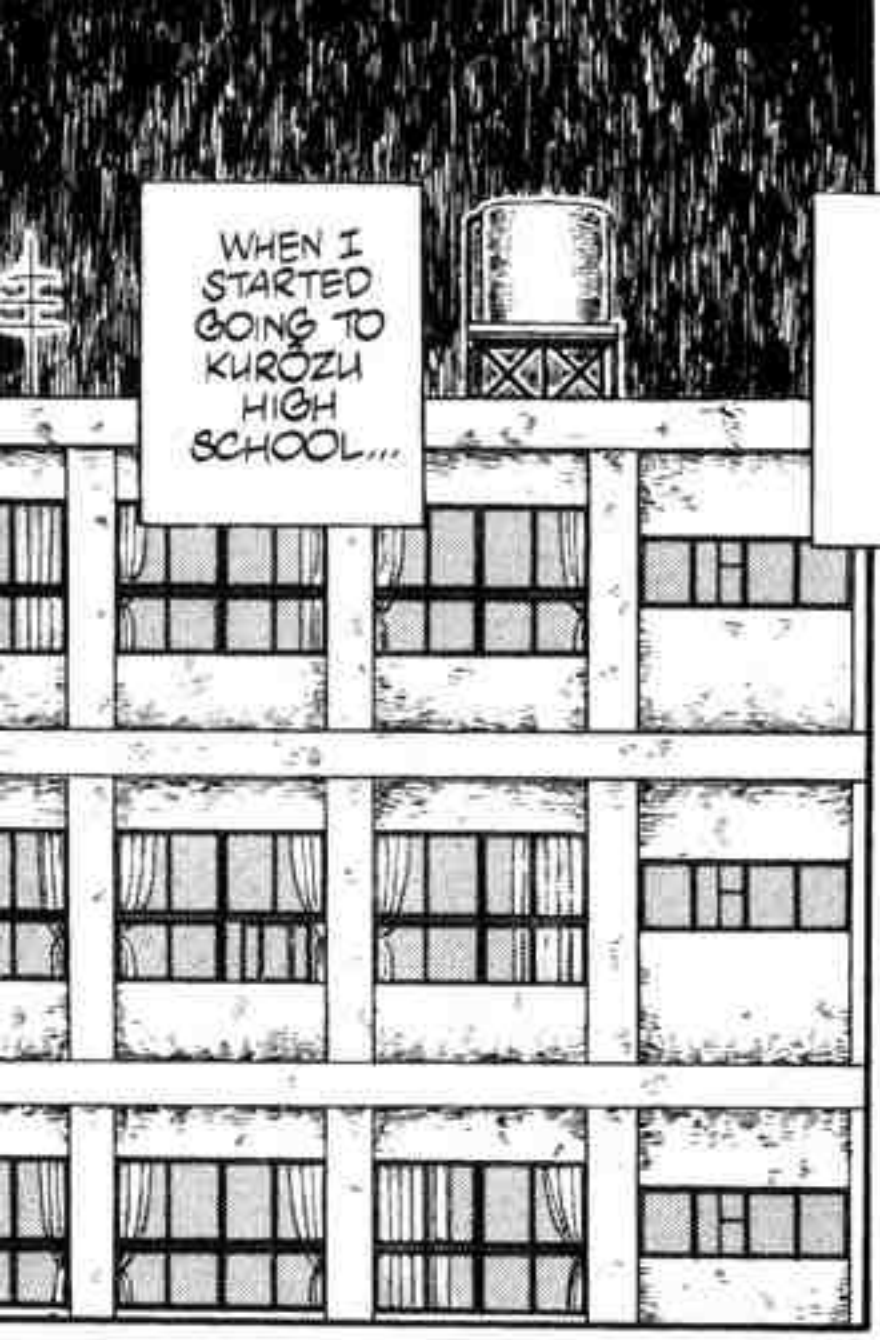
NO!

I DON'T WANT TO BECOME A SPIRAL!

ON THE DAY OF HER FUNERAL, AS HER BODY WAS BURNED...

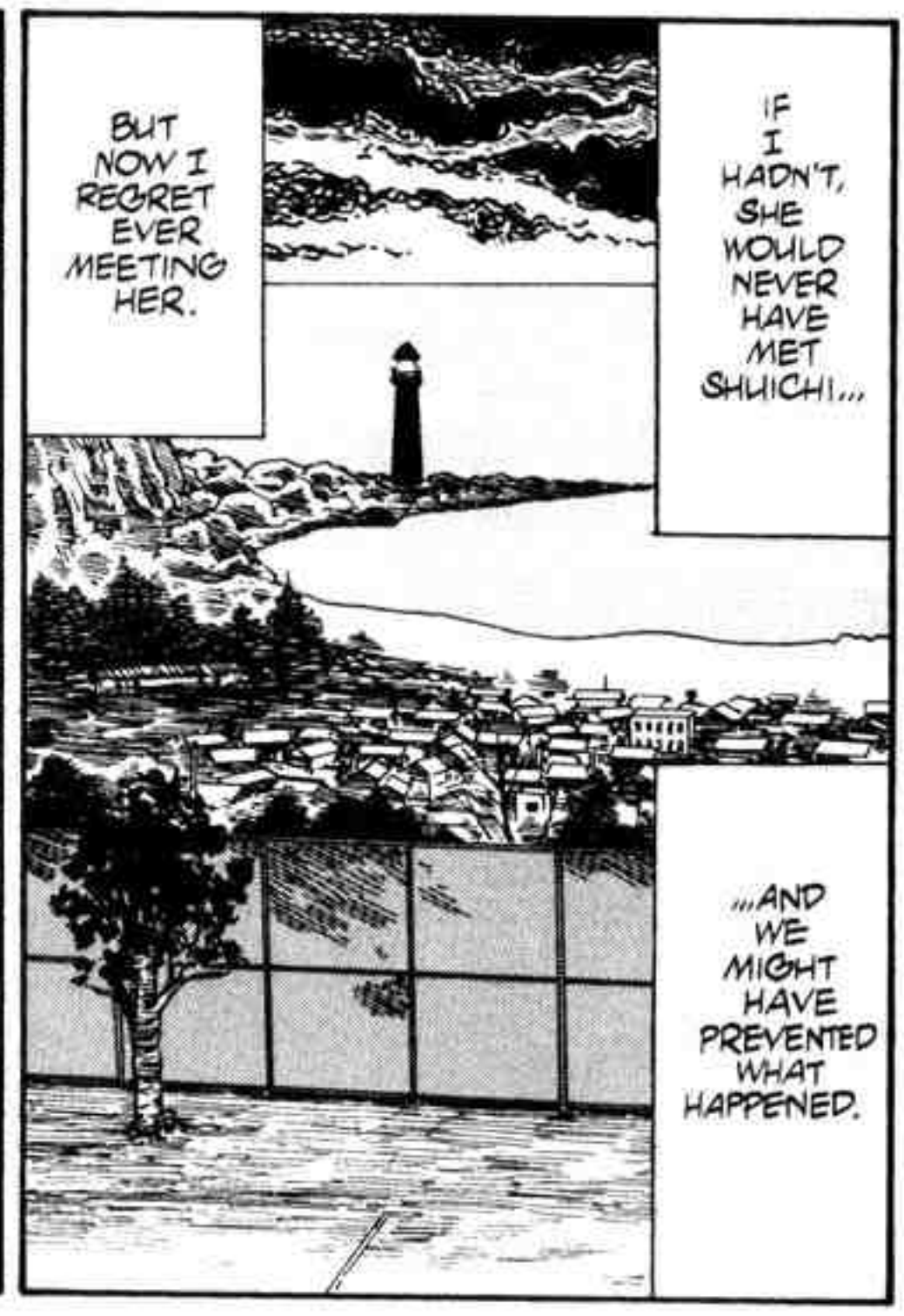
...ANOTHER BLACK SPIRAL... EMERGED IN THE SKY ABOVE OUR TOWN.

CHAPTER
3
THE SCAR


WHEN I STARTED GOING TO KUROZU HIGH SCHOOL...

...I MADE FRIENDS WITH AZAMI KUROTANI.
SHE COMMUTED TO SCHOOL FROM MIDORIYAMA-SHI.

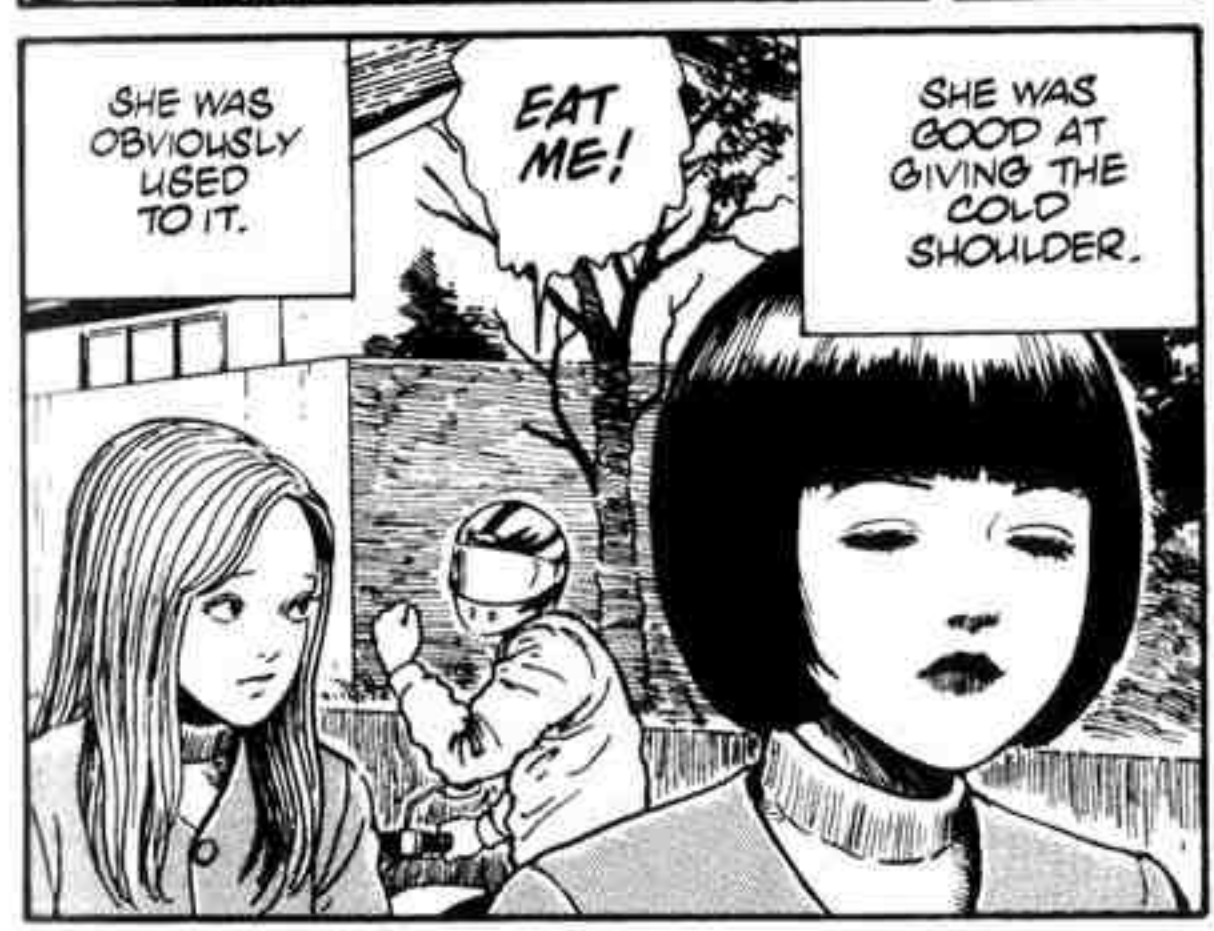
SHE WAS ONE OF THOSE PRETTY, RESERVED GIRLS.


BUT NOW I REGRET EVER MEETING HER.
IF I HADN'T, SHE WOULD NEVER HAVE MET SHUICHI...
...AND WE MIGHT HAVE PREVENTED WHAT HAPPENED.

FROM THE DAY SHE STARTED SCHOOL, SHE WAS ALWAYS SURROUND-ED BY GUYS.
TH-THIS IS FOR YOU.

STP

HEY, WANT TO GO FOR A RIDE?
Hmph.
LET'S GO, KIRIE.


SHE WAS OBVIOUSLY USED TO IT.
EAT ME!
SHE WAS GOOD AT GIVING THE COLD SHOULDER.

YOU'RE SO POPULAR.
NO, I'M NOT.
OH, COME ON, YOU'RE SO PRETTY.

AS TIME WENT ON, A RUMOR STARTED.

KIRIE, ARE YOU STILL HANGING OUT WITH AZAMI?
Uh, YEAH...

YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T.
WHY NOT?

SHE'S GOT A BAD REPUTA-TION.
SHE USES HER LOOKS TO GET GUYS...
SHE GETS THEM OBSESSED ...AND THEN DUMPS THEM.

THEY SAY SHE'S GOT A MAGIC POWER.
MAGIC?

THE POWER TO ATTRACT BOYS...

THE SECRET'S ON HER FOREHEAD.

DONNG

YOU CAN'T TELL BECAUSE OF HER BANGS. BUT SHE'S SUPPOSED TO HAVE A SCAR THERE.

DONNG

THEY SAY THAT'S THE SOURCE OF HER POWER.

...

YOU'D BETTER BE CAREFUL OR SHE'LL END UP STEALING YOUR BOYFRIEND.

Ahh.
THAT WAS GOOD.

...

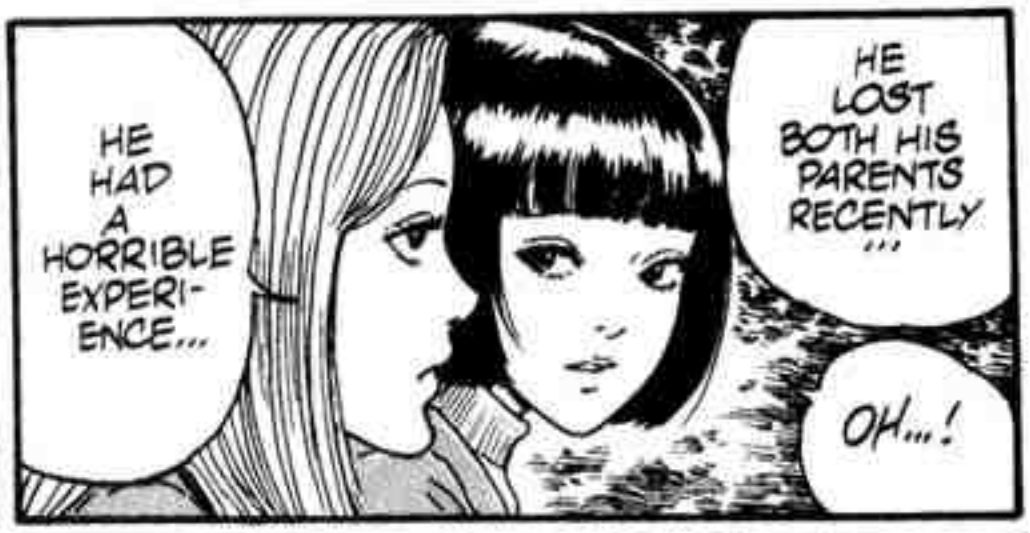
WHAT'S WRONG, KIRIE?
Uh...

Oh...
THIS SCAR.

THEY WERE TALKING TO YOU ABOUT IT, WEREN'T THEY?
THEY'RE JUST IDIOTS... DON'T BELIEVE THEM.
Oh...
OF COURSE I DON'T.

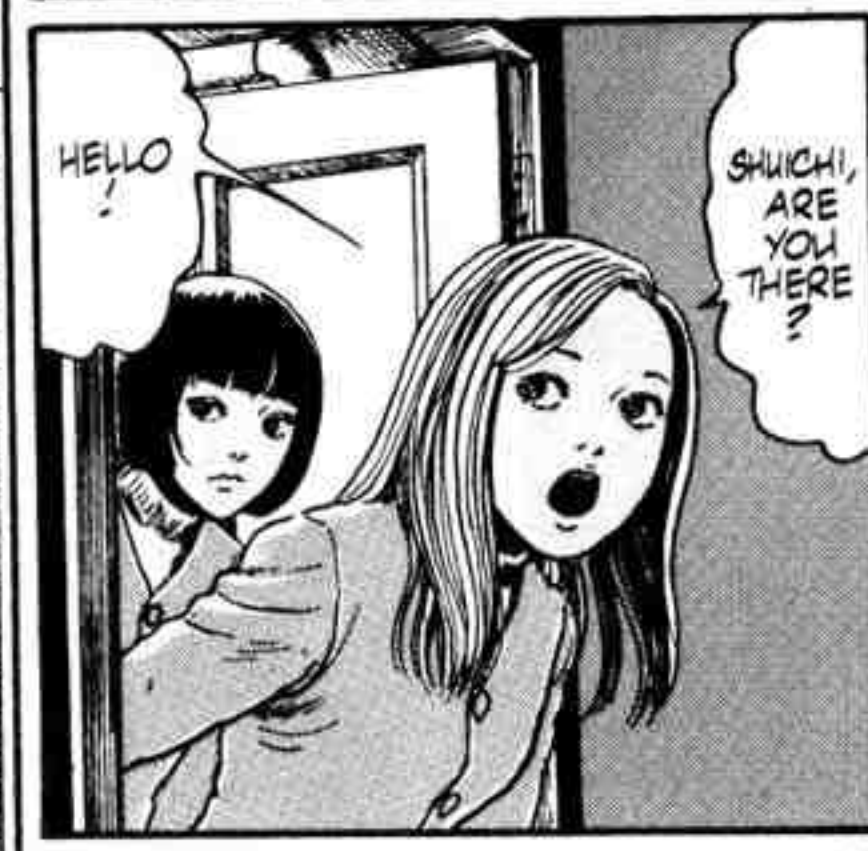
IT'S TRUE, THOUGH, THAT THIS SCAR MEANS SOMETHING TO ME.
WHEN I WAS LITTLE, THERE WAS THIS BOY I HAD A CRUSH ON. I WANTED TO IMPRESS HIM SO MUCH...
...SO I TRIED WALKING ON THE ROPES IN THE PLAYGROUND. I FELL AND THAT WAS HOW I GOT THIS SCAR.
HEY! GET DOWN HERE!
THE FUNNY THING IS, WE BECAME FRIENDS BECAUSE OF THAT.
I TOLD YOU SO! ARE YOU OKAY?!
WAHH!
I'LL GO GET THE TEACHER!
SO SOMETIMES I ACTUALLY WONDER ...
...IF THIS SCAR HAS THE POWER TO ATTRACT BOYS.
EVER SINCE I GOT IT, I'VE HAD EVERY BOY I EVER LIKED.
BUT OF COURSE IT'S JUST A COINCIDENCE. NO ONE HAS THAT KIND OF POWER!
...

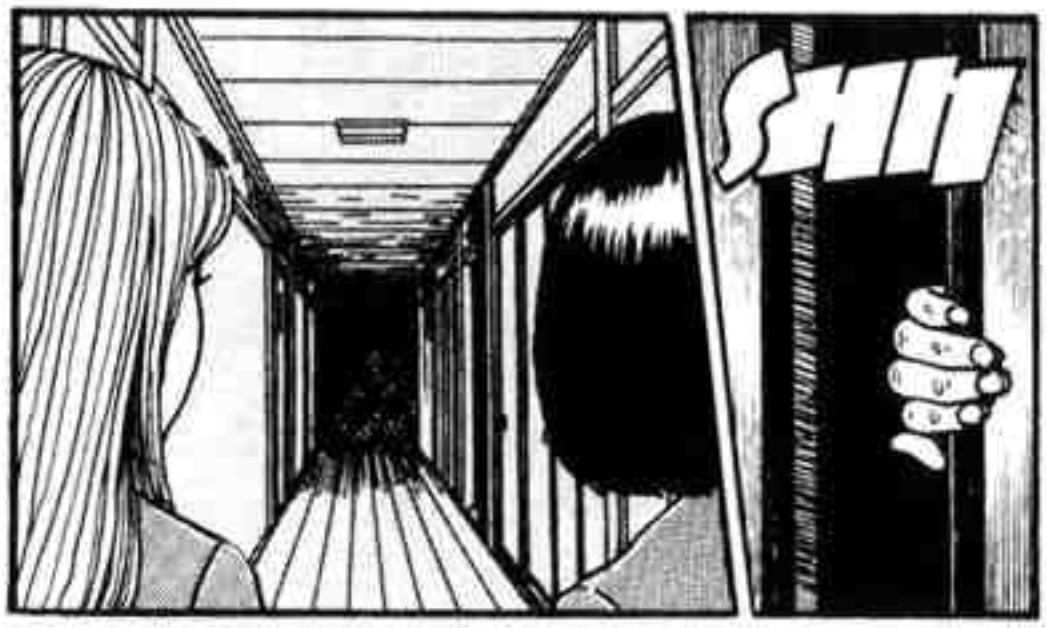
HE HASN'T BEEN GOING TO SCHOOL LATELY.
REALLY? WHY?


HE HAD A HORRIBLE EXPERI-ENCE...
HE LOST BOTH HIS PARENTS RECENTLY...
OH...!

I WAS RELUCTANT TO LET HER MEET SHUICHI.
BUT SHE INSISTED ON IT SO I GAVE IN.

CHAN


HELLO!
SHUICHI, ARE YOU THERE?


SHIT

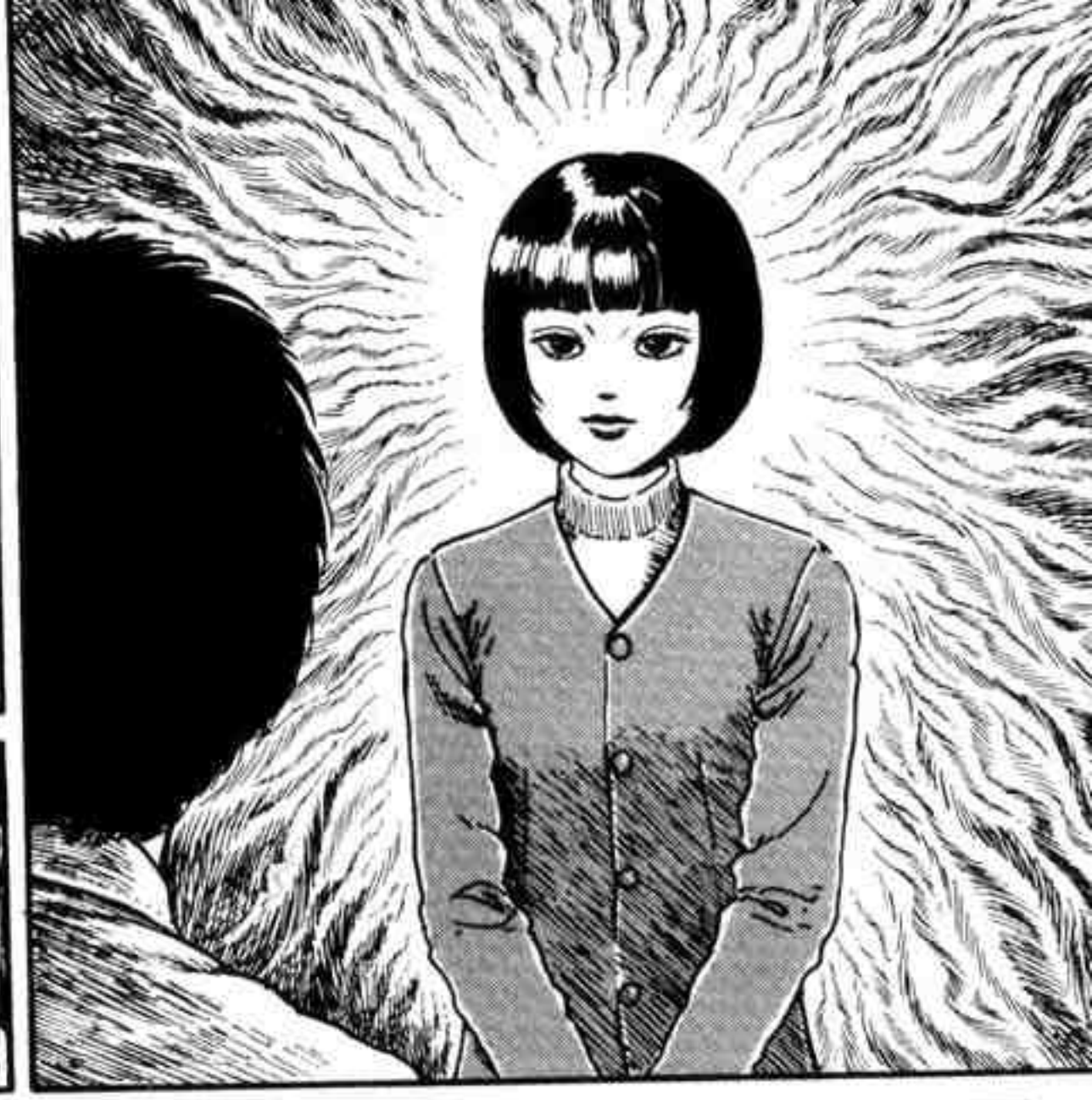
HEY...

COME ON IN...

SHUICHI, THIS IS MY CLASSMATE, AZAMI KUROTANI.

HELLO.
CALL ME AZAMI.

HELLO.



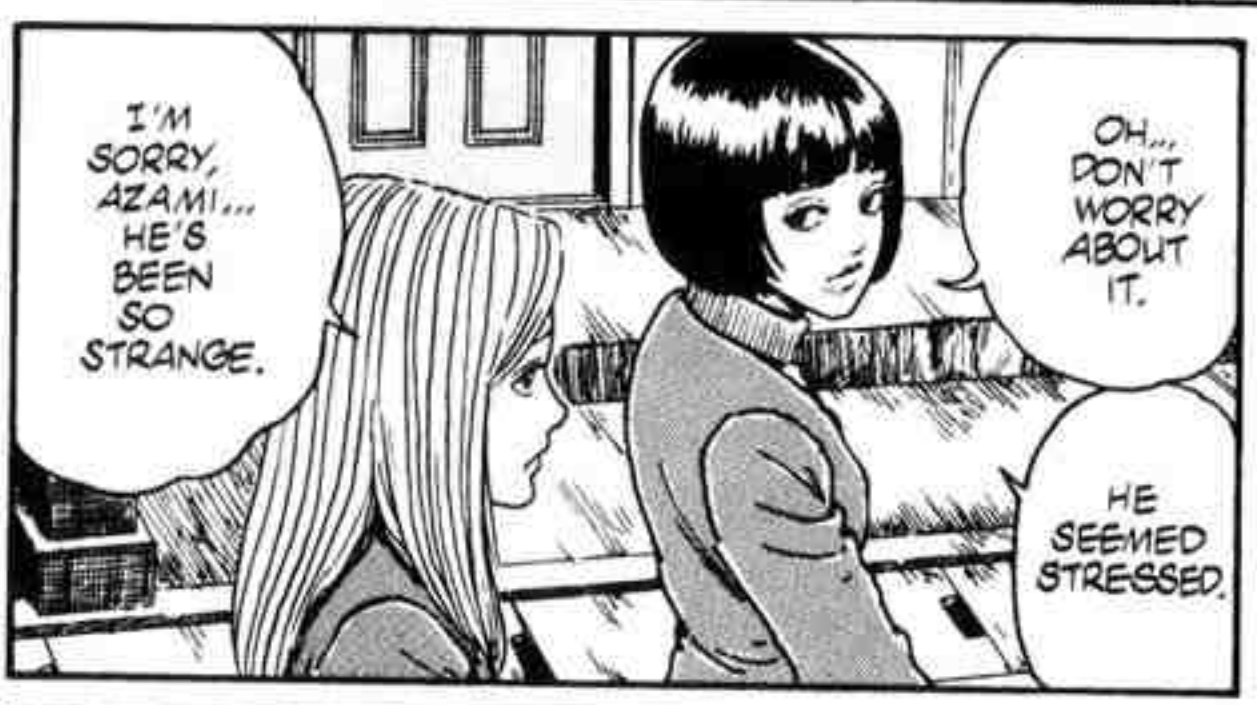
HUH?

UR...

WHAT'S WRONG, SHUICHI?

G-GO AWAY!

I-
IT'S
YOU!
GO
AWAY!
AND
DON'T
EVER
COME
AGAIN!
...!!


I'M
SORRY,
AZAMI...
HE'S
BEEN
SO
STRANGE.
OH...
DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
IT.
HE
SEEMED
STRESSED.

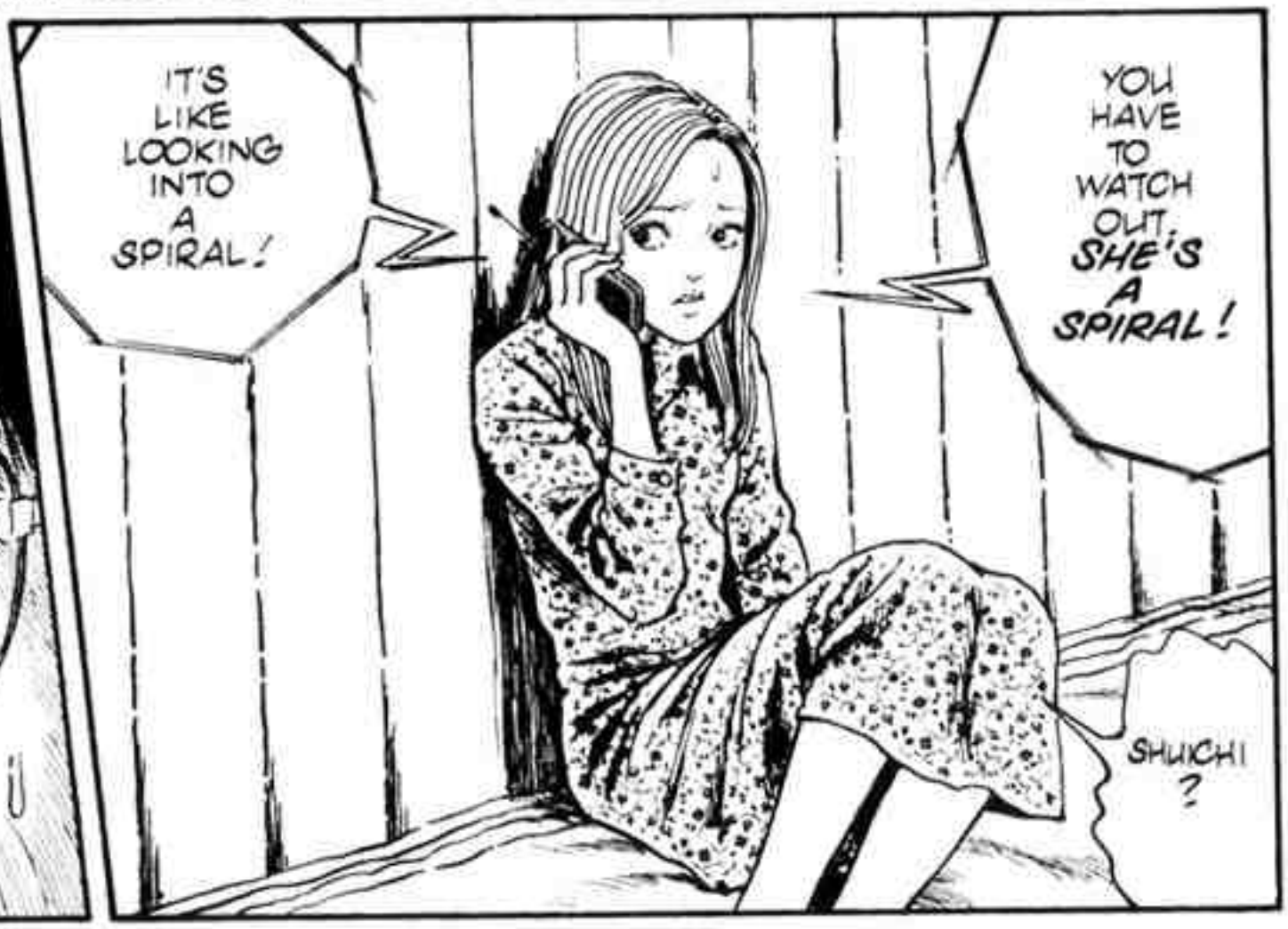
BUT
SHE
LOOKED
PALE...
...AND
HARDLY
SAID A
WORD
ON OUR
WAY
HOME.

HELLO, SHUICHI?
IT'S ME, KIRIE.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU TODAY?
YOU SHOCKED AZAMI.
WHY'D YOU TREAT HER LIKE THAT?

KIRIE, YOU DON'T FEEL IT?
WHAT?

THERE'S SOMETHING MESMERIZING ABOUT HER.
IT'S LIKE LOOKING DOWN FROM A HIGH PLACE...

...LIKE VERTIGO...


IT'S LIKE LOOKING INTO A SPIRAL!
YOU HAVE TO WATCH OUT. SHE'S A SPIRAL!
SHUICHI?

SLAM

SPIRAL ...
SHE'S A SPIRAL ...

SHE'S CONTAMINATED BY THE SPIRAL!

DING
HUH?

DINGDING
WHO COULD IT BE AT THIS HOUR?

shhh

AAHH!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

YOU'RE THE FIRST BOY I'VE EVER MET WHO'S TREATED ME LIKE THIS.
WHAT IS IT ABOUT ME THAT YOU DON'T LIKE?

JUST GO AWAY!
GET OUT OF KHRÔZU-CHO!

I WILL NOT.

EVERY BOY I'VE EVER MET HAS FALLEN FOR ME.
HOW COULD YOU REJECT ME?

WHY?
...
THERE!
Y-YOU'RE HIDING SOMETHING ON YOUR FOREHEAD!
FORE-HEAD?
YOU MEAN MY SCAR?
SO KIRIE TOLD YOU?
NO, IT'S NOT A SCAR!
IT'S A SPIRAL! I CAN FEEL IT!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IT'S A CRESCENT-SHAPED SCAR...
THANKS TO THIS SCAR, I'VE NEVER HAD PROBLEMS WITH LOVE!
EE?

I KNEW IT!
IT'S NO CRESCENT. IT'S A SPIRAL!
TAKE A LOOK IN THE MIRROR BY THE ENTRANCE!!
WHAT?!
WA-
I DON'T...
MAYBE IT USED TO BE SHAPED LIKE A CRESCENT...
...BUT THEN THE ENDS STARTED GROWING AND FORMED THAT SPIRAL.
IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF THIS PLACE... KURÔZU-CHO!
THIS TOWN IS CONTAMINATED WITH SPIRALS!
GO TO SCHOOL IN MIDORIYAMA-SHI! GET OUT OF TOWN AS FAST AS YOU CAN!

INSTEAD OF HEEDING SHUICHI'S WARNING...

...AZAMI KUROTANI TALKED HER PARENTS INTO RENTING AN APARTMENT FOR HER IN KURŌZU-CHO.

NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, SHE VISITED HIM.

BAM

SHUICHI! OPEN THE DOOR!

BAM

PLEASE! I'VE NEVER FELT THIS WAY BEFORE! ALL THE BOYS I KNEW COULDN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT ME!

BUT NOW I KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE. I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT YOU!

AZAMI-- I DON'T WANT YOU VISITING SHUICHI ANYMORE!

HE DOESN'T WANT YOU AROUND. BESIDES, HE'S MY BOYFRIEND.

I WON'T! I LIKE HIM, TOO!
I'LL MAKE HIM CARE ABOUT ME!

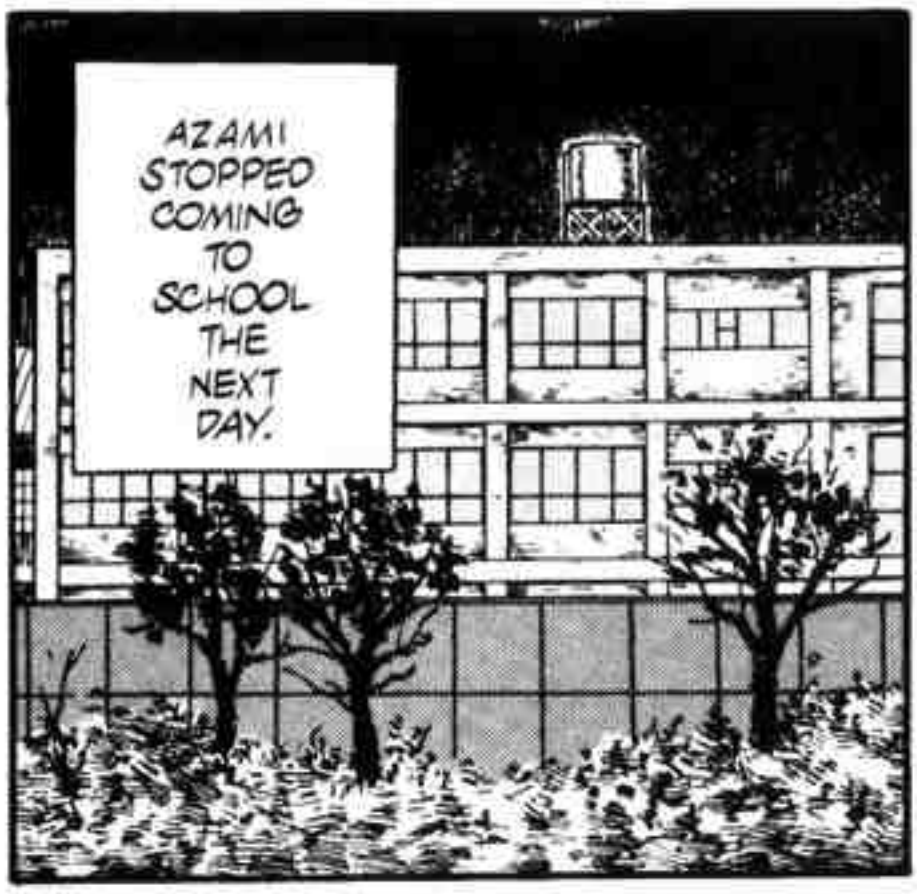
...

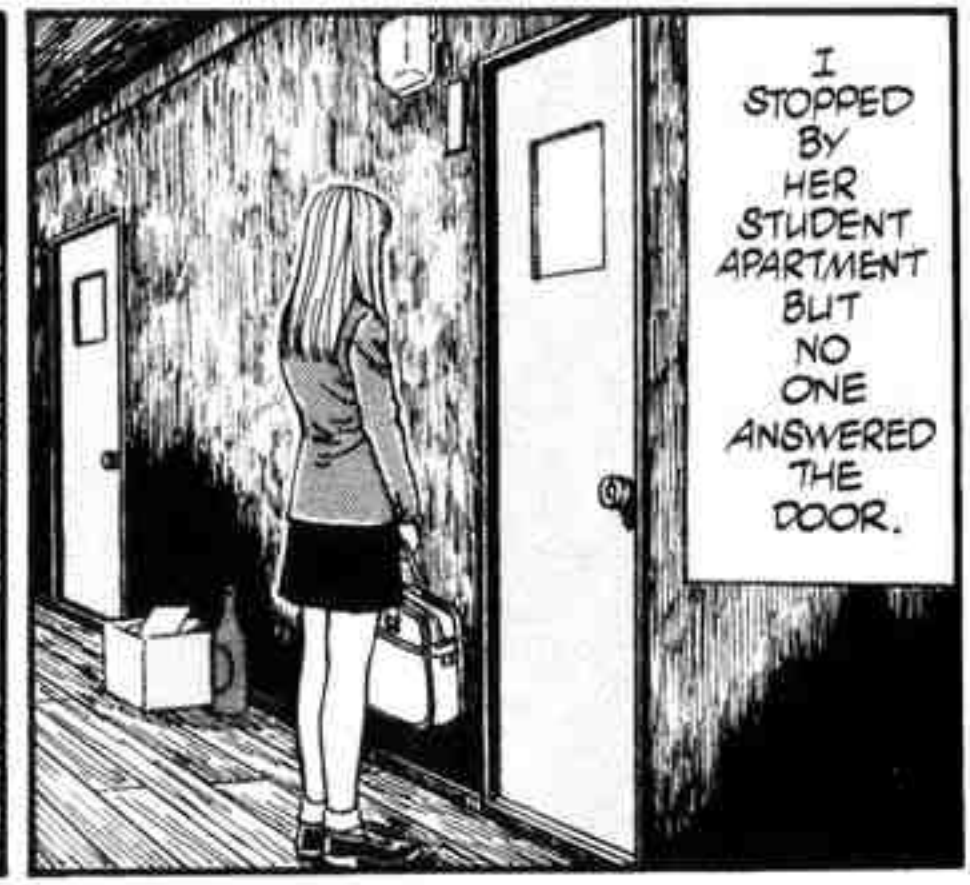
WEEEOOO

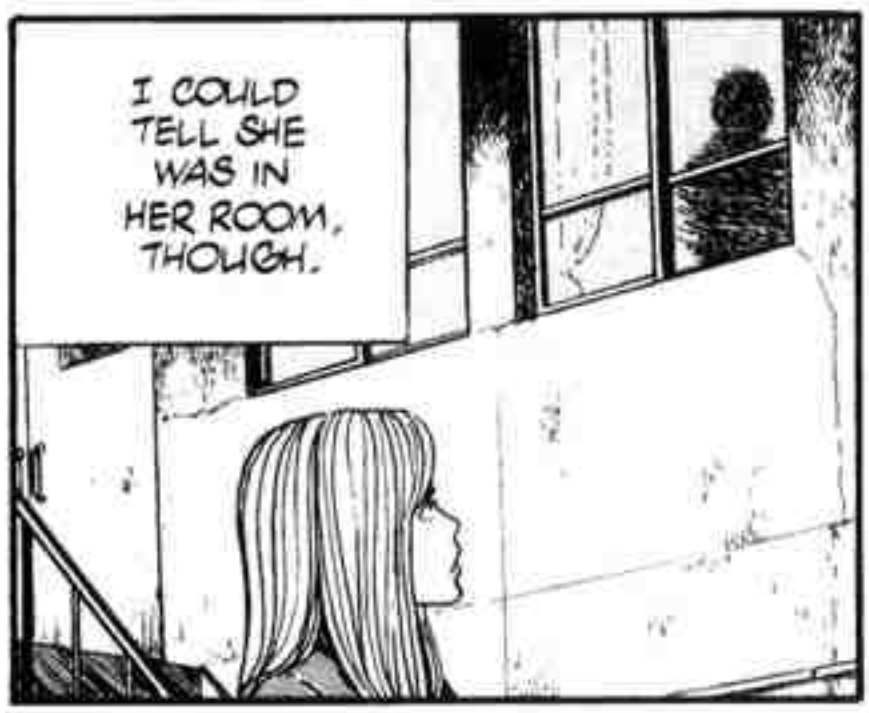
AAHH!

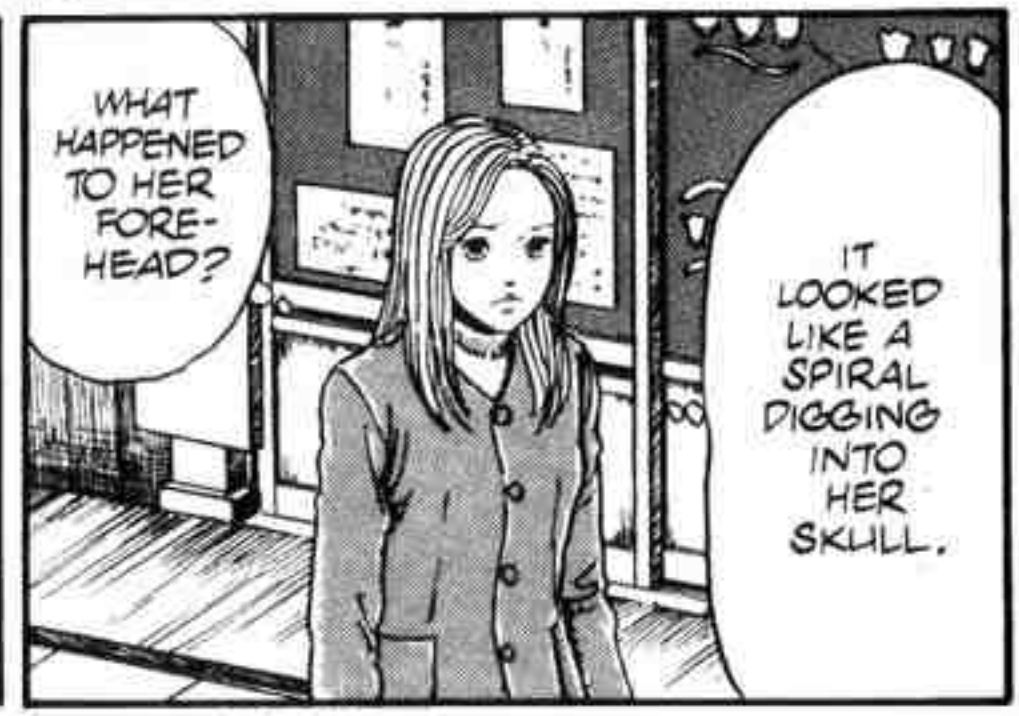
A-
A...
YOUR FORE-HEAD...
AZAMI ...
FSH
AZAMI!
STOP!!

AZAMI!
Hff
Hff
AZAMI
IT'S ME, OKADA FROM CLASS C.
PLEASE GO OUT WITH ME.
LEAVE ME ALONE! I TOLD YOU NO!
I KNOW YOU DID... BUT I'M SO DRAWN TO YOU...
I HAVE TO BE NEAR YOU. I CAN'T HELP IT. IT'S LIKE I'M BEING SUCKED IN...


AZAMI STOPPED COMING TO SCHOOL THE NEXT DAY.


I STOPPED BY HER STUDENT APARTMENT BUT NO ONE ANSWERED THE DOOR.


I COULD TELL SHE WAS IN HER ROOM, THOUGH.


WHAT HAPPENED TO HER FORE-HEAD?
IT LOOKED LIKE A SPIRAL DIGGING INTO HER SKULL.

I MUST HAVE BEEN HALLUCI-NATING...
BUT HOW CAN THAT BE?

THEN...
...SEVERAL DAYS LATER.

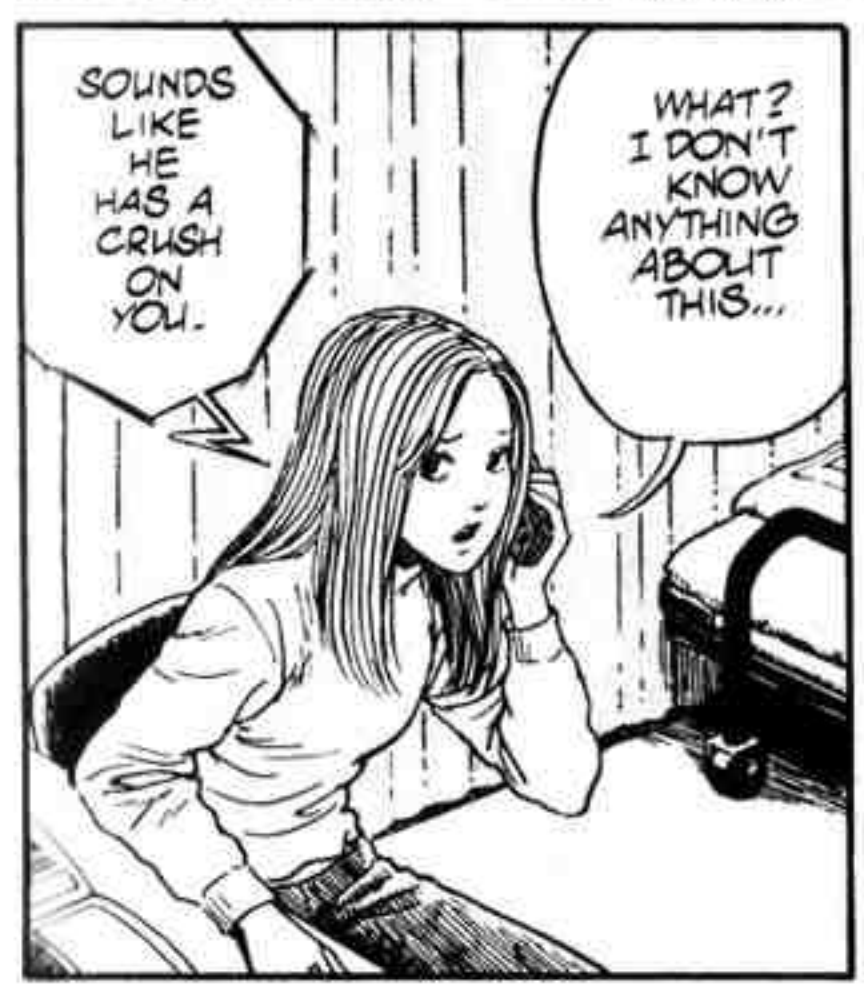
RRING
RRING

HELLO ?
KIRIE, IT'S ME.
SHUICHI ?

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE NAMED OKADA?

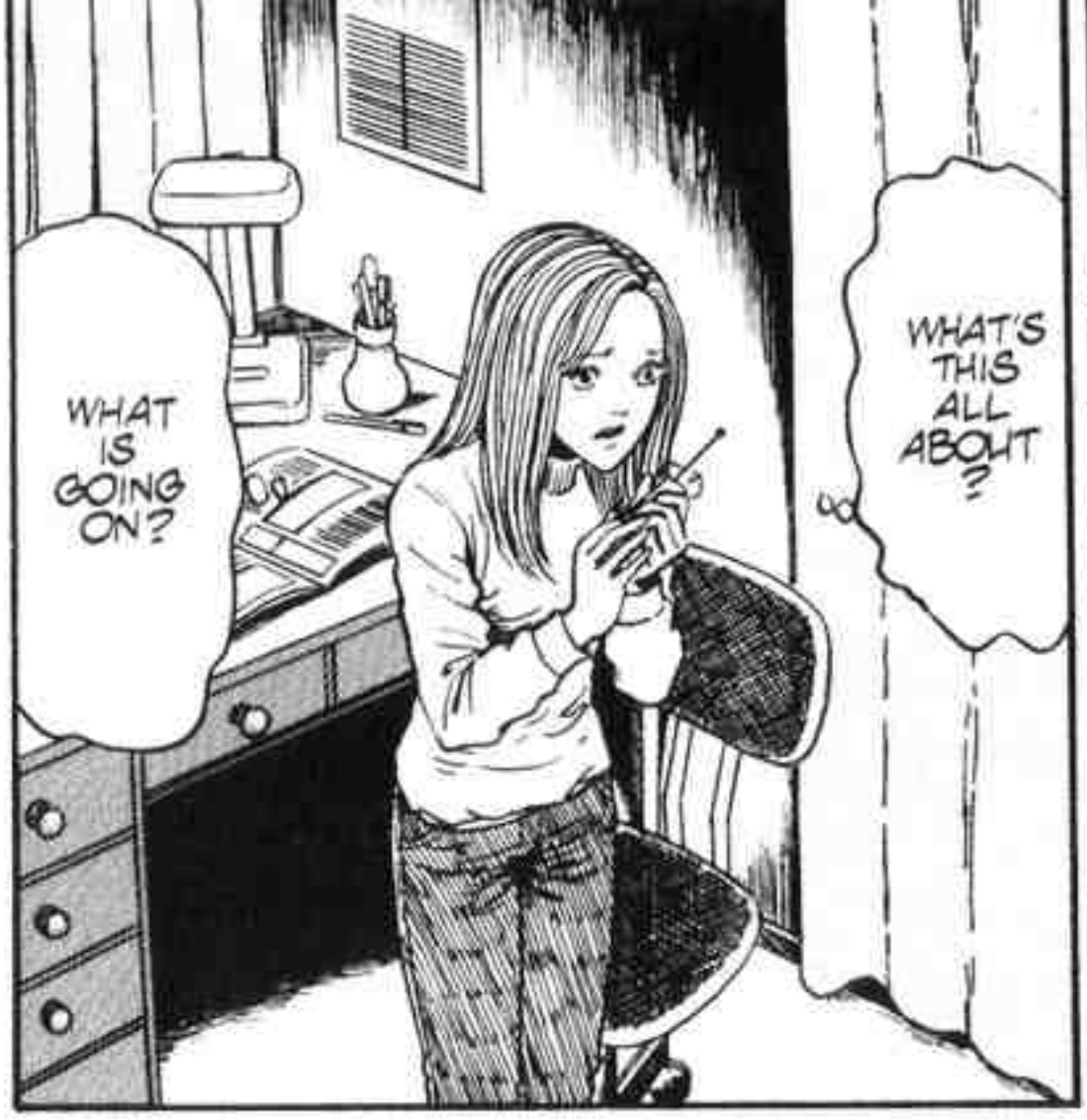
OKADA? NO, WHO IS HE?

I SEE... HE JUST GAVE ME A PHONE CALL.
SAYS HE WANTS TO TALK TO ME ABOUT YOU.
HE'S MEETING ME AT THE PARK.

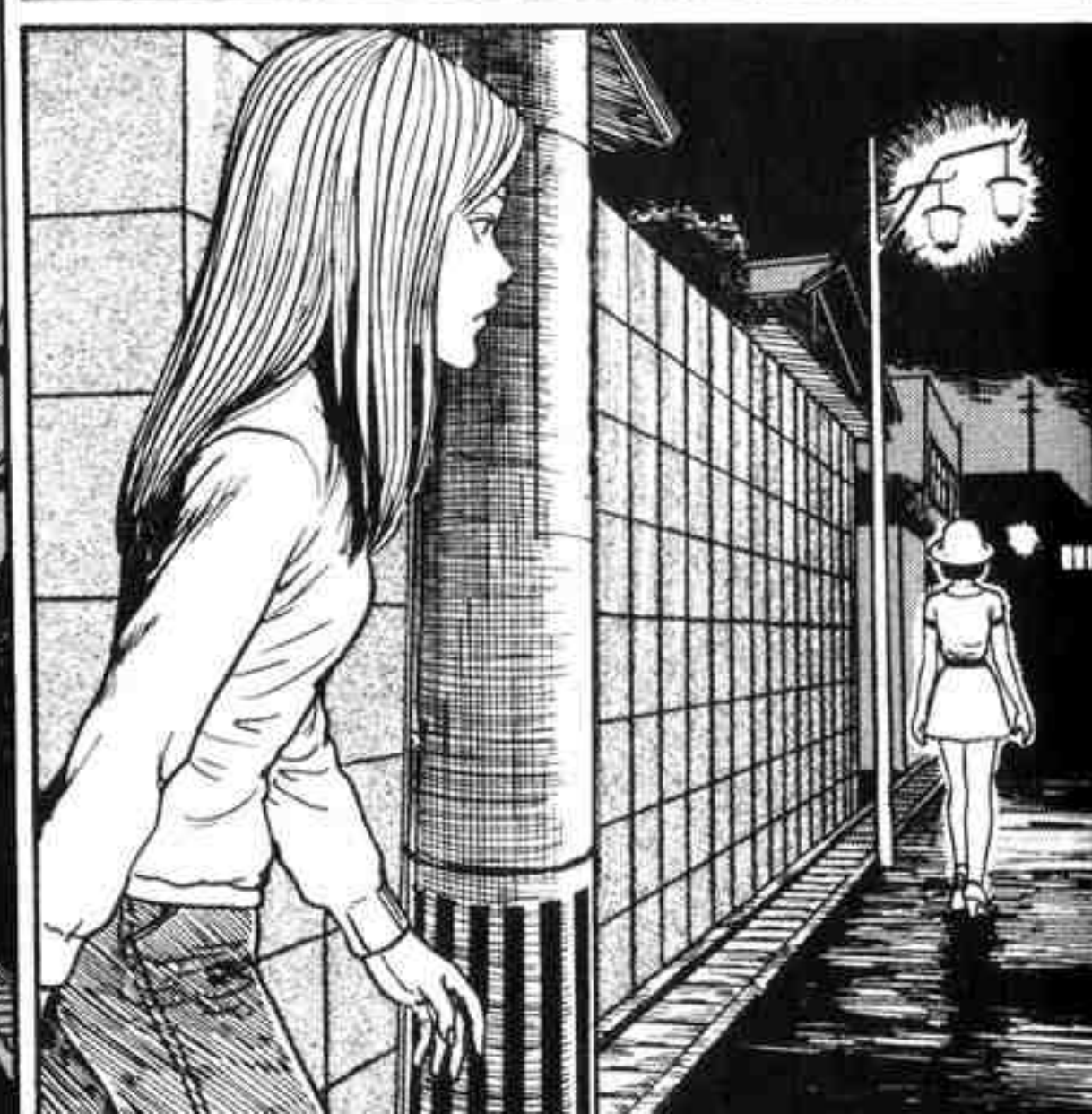

SOUNDS LIKE HE HAS A CRUSH ON YOU.
WHAT? I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS...

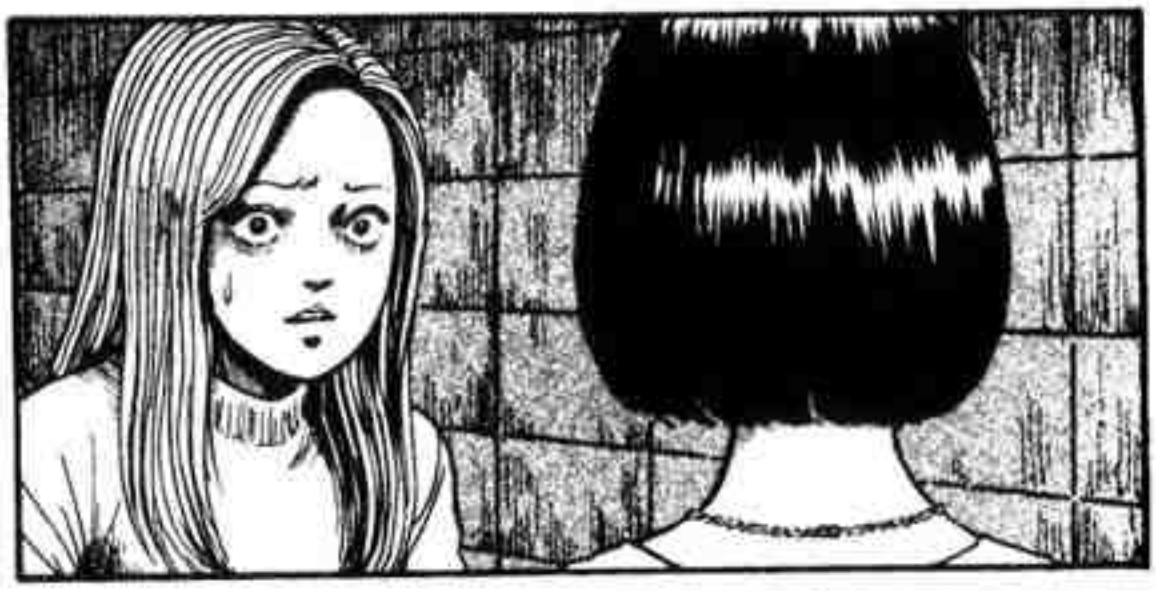
I SEE...
ALL RIGHT, THEN.

CLIK
HEY.


WHAT IS GOING ON?
WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

THIS PARK MUST BE THE ONE.
MAYBE MY FATHER SHOULD HAVE COME WITH ME.





SUBBBB

SLUMP
...
WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?
JUST HOLD ON...
SHE'LL BE HERE ANY MINUTE.
WHO? KIRIE?
NO.
SEE... HERE SHE COMES.

ALL RIGHT. I BROUGHT SHUICHI SAITO LIKE YOU ASKED.
NOW YOU'LL GO OUT WITH ME, RIGHT?

NO, I HAVE NO USE FOR YOU ANY MORE.
GO HOME.

WH-WHAT? BUT YOU PROMISED!
YOU SAID IF I BROUGHT HIM YOU'D GO OUT WITH ME!

HA HA... I DON'T CARE ABOUT MY PROMISES.
I JUST WANTED TO SEE SHUICHI.

WH-
WHAT?!

YOU LIED TO ME!
FAP!

HEE...
HEE HEE HEE HEE ...

A-AZAMI.

WH...
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
HEE HEE HEE HEE

I-IS THAT... BONE?

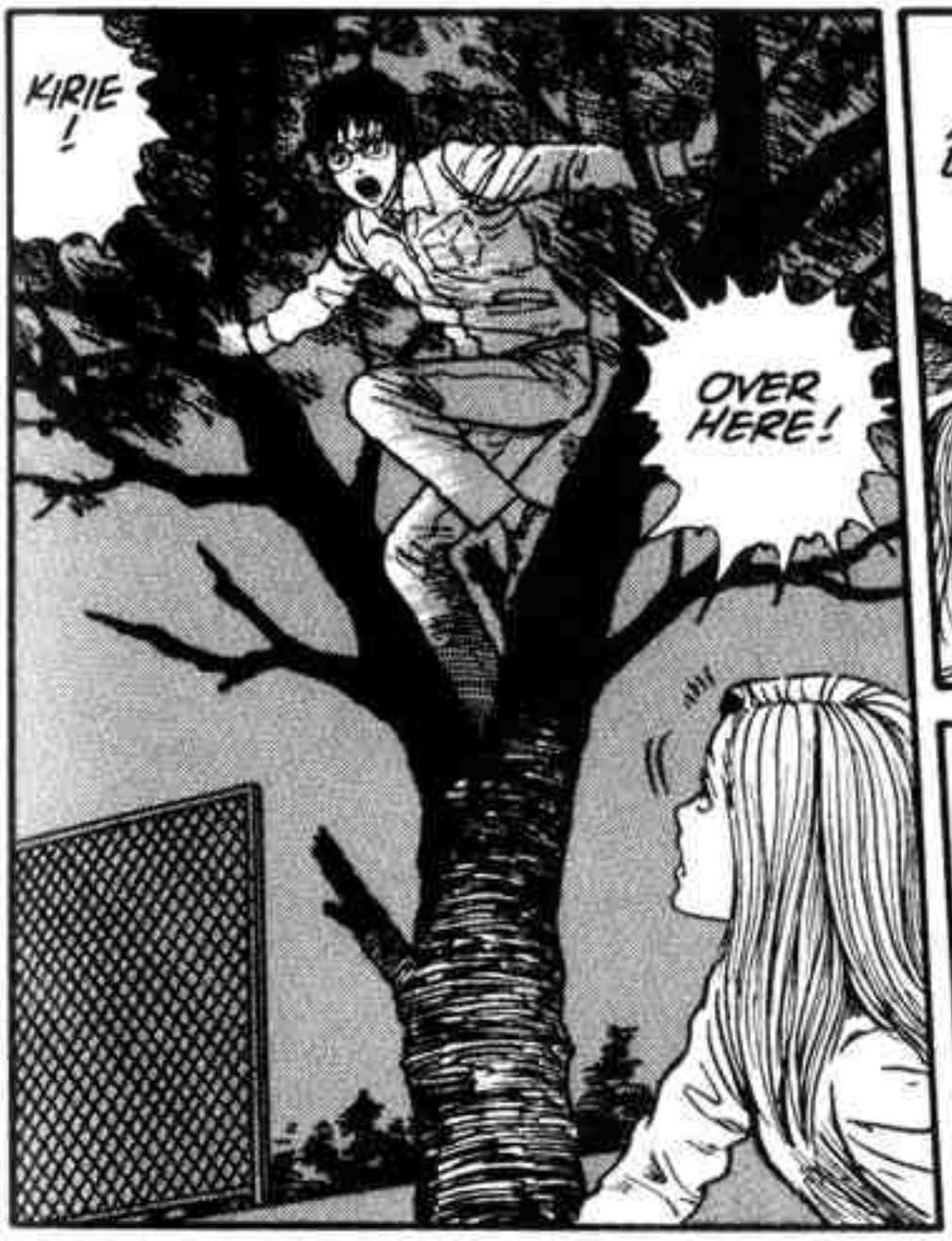
SHEEDO

KYEEE!

EAAAGH!
HUH ?!

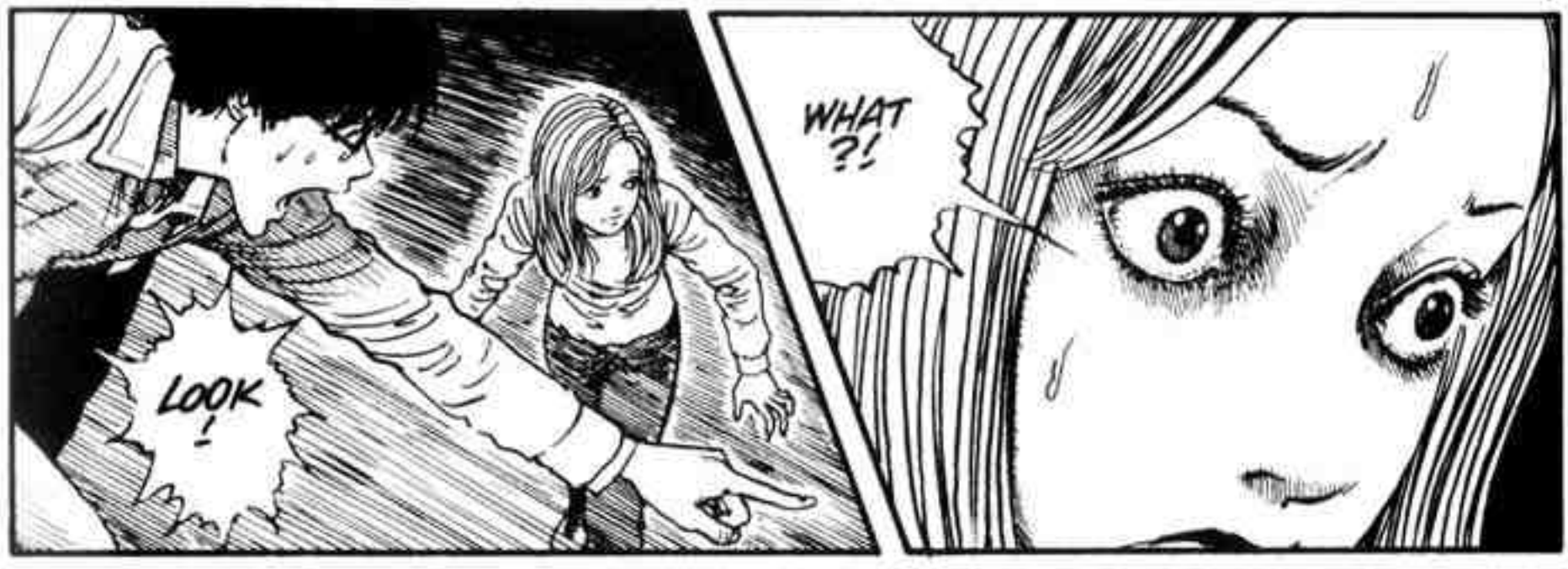
WHO WAS THAT?
SHUICHI ?!
WHERE ARE YOU?

CAN YOU HEAR ME?


KIRIE !
OVER HERE!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP THERE?
OKADA JUST GOT SUCKED IN!

HE'S GONE!
NOW SHE'S GOING TO VANISH, TOO !


LOOK !
WHAT ?!

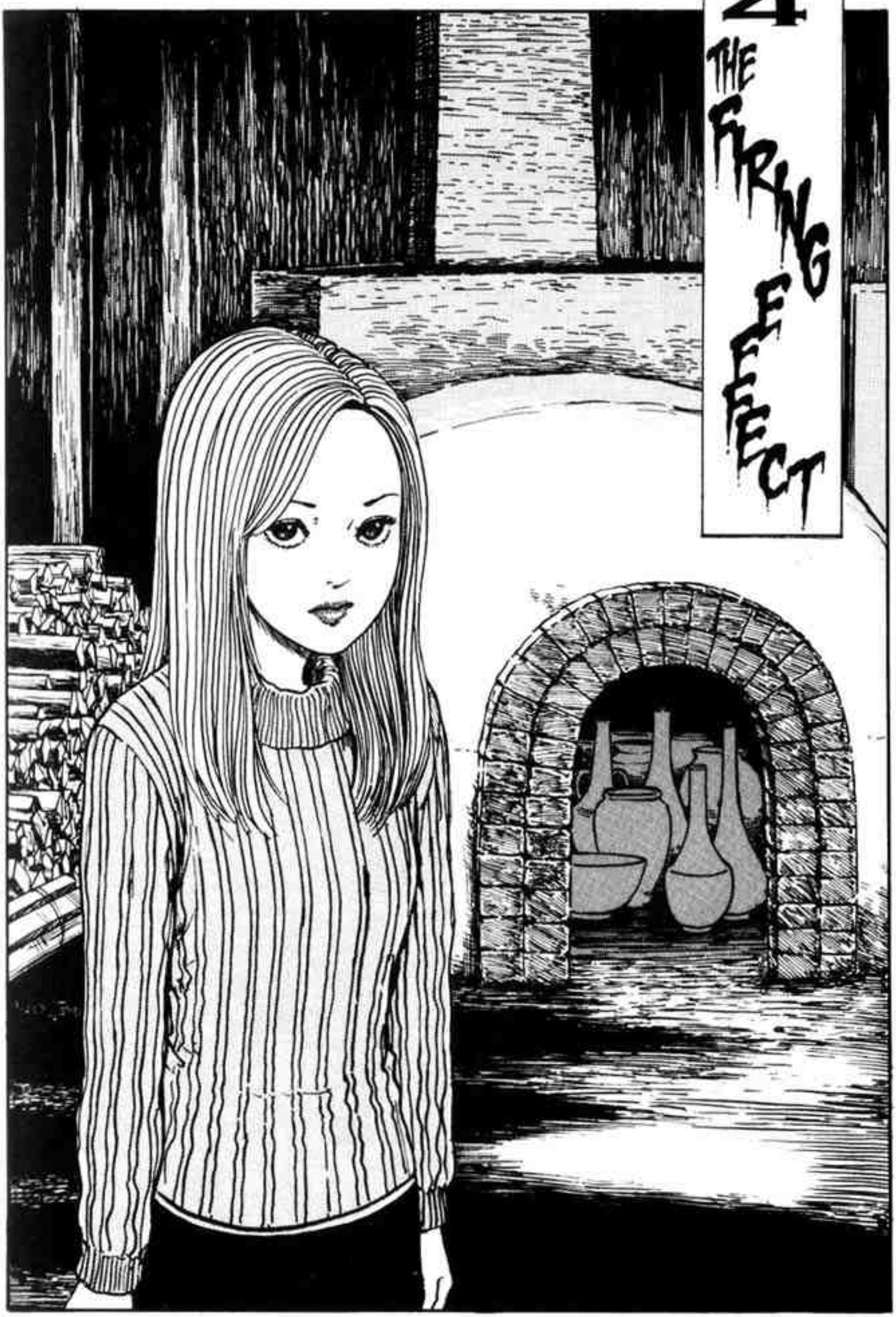
SHE'S BEING CONSUMED BY THE SPIRAL THAT APPEARED ON HER BODY!

LOOK! LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING!

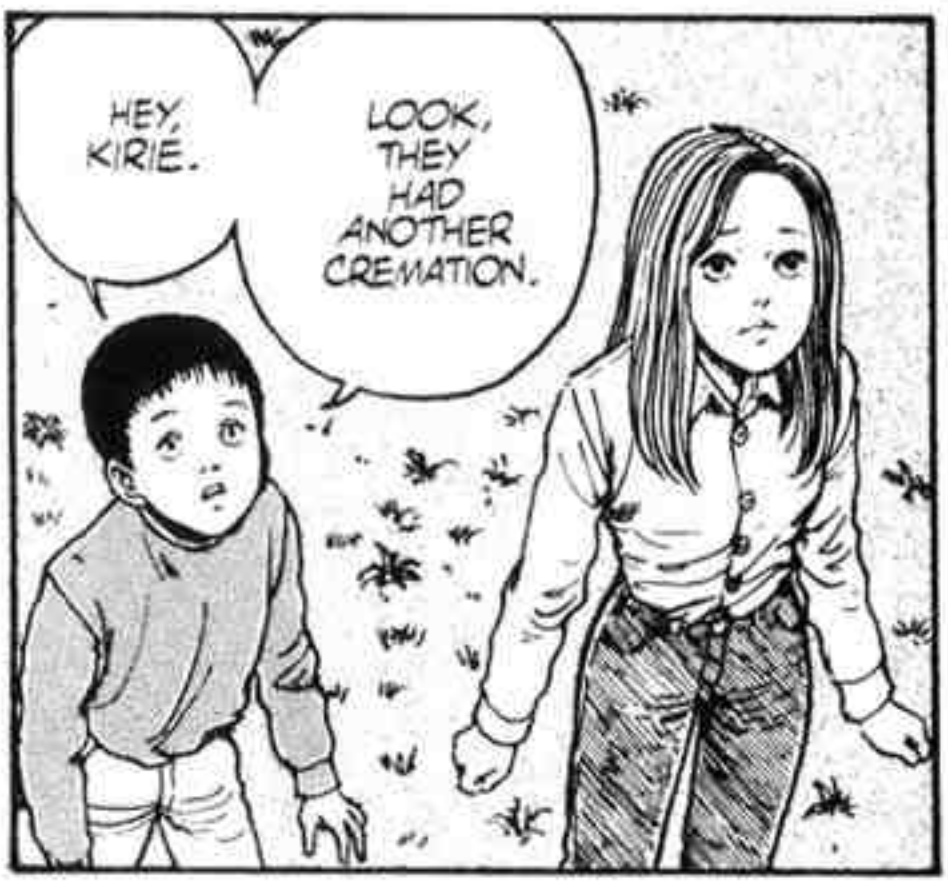
SHEEDOOO

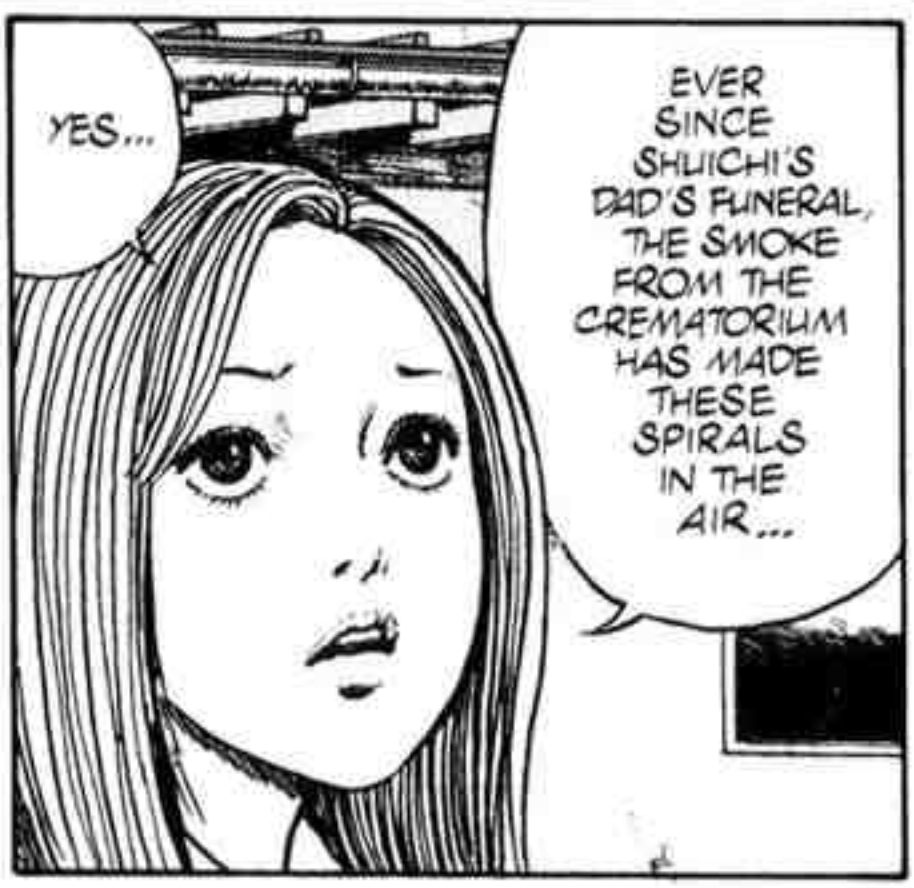
AZAMI KUROTANI WAS DEVOURED FROM HEAD TO TOE...

...WITHOUT LEAVING A TRACE BEHIND.



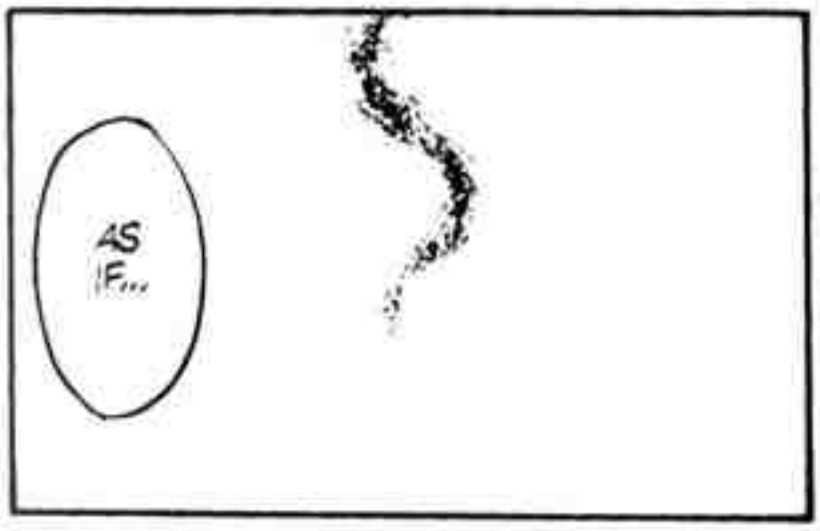
RESEARCH CONSULTANT: HISASHI SATO


HEY, KIRIE.
LOOK, THEY HAD ANOTHER CREMATION.


YES...
EVER SINCE SHUICHI'S DAD'S FUNERAL, THE SMOKE FROM THE CREMATORIUM HAS MADE THESE SPIRALS IN THE AIR...

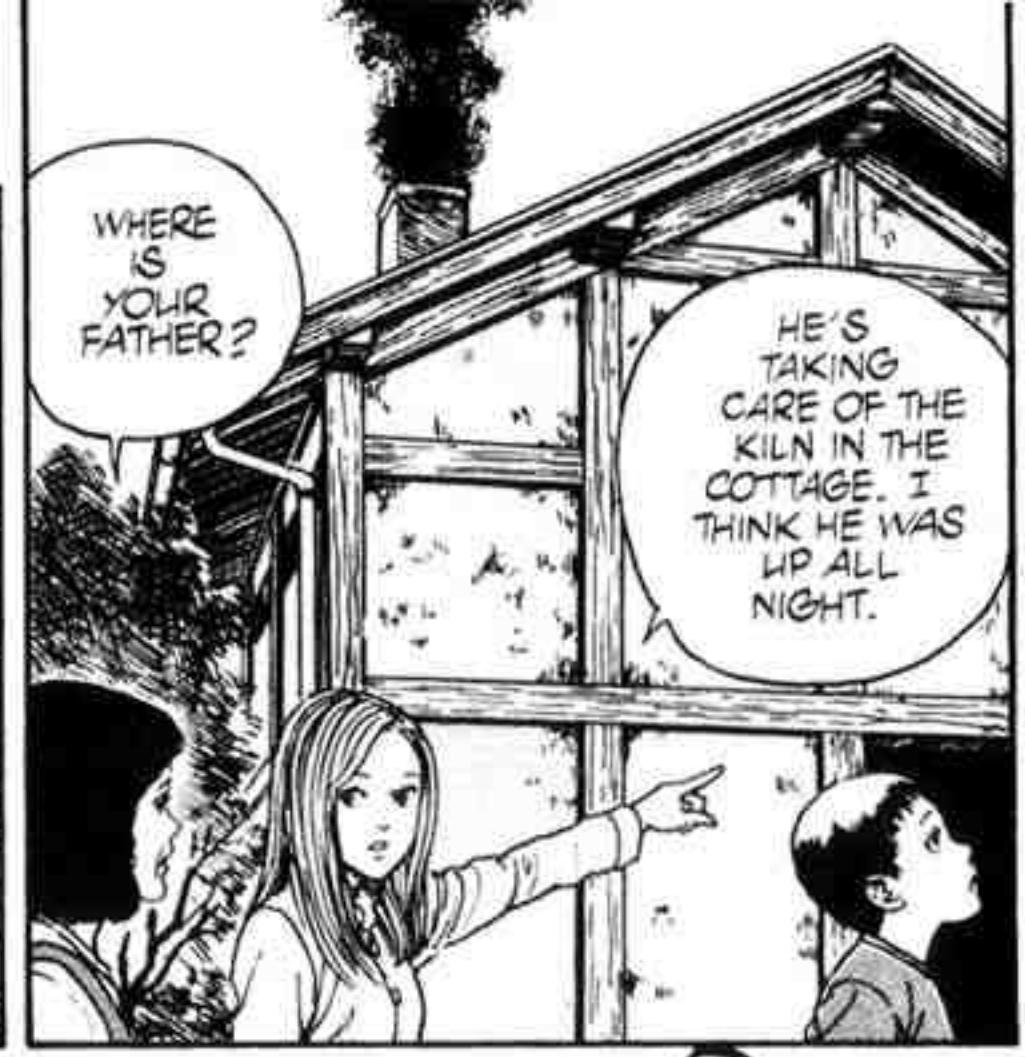
LOOK, MITSUO...
SOON IT'LL FALL INTO DRAGONFLY POND.

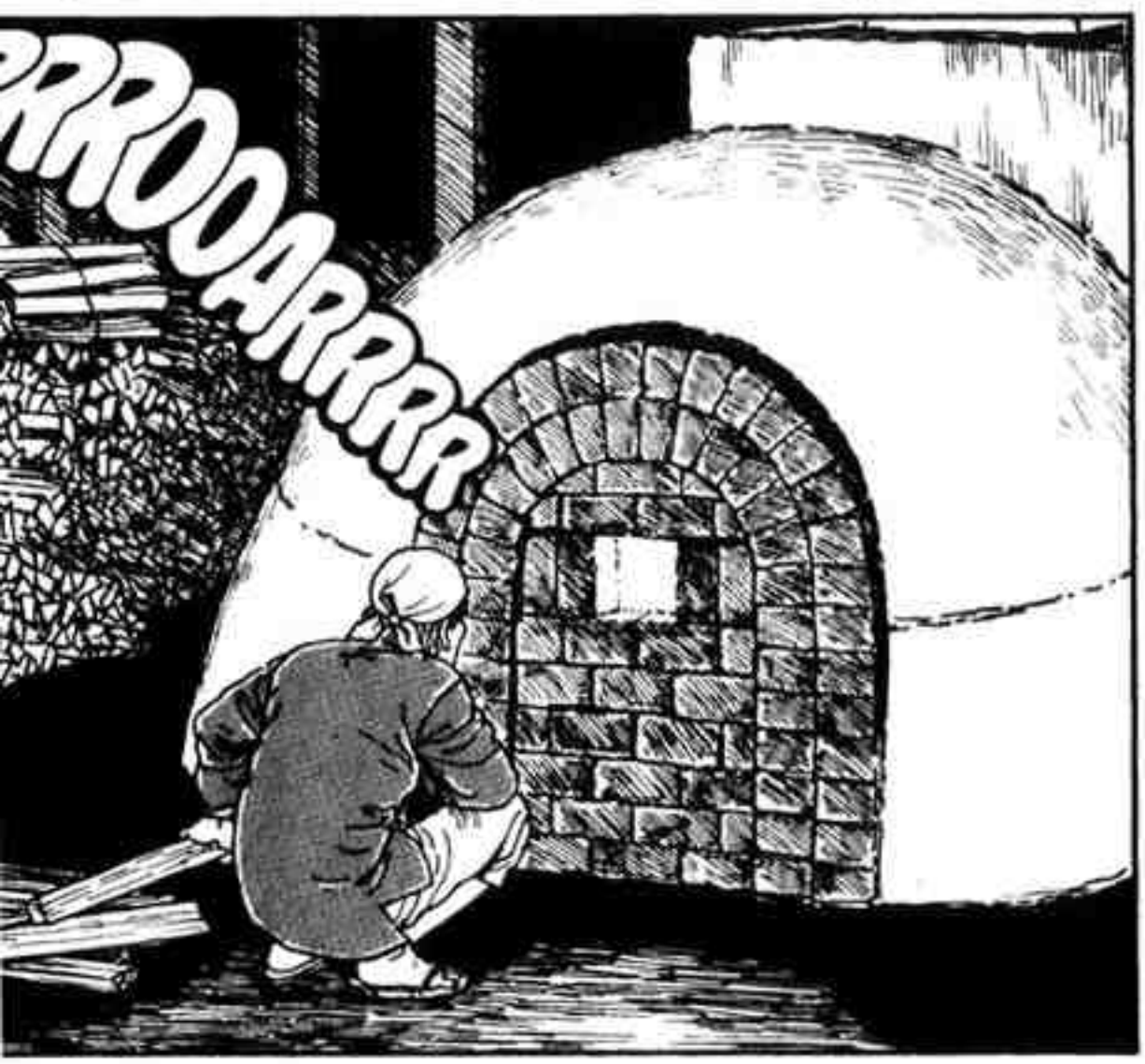
SEE?
IT'S FALLING SLOWLY...


AS IF...

...THE POND IS SUCKING IT IN...

KIRIE, MITSUO.
STOP STARING AT THAT AWFUL THING AND COME INSIDE.
MOM ...


WHERE IS YOUR FATHER?
HE'S TAKING CARE OF THE KILN IN THE COTTAGE. I THINK HE WAS UP ALL NIGHT.


RROARRRR

RROARR

BUT ...
...THIS CAN'T BE...

DEAR ?
WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO TAKE OVER?

NO... IT'S ALL RIGHT.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS.

YOU'LL GET SICK IF YOU DON'T GET SOME REST SOON.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE FIRE?

JUST GO BACK TO THE HOUSE!

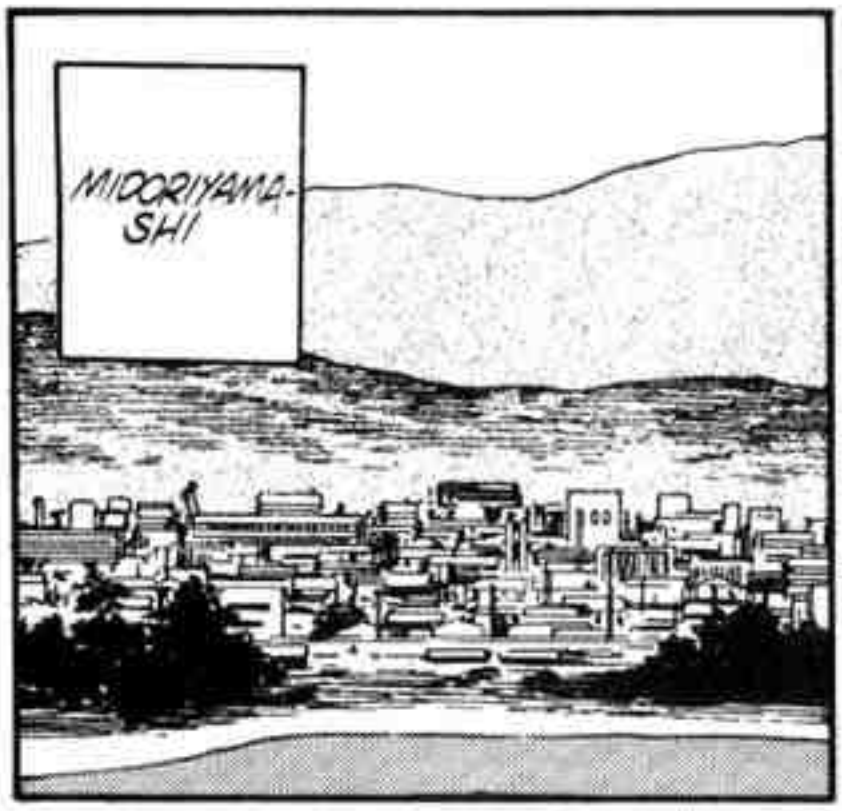
DON'T LOOK INSIDE THE KILN!

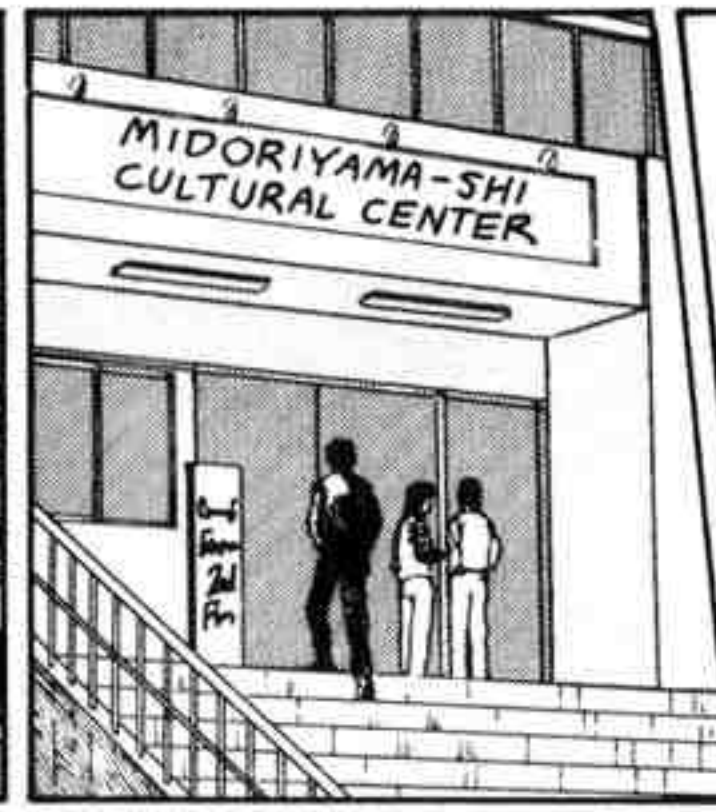
BUT...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. YOUR FATHER'S ACTING STRANGE.

LOOK!

EVEN THE SMOKE FROM FATHER'S KILN IS SWIRLING!


MIDORIYAMA-SHI


MIDORIYAMA-SHI CULTURAL CENTER

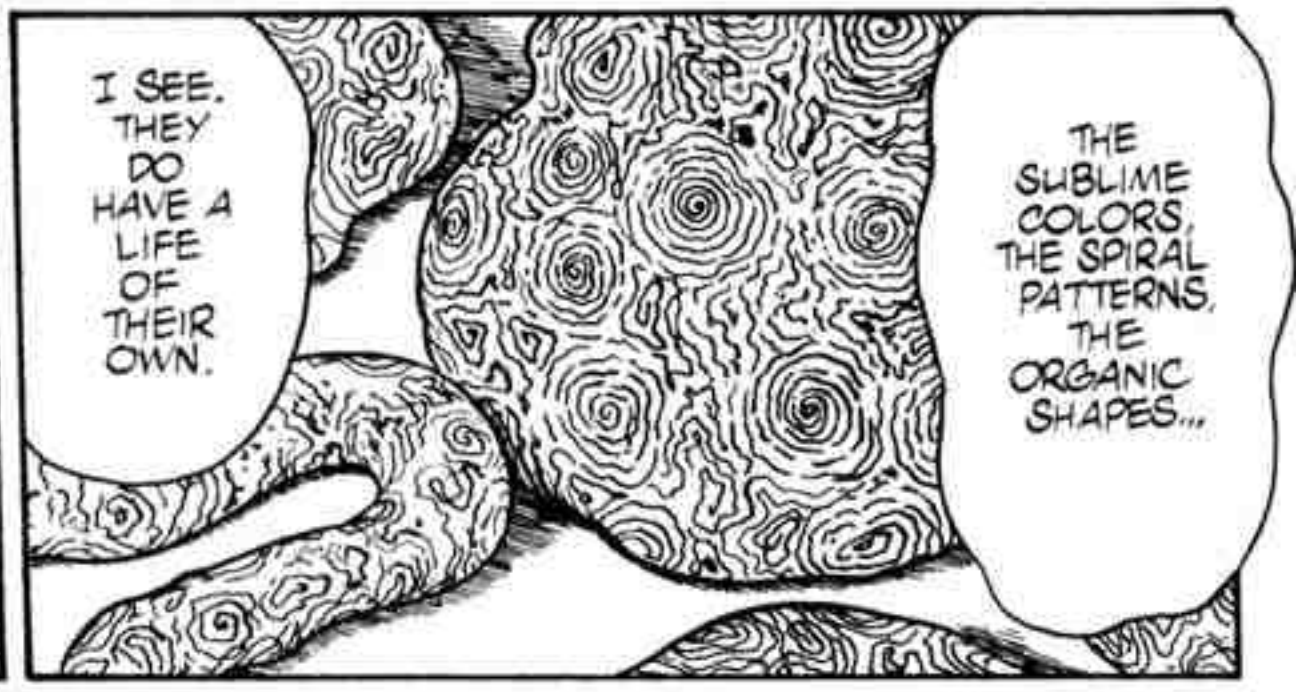
CERAMICS EXHIBITION
2nd Floor

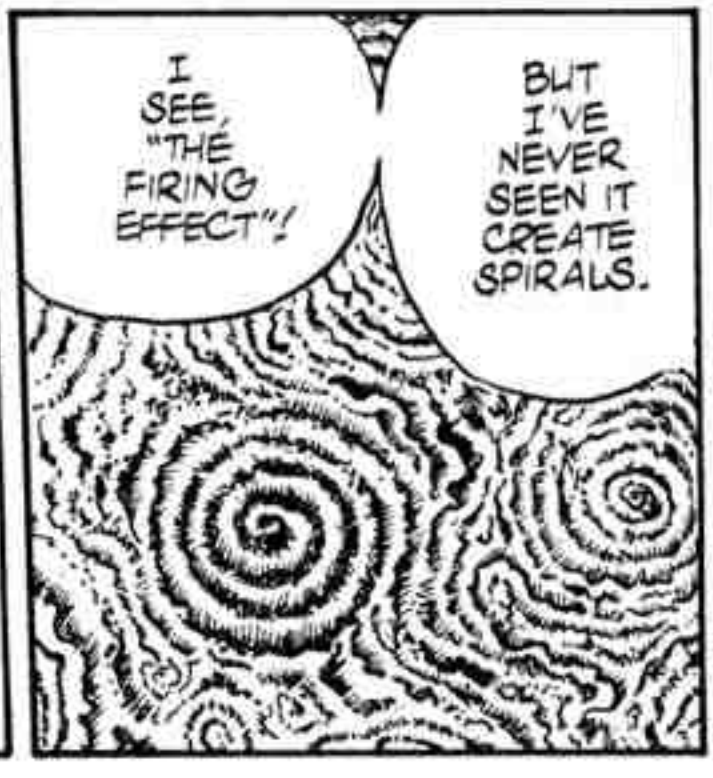
Hmm...
INTERESTING ...
MR. GOSHIMA, YOUR SUBMISSIONS THIS TIME ARE VERY ODD.
YES, THEY'RE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM YOUR PREVIOUS STYLE.

I'M EMBARRASSED. THEY WERE ALL NORMAL POTS AND PLATES...

...BUT AS SOON AS I PUT THEM IN THE KILN THEY BECAME RADICALLY DEFORMED.

I USED A NEW CLAY, SO I SUPPOSE THE TEMPERATURE WASN'T RIGHT.

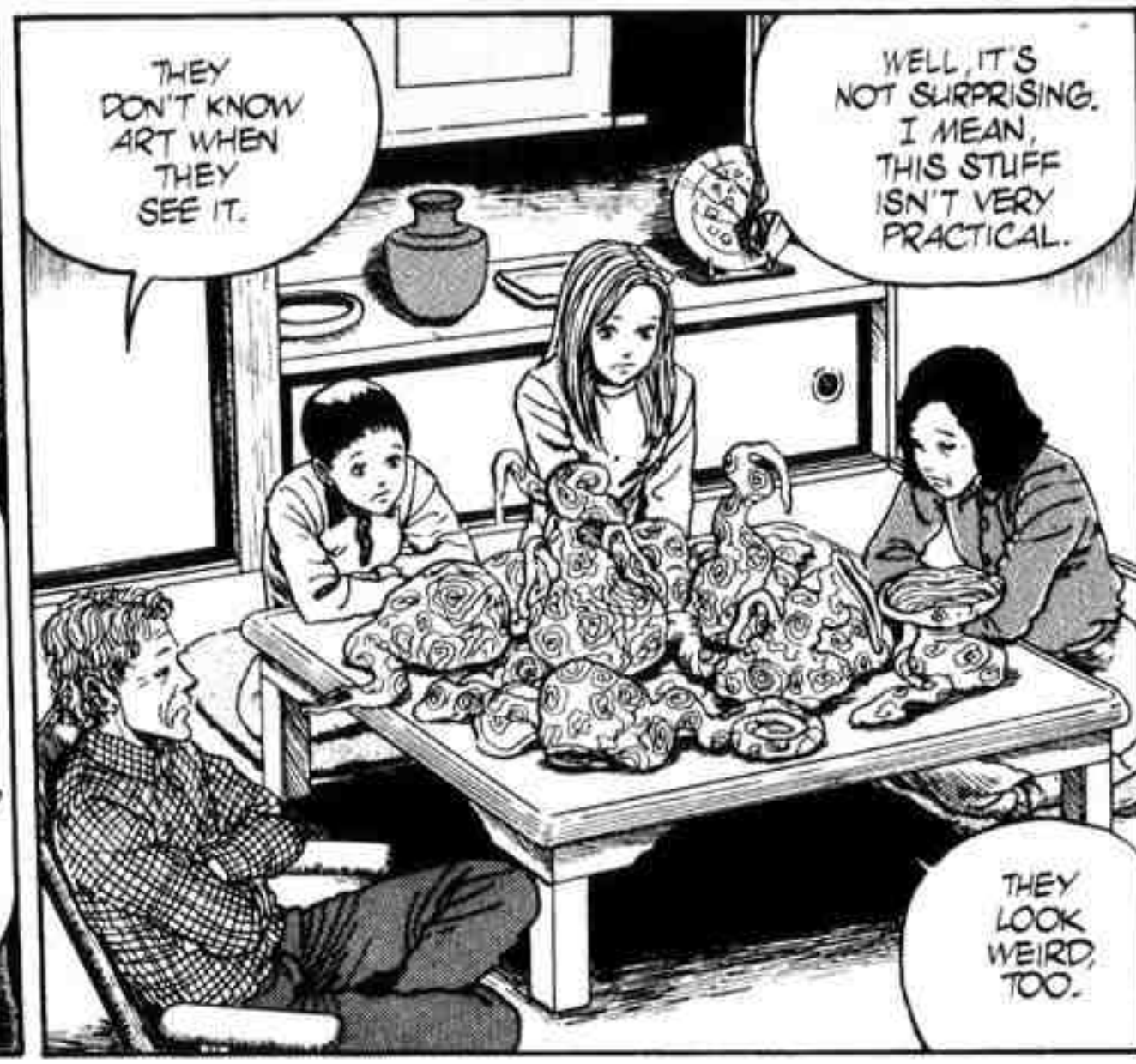




BY THE WAY...
...WHAT KIND OF NEW CLAY DID YOU USE?

HEH HEH HEH...
LET'S KEEP THAT A SECRET.

SO...
YOU DIDN'T SELL A SINGLE PIECE?


THEY DON'T KNOW ART WHEN THEY SEE IT.
WELL, IT'S NOT SURPRISING. I MEAN, THIS STUFF ISN'T VERY PRACTICAL.
THEY LOOK WEIRD, TOO.

YOU'RE SUCH A HARSH CRITIC, KIRIE.
HOW COULD THESE PATTERNS FORM NATURALLY?

I DON'T KNOW.
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANY-THING LIKE IT.

IT LOOKS LIKE A WOMAN!

UH...

MOM...
DAD...
DON'T YOU THINK THEY LOOK LIKE...
SHUICHI'S MOTHER AND FATHER?

DON'T YOU THINK SO, MOM?
OH, PLEASE...

Y. YOU'RE RIGHT!
THEY DO LOOK LIKE THEM!

THIS IS HORRIBLE.
DEAR, WHAT IS THIS?
I DON'T KNOW. IT MUST BE A COINCIDENCE.

HOW COULD YOU MAKE SOMETHING SO VICIOUS?

BUT I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!

HERE'S ANOTHER ONE!

THERE WERE FOUR FACES IN ALL.

THE TWO NEW FACES WERE IDENTIFIED AS CITIZENS WHO HAD RECENTLY DIED.

EACH HAD BEEN CREMATED IN KURÔZU-CHO.

THEIR SMOKE AND ASH HAD FORMED THE SPIRALS...

WHAT'S GOING ON, DAD? WHY WOULD THEIR FACES APPEAR ON YOUR POTTERY?

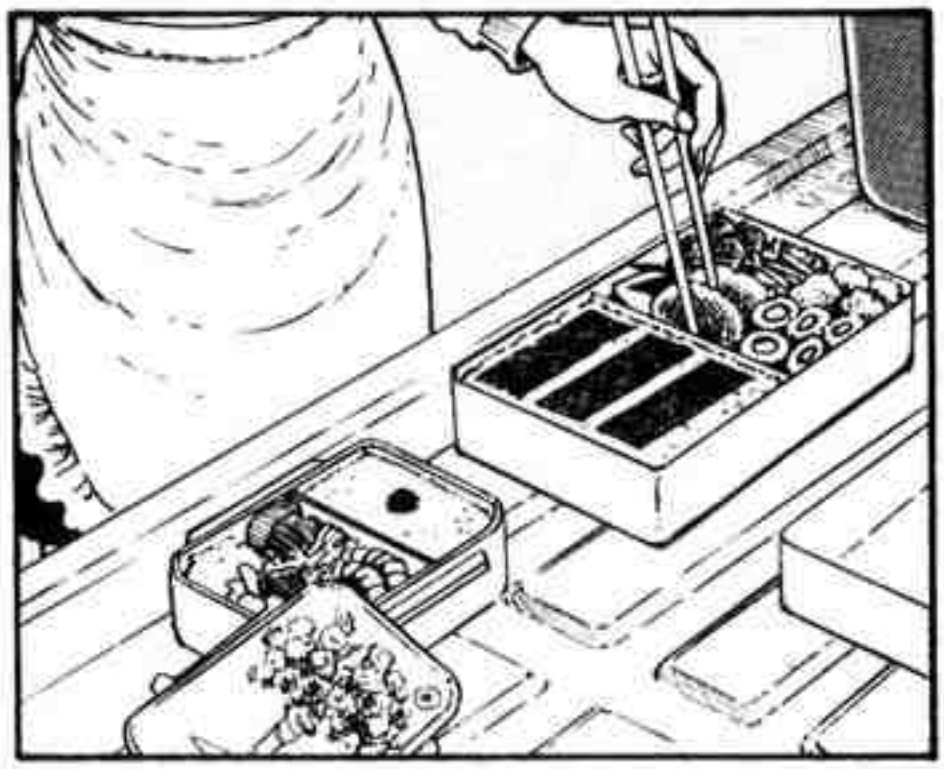
HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?

I DON'T REALLY KNOW, BUT...

CERAMICS ARE MADE FROM EARTH AND FIRE. IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S THE WORK OF NATURE...

WE TRY OUR BEST WITH HUMAN HANDS, BUT SOMETIMES NATURE CAN CREATE THINGS BEYOND OUR IMAGINATION. AFTER ALL, MOST SHAPES ARE REALLY PATTERNS, BUT WE CAN ONLY SEE A PIECE OF THEM AT A TIME.

...



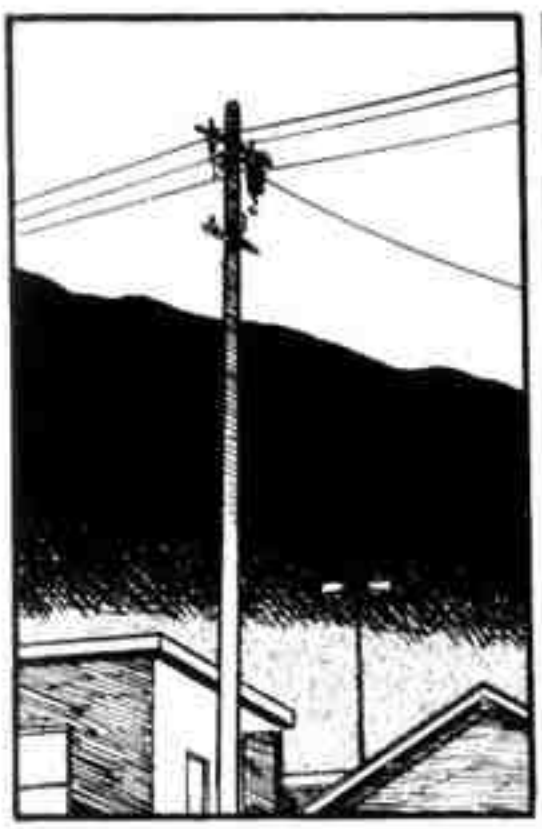
YOU STILL MAKING LUNCH FOR THAT WEIRDO?
YOU SHUT UP.
HURRY UP AND GO TO SCHOOL.

SO IS SHUICHI STILL NOT GOING TO SCHOOL?
I HOPE HE'S BEEN EATING PROPERLY.

WELL, THAT'S WHY I'M DOING THIS FOR HIM.

BUT HE HAS TO EAT A BIG, HEALTHY MEAL ONCE IN A WHILE.
WHY DON'T WE HAVE HIM OVER FOR DINNER? YOUR FATHER WOULD LIKE TO SEE HIM, TOO.

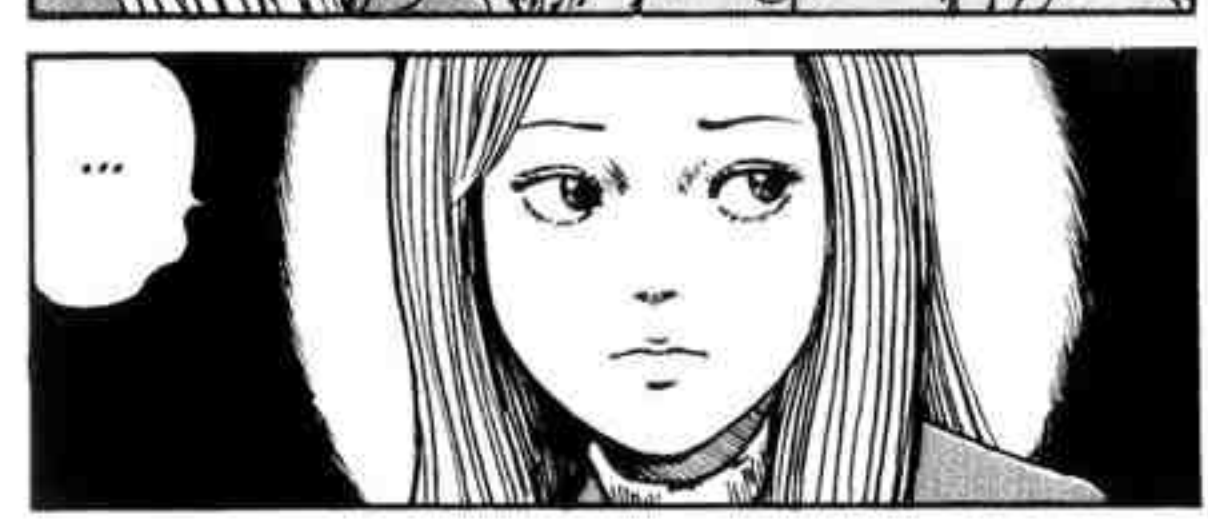
WELL ...
OKAY.



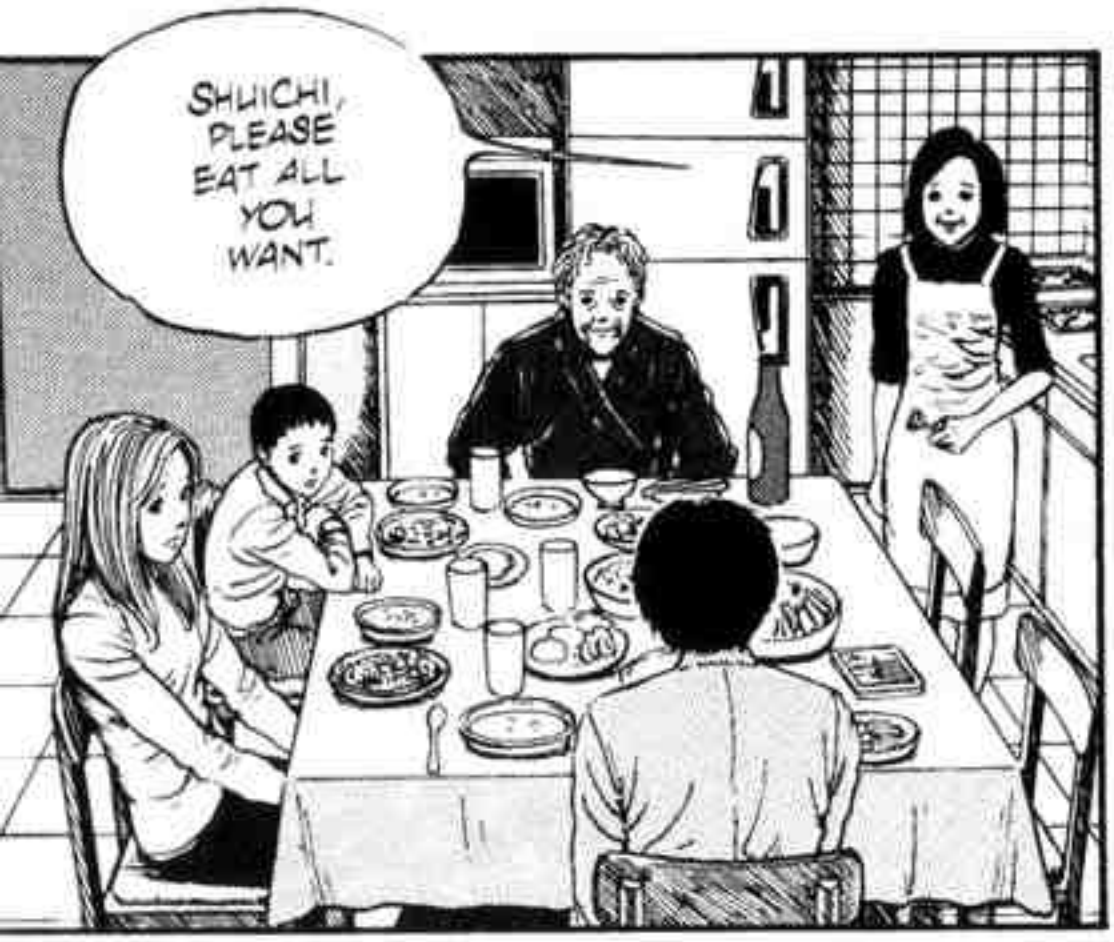
YOU DON'T HAVE TO PULL ME, KIRIE!
I HAVE TO, OTHERWISE YOU WON'T GO OUT!

YOU'LL DIE OF MALNUTRITION LIVING LIKE THAT!
BUT I DON'T WANT TO GO TO YOUR HOUSE!
IT'S NOT YOU! YOU LIVE NEXT TO DRAGONFLY POND!

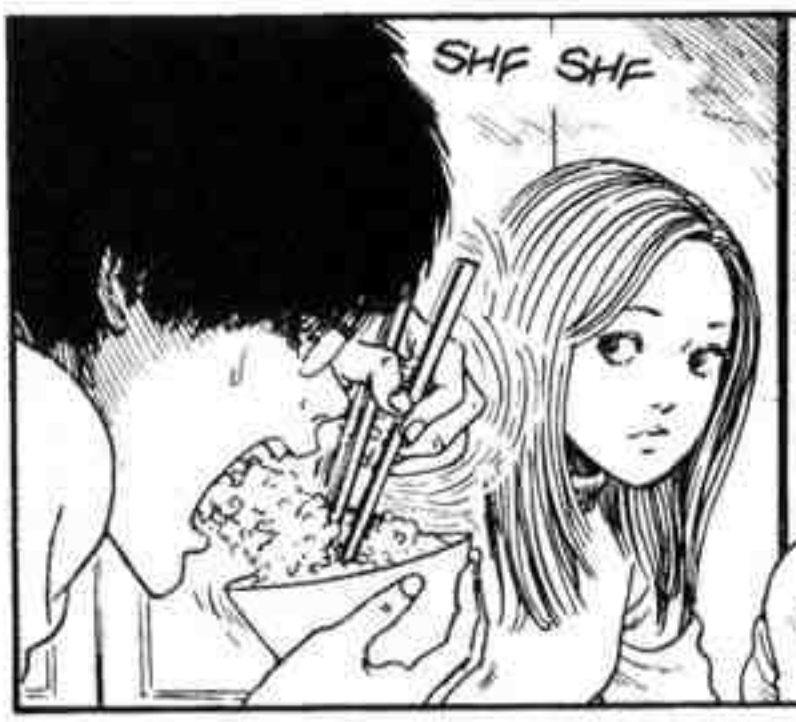
DRAGONFLY POND?
YES. THAT POND IS INFESTED... INFECTED WITH SPIRALS!


...

JUST THE SAME, I FORCED HIM TO COME OVER.


SHUICHI, PLEASE EAT ALL YOU WANT.

THANK YOU ...
Glp.
...MRS. GOSHIMA.


SHF SHF

MY...YOU MUST BE REALLY HUNGRY.
YOU SHOULD COME OVER MORE OFTEN.

YES, SIR.
SUIIIIIN

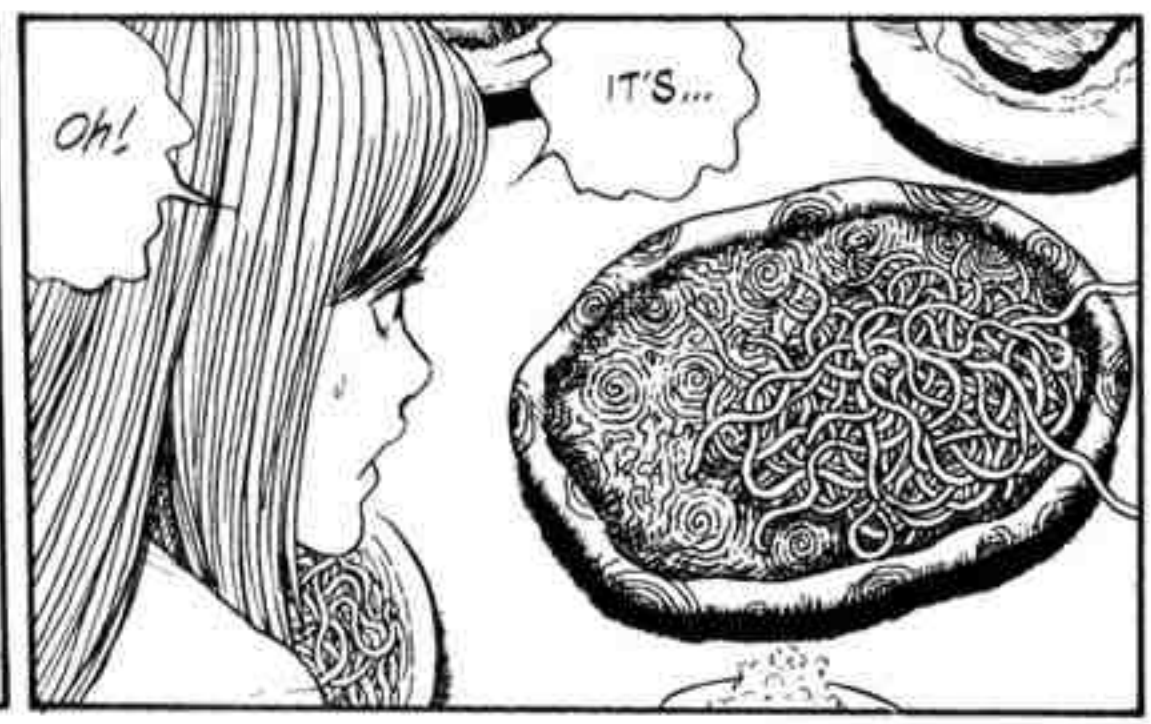
GULP
GULP

GULP
??

ARGH!
KANG

WHAT'S WRONG, SHUICHI?

TH-THAT PLATE! IT'S...
WHAT ?!


Oh!
IT'S...

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT PLATE?
I GET DIZZY JUST LOOKING AT IT!

DAD, THIS IS ONE OF THE PLATES YOU JUST MADE!
WHAT'S IT DOING ON THE TABLE ?!

WELL, THE PLATE WAS FLAT ENOUGH TO EAT ON, SO I BROUGHT IT OUT ESPECIALLY FOR SHUICHI.
WHAT? HOW COULD YOU GIVE HIM THAT TWISTED THING?

TWISTED? IT'S A WORK OF ART.
I THOUGHT, IF ANYONE, SHUICHI WOULD LIKE IT.

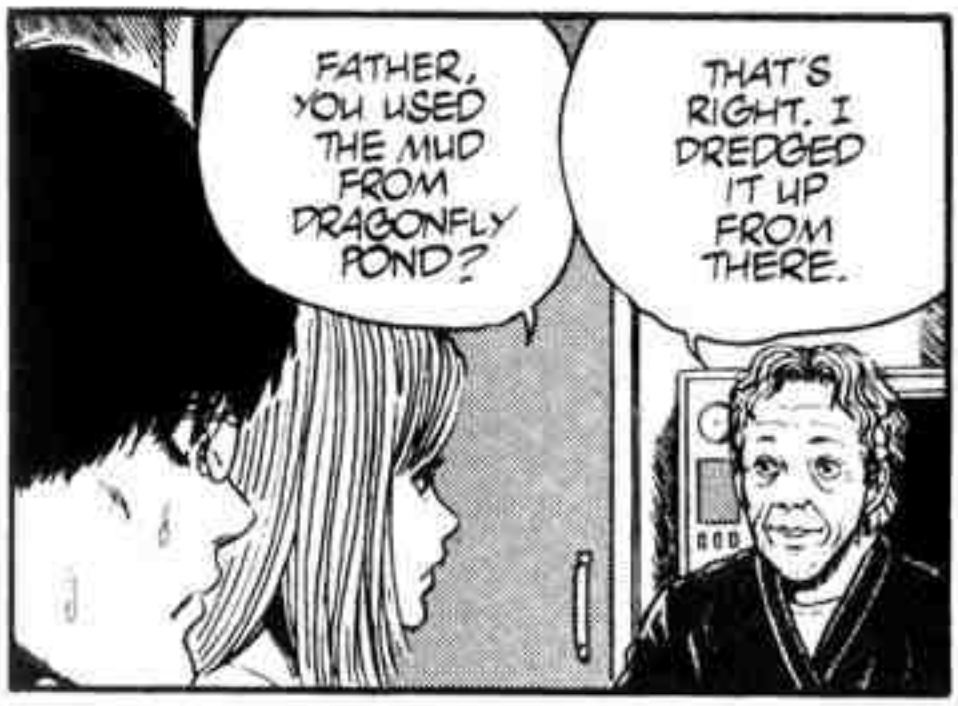
BECAUSE YOUR FATHER UNDER-STOOD ART.
I STILL REMEMBER WHEN HE TOLD ME, "CERAMICS IS THE ART OF THE SPIRAL."

HE WAS A HUGE INFLUENCE. BEING AN ARTIST, NOT JUST A CRAFTSMAN. I EXPERIMENTED BY TRIAL AND ERROR AND FINALLY I FOUND THE MOST AMAZING CLAY...
AND THIS IS THE WORK I CAME UP WITH!

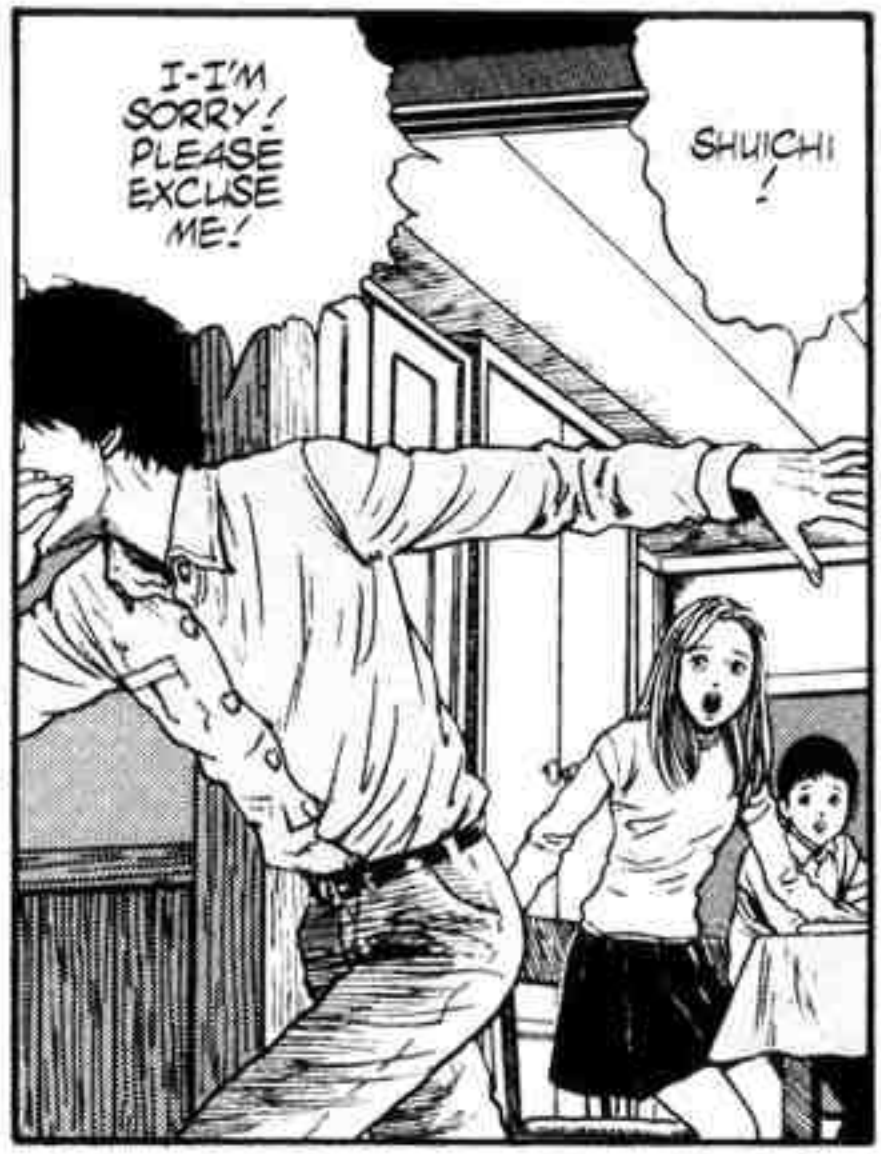
S-SIR...
WHERE DID THIS CLAY COME FROM?

...
DRAGONFLY POND.

DR-
DRAGONFLY POND?

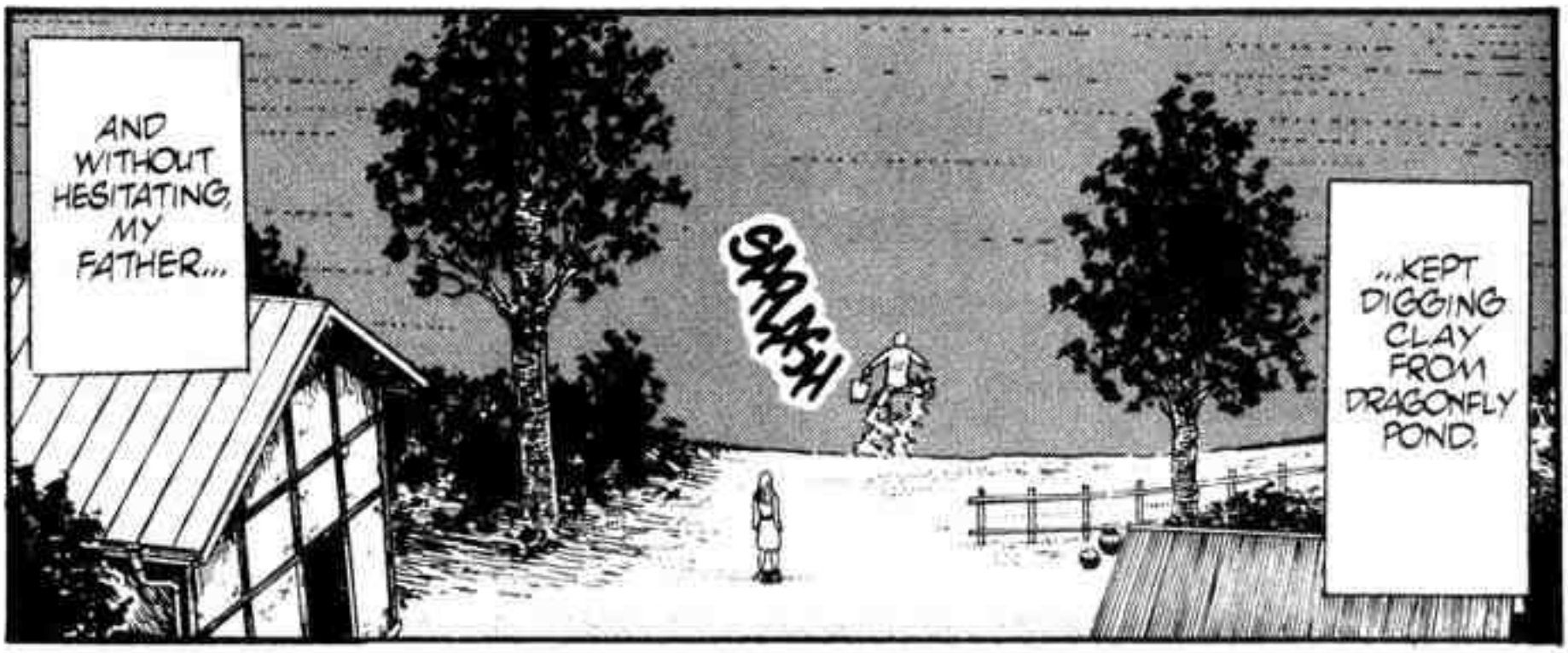

FATHER, YOU USED THE MUD FROM DRAGONFLY POND?
THAT'S RIGHT. I DREDGED IT UP FROM THERE.

URGH!


I-I'M SORRY! PLEASE EXCUSE ME!
SHUICHI!

I FEEL BAD ABOUT SHUICHI, BUT DON'T YOU THINK HE'S OVERREACTING?!
AFTER ALL, IT'S JUST A PLATE.

I WOULDN'T EAT OFF A PLATE THAT WAS MADE FROM MUD FROM DRAGONFLY POND!
THAT CLAY MIGHT BE MADE OF DEAD PEOPLE!
BUT, DEAR...

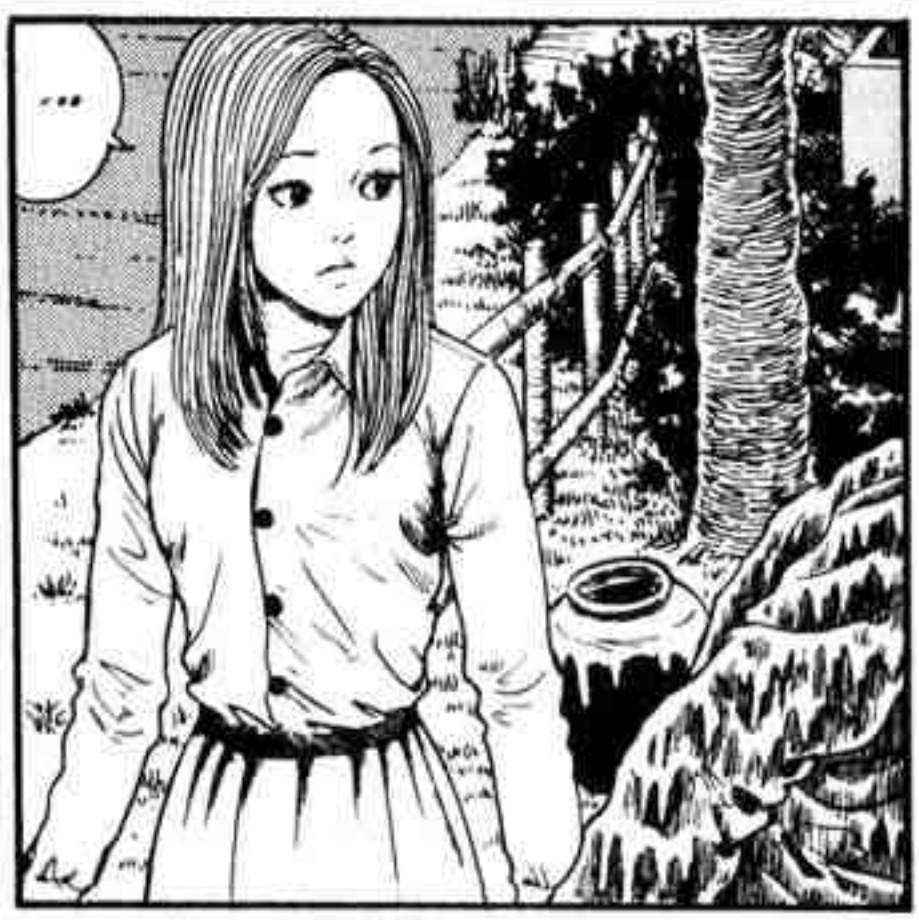

AND WITHOUT HESITATING, MY FATHER...
SPLASH
...KEPT DIGGING CLAY FROM DRAGONFLY POND.

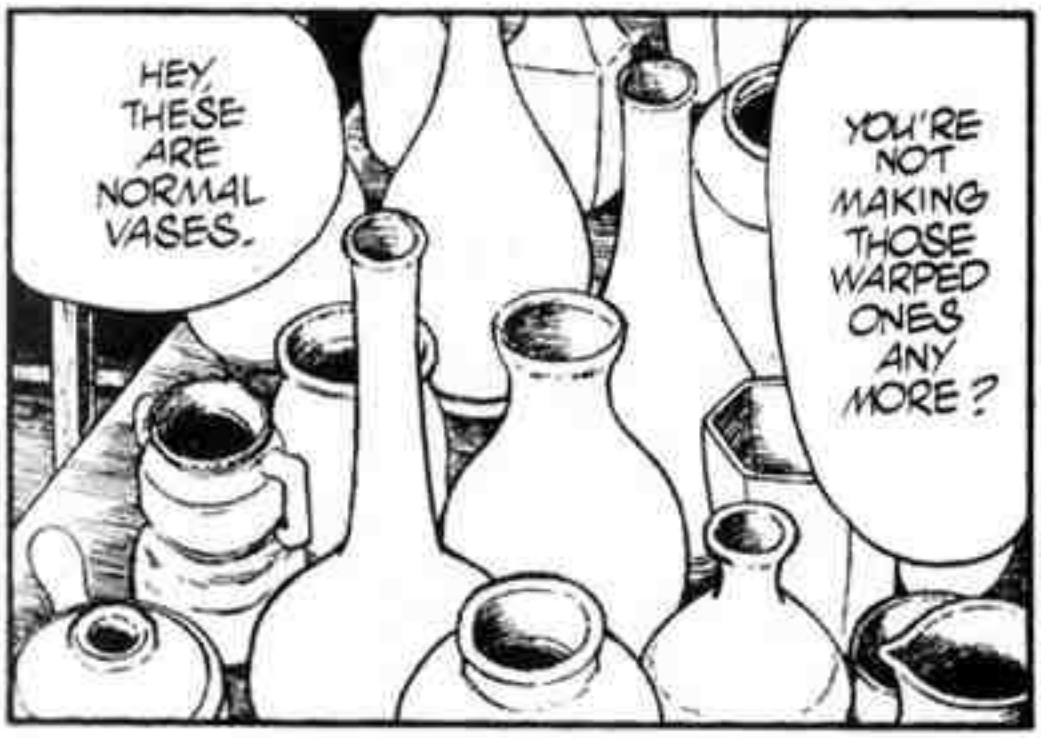
Glug
Glug

plup

Saplash

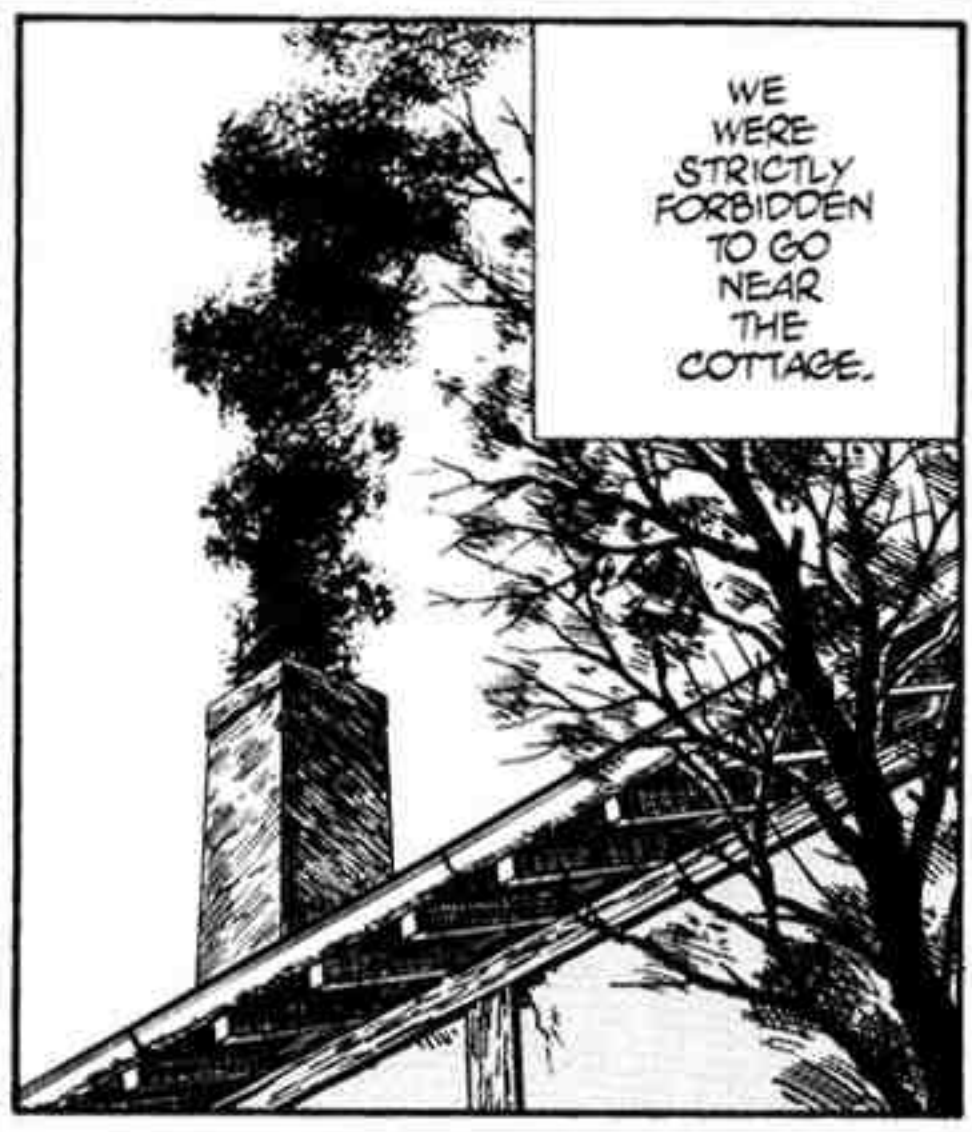
WHOO HAHA!
I'M SOAKING WET!


...


HEY, THESE ARE NORMAL VASES.
YOU'RE NOT MAKING THOSE WARPED ONES ANY MORE?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? IT'S ONLY AFTER I PUT THEM IN THE KILN ...
...THAT THEY TURN THAT WAY.

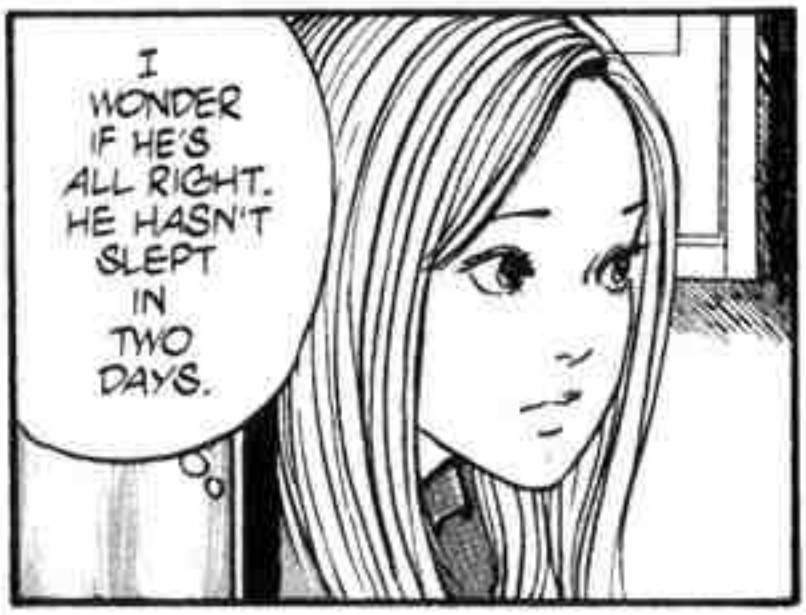
FINALLY THE KILN WAS FIRED UP.
ROAARR
FOR SIX DAYS AND NIGHTS IT WOULD BURN.

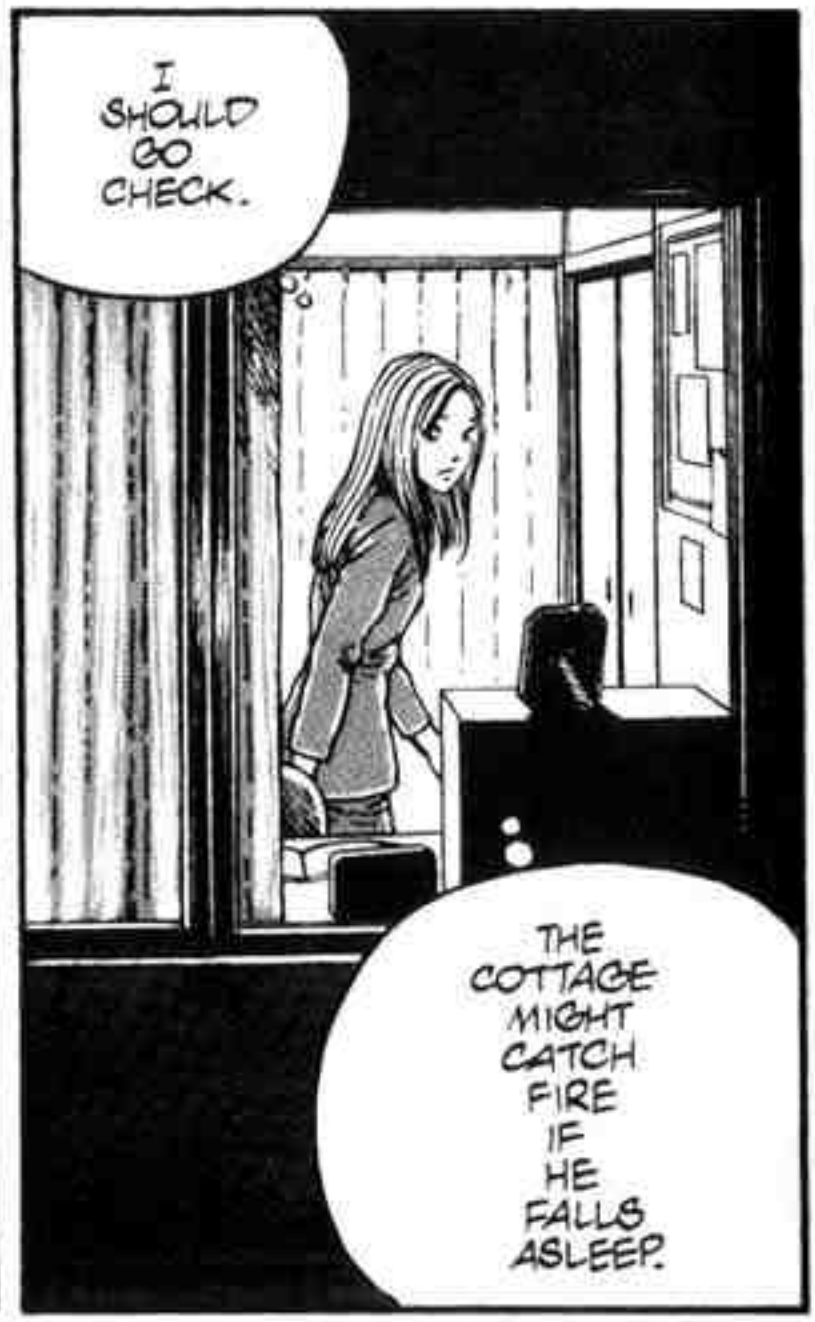

WE WERE STRICTLY FORBIDDEN TO GO NEAR THE COTTAGE.

IT'S ALREADY ONE IN THE MORNING.

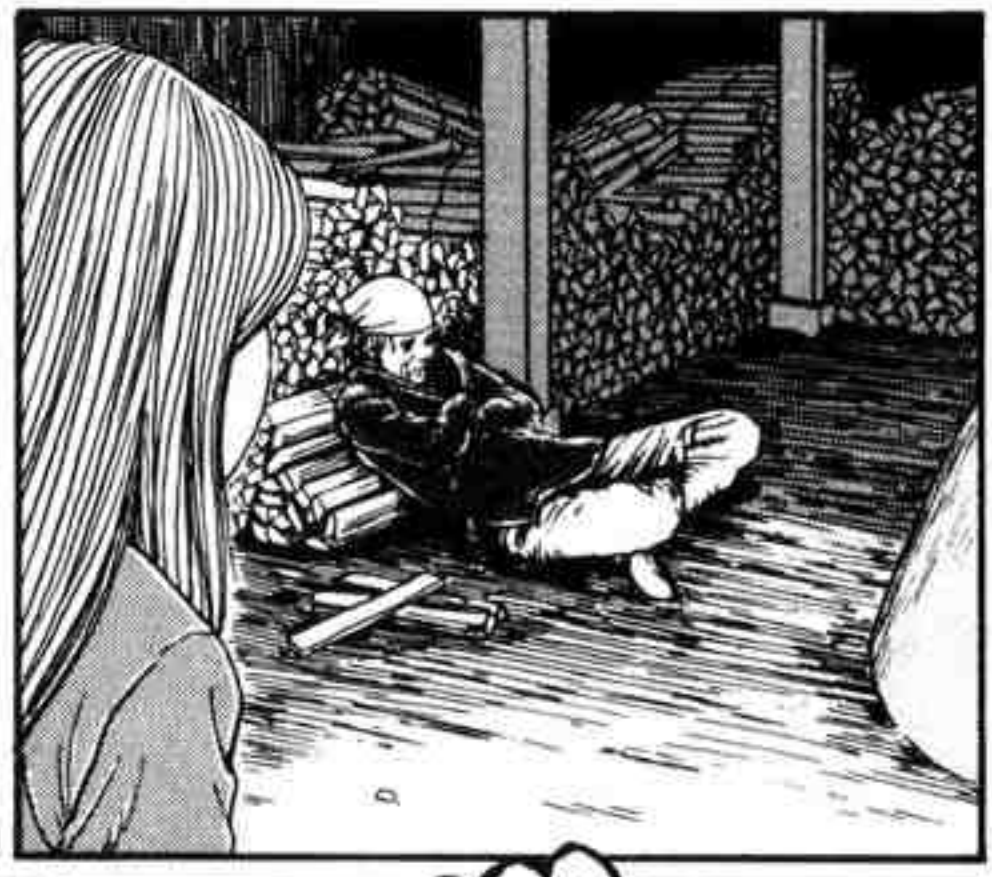
I WONDER IF FATHER'S STILL UP.
CHIK

ROARRR


I WONDER IF HE'S ALL RIGHT. HE HASN'T SLEPT IN TWO DAYS.


I SHOULD GO CHECK.
THE COTTAGE MIGHT CATCH FIRE IF HE FALLS ASLEEP.

RROARRR



I KNEW HE'D BE ASLEEP.
SNNN

ROARR

RRROOAARRR

RRROOAARRR

THAT WAS HOW...
RROOAR
...I SAW IT!

RRRROARR
AHHH
HRGHGHGH

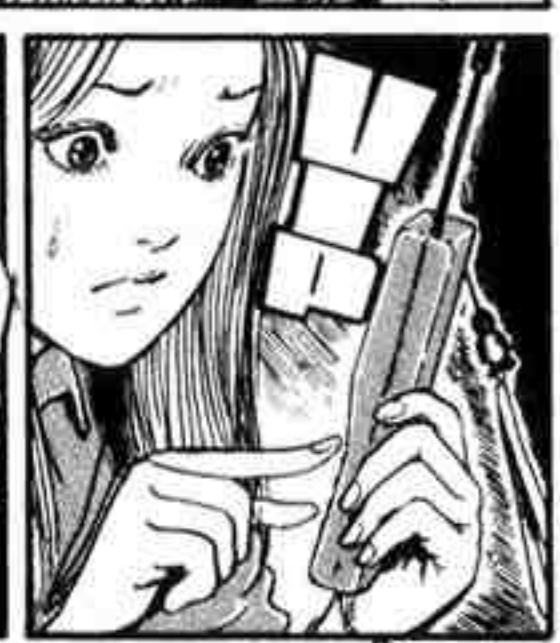
AIEEE
THE HEAT... THE HEAT...
SHUICHI... SHUICHI...
THE HEAT...
THE HEAT!!!
I CAN STILL HEAR THEM!!!
THEIR VOICES ARE REACHING THIS FAR!
SHUICHI!!!
SHUICHI!!!
THIS IS GOING TO CONTINUE FOR FOUR MORE DAYS!
THEY'RE GOING TO BE SUFFERING LIKE THIS FOR FOUR DAYS IN THE KILN!!

!
RRRING
RRRING
HELLO...
THE HEAT... THE HEAT...
AIEEEE
IT'S ME, SHUICHI. I GOT LONELY, SO I CALLED YOU.
Oh...
YOU DON'T SOUND WELL.
AIEEEE
OH... NO... IT'S NOTHING.

YOU'RE LYING! TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON!
SHUICHI... SHUICHI...
I TOLD YOU, IT'S NOTHING.

HM? HEY, I HEAR SOMETHING... SOMEONE'S VOICE?
SHUICHI... HELP ME...
WHAT?

TH-THERE'S NO ONE.
SHUICHI...
SHUICHI...
YOU'RE LYING! SOMEONE'S SCREAMING... I CAN HEAR IT!



AIEEEEE
THE HEAT... THE HEAT...

HELP ME...
AIEEEEE

THE SAME THING MUST HAVE HAPPENED THE LAST TIME HE FIRED UP THE KILN.
WE JUST DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT.
ONLY FATHER KNEW.
AND HE DIDN'T TELL US...

SHUICHI, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?! IT'S LATE!
GO HOME!
?!

MR. GOSHIMA, I NEED TO SEE YOUR KILN!
NO! GO HOME!

SHUICHI ...?
YOU'RE HERE?

SOMEONE'S CALLING FOR ME!
RRROAR
CALLING ME FROM THE KILN!
NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE!

SHUICHI
IT SOUNDS LIKE MY MOTHER!
HELP ME
I SAID GO HOME!

SHUICHI...
RROARR
SHUICHI...

YES... IT'S HER...
MY FATHER'S THERE, TOO!
WHY?
HOW COULD THEY BE IN THERE?
GET OUT OF THE WAY!
HRH
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
WHOO

HRRR

DIDIDIDIDI

AHEB
RRRLLLL
THE HEAT! THE HEAT!
SHUIIICHIII!
TUMP
TUMP
SSZZ
SSZZ

SHUICHI! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
HURRY AND GET OUT! JUST GET OUT!

FATHER!
SHUICHI!!

KRAAAAZ
CALL AN AMBU-LANCE!

KRAK KRAK
THE COTTAGE BURNED TO THE GROUND.

I SUPPOSE WE WERE LUCKY WE ONLY LOST THE KILN.

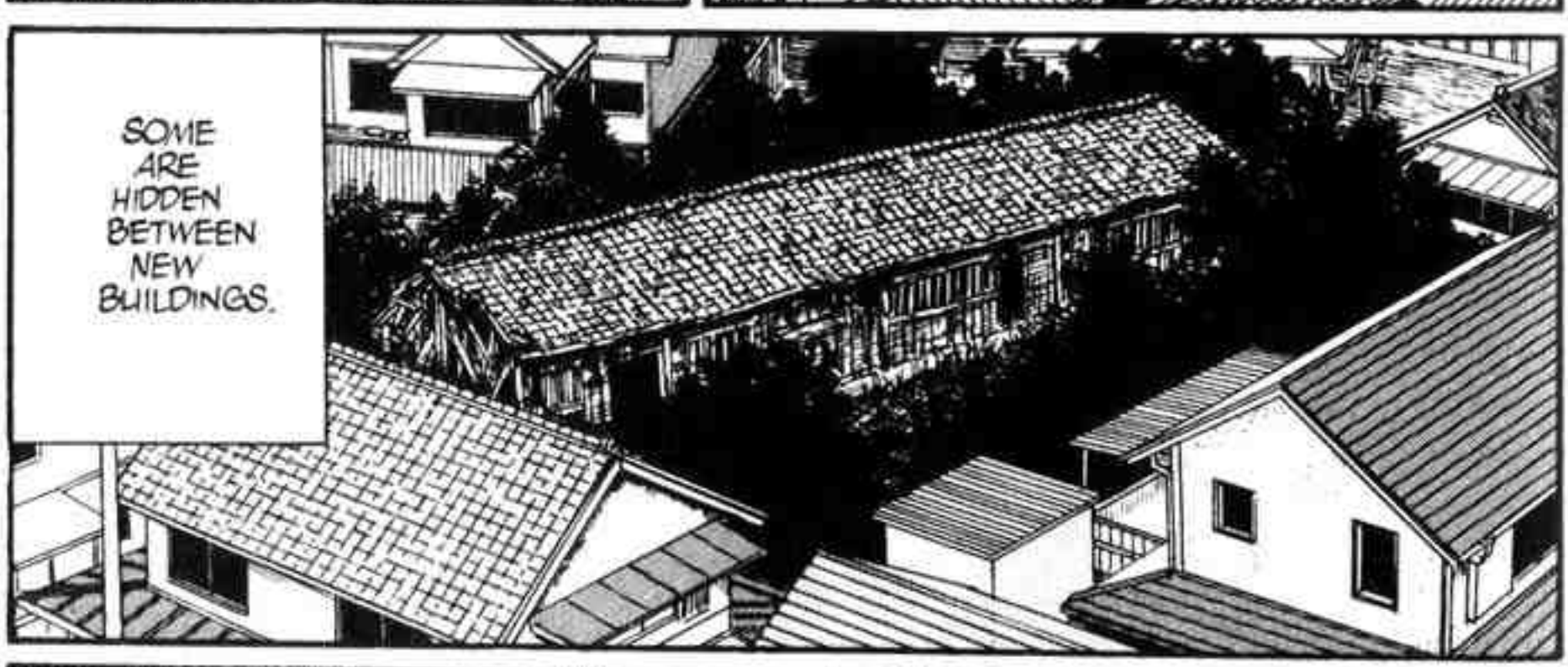
AHH, YES, HERE WE GO!
WHAT A NICE SURPRISE... THIS TURNED OUT WELL...
THERE MUST BE OTHERS BURIED AROUND HERE...

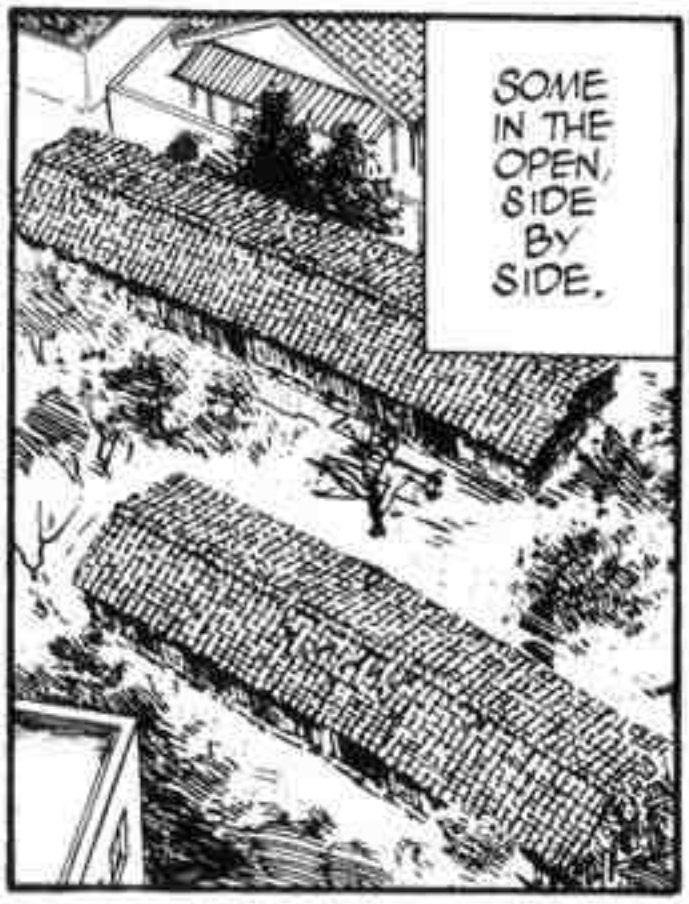
EVEN BY DAYLIGHT, FATHER'S OBSESSION CONTINUED.
SCRP
SCRP

CHAPTER
5
TWISTED SOULS

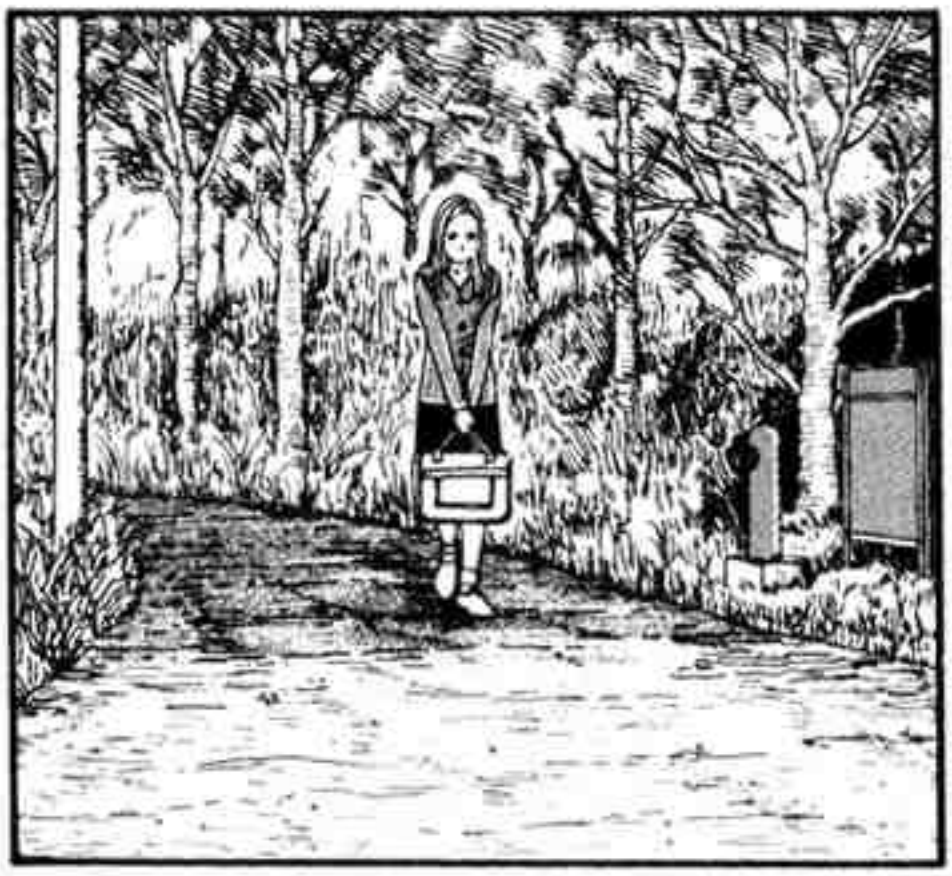
IN KURÔZU-CHO...

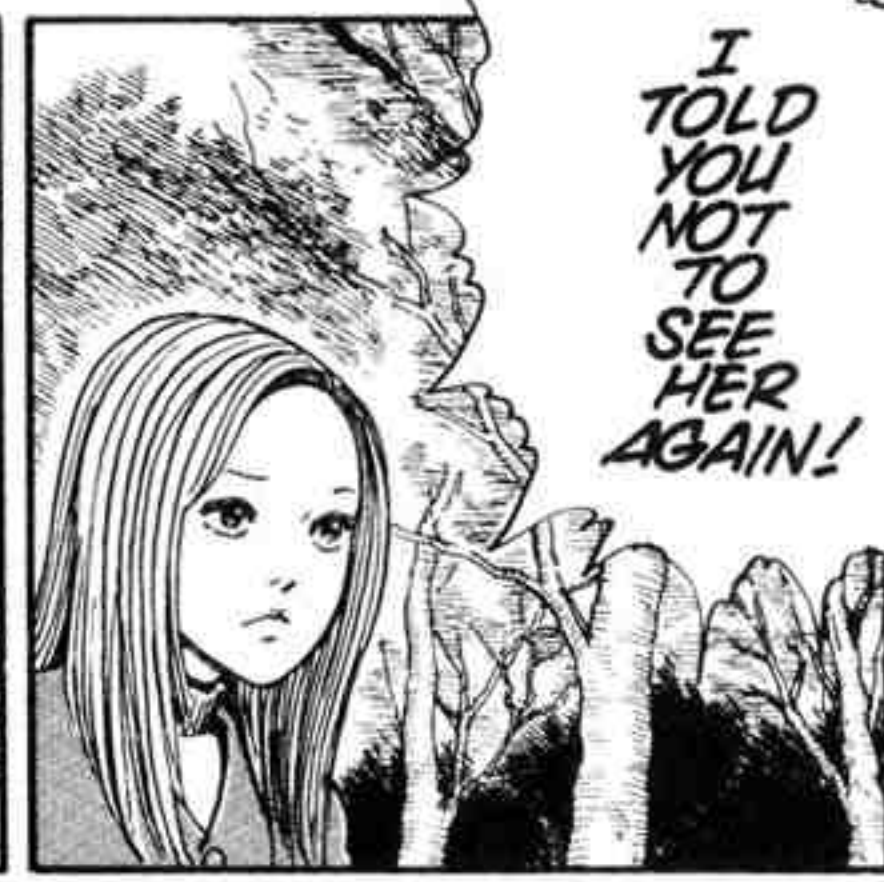
...THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ROW HOUSES IN RUINS.

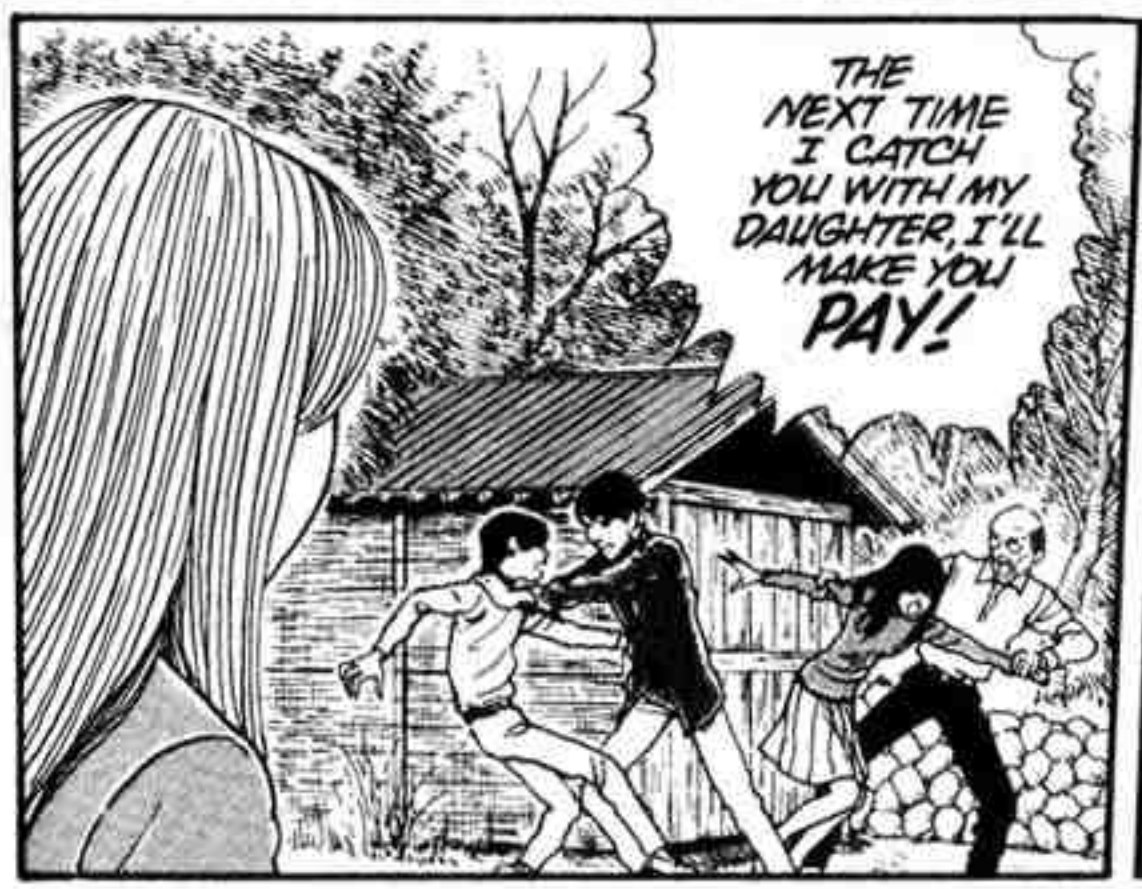

SOME ARE HIDDEN BETWEEN NEW BUILDINGS.


SOME IN THE OPEN, SIDE BY SIDE.

WHILE OTHERS, ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSING ...
...CAN BE FOUND ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN.

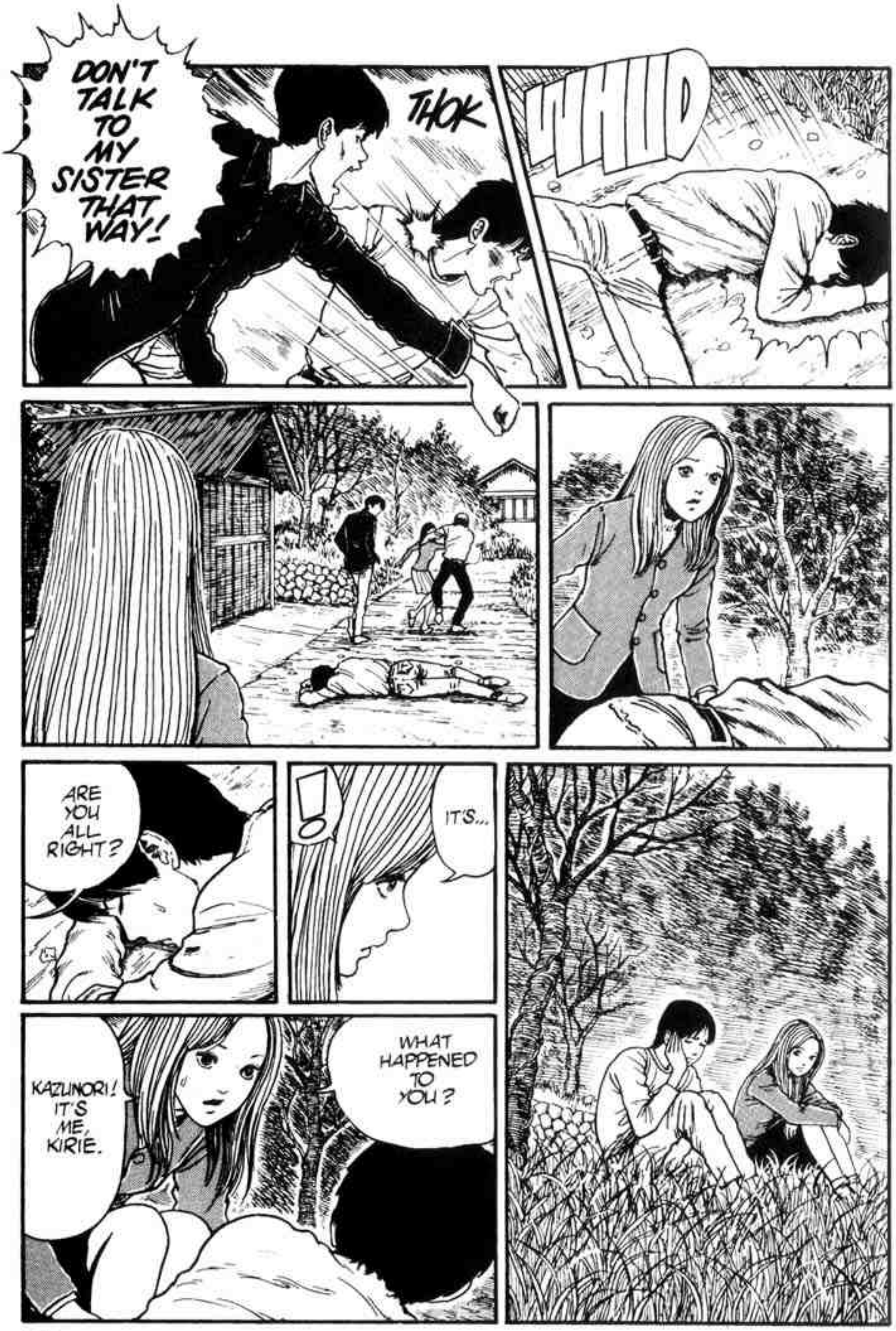



I TOLD YOU NOT TO SEE HER AGAIN!


THE NEXT TIME I CATCH YOU WITH MY DAUGHTER, I'LL MAKE YOU PAY!

PLEASE, SIR, JUST LET ME TALK TO HER!
NO!

I CAN'T LET MY PRECIOUS DAUGHTER NEAR YOUR WRETCHED FAMILY!
COME ON, YORIKO!
LET ME GO, DAD!
YORIKO!


DON'T TALK TO MY SISTER THAT WAY!
THOK
WHUD
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
!
IT'S...
KAZUNORI! IT'S ME, KIRIE.
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

THEY LIVE IN THE SAME ROW HOUSE AS US.

WE LIVE ON OPPOSITE ENDS, BUT...

...OUR FAMILIES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ENEMIES.

BUT YORIKO AND I HAVE FALLEN IN LOVE.

WELL... YOU KNOW... YOU HAVE SHUICHI ...

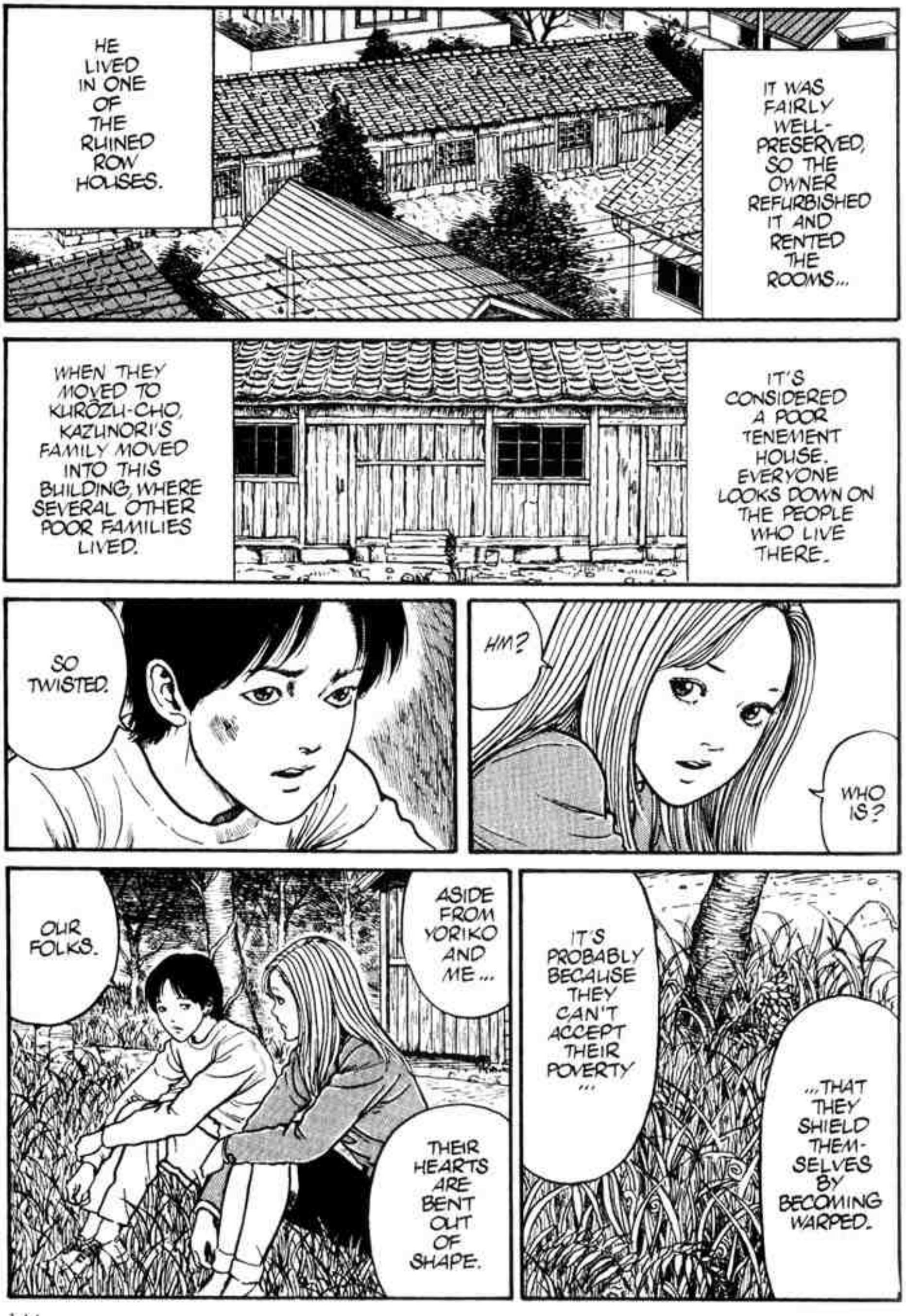
BUT OUR FAMILIES WON'T LET US SEE EACH OTHER.

WE'VE TRIED EVERYTHING TO MAKE THEM ACCEPT US...

...BUT NOTHING WORKS.

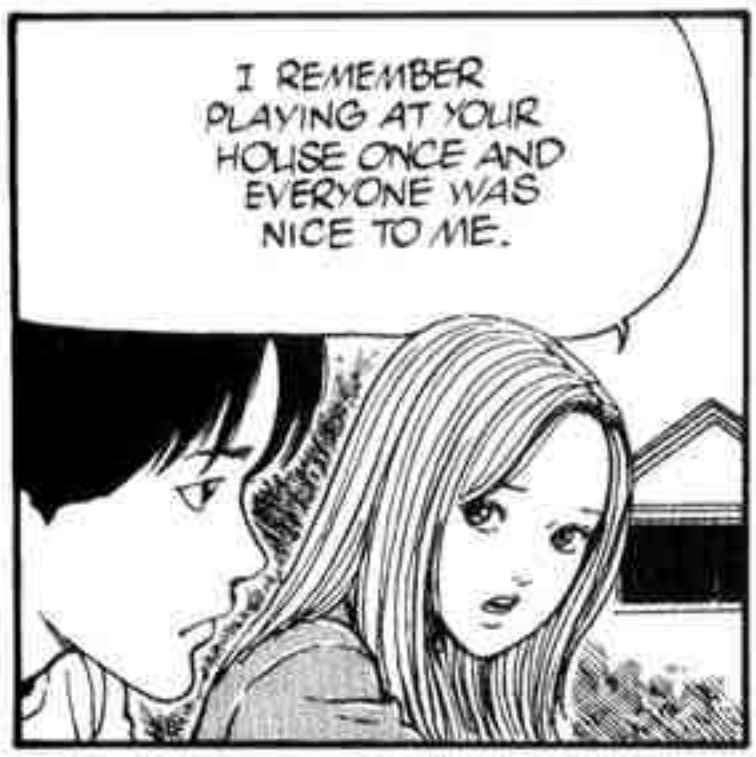
...

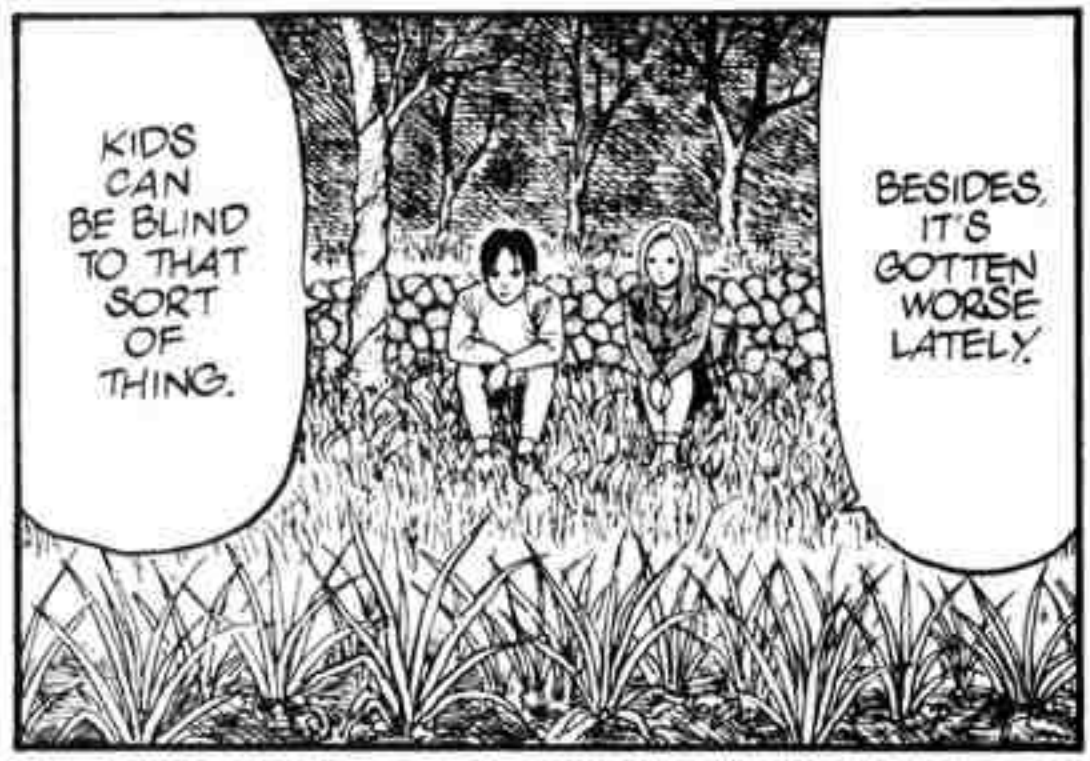
KAZUNORI NISHIKI HAS BEEN MY CLASS-MATE EVER SINCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.


HE LIVED IN ONE OF THE RUINED ROW HOUSES.
IT WAS FAIRLY WELL-PRESERVED, SO THE OWNER REFURBISHED IT AND RENTED THE ROOMS...
WHEN THEY MOVED TO KUROZU-CHO, KAZUNORI'S FAMILY MOVED INTO THIS BUILDING, WHERE SEVERAL OTHER POOR FAMILIES LIVED.
IT'S CONSIDERED A POOR TENEMENT HOUSE. EVERYONE LOOKS DOWN ON THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE.
SO TWISTED.
HM?
WHO IS?
OUR FOLKS.
ASIDE FROM YORIKO AND ME...
THEIR HEARTS ARE BENT OUT OF SHAPE.
IT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE THEY CAN'T ACCEPT THEIR POVERTY ...
...THAT THEY SHIELD THEM-SELVES BY BECOMING WARPED.

THAT SLUM COLLECTS PEOPLE WITH TWISTED SOULS.
WHEN THEY FIGHT, THEY CAN'T CONTROL THEMSELVES. THERE'S NO WAY OUT. YOU CAN'T UNTANGLE THEM.

BUT YOU'RE NOT LIKE THAT, KAZUNORI!


I REMEMBER PLAYING AT YOUR HOUSE ONCE AND EVERYONE WAS NICE TO ME.

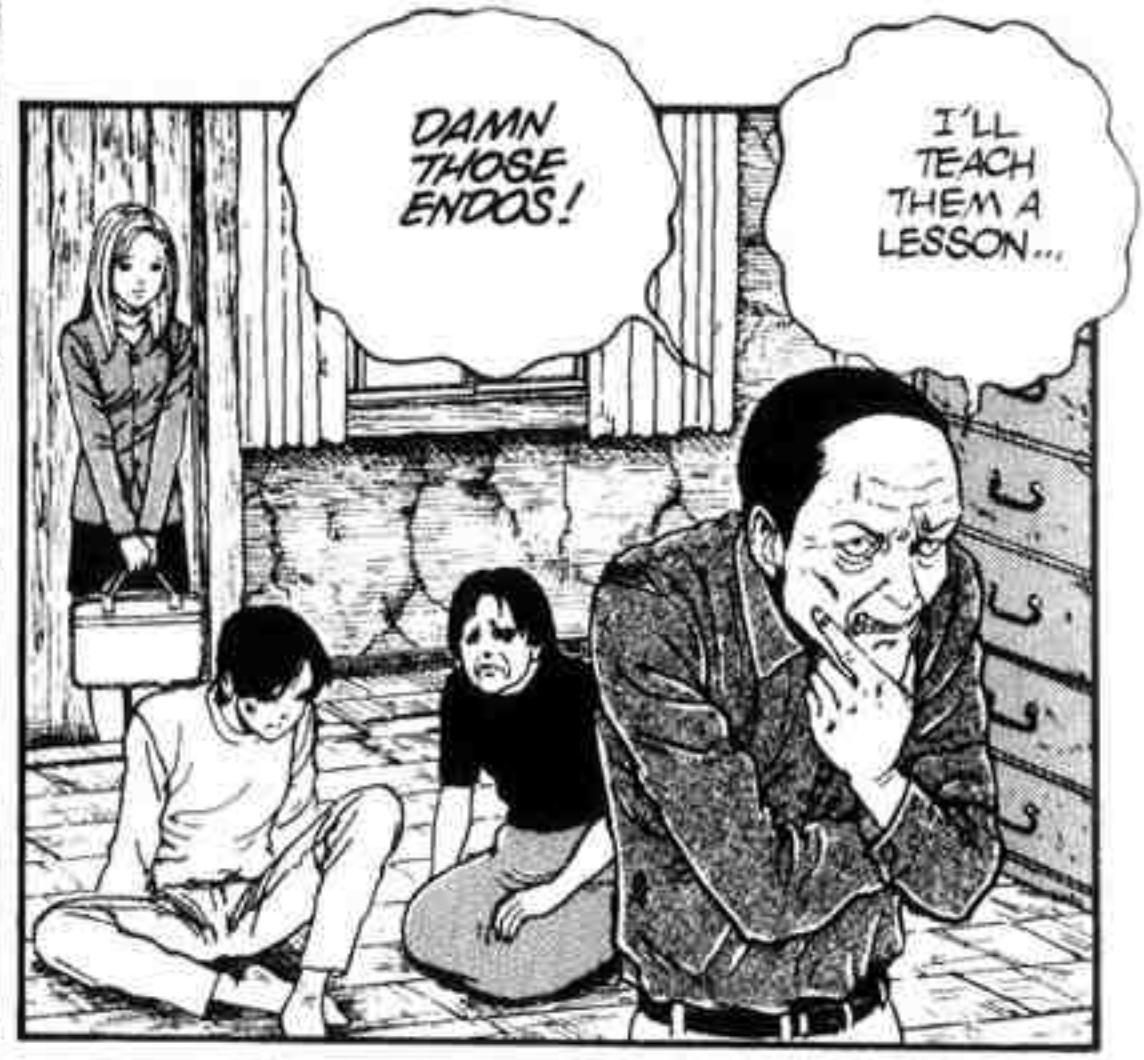

KIDS CAN BE BLIND TO THAT SORT OF THING.
BESIDES, IT'S GOTTEN WORSE LATELY.

I SHOULD GET GOING, THOUGH.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? CAN YOU WALK?
YEAH ...

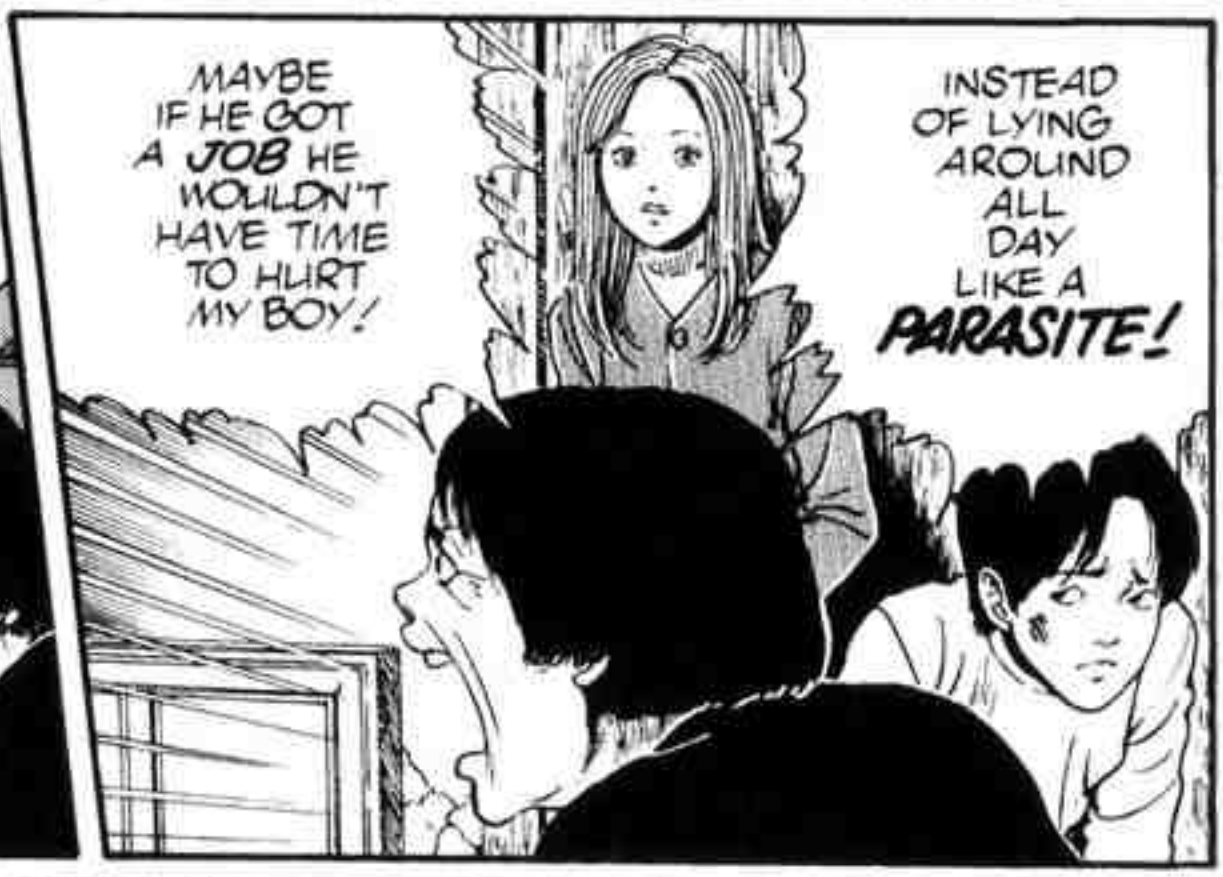
W-WATCH OUT!
SLP

I ENDED UP WALKING HIM HOME.

KAZUNORI! I TOLD YOU NOT TO SEE THAT GIRL!!
AND THEN YOU LET THEM BEAT YOU UP? HOW PATHETIC!


DAMN THOSE ENDOS!
I'LL TEACH THEM A LESSON...

THEY HURT MY POOR KAZUNORI ...
SO THEIR SON DID THIS TO YOU?
OW, MOM...


MAYBE IF HE GOT A JOB HE WOULDN'T HAVE TIME TO HURT MY BOY!
INSTEAD OF LYING AROUND ALL DAY LIKE A PARASITE!

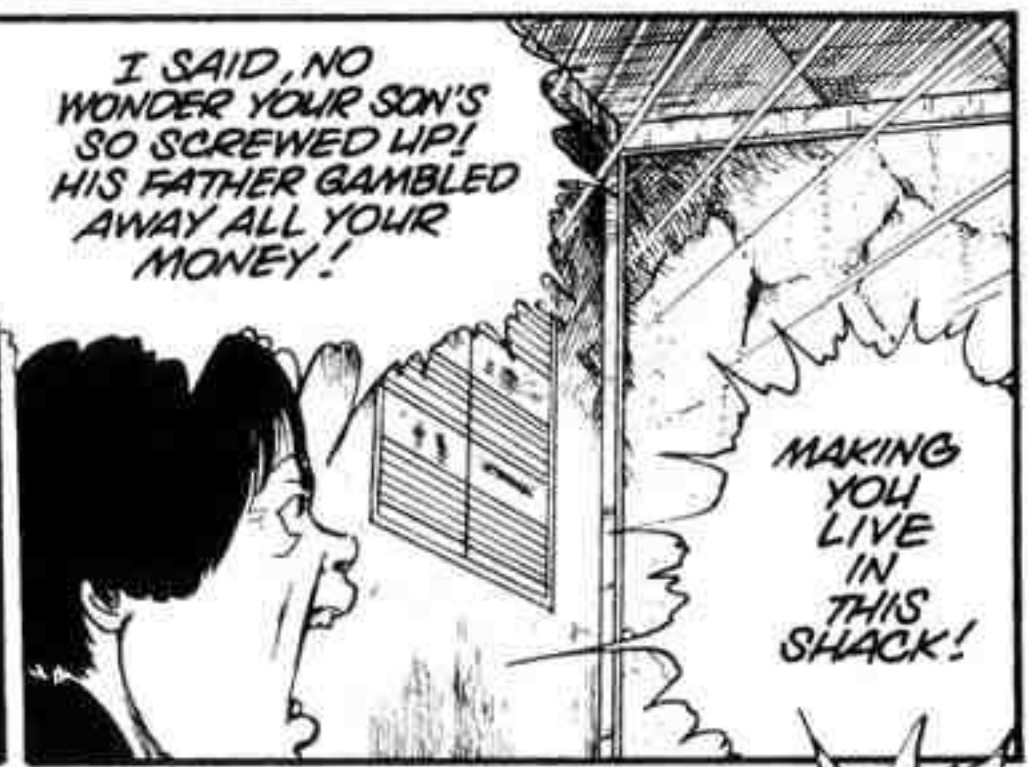
SHUT UP, BITCH! OR I'LL KILL YOU!
W-WHAT? WHY, YOU THUG!

THEY LIVE AT OPPOSITE ENDS, BUT THEIR VOICES GO RIGHT THROUGH THE WALLS...

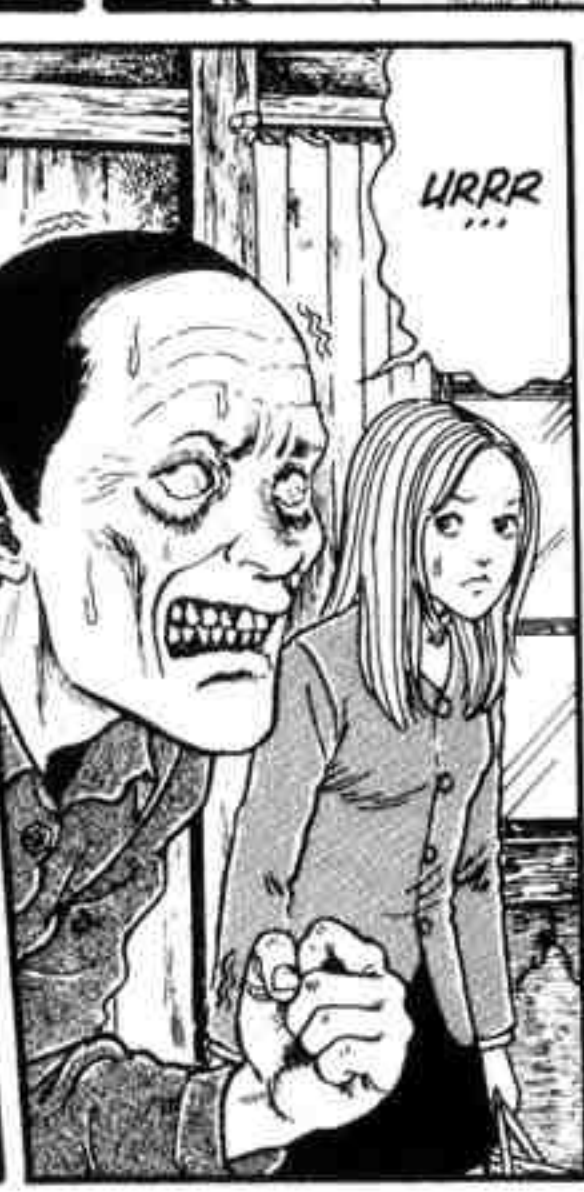
WHAT WAS THAT YOU SAID ABOUT MY SON?!

THERE SHE GOES!
THE THUG'S MOTHER.

STOP IT, MOM.
SHUT YOUR MOUTH!


I SAID, NO WONDER YOUR SON'S SO SCREWED UP! HIS FATHER GAMBLED AWAY ALL YOUR MONEY!
MAKING YOU LIVE IN THIS SHACK!

YOU'RE ONE TO TALK! YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE IF YOUR HUSBAND COULD RUN A BUSINESS! I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU!
SHUT UP!


URRR...

STOP IT!

I CAN'T STAND IT!
WHY CAN'T YOU STOP FIGHTING?

DON'T YOU UNDER-STAND?
I LOVE YORIKO!

IT'S ALL POINTLESS! FORGET ABOUT IT!
WHY CAN'T WE JUST GET ALONG?
SLAM

SLAM

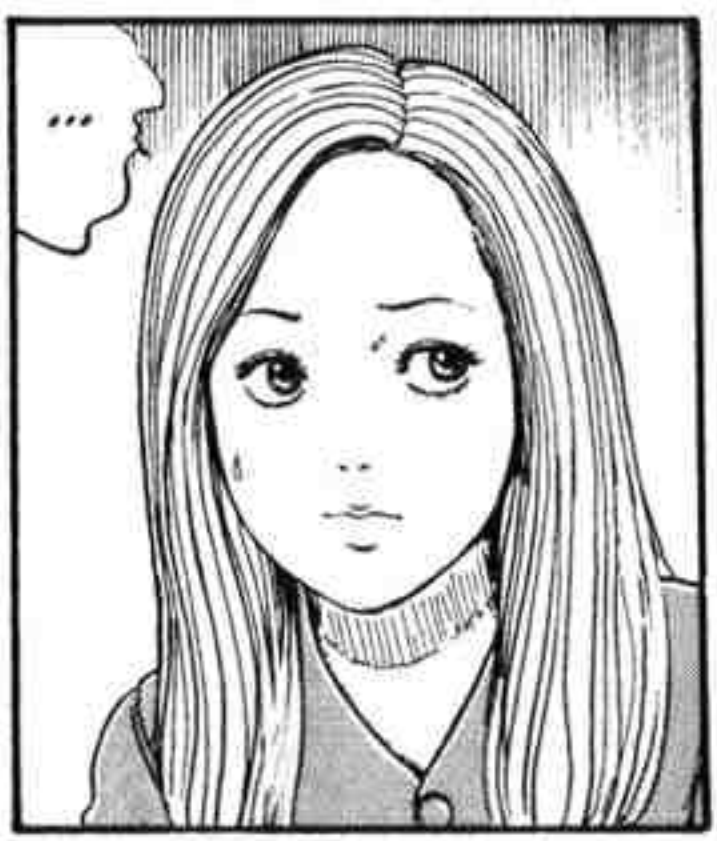
KAZUNORI!

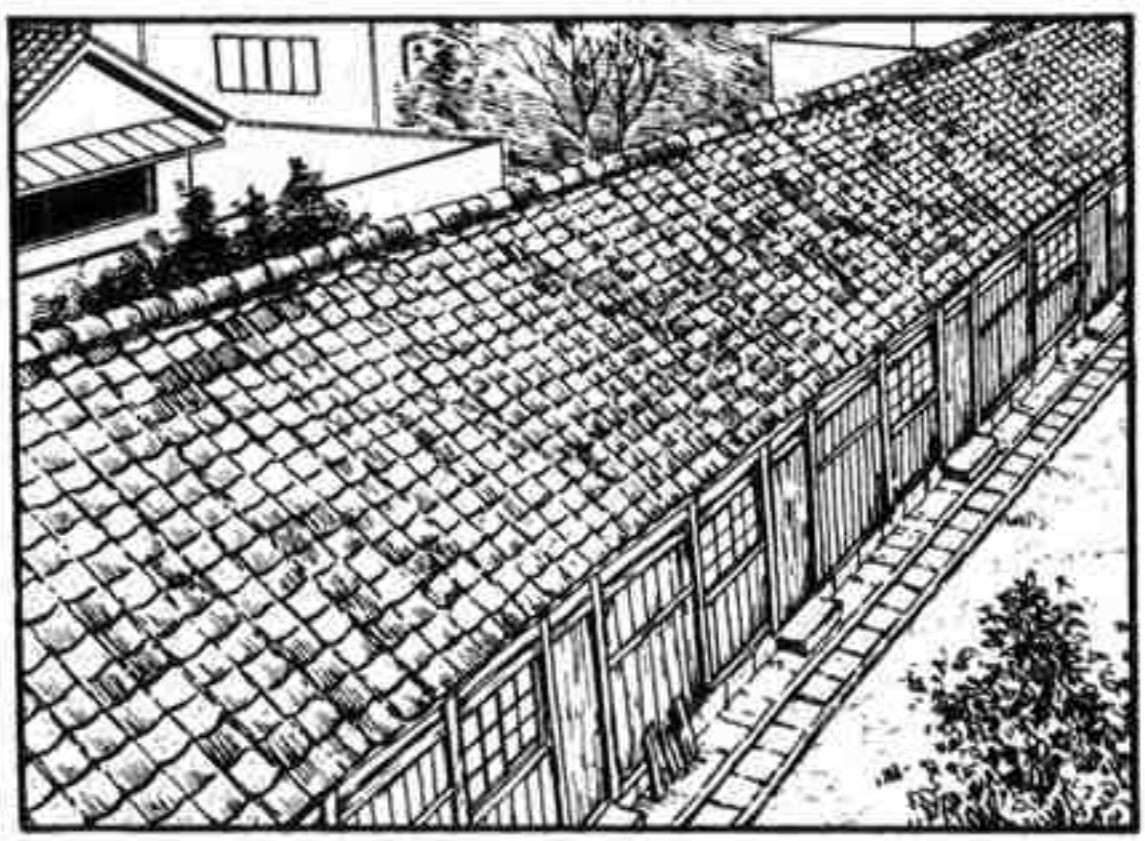
YORIKO!

THAT'S ENOUGH!
PLEASE, DAD!
NO!

KAZUNORI! YOU'RE EMBARRASSING US!
SLAM
GET BACK INSIDE!

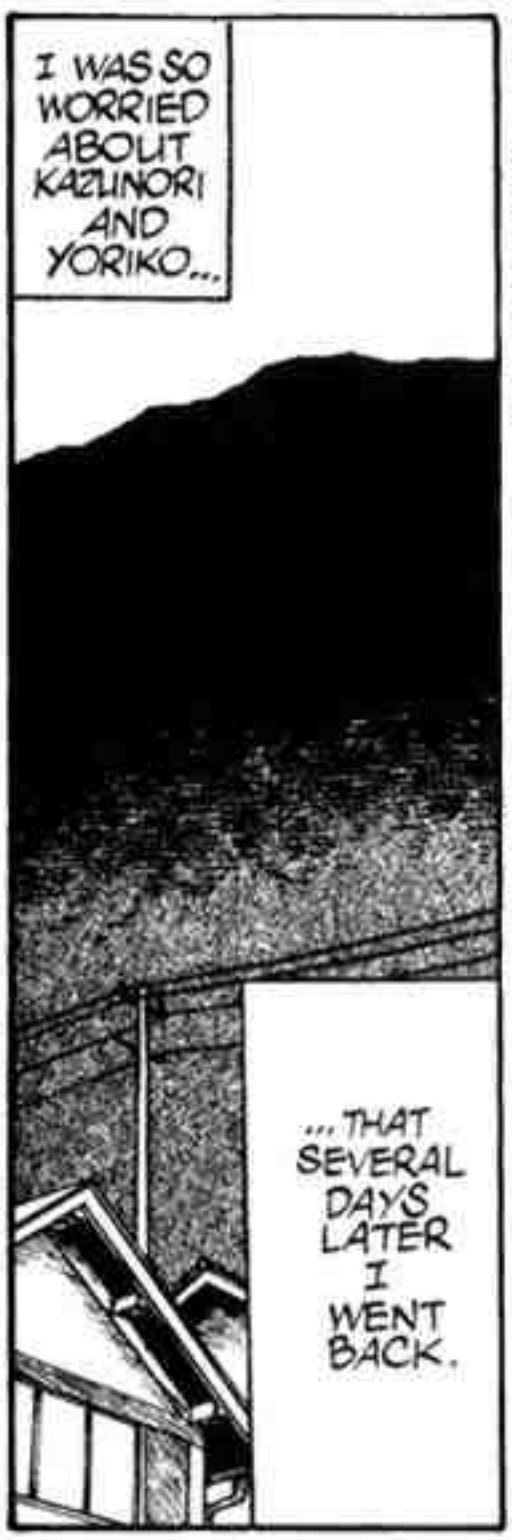
YORIKO!

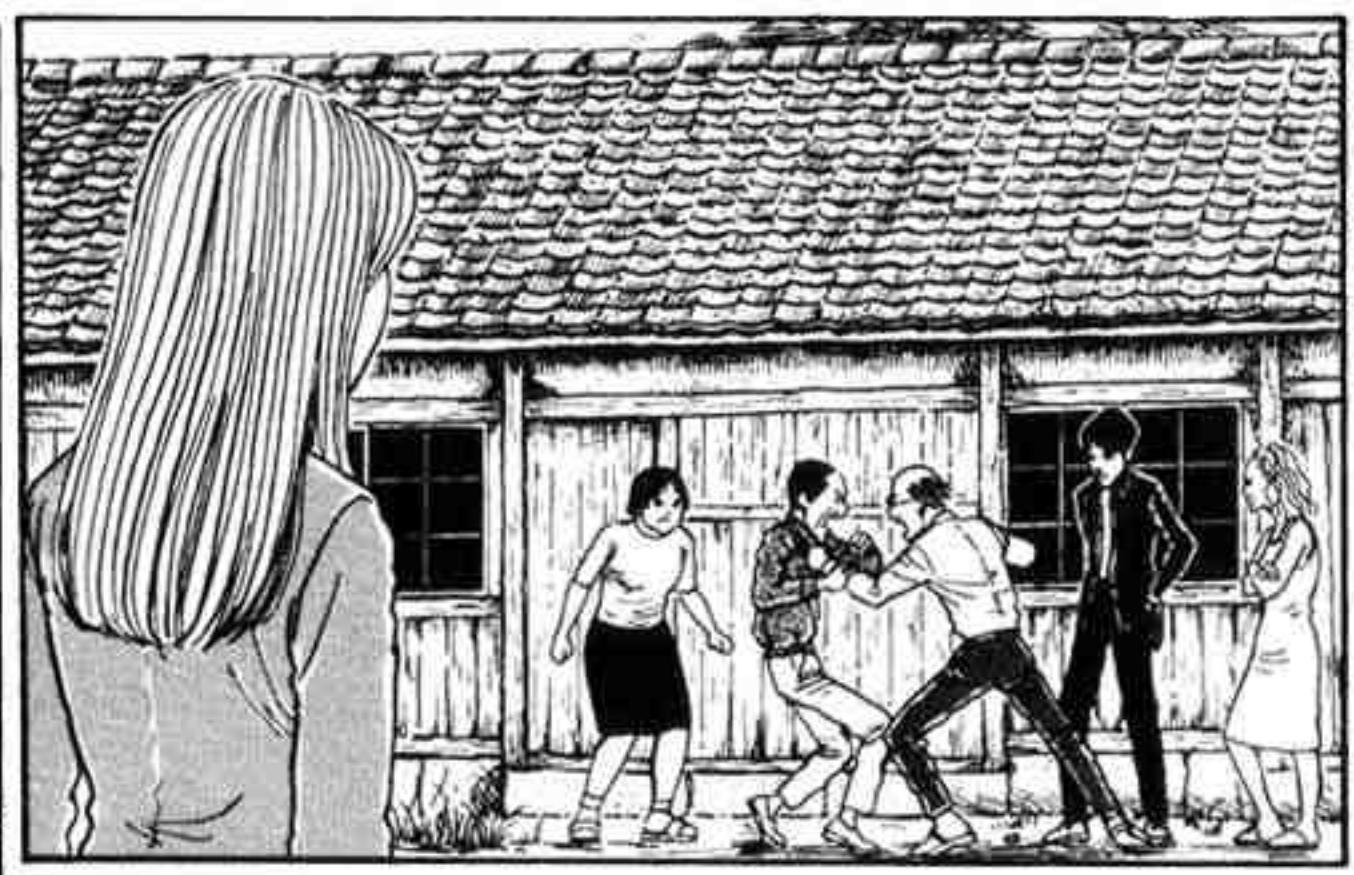

...



SO HOW ABOUT IT, KIRIE? WHY DON'T YOU AND I JUST LEAVE TOWN?
WE COULD GO TONIGHT ...RUN AWAY...
SH-SHUICHI!

FORGET IT!
I WON'T ASK FOR YOUR HELP ANY MORE!


I WAS SO WORRIED ABOUT KAZUNORI AND YORIKO...
...THAT SEVERAL DAYS LATER I WENT BACK.



THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN!

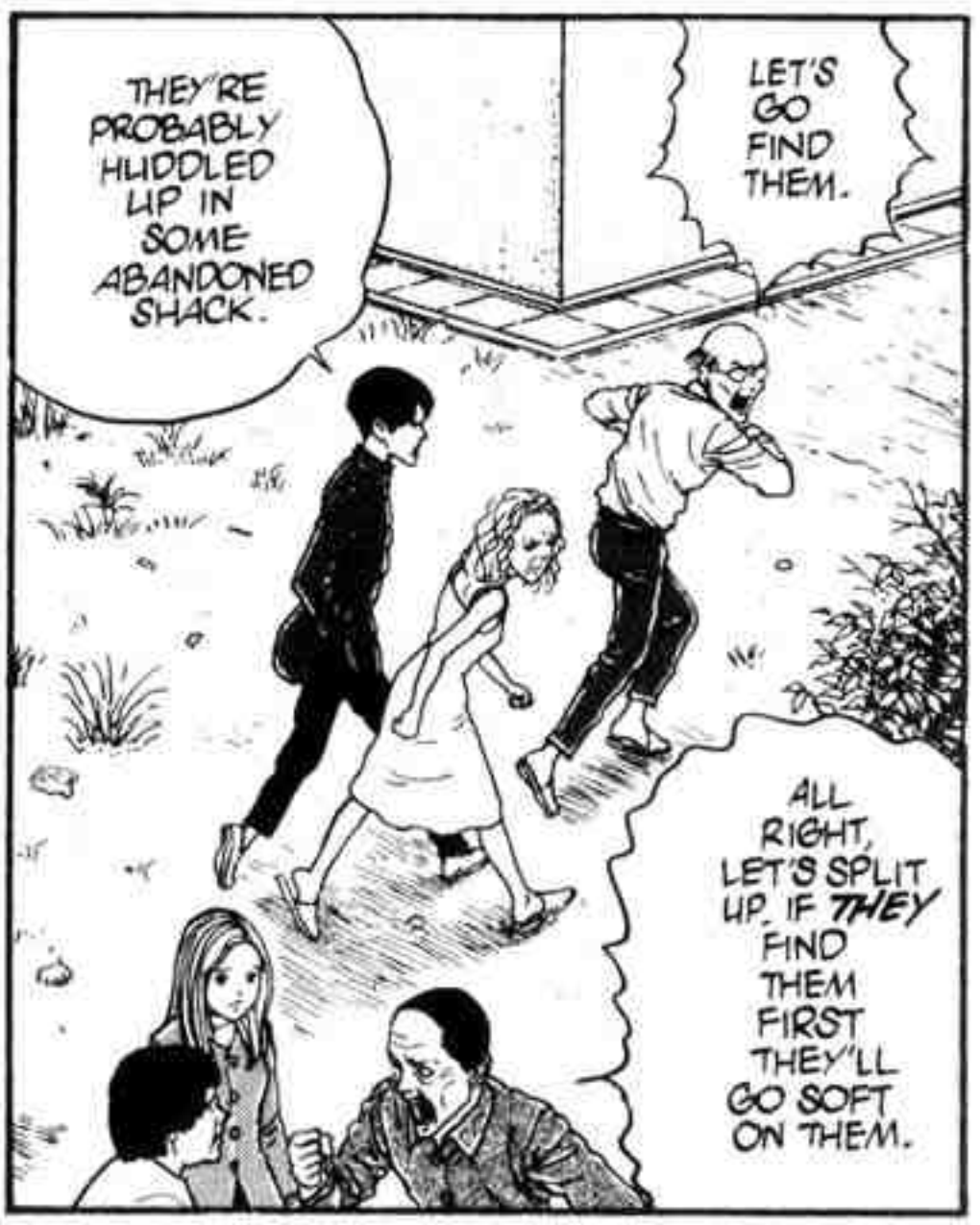
IT'S BECAUSE YOU DON'T KEEP AN EYE ON THAT IMBECILE SON OF YOURS!
I ADVISE YOU TIE UP YOUR DAUGHTER.

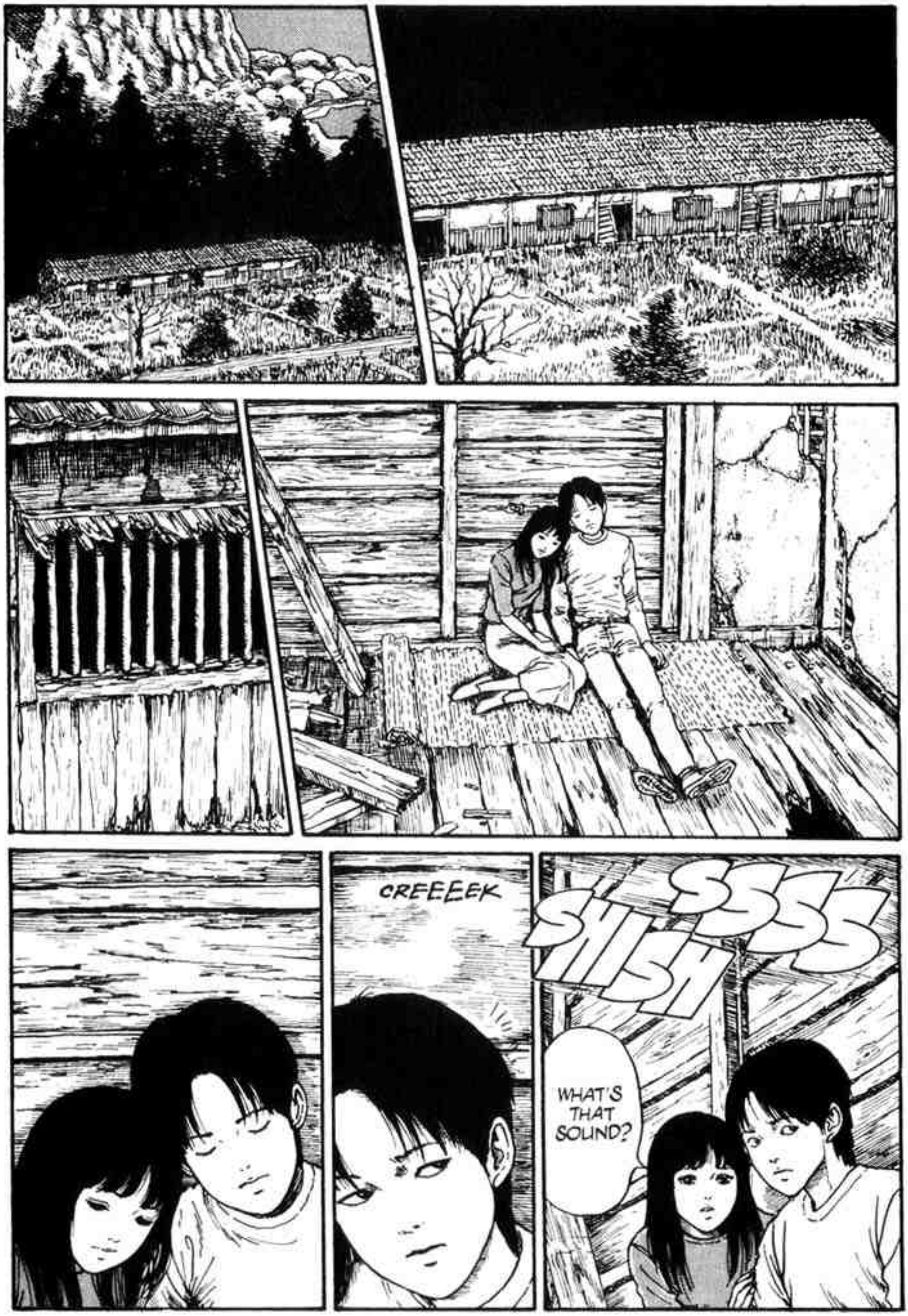
EXCUSE ME ...

HAS... HAS SOME-THING HAPPENED ?

Oh, KIRIE...
AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU.

KAZUNORI'S BEEN SEDUCED BY THAT GIRL AGAIN. THEY'VE BEEN GONE SINCE YESTERDAY.
IT'S YOUR SON WHO DID THE SEDUCING!


THEY'RE PROBABLY HUDDLED UP IN SOME ABANDONED SHACK.
LET'S GO FIND THEM.
ALL RIGHT, LET'S SPLIT UP. IF THEY FIND THEM FIRST THEY'LL GO SOFT ON THEM.


CREEEEK
SSSS SHISH
WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

SSSSHSH

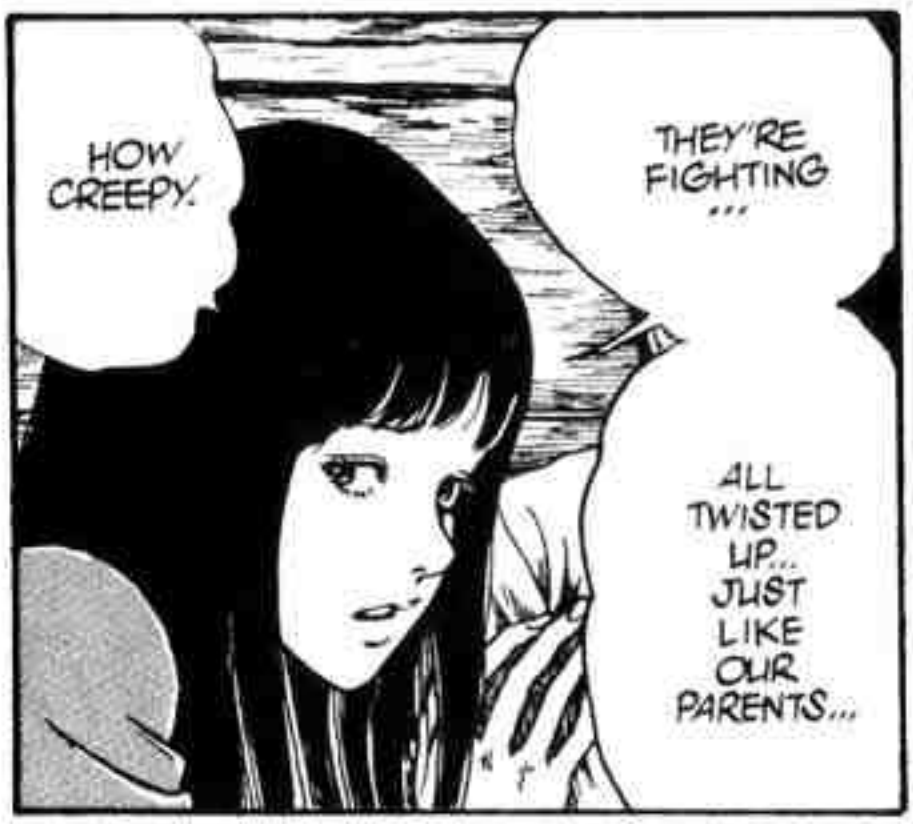
SHURRR

AAHH!

SHIRR

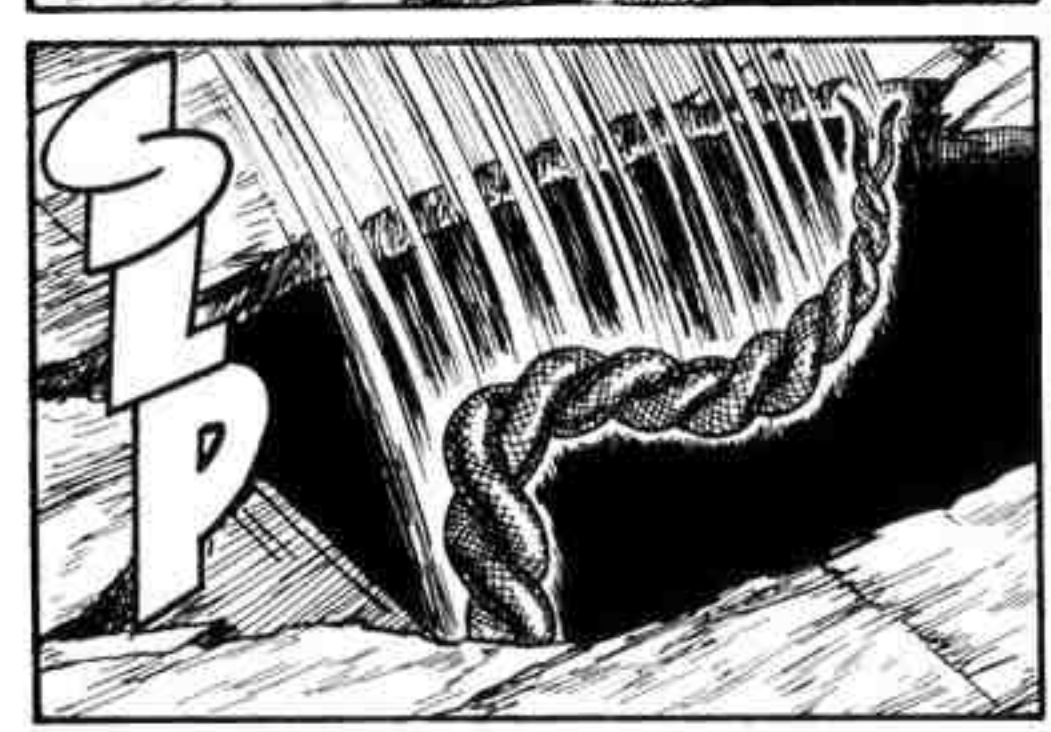
W-
WHAT IS
THAT?

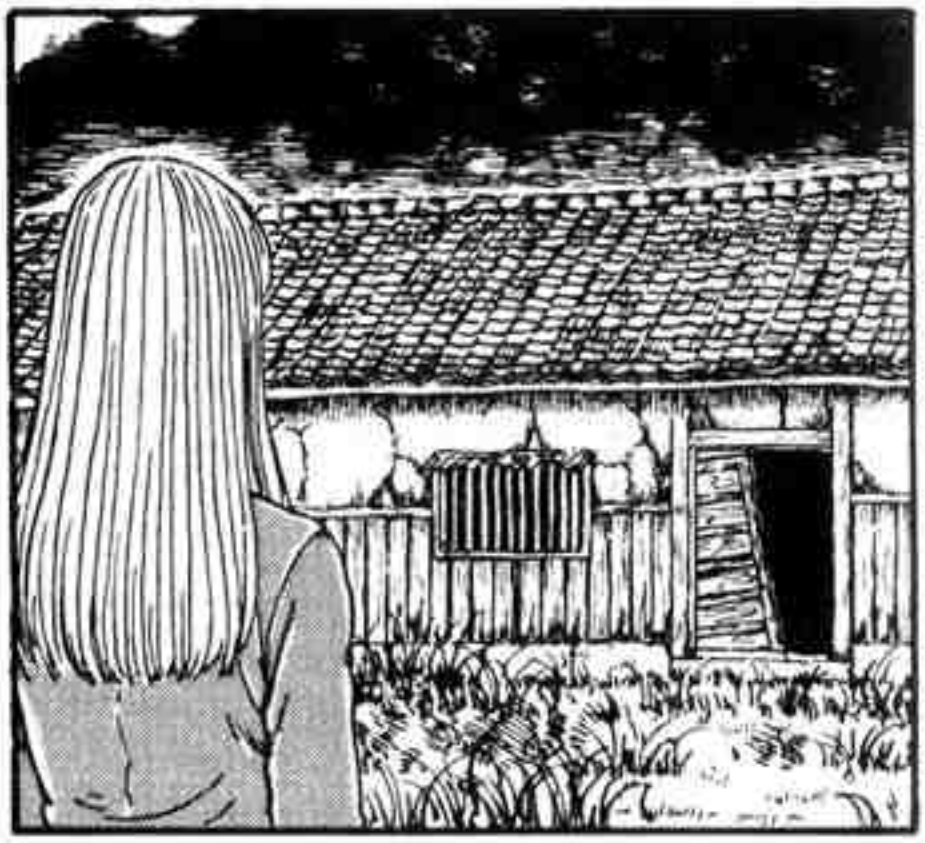
SNAKES!
TWO SNAKES INTER-TWINED!


HOW CREEPY.
THEY'RE FIGHTING ...
ALL TWISTED UP... JUST LIKE OUR PARENTS...

THEY'RE NOT FIGHTING.
THEY'RE ...
slish

NO.


SLP



KAZUNORI, I CANT STAND BEING AWAY FROM YOU.
I WANT TO BE WITH YOU FOR-EVER.

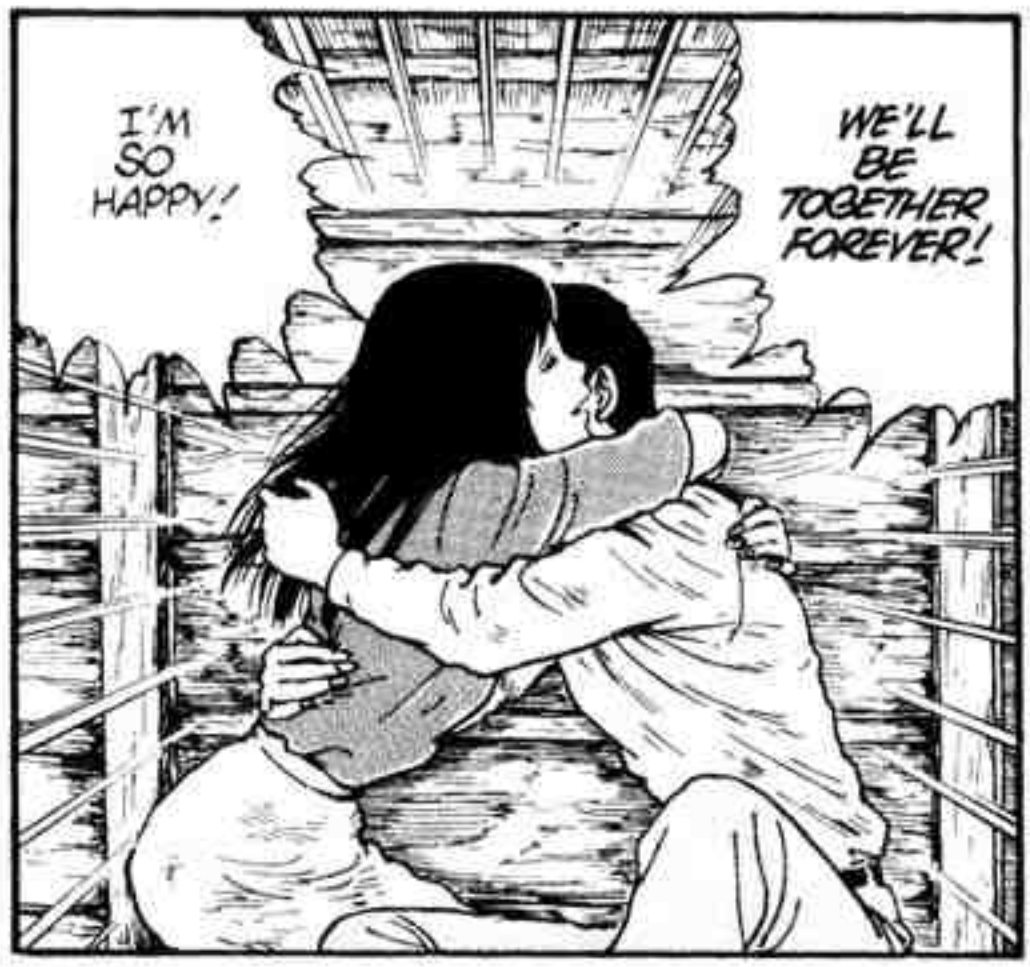
SHOULD WE JUST RUN AWAY?

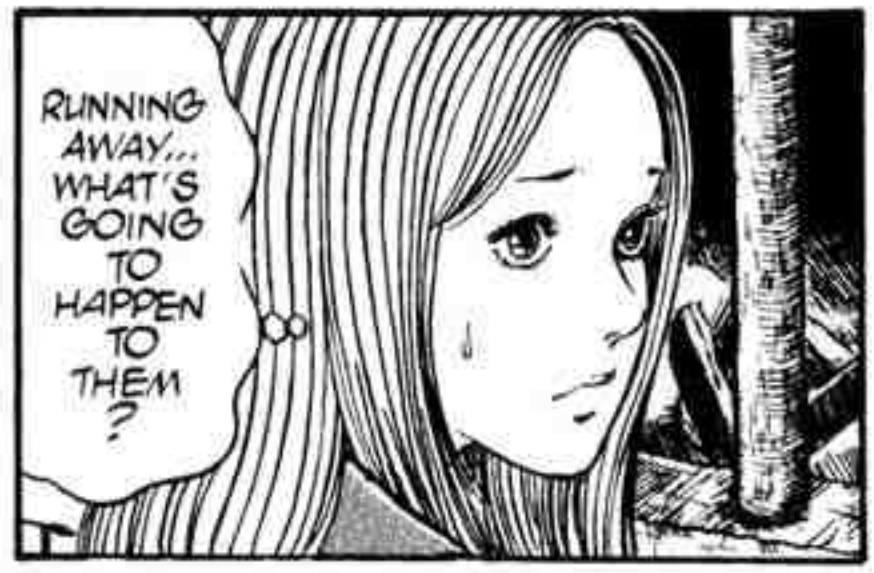
YOU MEAN ELOPE ?

YES.

LET'S DO IT! LET'S LEAVE KUROZU-CHO!

I'LL GO ANY-WHERE IF IT MEANS I CAN BE WITH YOU.
ALL RIGHT, THEN TOMOR-ROW!

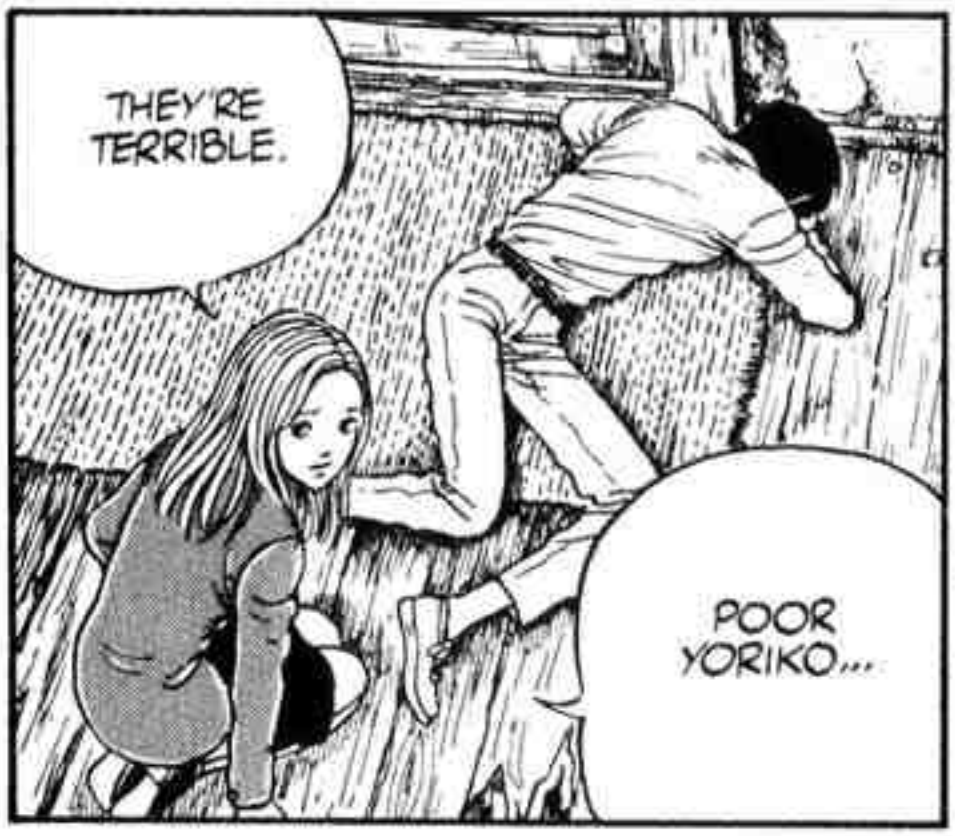

I'M SO HAPPY!
WE'LL BE TOGETHER FOREVER!


RUNNING AWAY... WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO THEM?

THEY MUST BE HERE.
OH, NO.

MR. ENDO, SIR?

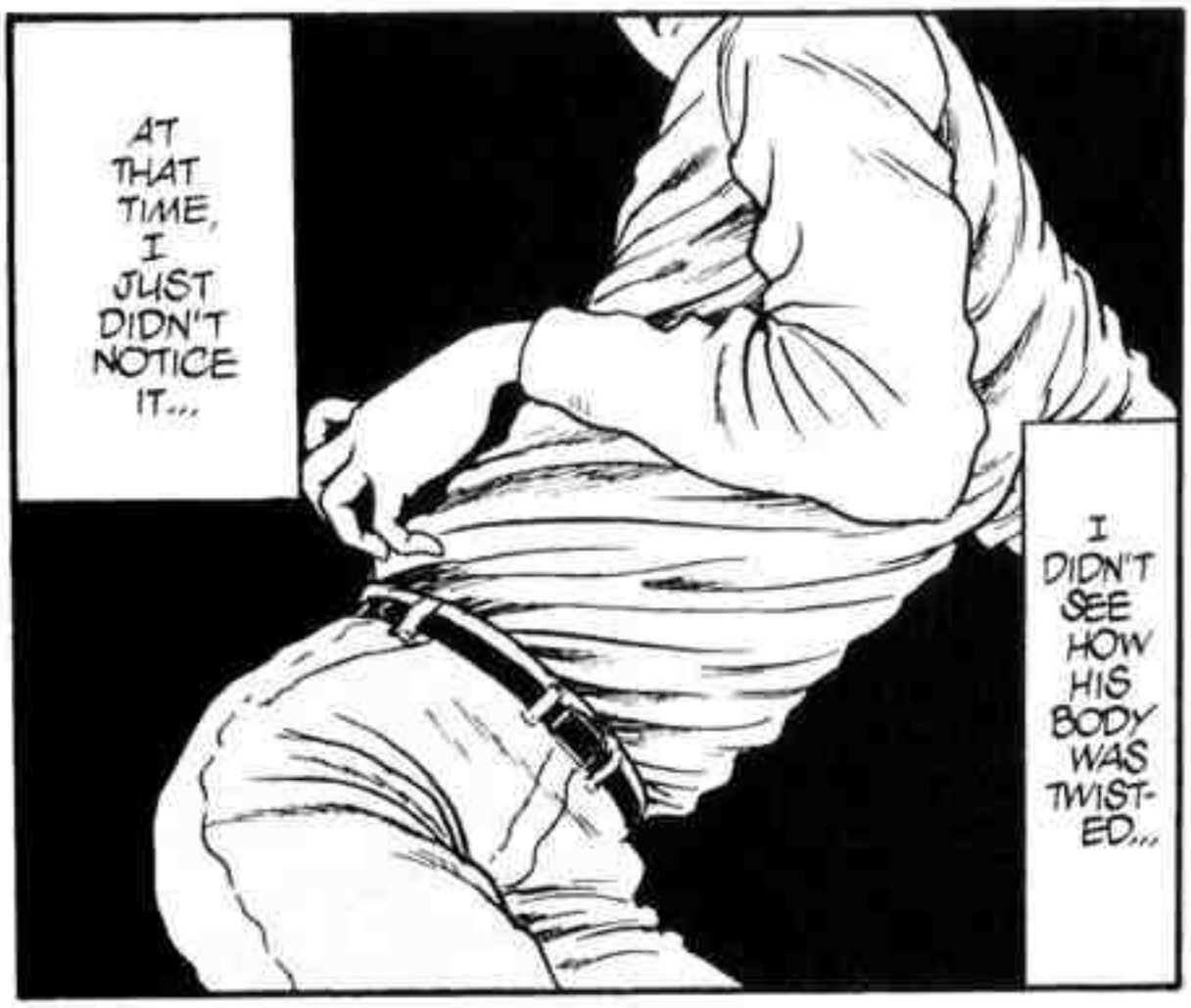
HUH?!
EEEYAAH! STOP IT, DAD!
COME ON, YORIKO.
NO!
NO! NO!
...
KAZUNORI ...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

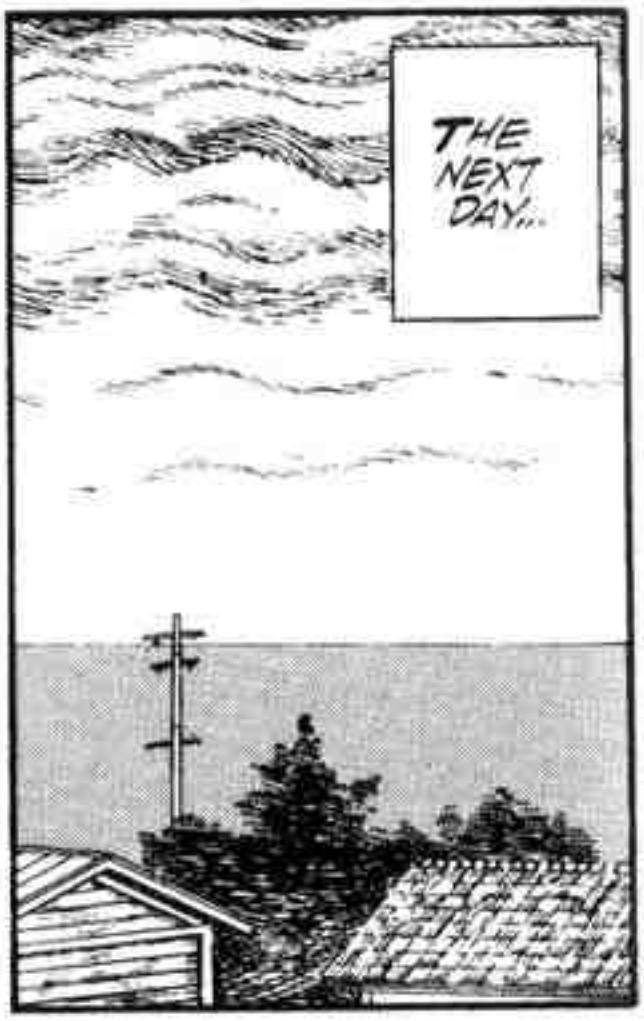

THEY'RE TERRIBLE.
POOR YORIKO...

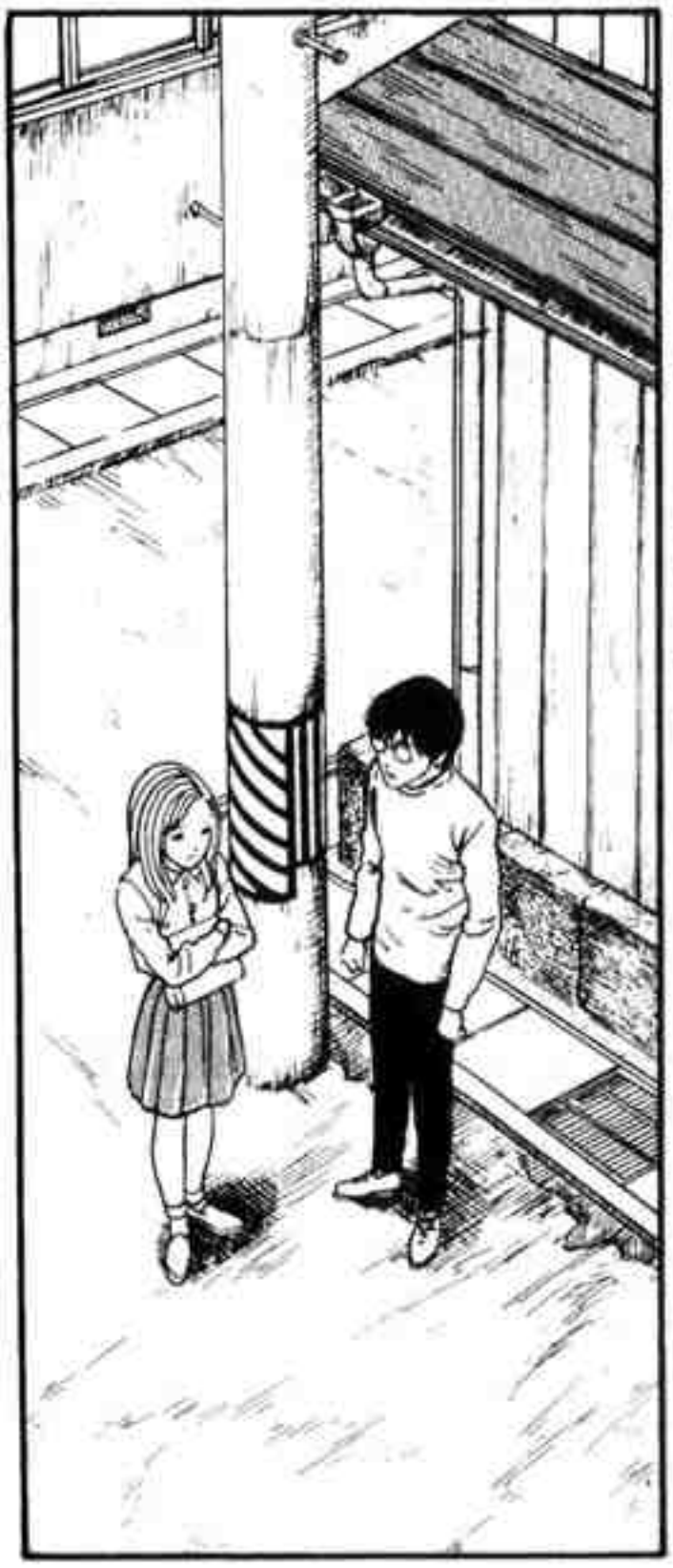
MAYBE IT WOULD BE BEST FOR YOU TWO TO RUN AWAY.
IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP...

URR...

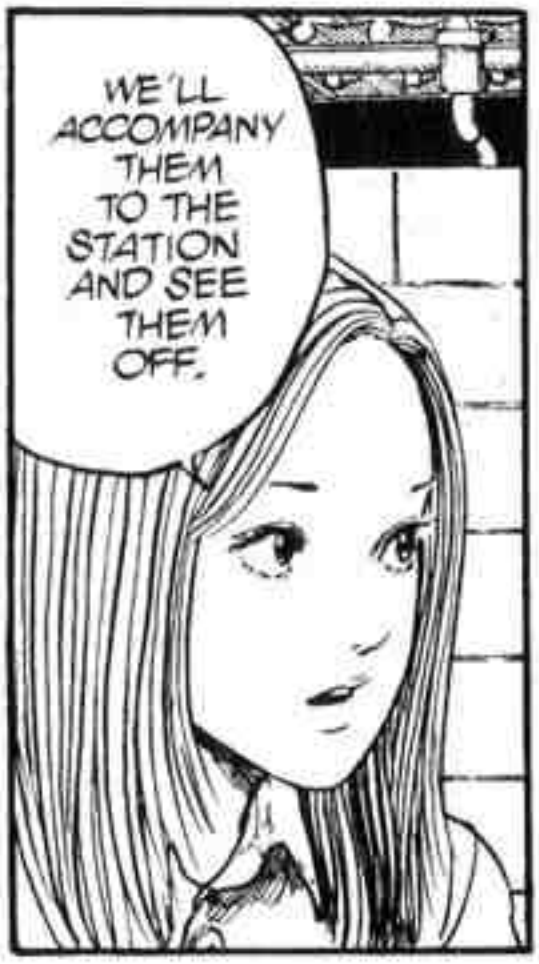
OH...
IT'S YOU.


AT THAT TIME, I JUST DIDN'T NOTICE IT...
I DIDN'T SEE HOW HIS BODY WAS TWISTED...


THE NEXT DAY...



ARE THEY REALLY COMING?
YES, THEY PROMISED TO MEET ME HERE.

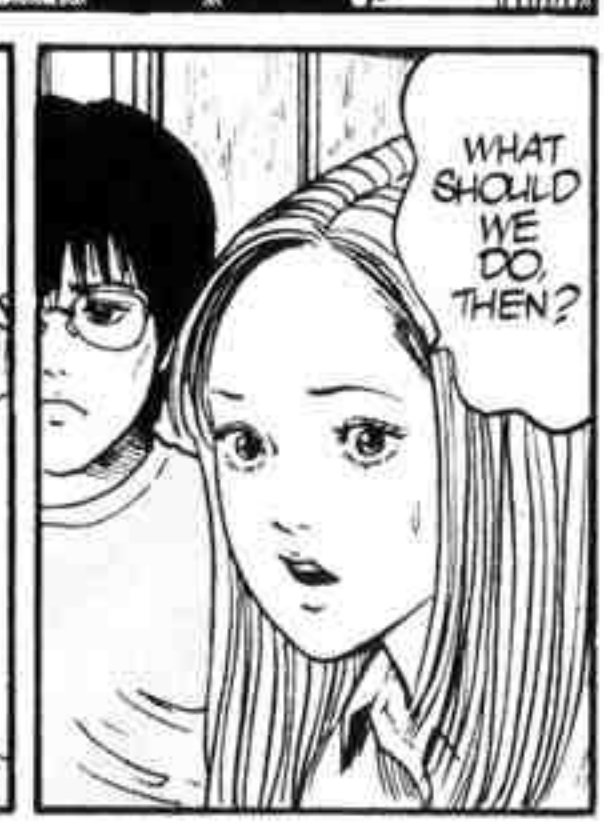

WE'LL ACCOMPANY THEM TO THE STATION AND SEE THEM OFF.

ELOPING, HUH...
GOOD IDEA.

HERE THEY COME!

HUFF HUFF
HUFF HUFF
WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT'S THE RUSH?

OUR PARENTS SAW US LEAVING!
THEY HAVE SOMEONE WAITING AT THE STATION!
OUR FATHERS ARE AFTER US NOW.

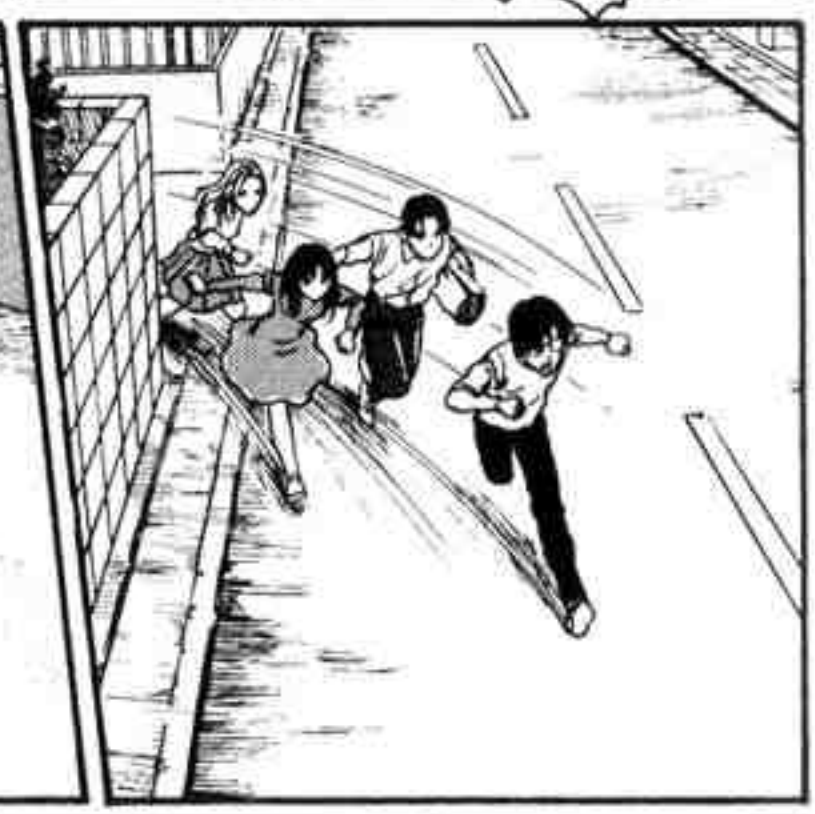

WHAT SHOULD WE DO, THEN?

WE'LL HEAD TO THE BEACH!
WE'LL CIRCLE AROUND TO THE ROAD OUT OF TOWN!
SHUICHI!

THERE THEY ARE!

THIS WAY!
STOP!

SHAAAA



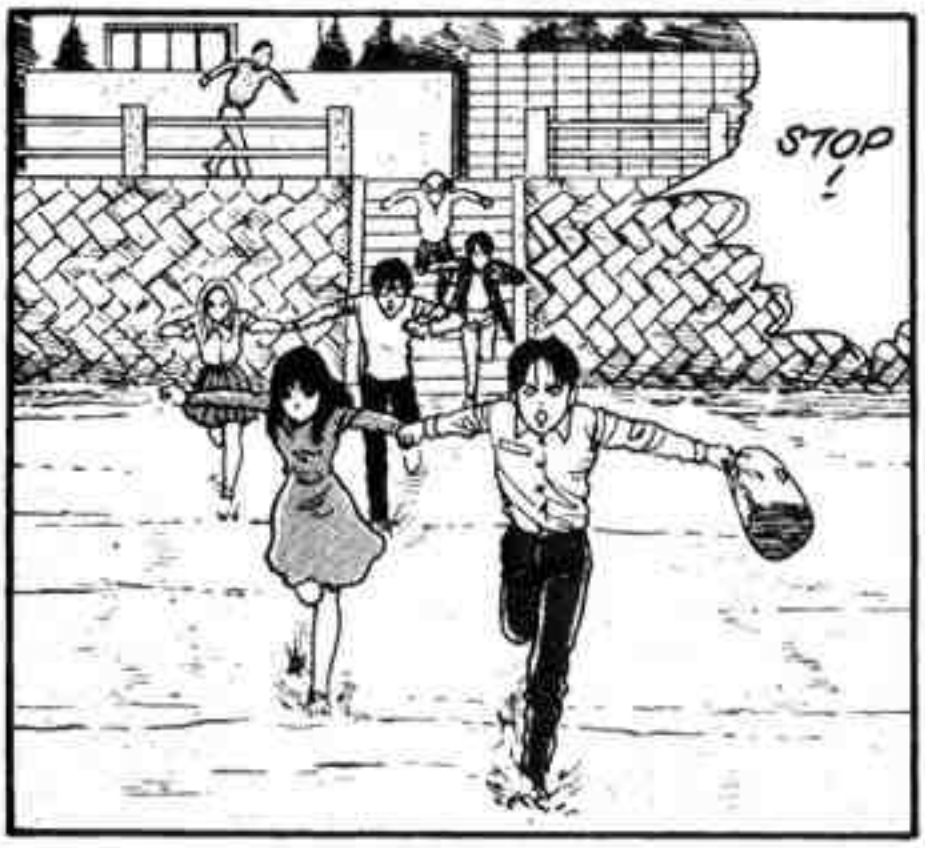
WHA ?!

STOP THIS NON-SENSE!
YOU'RE GOING HOME!

GET OUT OF THE WAY, DAD!

I'VE SPOTTED THEM!

THIS WAY, KAZUNORI!


STOP!

SHAAAA

I... I CAN'T MAKE IT...

KRICH

KRICH

Krich
huff
Krich
huff huff
huff
Krich
YOU'RE BEING A REAL PAIN.

HOW MANY TIMES DO I GOTTA HIT YOU...
...TO MAKE YOU UNDER-STAND?
BAM

huff huff
SHAAA
huff
huff

KAZU-NORI ...
THEY'RE SEPARATING US AGAIN.

HUF
HUF

NO...

NOT THIS TIME, YURIKO!

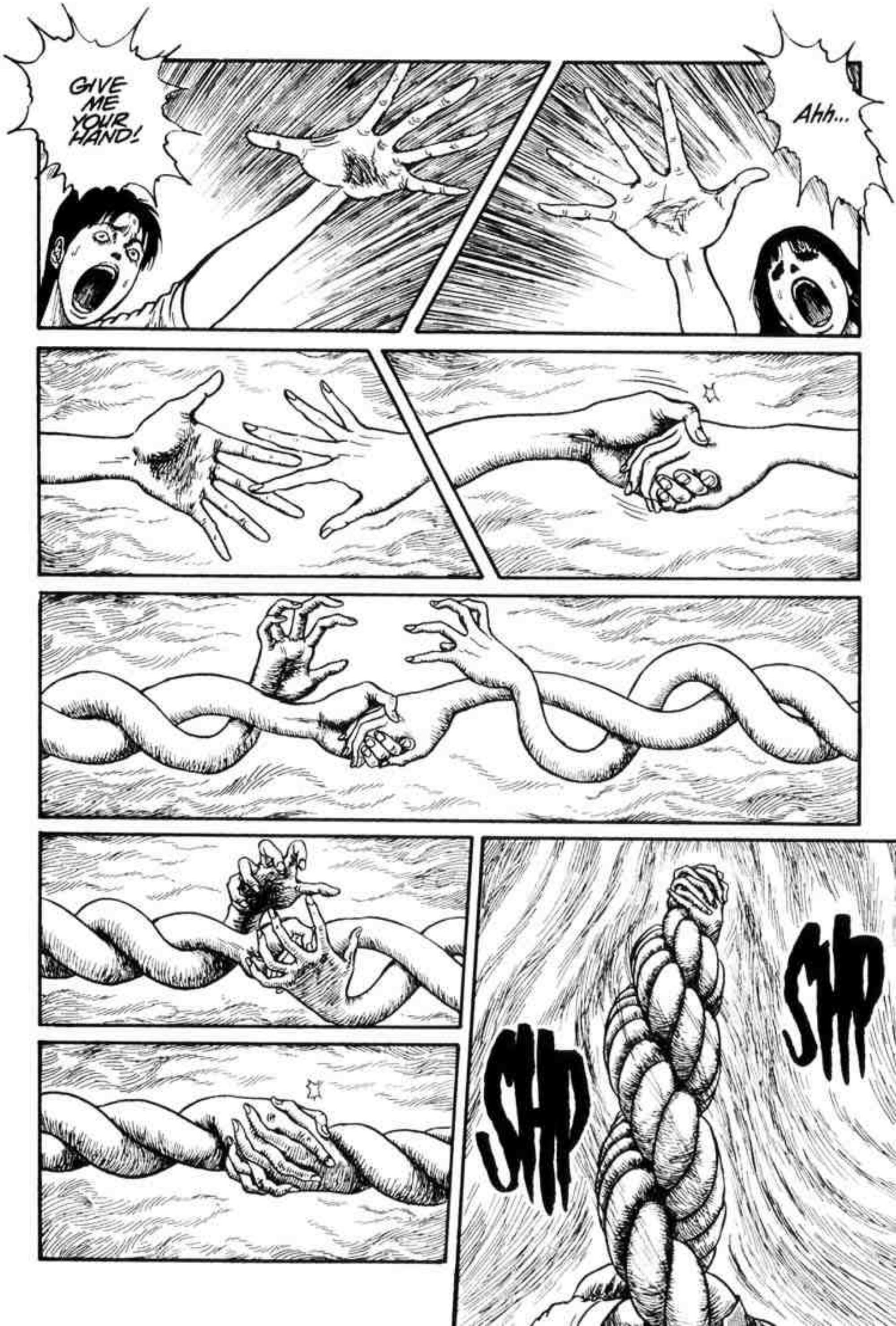
YORIKO, DO IT! LIKE BEFORE!

RIP
LIKE THIS!
RIP
RAK
WHAA?

Y... YORIKO ...
HURRY!

SHRINK

Y... YORIKO ?!
YORIKO !
YORIKO !!
KAZUNORI!


GIVE ME YOUR HAND!
Ahh...
SHP
SHP

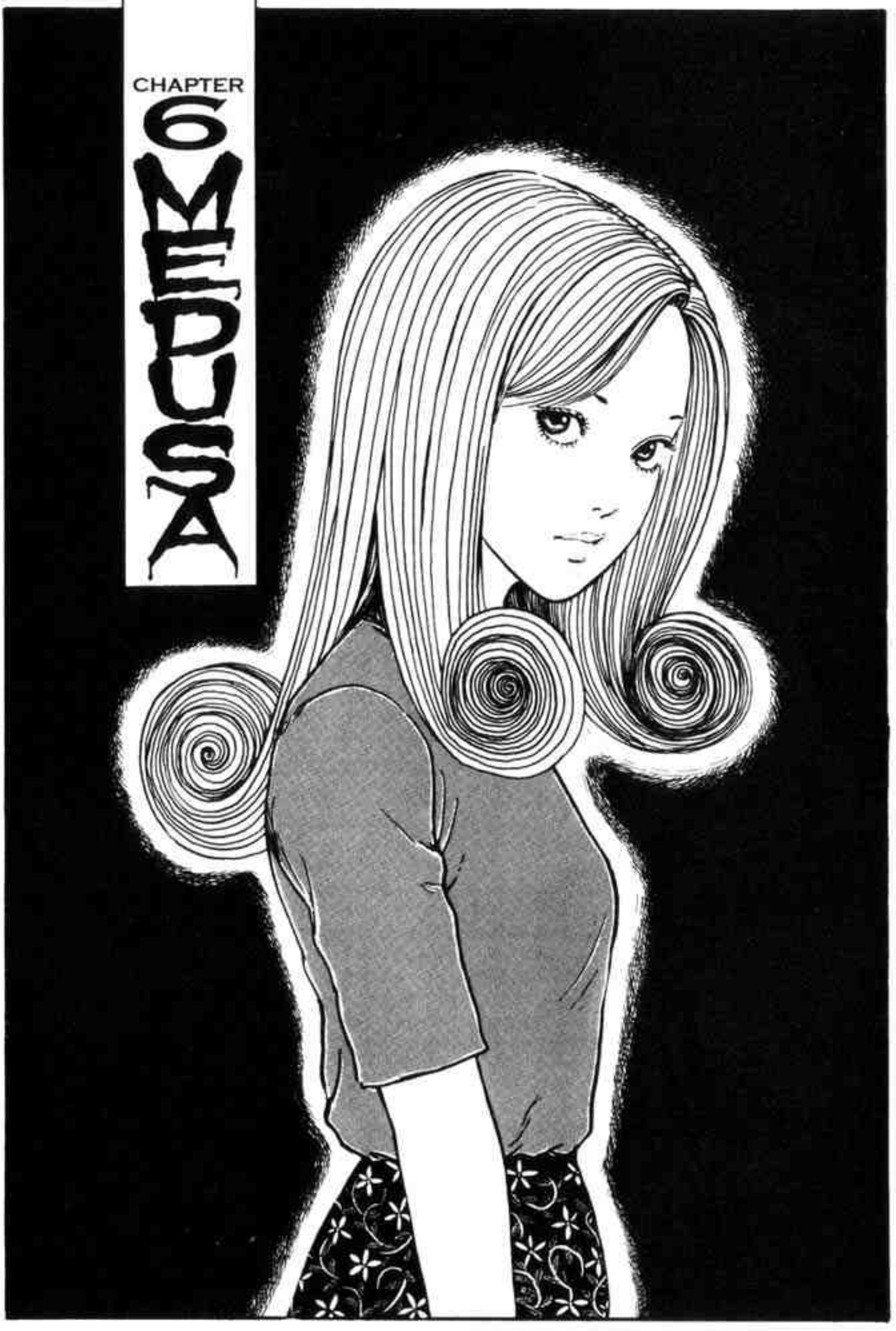
SHKSH
SHISH
SHKSH

DUNN
W-WHAT'S GOING ON?!
YORIKO! YORIKO! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
OH GOD... IT'S TOO TIGHT...
THEY'RE LIKE STEEL WIRE!
WE'LL SAVE YOU!

STOP IT... FATHER ...
WE'RE NEVER GOING TO BE APART...
Ugh
SHSH
THAT'S RIGHT ...
FOREVER ...
SHAAAAA
BASHOOM
THAT WAS THE LAST WE SAW OF THEM BEFORE THEY DISAPPEARED INTO THE SEA.

CHAPTER 6

MEDUSA



THE OTHER DAY, ONE OF MY CLASS-MATES FELL FROM THE ROOF OF THE SCHOOL.

HE'D BEEN DOING ACRO-BATICS ON THE HANDRAIL WHEN HE SLIPPED.

HE'D ALWAYS BEEN A SHOW-OFF TRYING TO GET PEOPLE'S ATTENTION.

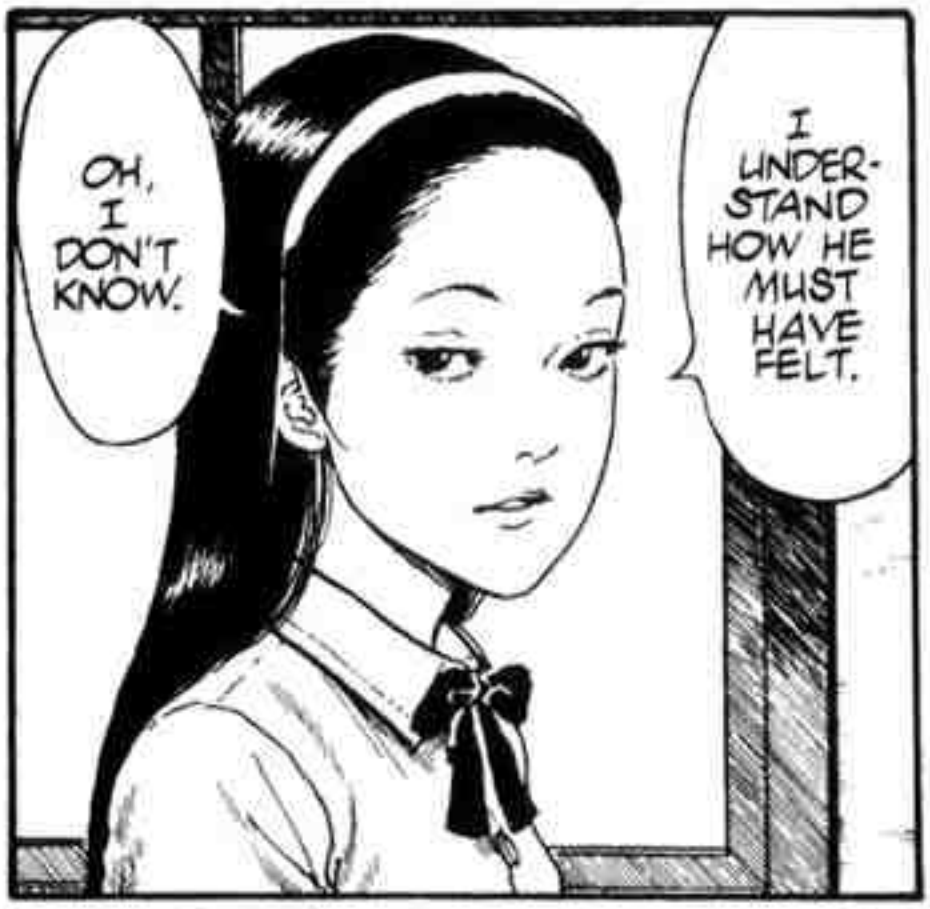
AND YET, SURROUNDED BY THE CROWD ...

...HE SOMEHOW LOOKED...

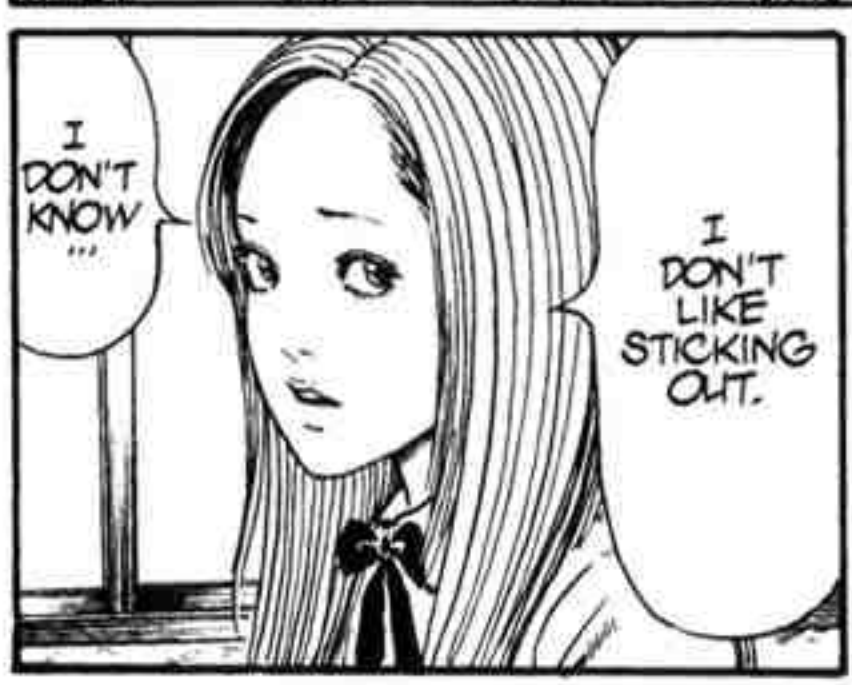
...CONTENT.

THAT WAS SO HORRIBLE, SEKINO.

THAT WAS JUST CRAZY. HE SHOULD NEVER HAVE TRIED SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

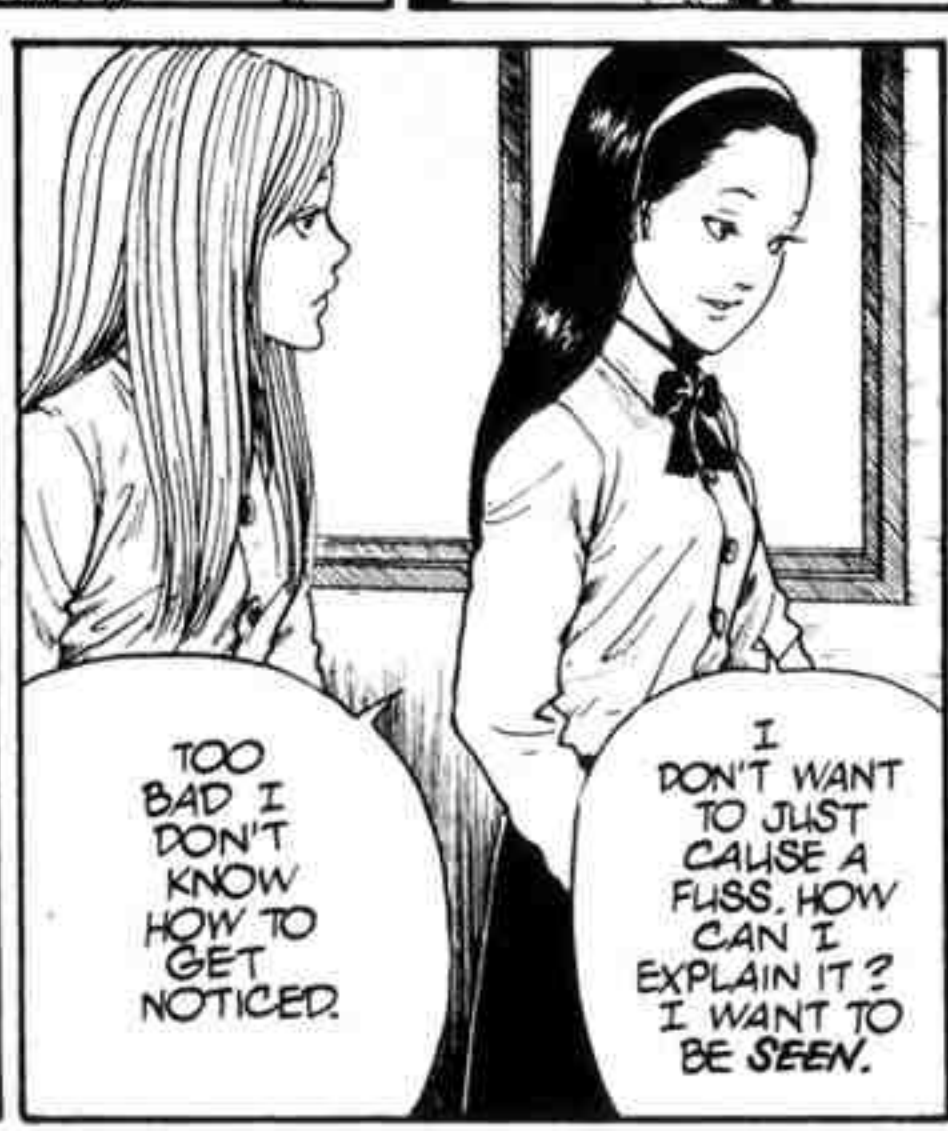

OH, I DON'T KNOW.
I UNDER-STAND HOW HE MUST HAVE FELT.

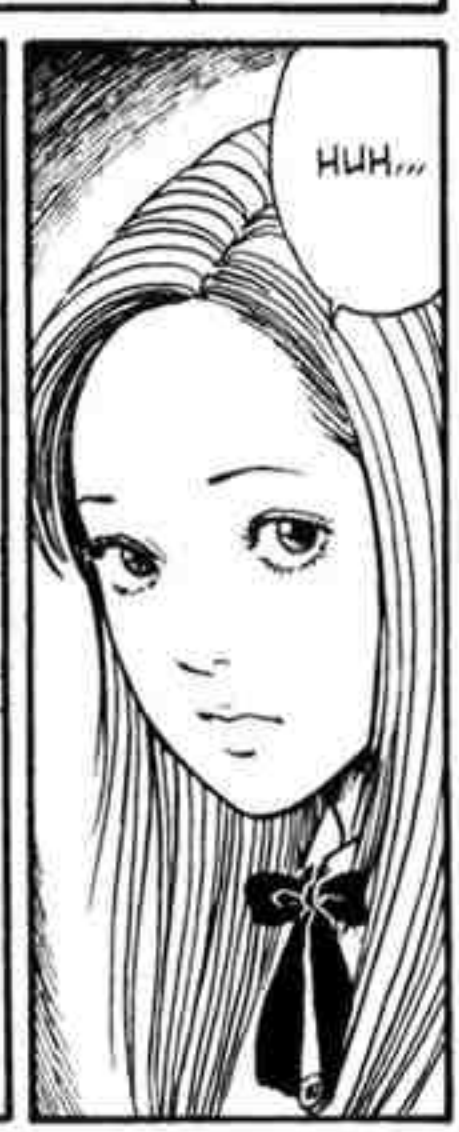
WHAT?
IT'S NICE WHEN OTHER PEOPLE NOTICE YOU. DON'T YOU THINK SO, KIRIÉ?

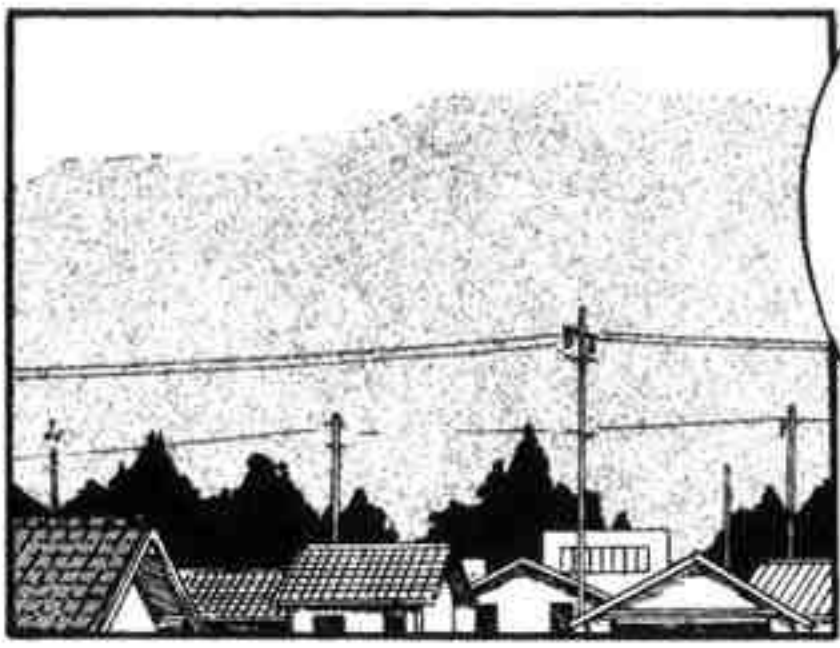

I DON'T KNOW...
I DON'T LIKE STICKING OUT.

REALLY?
I DO. LATELY I CRAVE IT.

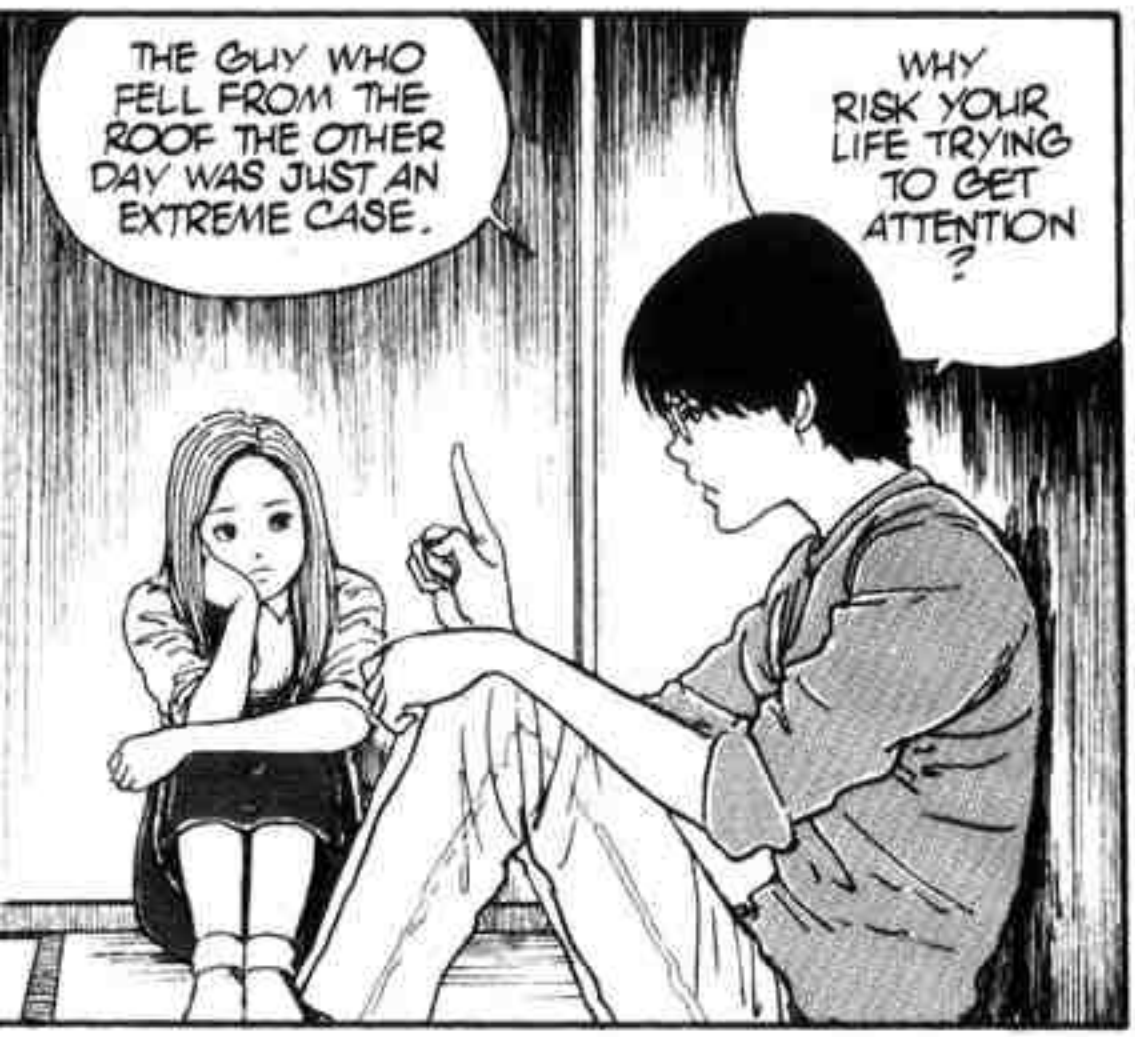
I WANT TO STAND OUT!
I LOVE IT WHEN PEOPLE LOOK AT ME!


TOO BAD I DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET NOTICED.
I DON'T WANT TO JUST CAUSE A FUSS. HOW CAN I EXPLAIN IT? I WANT TO BE SEEN.


HUH...



A LOT OF PEOPLE IN KURÔZU-CHO HAVE BEEN ACTING STRANGE LATELY.


THE GUY WHO FELL FROM THE ROOF THE OTHER DAY WAS JUST AN EXTREME CASE.
WHY RISK YOUR LIFE TRYING TO GET ATTENTION?

I'M BEGINNING TO UNDER-STAND.
WHAT, SHUICHI?

THIS TOWN IS CONTAMINATED BY THE SPIRAL.

NOT AGAIN.
WHAT DOES WANTING ATTENTION HAVE TO DO WITH A SPIRAL?

DON'T YOU SEE?!
IT'S ABOUT MESMERISM.
THEY BOTH HAVE THE POWER TO ATTRACT PEOPLE.

SPIRALS SUCK THINGS IN... THE EYE FOLLOWS THE PATTERN TO THE CENTER.

THAT'S WHY PEOPLE POSSESSED BY THE SPIRAL WANT TO GET THE ATTENTION OF OTHERS.

SO YOU'RE SAYING HE DIED BECAUSE OF THE SPIRAL?

THAT'S RIGHT.

NOT JUST HIM, BUT EVERYONE WHO'S OBSESSED WITH ATTENTION.

TH-THAT SOUNDS LIKE SEKINO. SO SHE'S ALSO AFFECTED BY THE SPIRAL?

PROBABLY.

I WONDER IF SHE'S ALL RIGHT.

HEY, YOU KNOW...

YOUR HAIR'S GETTING LONG.

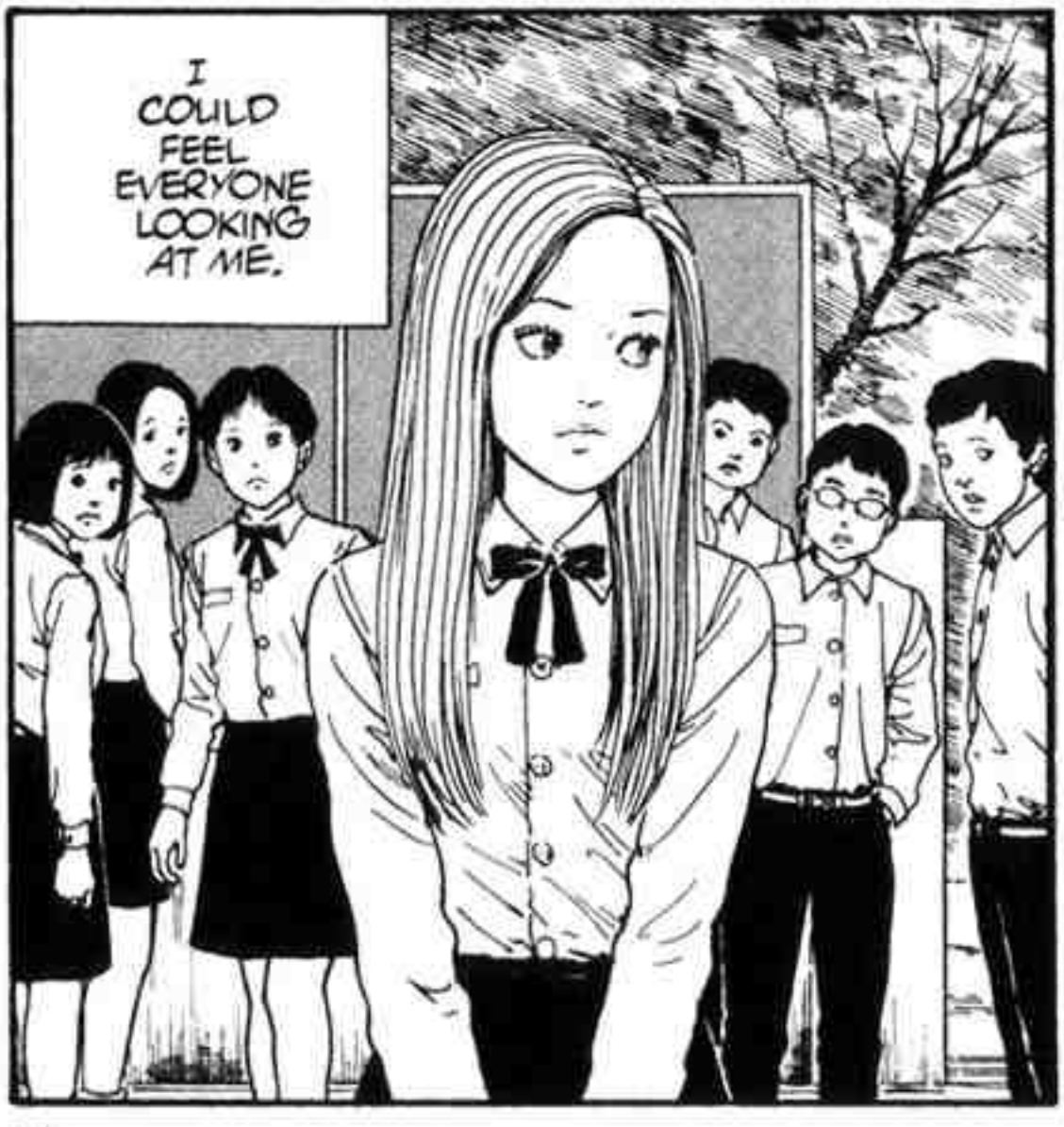
MAYBE YOU SHOULD GET A HAIRCUT.

HUH?

THE NEXT DAY.

IT FEELS LIKE IT'S GROWN ALL OF A SUDDEN.

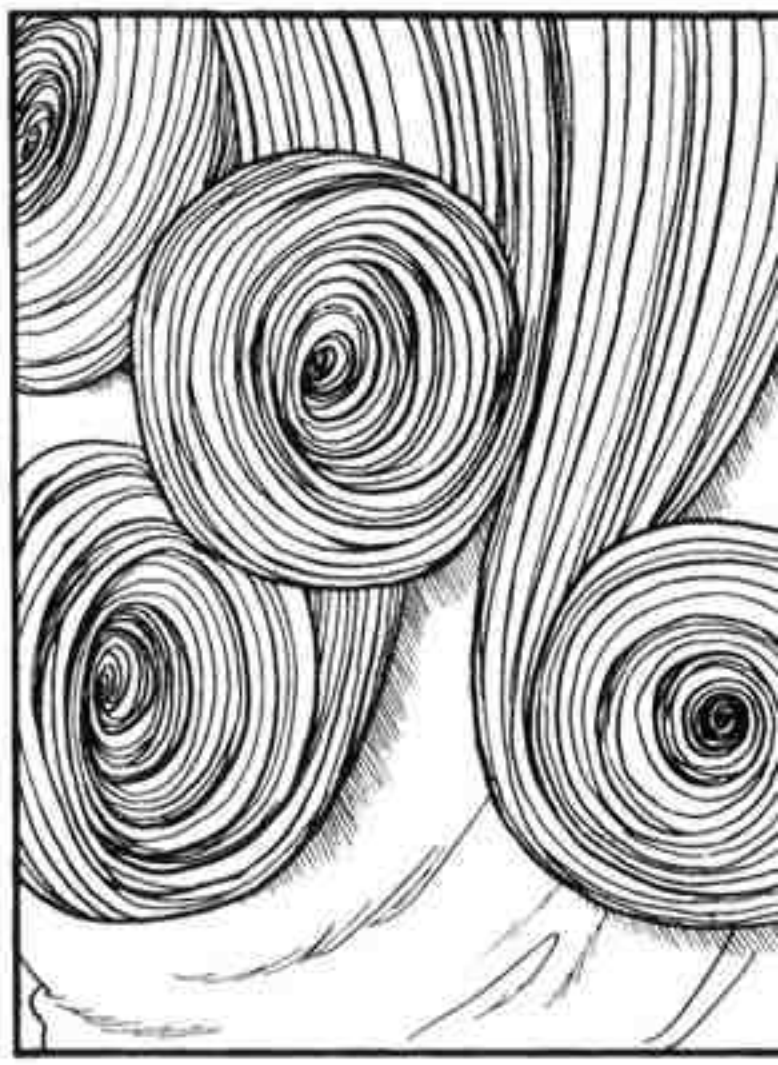
KUROZU

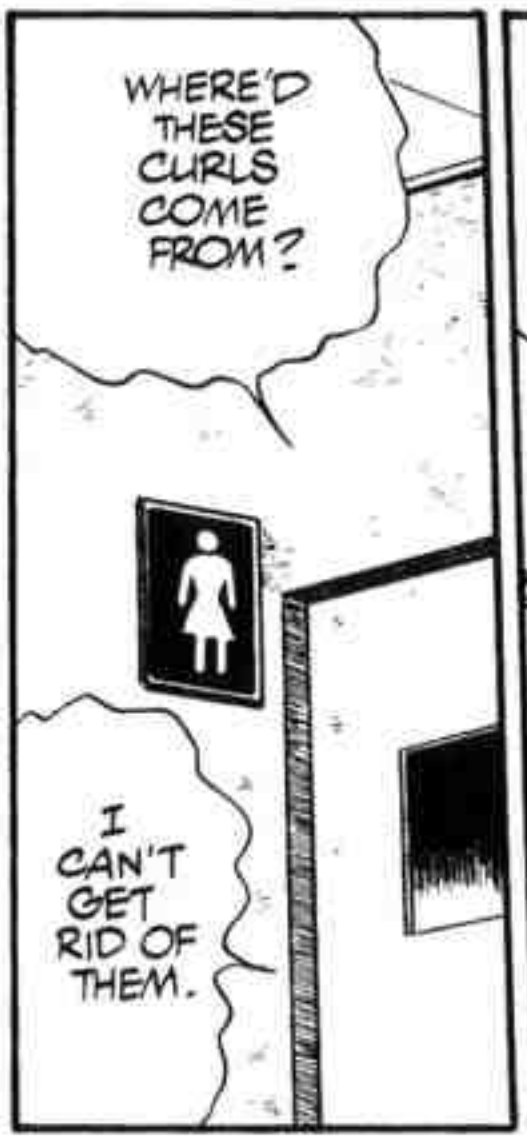

I COULD FEEL EVERYONE LOOKING AT ME.

KIRIE ...

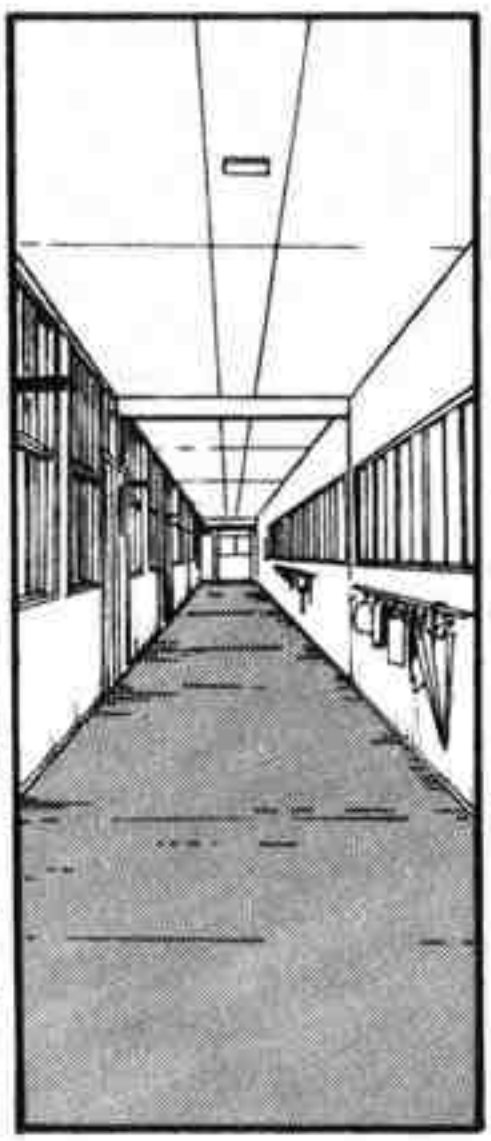
WHAT DID YOU DO TO YOUR HAIR?
HUH?

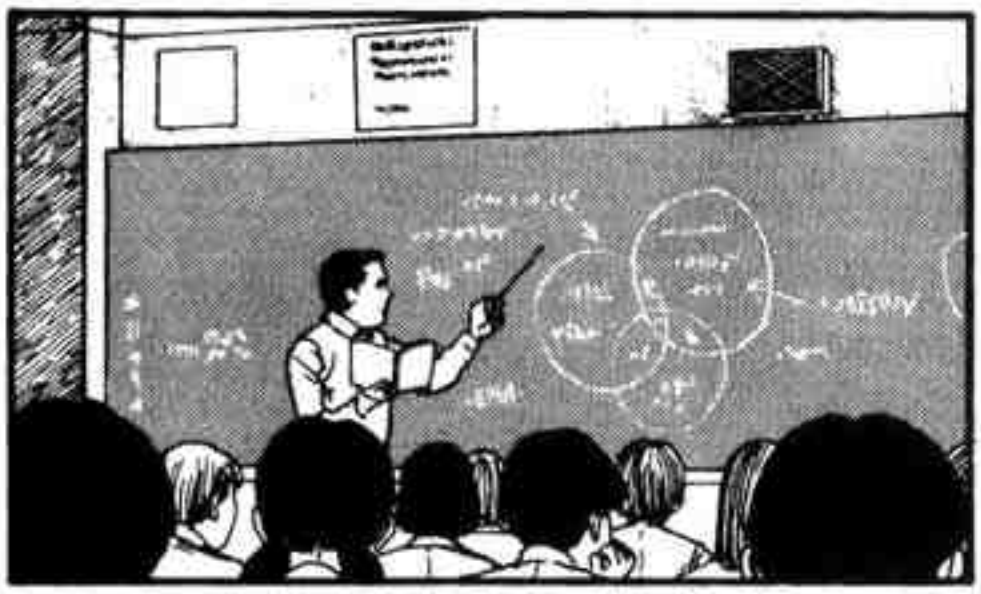
WHA?

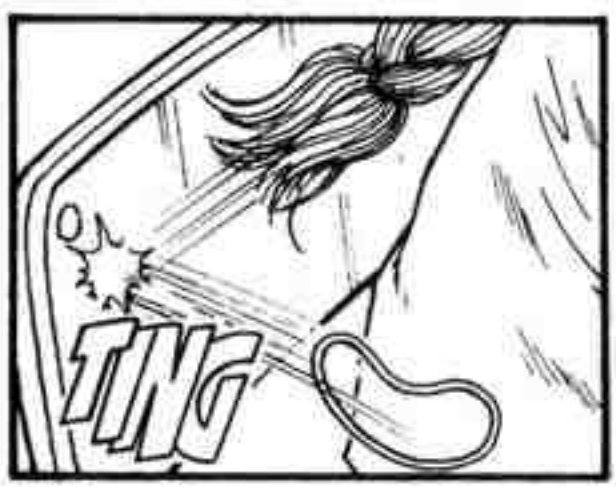



WHERE'D THESE CURLS COME FROM?
I CAN'T GET RID OF THEM.

WHY DON'T YOU BRAID IT?
THAT'S A GOOD IDEA. CAN YOU HELP ME?






TING

FWP

WHRRRR!
WHRRRR!

THIS IS UN-BEARABLE!

...

BEAUTY SALON MARBLE

MARBLE

I DON'T UNDER-STAND...
I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING TO MY HAIR. HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

I DON'T REALLY KNOW...
SHALL I GIVE YOU A STRAIGHT PERM?

HMMM... COULD YOU JUST CUT IT OFF?
I'LL HAVE SHORT HAIR.
I DON'T WANT THIS WEIRD STUFF ON MY HEAD.

YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?

THEN HERE GO YOUR LOVELY LOCKS.

SHAGGSHHHHH
MARBLE
AGGH!

YOU'RE ...

...YOU'RE A MONSTER!

WAS MY HAIR ...

...CURSED BY THE SPIRAL?

IT GREW RAPIDLY ON ITS OWN AS IF IT WAS ALIVE.

EVERY TIME I TRIED TO CUT IT OFF, IT STARTED TO CHOKE ME.

WHEN MY FAMILY TRIED TO TAKE ME TO THE HOSPITAL...

UAAH!

I CAN'T BREATHE!

...IT STRANGLED ME AGAIN.

EVEN WHEN I STOPPED RESISTING, IT KEPT MOVING.

IT SWIRLED IN PLACE, DISPLAYING ITS CURLS.

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

...

...

WH-
WHAT'S
WRONG?

MOM?
DAD?

I SOON UNDERSTOOD THAT MY HAIR HAD THE POWER TO MESMERIZE PEOPLE WHO LOOKED AT IT.
AND IT WAS ATTRACTED TO CROWDS.

KIRIE
...

MY HAIR CONSTANTLY CHANGED SHAPE...
...THE BETTER TO DRAW THEIR ATTENTION.

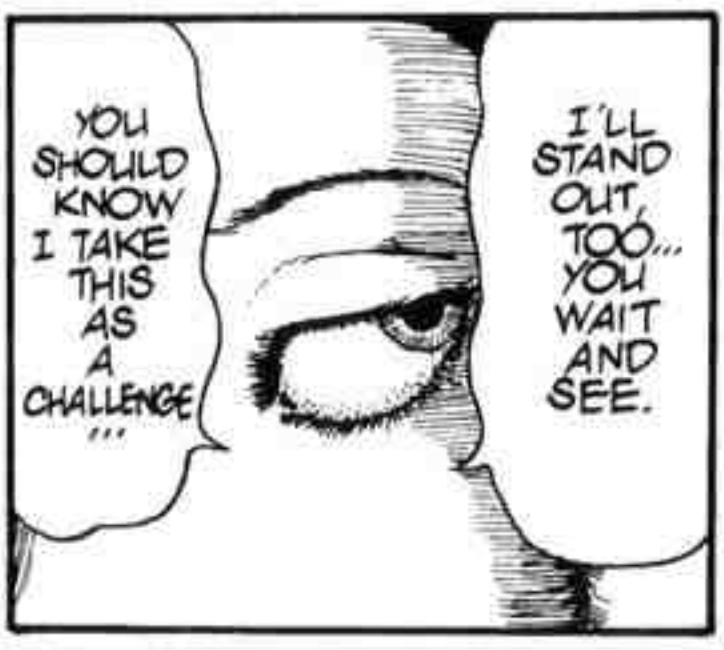
GOSHIMA! WHAT IS THAT HAIR?!
YOU BETTER FIX IT NOW!

SASHH

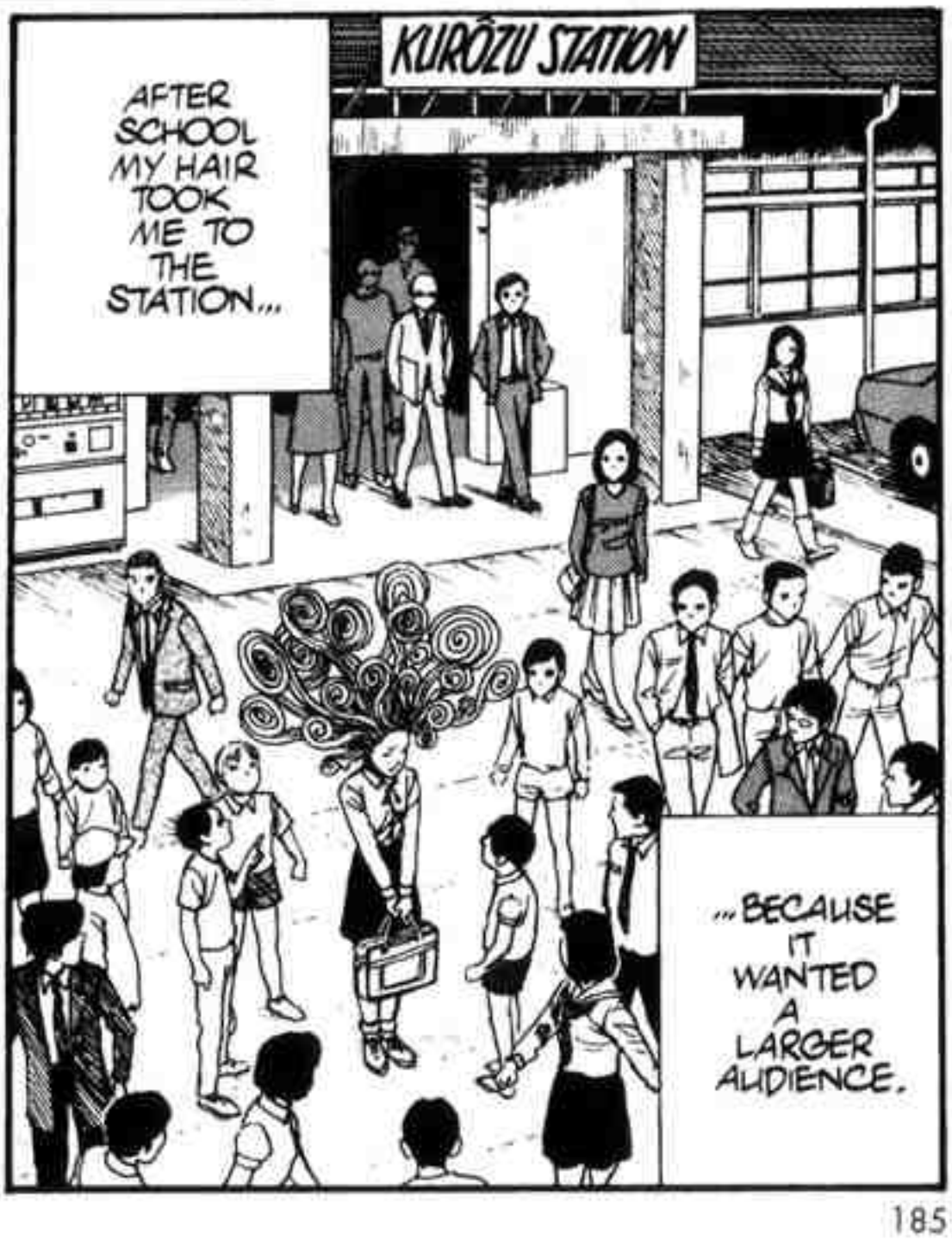
I'M IMPRESSED, KIRIE.
WOOOOO
I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T LIKE ATTENTION, BUT NOW YOU STAND OUT MORE THAN ANYONE AT SCHOOL.

IT MUST BE NICE.
I ENVY YOU.

EVERYONE WHO LOOKS AT YOU IS CAPTIVATED.
I SHOULD WATCH OUT... NOT LOOK TOO MUCH.


YOU SHOULD KNOW I TAKE THIS AS A CHALLENGE...
I'LL STAND OUT, TOO... YOU WAIT AND SEE.

...


KURÔZU STATION
AFTER SCHOOL MY HAIR TOOK ME TO THE STATION...
...BECAUSE IT WANTED A LARGER AUDIENCE.

MRRMRR

!
SHUICHI
...

Fwip

SHUICHI
...

KUROZU STATION
...

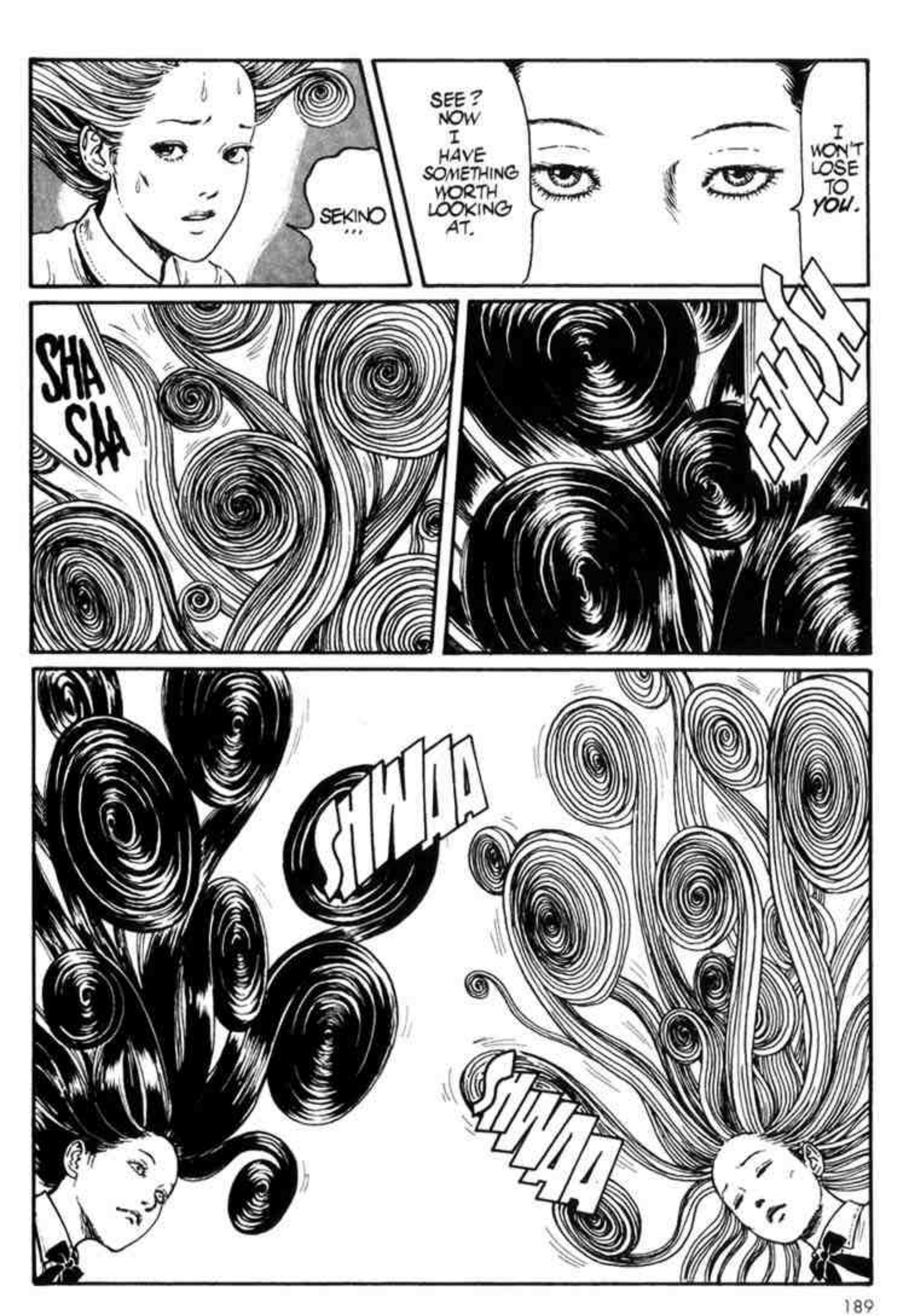
I ENDED UP LIKE THIS BECAUSE OF THIS TOWN.
BECAUSE THIS TOWN IS CURSED BY THE SPIRAL.

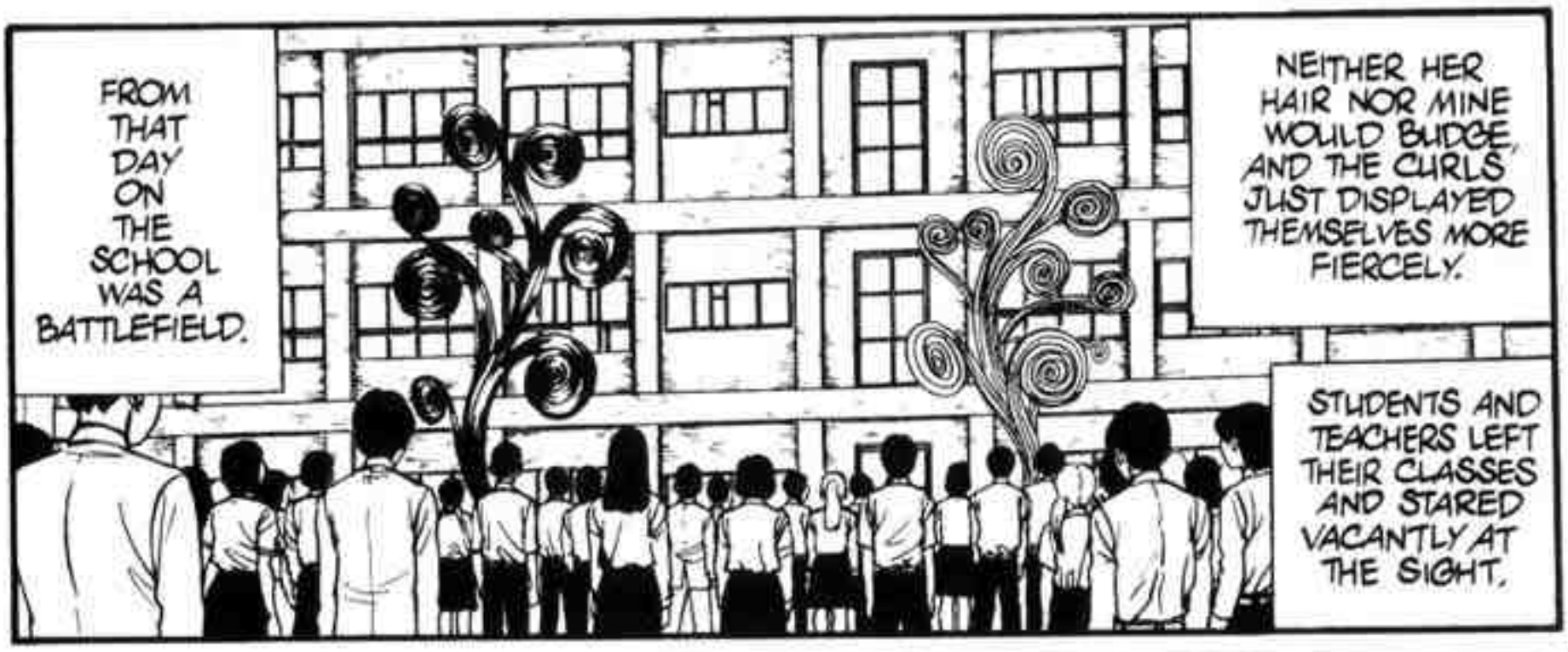
NOW I'M TOO WEAK TO GET AWAY FROM HERE...
IS MY HAIR DRAINING ALL MY STRENGTH?

MY HAIR KEPT ON...
...GROWING AND GROWING.

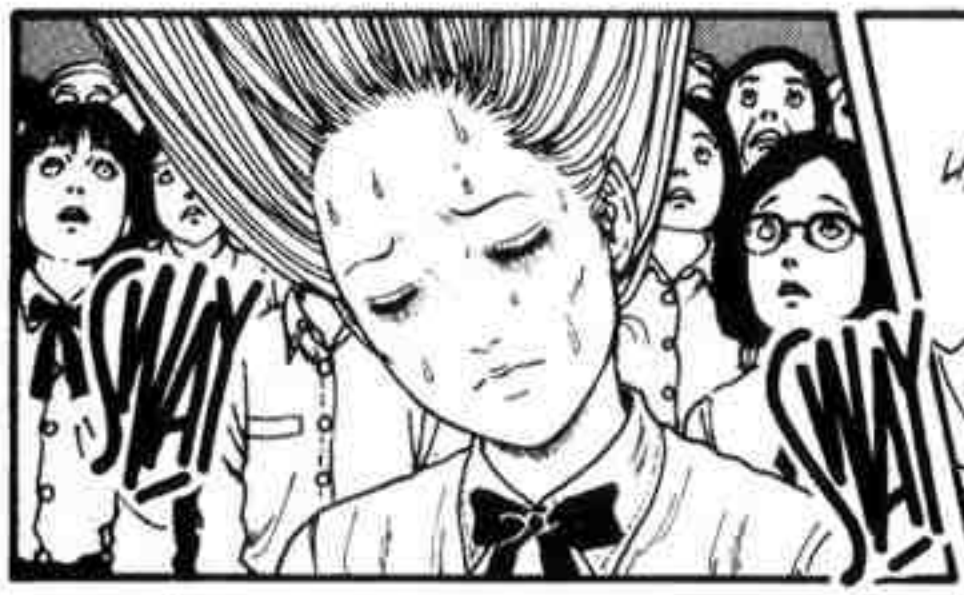
GOOD MORNING, KIRIE!
LOOK AT ME!

WOW!

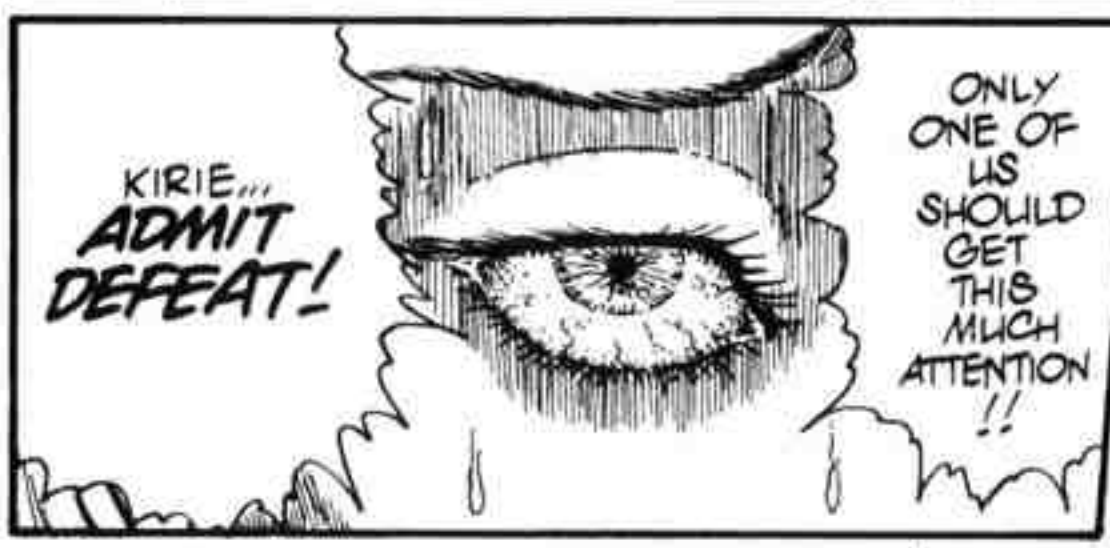

SEKINO ...
SEE? NOW I HAVE SOMETHING WORTH LOOKING AT.
I WON'T LOSE TO YOU.
SHA SAA
FUCK
SHUDA
SHUDA


FROM THAT DAY ON THE SCHOOL WAS A BATTLEFIELD.
NEITHER HER HAIR NOR MINE WOULD BUDGE, AND THE CURLS JUST DISPLAYED THEMSELVES MORE FIERCELY.
STUDENTS AND TEACHERS LEFT THEIR CLASSES AND STARED VACANTLY AT THE SIGHT.

SHA
AA


SWAY
SWAY

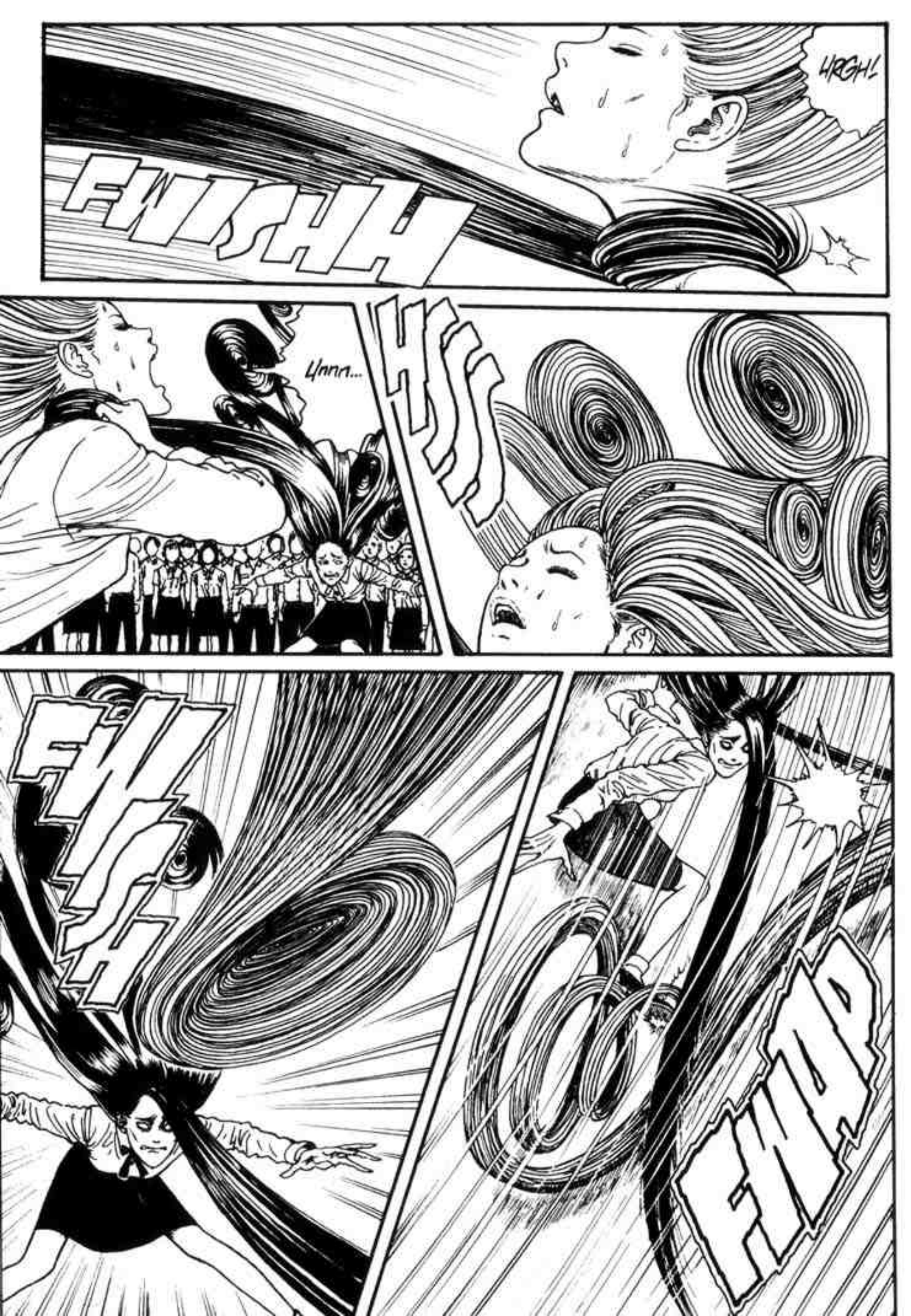
UFF
HUFF


KIRIE... ADMIT DEFEAT!
ONLY ONE OF US SHOULD GET THIS MUCH ATTENTION !!

SWAY
SWAY

UFF
HUFF
SWAY

ARGH! I'VE HAD ENOUGH!
FWOOSH


FWISHH
HRGH!
Unnn...
HSSS
FHHH
FHUP

FWISHH
FWISHH
AIEE!
FP
KIRIE!!
TMP

GGG
SNIPP

KYAA!

KIRIE!!

I'LL CUT IT OFF YOU!

FWP
FWP

ARGH!
AAAYAH!
SWAT

RRRLLL LLLL LLL

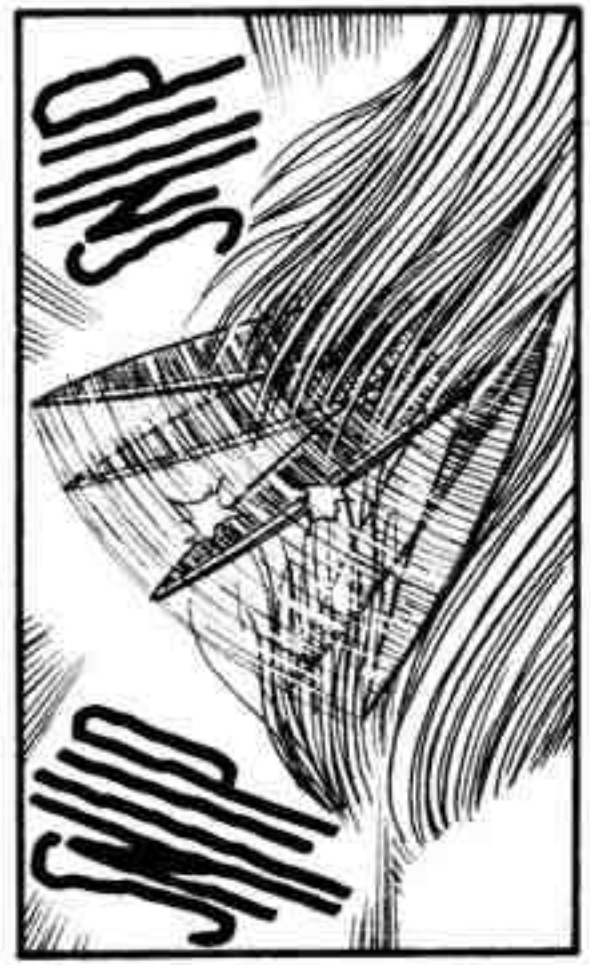
HA HA HA!
I WON!

AHA HA HA! NOW I'M THE MOST...
...THE MOST ATTRACTIVE GIRL IN TOWN!

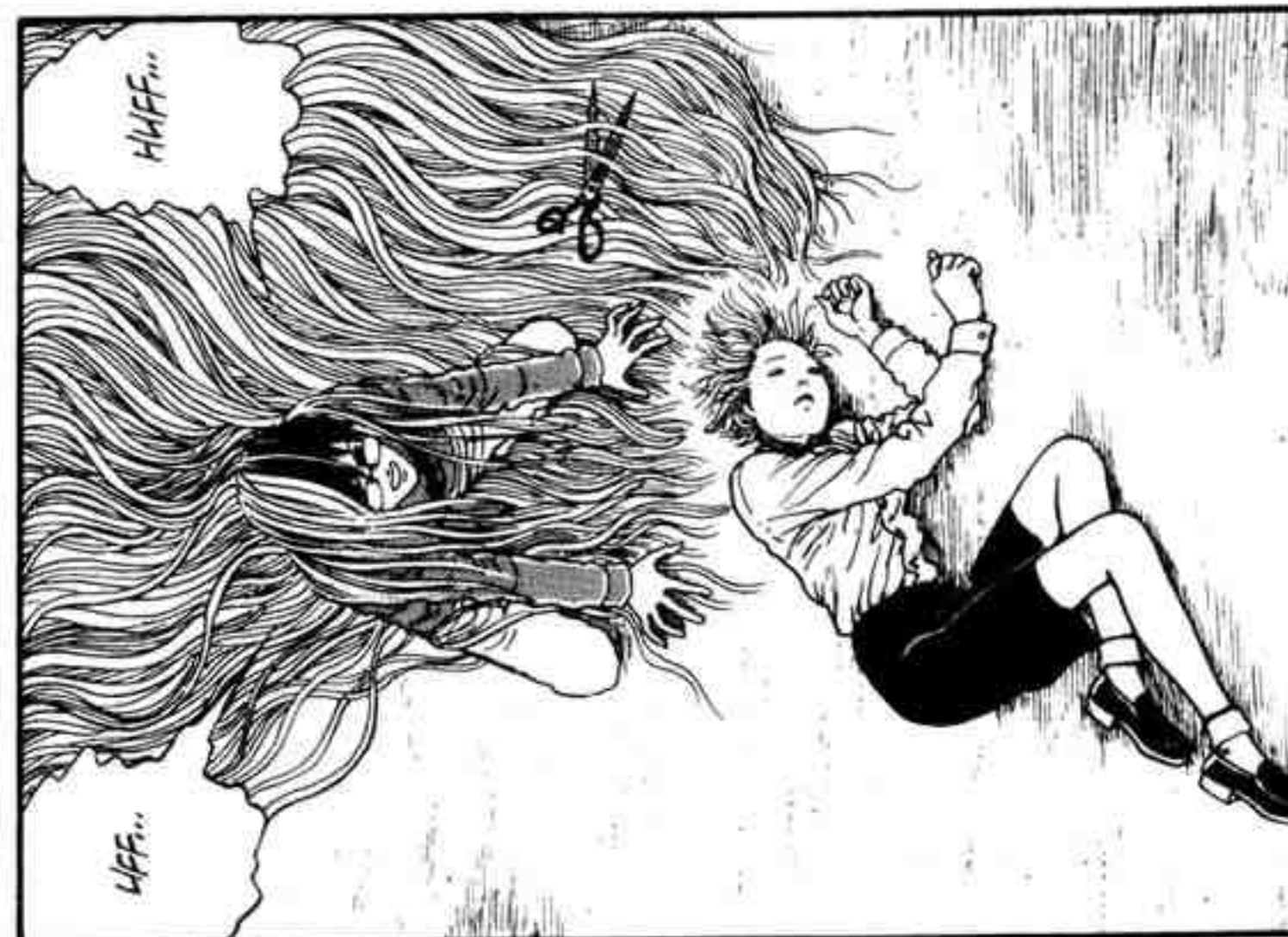
NOW I'LL SHOW ALL OF KURÔZU-CHO!
EVERYONE, FOLLOW ME!

HA HA HA!
HSSS HSSS

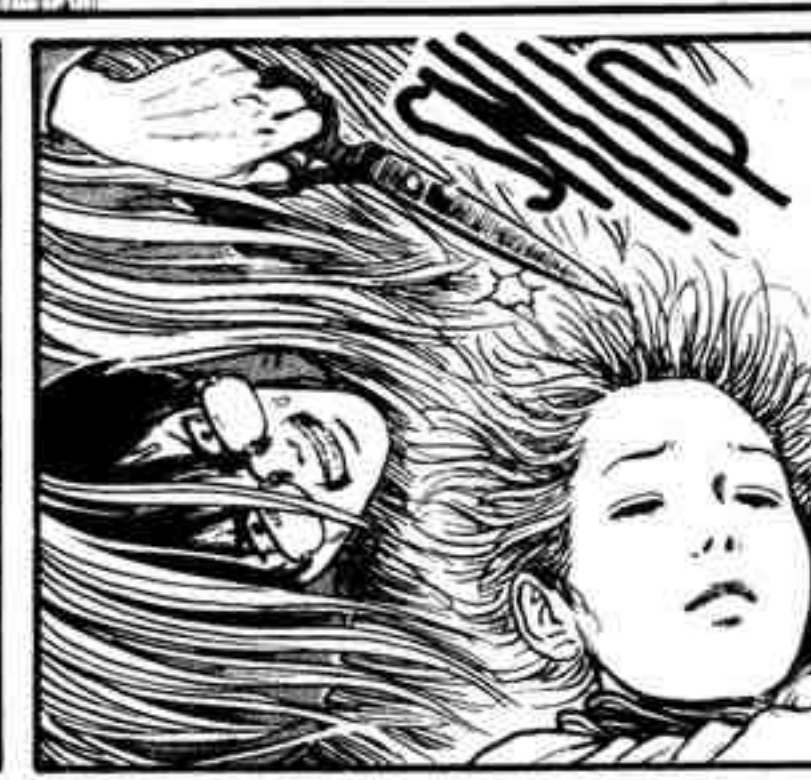
SKID


SKID
SKID

SKID


HUFF...
HUFF...

SKID
SKID


SKID

HUFF...
HUFF...

KIRIE!
KIRIE!

SHUICHI...
WHAT HAPPENED?
UFF...
KIRIE...
HUFF...
YOU'RE COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED.

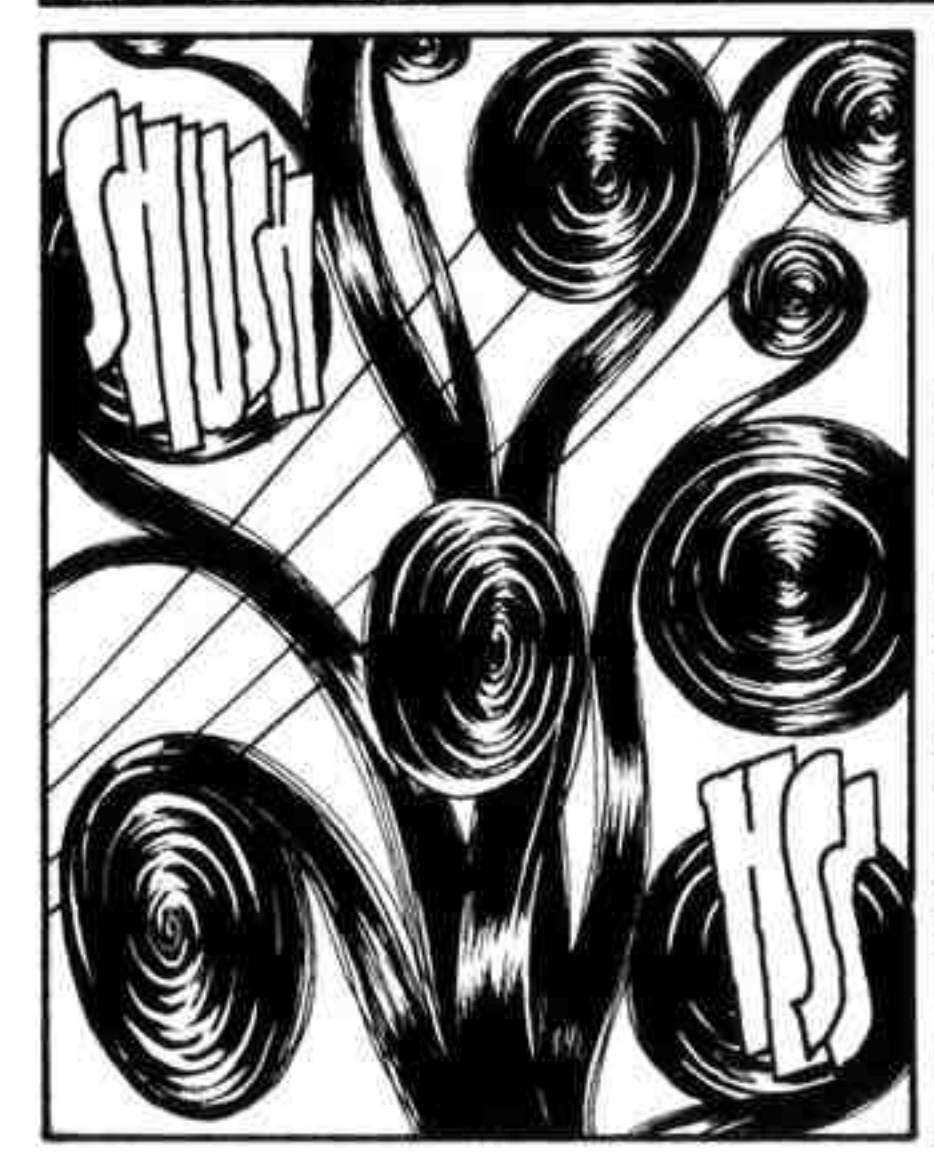
THE HAIR...
...MUST HAVE BEEN DRAINING ALL YOUR ENERGY TO GROW.

IF THAT'S THE CASE...

HA HA HA!
AHA HA HA!

AHA HA HA LOOK AT ME!
EVERYBODY LOOK!
SHHH

HA HA HA


SHUSH
HSS

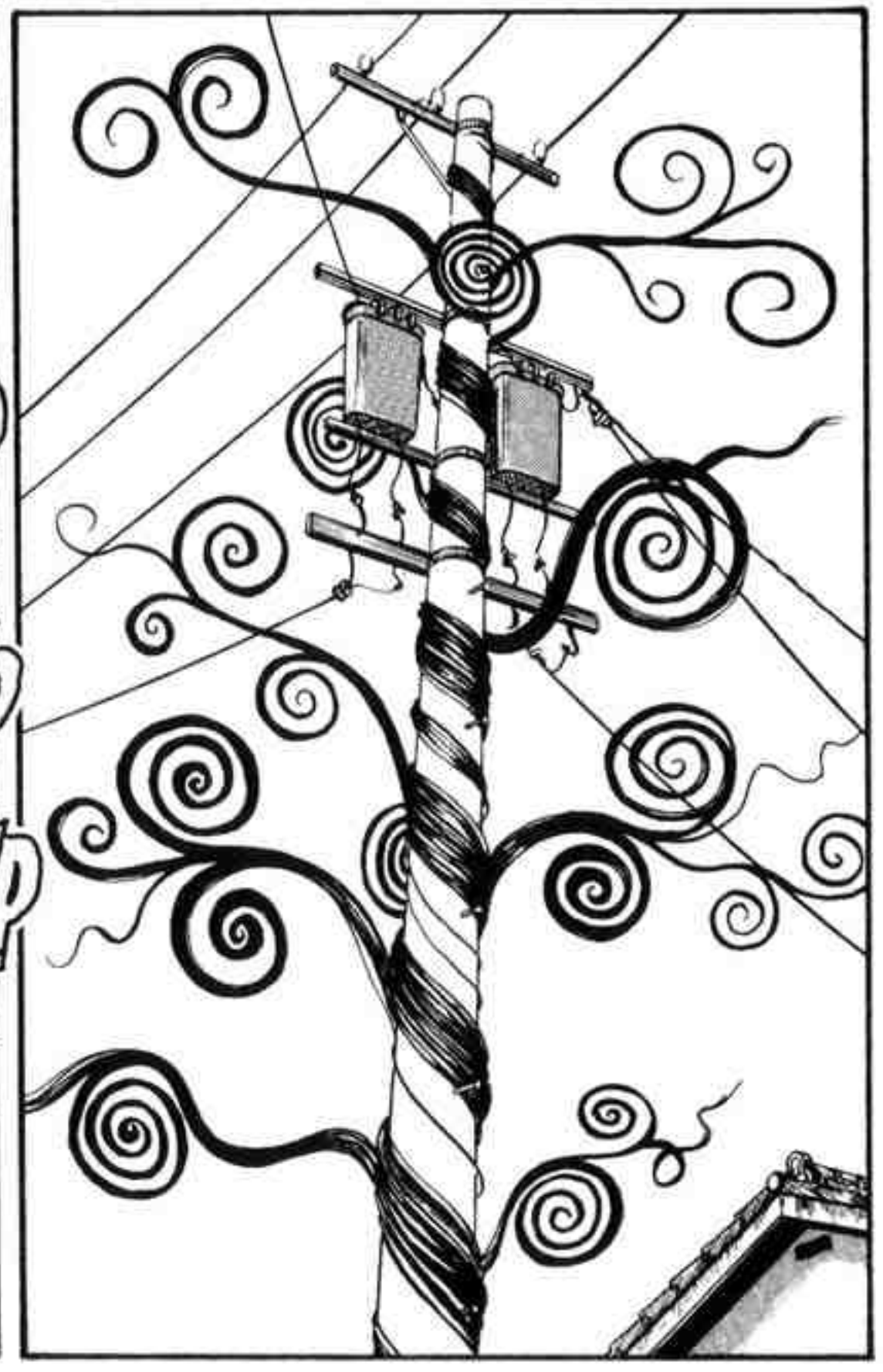
HUFF
HUFF

I'M REALLY TIRED.
HUFF
HUFF

BUT I NEED MORE ATTENTION... MORE...

SHIP
SHIP

SHIP
SHIP
SHIP
SHIP
SHIP
HUFF
HUFF



HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

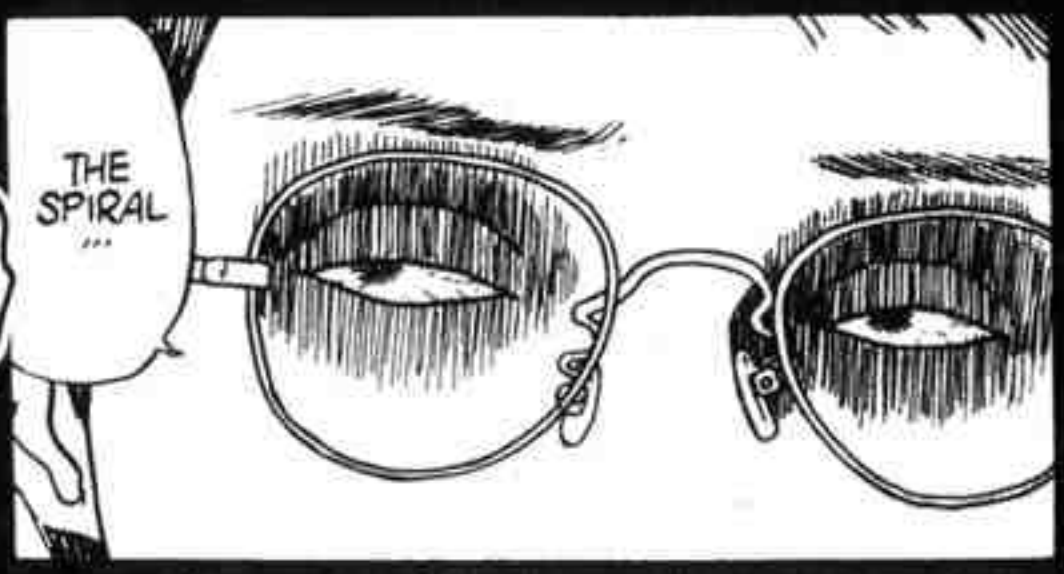
HUFF

HUFF

WHUD

To Be Continued...

AFTERWORD


THE SPIRAL ...

SUCH A MYSTERIOUS PATTERN...
WITH THE MANGA UZUMAKI, I, JUNJI ITO, ATTEMPTED TO FIND AN ANSWER TO THE SECRETS OF THIS ENIGMATIC SHAPE.

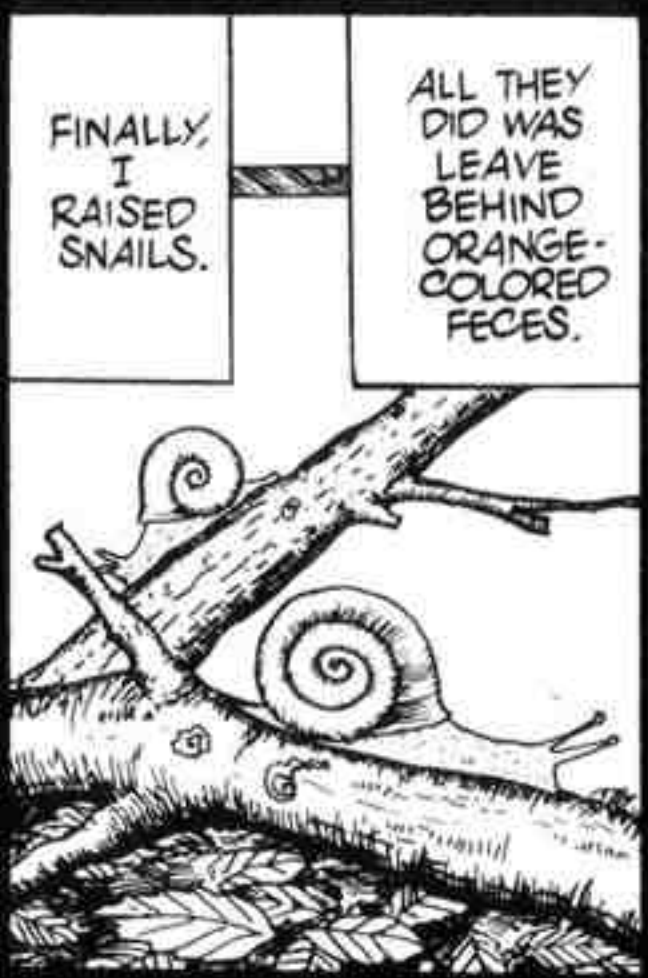
TO UNDERSTAND THE SPIRAL, ONE MUST CAREFULLY OBSERVE IT.
TO BEGIN MY STUDIES, I SPENT HOURS STARING INTO ITS DEPTHS.
I JUST ENDED UP FEELING DIZZY ...

NEXT, I DECIDED TO READ ALL THE REFERENCE MATERIALS ABOUT SPIRALS THAT I COULD FIND.
The Voice of the Spiral
Spiral out of Space
Spiral Cults
I ALWAYS ENDED UP FALLING ASLEEP PART WAY THROUGH ...

I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING TO DO BUT ACTUALLY MAKE SPIRALS MYSELF.
POP

THE WATER IN THE TUB WOULD FORM A WHIRLPOOL AND DRAIN AWAY.
GURGL

I STILL DIDN'T UNDERSTAND MUCH, SO I TOOK THE NEXT STEP OF EATING SPIRALS.
SUSHI ROLLS, MORIGUCHI PICKLES, FIDDLEHEAD FERNS, ZENMAI, TURBAN SHELLS...
SOFT ICE CREAM, SPIRAL-SHAPED COOKIES, NEJIRINBO RICE CANDY... IT WAS ALL DELICIOUS.


FINALLY, I RAISED SNAILS.
ALL THEY DID WAS LEAVE BEHIND ORANGE-COLORED FECES.

AND SO... AS A RESULT OF MY RESEARCHES, THE ANSWER TO THE ENIGMA IS NEAR AT HAND. SOON I WILL REPORT MY FINDINGS... BUT IS THE WORLD READY?
ITO, WHERE'S THIS MONTH'S COMIC ?!
My editor, Nakagumo.

CHAPTER
7
JACK IN THE BOX

IN MY SCHOOL THERE WAS A SEVENTH-GRADER NAMED MITSURU YAMAGUCHI.

HE LOVED TO JUMP OUT AND SURPRISE PEOPLE.

BOO!

EVERYONE CALLED HIM "JACK-IN-THE-BOX."

BOO!

ONE DAY I REALIZED HE LIKED ME.

KIRIE! LET'S GO OUT SOME-TIME!

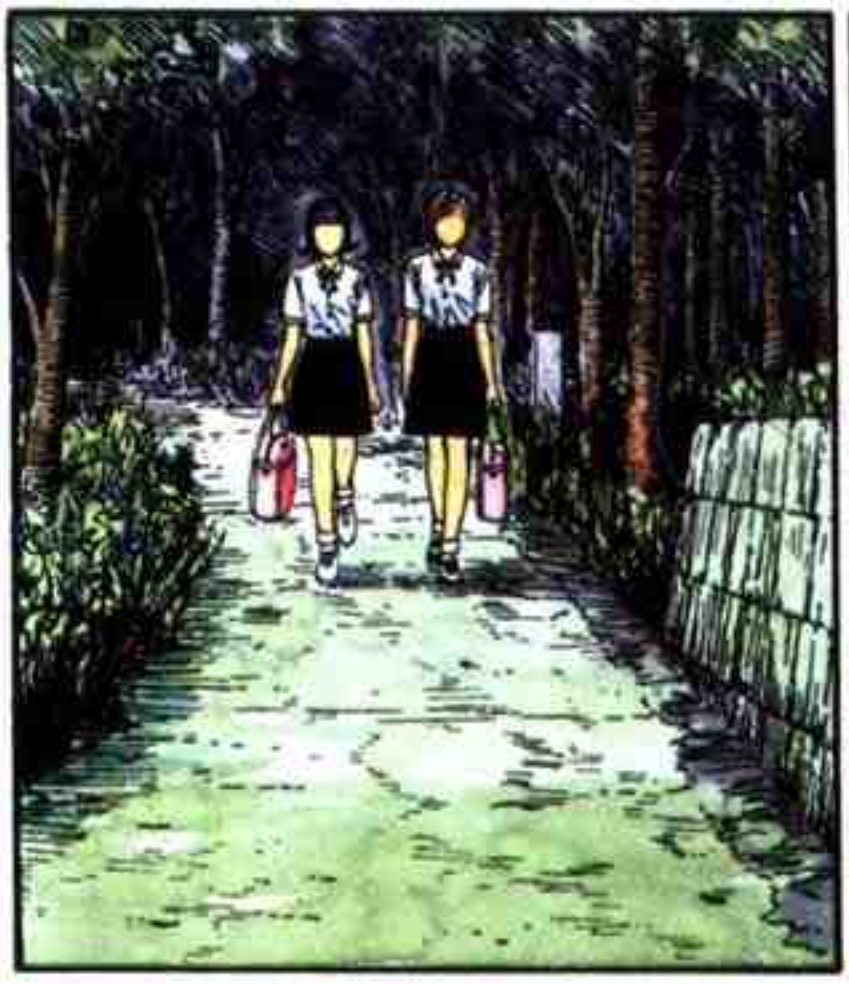
IT GOT ON MY NERVES PRETTY FAST.

I THINK I LOST HIM.

WHAT A PAIN.

LET'S HURRY HOME BEFORE HE FINDS YOU.

GOOD IDEA, SHIHO.

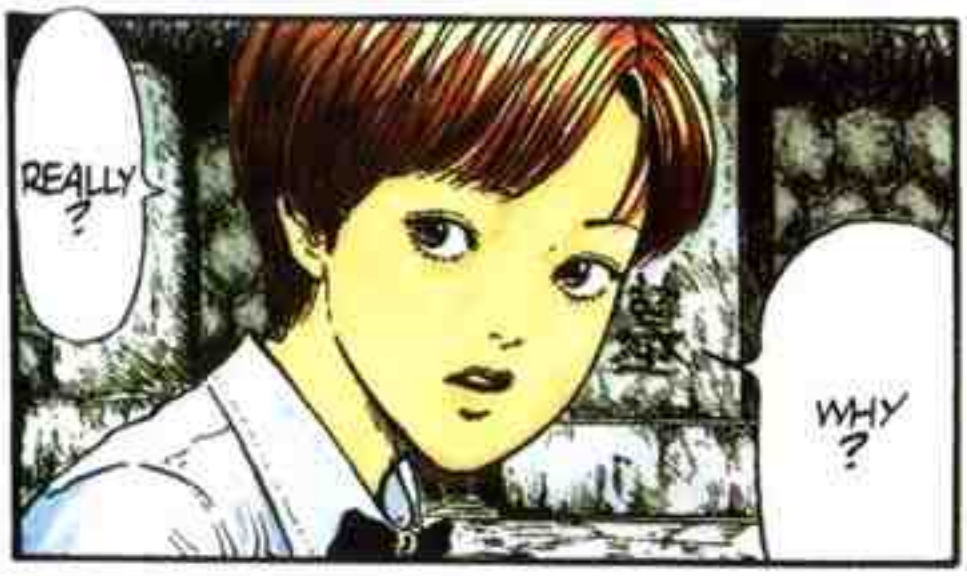


DON'T YOU THINK IT'S CREEPY THAT WE HAVE TO WALK THROUGH A CEMETERY ON OUR WAY TO SCHOOL?
YEAH.

HEY, KIRIE...

DID YOU HEAR THEY'RE BURYING PEOPLE AGAIN?
THEY'RE WHAT?

BURYING THEM, INSTEAD OF CREMATING THEM.


REALLY?
WHY?

Oh, COME ON. ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?

DO YOU REMEMBER HOW THE SMOKE FROM THE CREMATIONS...
...WOULD FORM A BLACK SPIRAL IN THE SKY?

SOME PEOPLE SAID THAT IT WAS BECAUSE OF A MALFUNCTION IN THE FURNACE.
OTHERS SAID IT'S BECAUSE OF THE WEATHER.

BUT I HEARD THAT EVEN WHEN SOMEONE WHO'S DIED HERE IS CREMATED SOMEWHERE ELSE, THE SMOKE TURNS INTO A BLACK SPIRAL.
IT ONLY HAPPENS WITH PEOPLE FROM OUR TOWN.

Spiral Into Horror

UZUMAKI

by Junji Ito

2

PULP GRAPHIC NOVEL

I WONDER WHY. IT'S REALLY STRANGE.
ANYWAY, THAT'S WHY THEY STOPPED DOING CREMATIONS.

I WONDER...
...IF EVERYONE HERE IS CURSED BY THE SPIRAL.
WHAT WAS THAT?
Oh, NOTHING.

SO PEOPLE ARE HAVING THEIR RELATIVES BURIED INSTEAD OF CREMATED.
I GUESS IT BEATS HAVING THAT SPIRAL CLOUD.
YEAH, BUT IT'S STILL PRETTY CREEPY TO THINK THERE'S ACTUAL BODIES UNDER SOME OF THESE GRAVESTONES.

I WISH I HADN'T MENTIONED IT. NOW I'M GETTING SCARED.

LET'S WALK FASTER.

BO!

EEYA!

DID I SURPRISE YOU?
MITSURU! HOW COULD YOU?

HOW ABOUT YOU, KIRIE?

WILL YOU LEAVE ME ALONE?

I DIDN'T MEAN TO MAKE YOU MAD. I'M SORRY.
IT'S JUST MY HABIT... TO SURPRISE PEOPLE.

MITSURU, HOW IMMATURE ARE YOU? YOU WON'T WIN ANY POINTS BY SCARING THE WITS OUT OF HER.
BESIDES, SHE ALREADY HAS A BOY-FRIEND.

I KNOW. SHUICHI SAITO, RIGHT?
FORGET ABOUT HIM. HE'S A DRAG.

I WANT TO HAVE A PRETTY GIRL LIKE YOU AS MY GIRLFRIEND AND IMPRESS EVERYONE!
SURPRISE THEM, YOU KNOW?!

I DON'T WANT TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOU AND YOUR HABIT OF SURPRISING PEOPLE!
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!

LET'S GO, SHIHO.

I WON'T GIVE UP, KIRIE.
YOU'LL TURN TO ME EVENTUALLY!

THE JACK-IN-THE-BOX KEPT FOLLOWING ME.
BO!

I LOVE YOU, KIRIE!

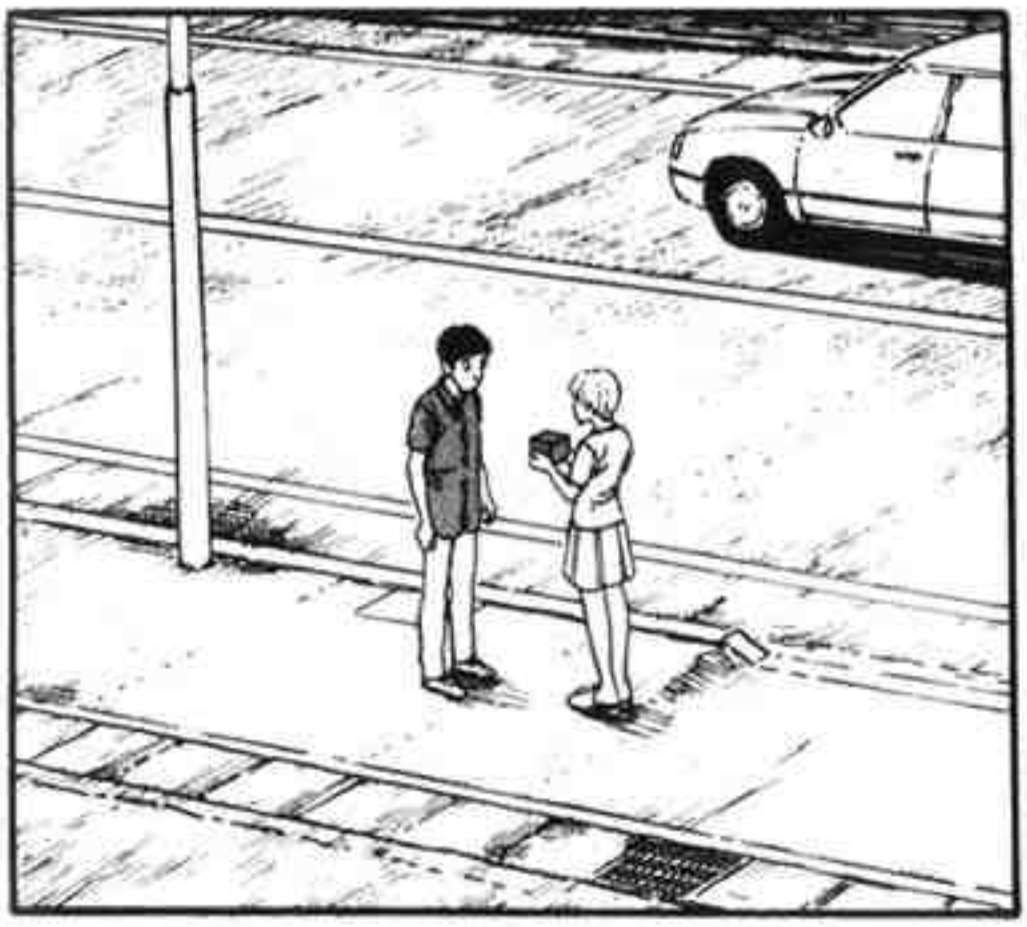
COME OUT, KIRIE!
I LOVE YOU!

I WISH MY HANDS COULD REACH INTO YOUR ROOM!

DELIVERY FOR KIRIE GOSHIMA.

IT'S FOR YOU, KIRIE.
WHO'S IT FROM?

LET'S SEE...
...MITSURU YAMAGUCHI.



MITSURU, I CAN'T ACCEPT THIS.
PLEASE DON'T SEND ME ANYTHING ELSE.

BUT YOU DIDN'T EVEN OPEN IT.
AT LEAST YOU COULD DO THAT MUCH.

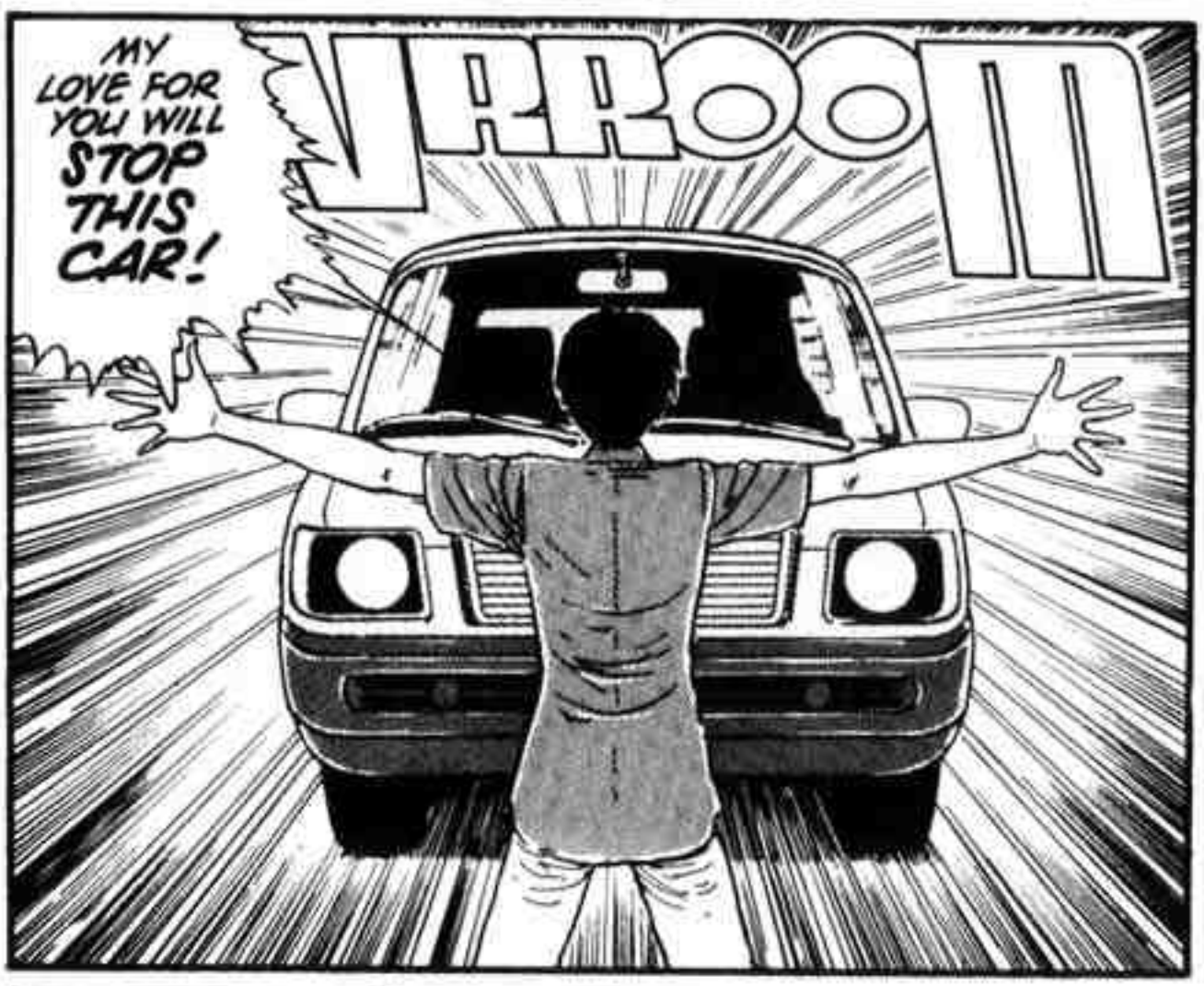
TO BE HONEST, I'M GETTING REALLY IRRITATED.
THE MORE YOU FOLLOW ME, THE LESS I LIKE YOU.

...

I GUESS I DIDN'T TAKE THE RIGHT APPROACH.
I REALLY DO CARE ABOUT YOU... HOW CAN I SHOW YOU?
VROO

THAT'S IT!
I SAW SOMETHING LIKE THIS ON TV!

W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
VARROOOM
THP


MY LOVE FOR YOU WILL STOP THIS CAR!
VARROOM

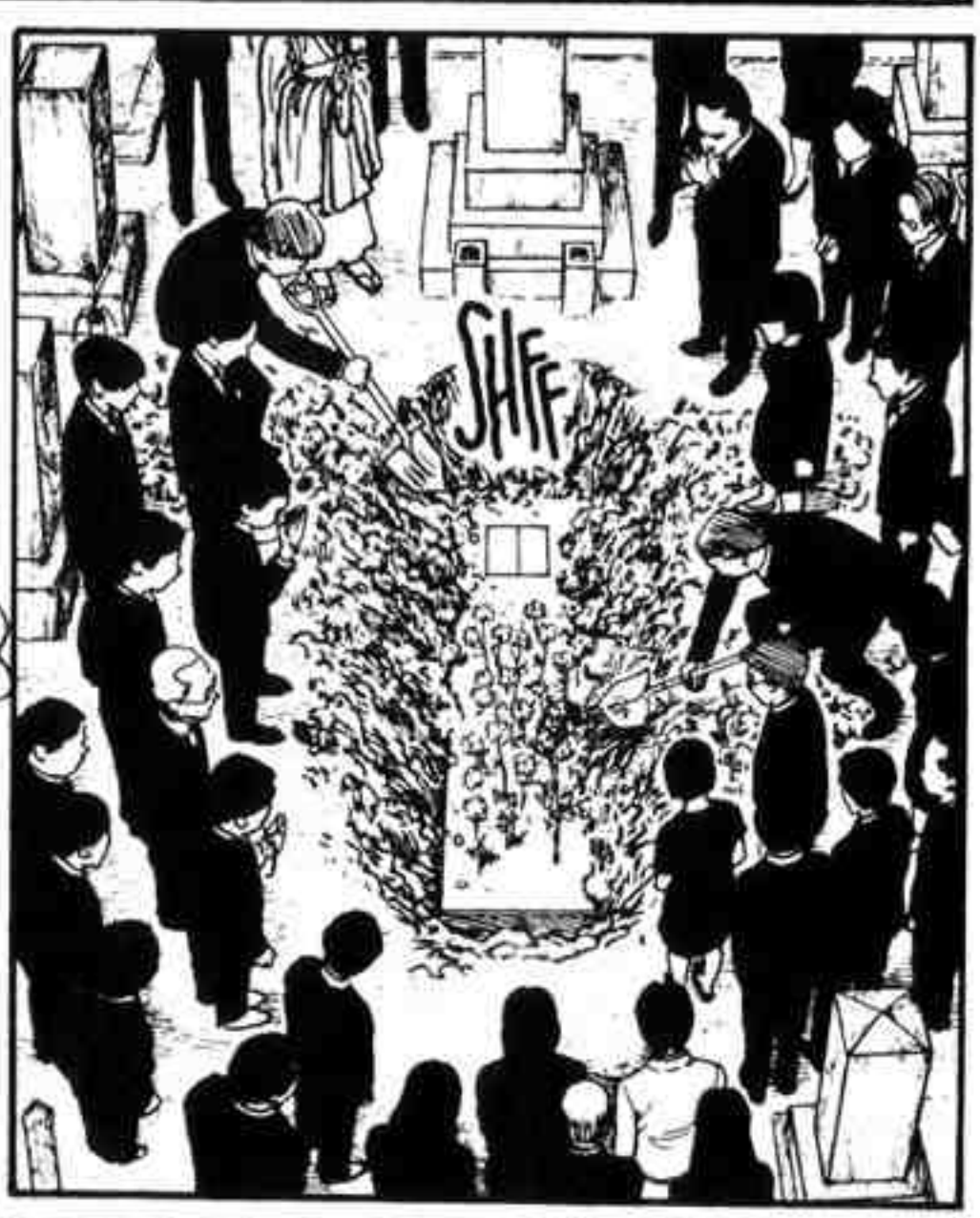
NO!
STOP!

KREEAH!
KRRSHH!

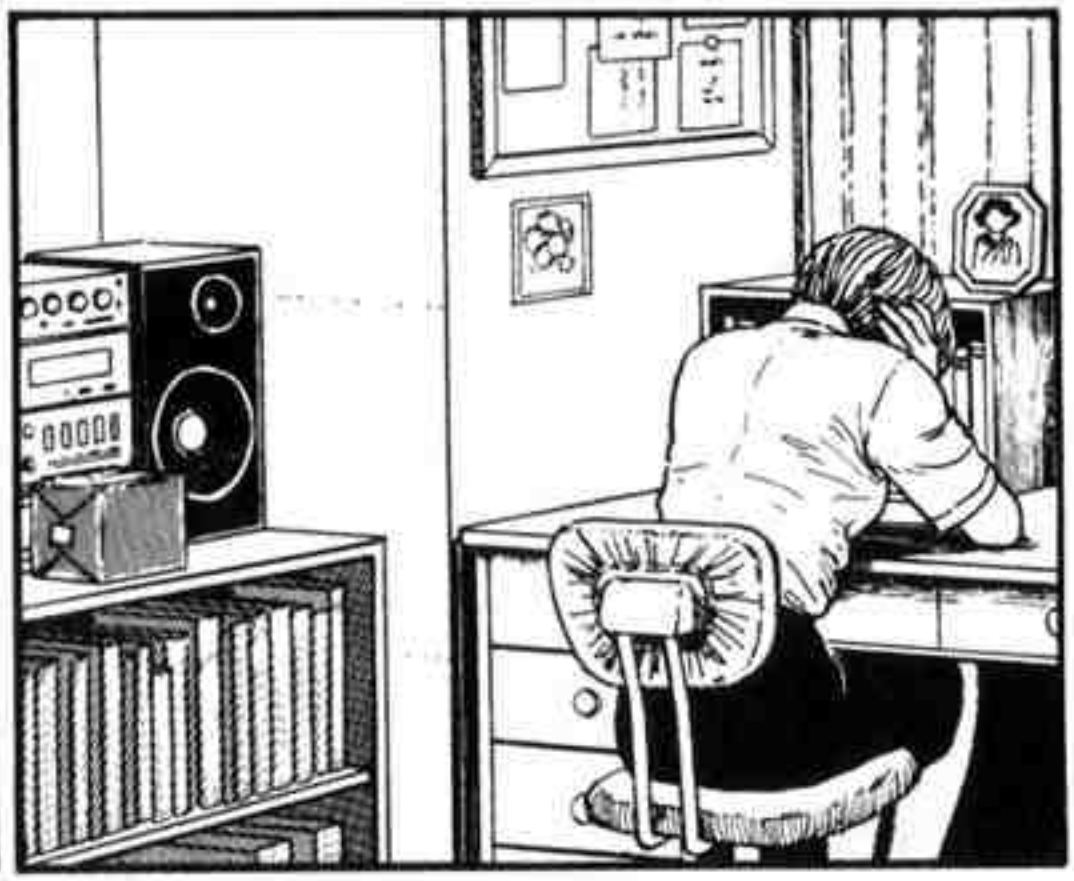
MITSURU ?!

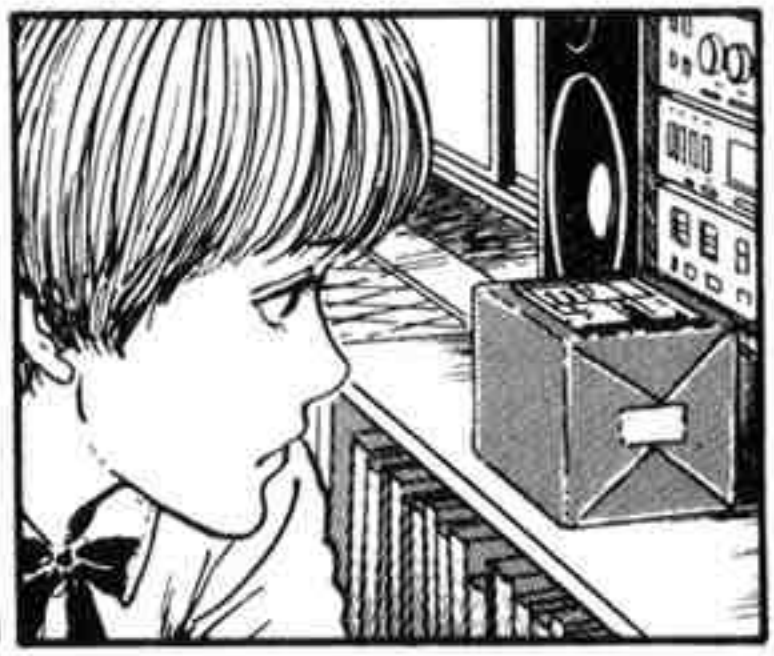
AIEEE!

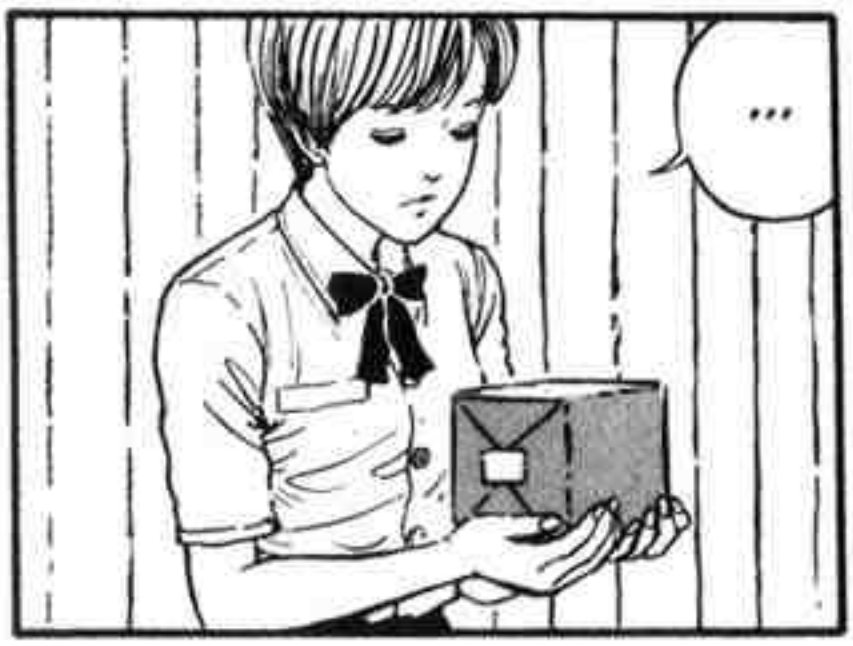
I HEARD JACK-IN-THE BOX WAS KILLED IN A CAR CRASH!
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING!
HIS BODY GOT JAMMED IN THE FRONT WHEEL!
THEY HAD TO USE A BLOWTORCH TO EXTRACT HIS BODY FROM THE CAR!
IT'S GOING TO BE A CLOSED-CASKET FUNERAL!


SHFF

SHF
SHF





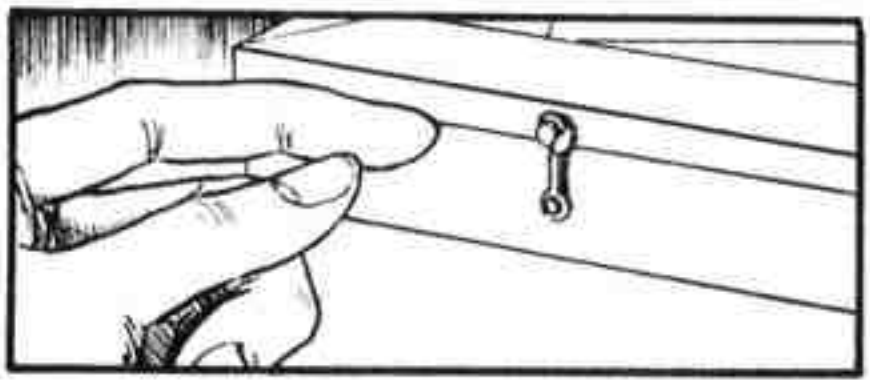

...

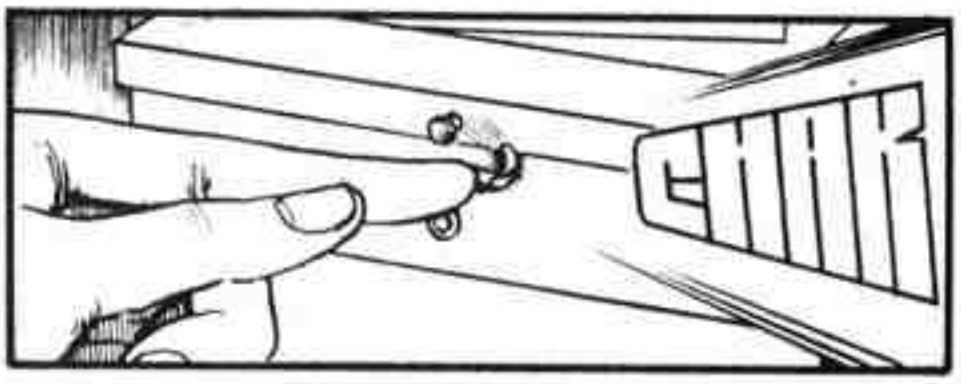
KRCH
KRCH

With Love,
Mitsuru

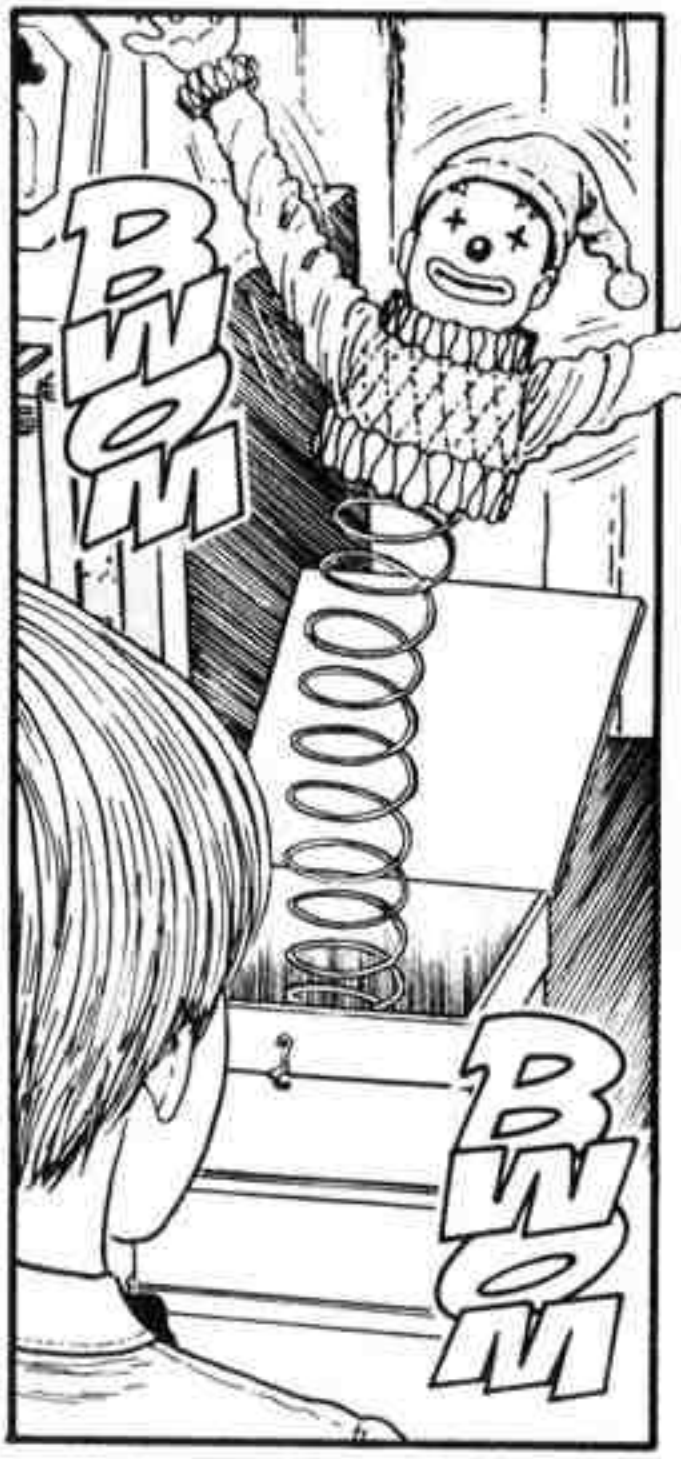
With Love,
Mitsuru

...



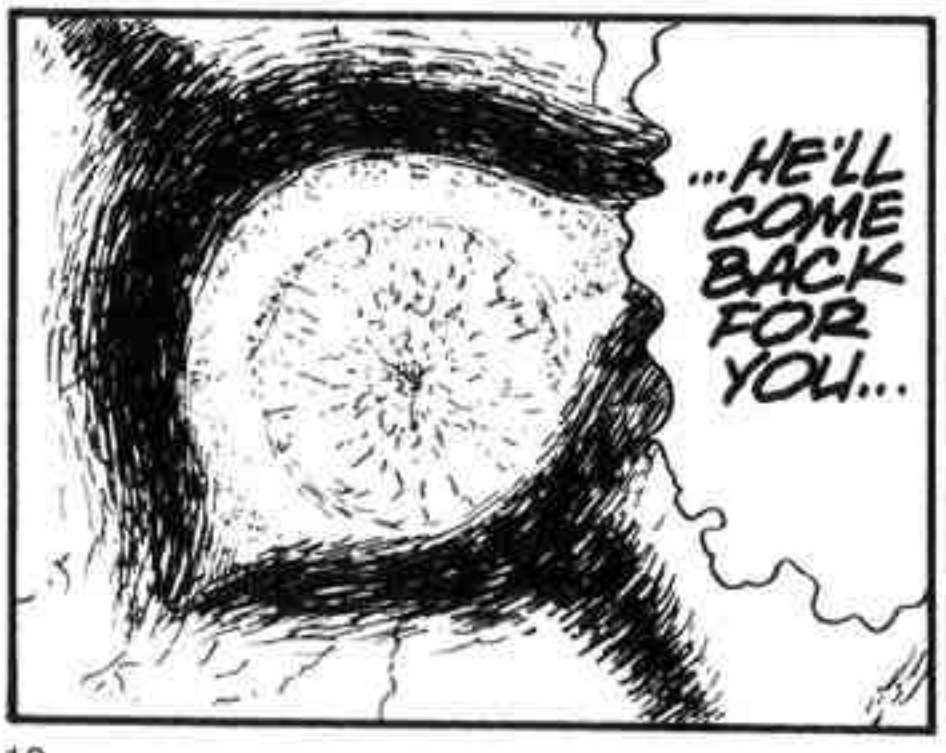

CHAK

FHOH


BUOM
BUOM

HE DIED FOR YOU, DIDN'T HE?

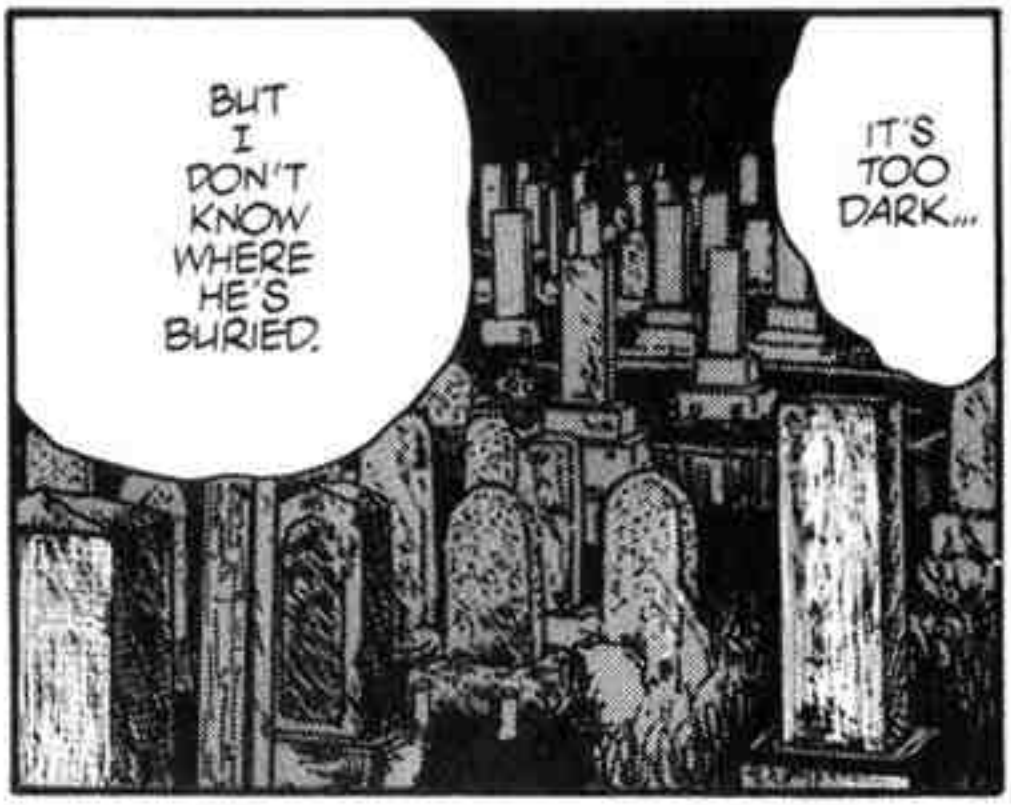
AND NOW...


...HE'LL COME BACK FOR YOU...

AIEEE!

TAK

SHUICHI...
I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'RE GOING TO DO THIS.
W-WE HAVE TO... JUST TAKE ME TO HIS GRAVE.


BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE'S BURIED.
IT'S TOO DARK...

WELL, WE CAN'T DIG HIM UP IN THE DAY-TIME.
THIS IS THE ONLY TIME WHEN WE WON'T GET CAUGHT.

BUT, uh...
WHAT WAS YOUR PLAN?

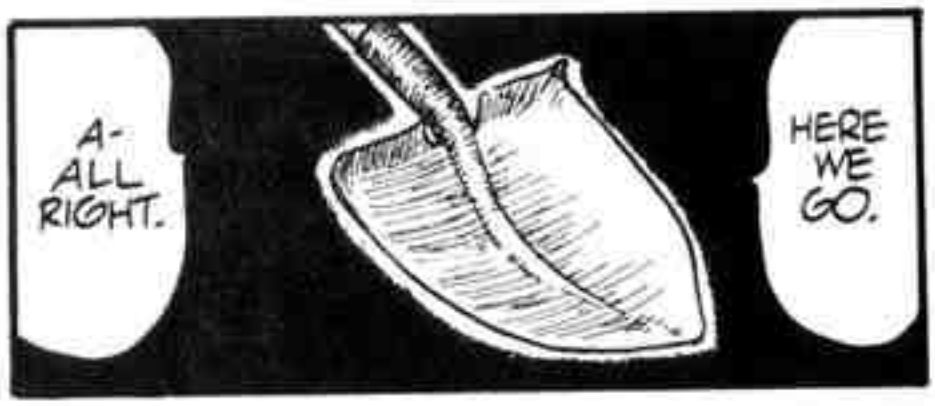
ISN'T IT OBVI-OUS?
I'M GOING TO HAMMER THIS STAKE INTO HIS HEART BEFORE HE CAN COME BACK TO LIFE!

SO YOU BELIEVE WHAT THAT CLOWN SAID?
uh... I don't think he's a VAMPIRE...
TELL ME, HOW YOU CAN BELIEVE A TOY CLOWN SAID ANYTHING AT ALL?

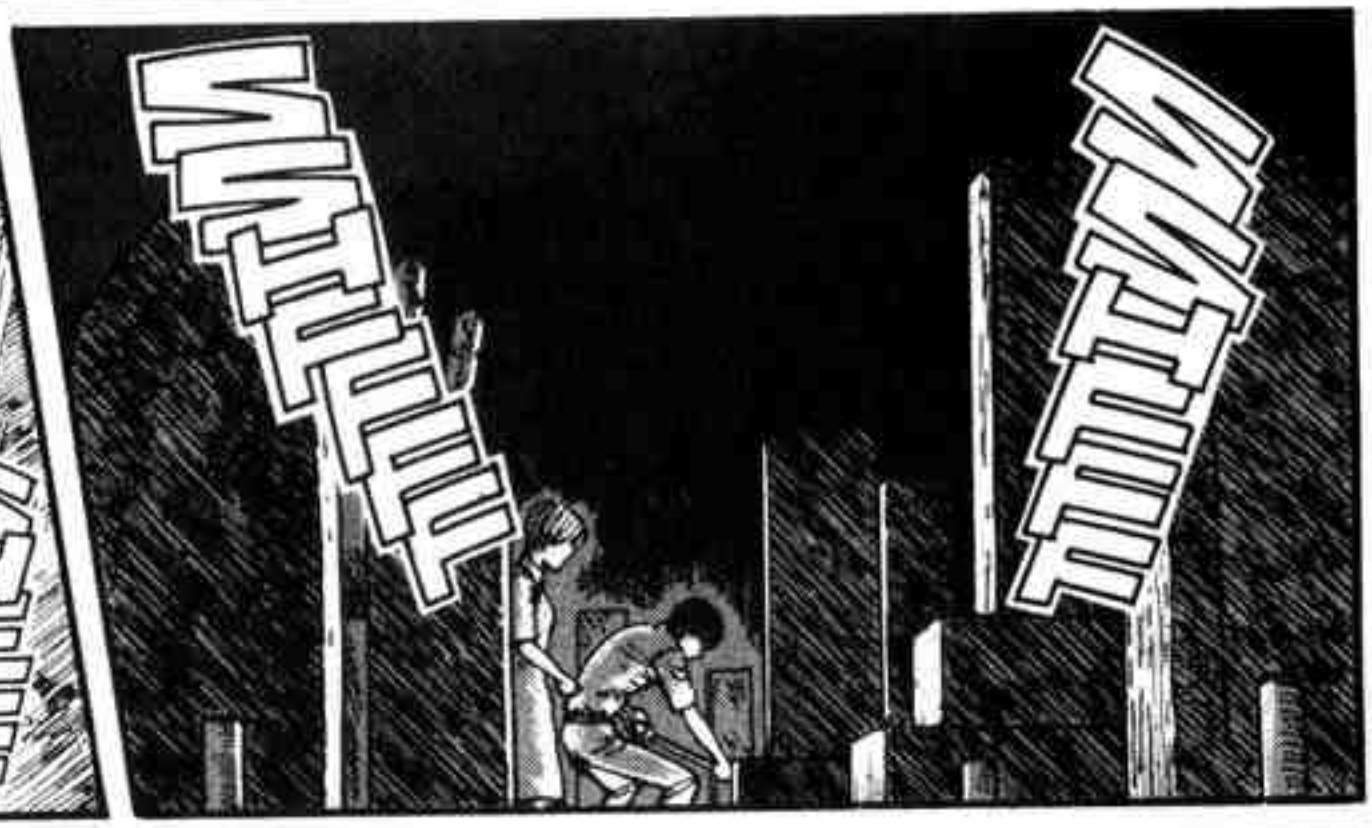
NOTHING IS UNBELIEVABLE IN THIS TOWN!

THIS MUST BE IT.

GULP


A- ALL RIGHT.
HERE WE GO.

SHIFT


SHIFT
SHIFT

uff
huff

uff
huff

THAT AWFUL SMELL... THE BODY MUST BE ROTTING ...
HE CAN'T POSSIBLY COME BACK TO LIFE...

YOU NEVER KNOW.
I NEED THE CROW-BAR.

TAN
TAN

TAN

KREEK

WAM

WHAT WAS THAT?

THE PRESSURE FROM PULLING OUT THE NAILS MUST HAVE FORCED THE CASKET WINDOW OPEN.

THIS IS UN-BEARABLE ...

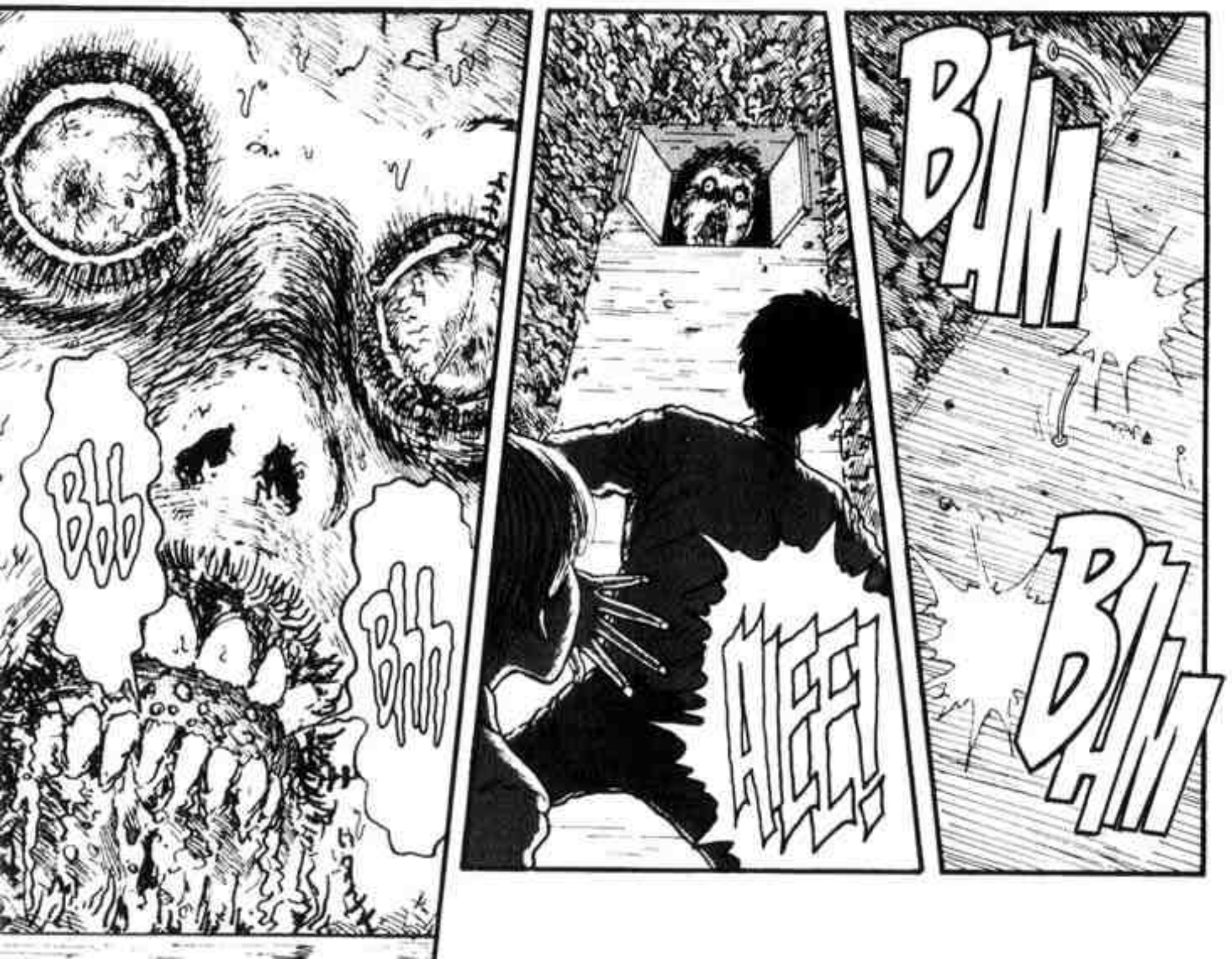
WELL, STEP BACK THEN.

LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH.

TAK

KREEK

BANG


BOOB
BOOB
AEEE
BAM
BAM

BAM

HHH

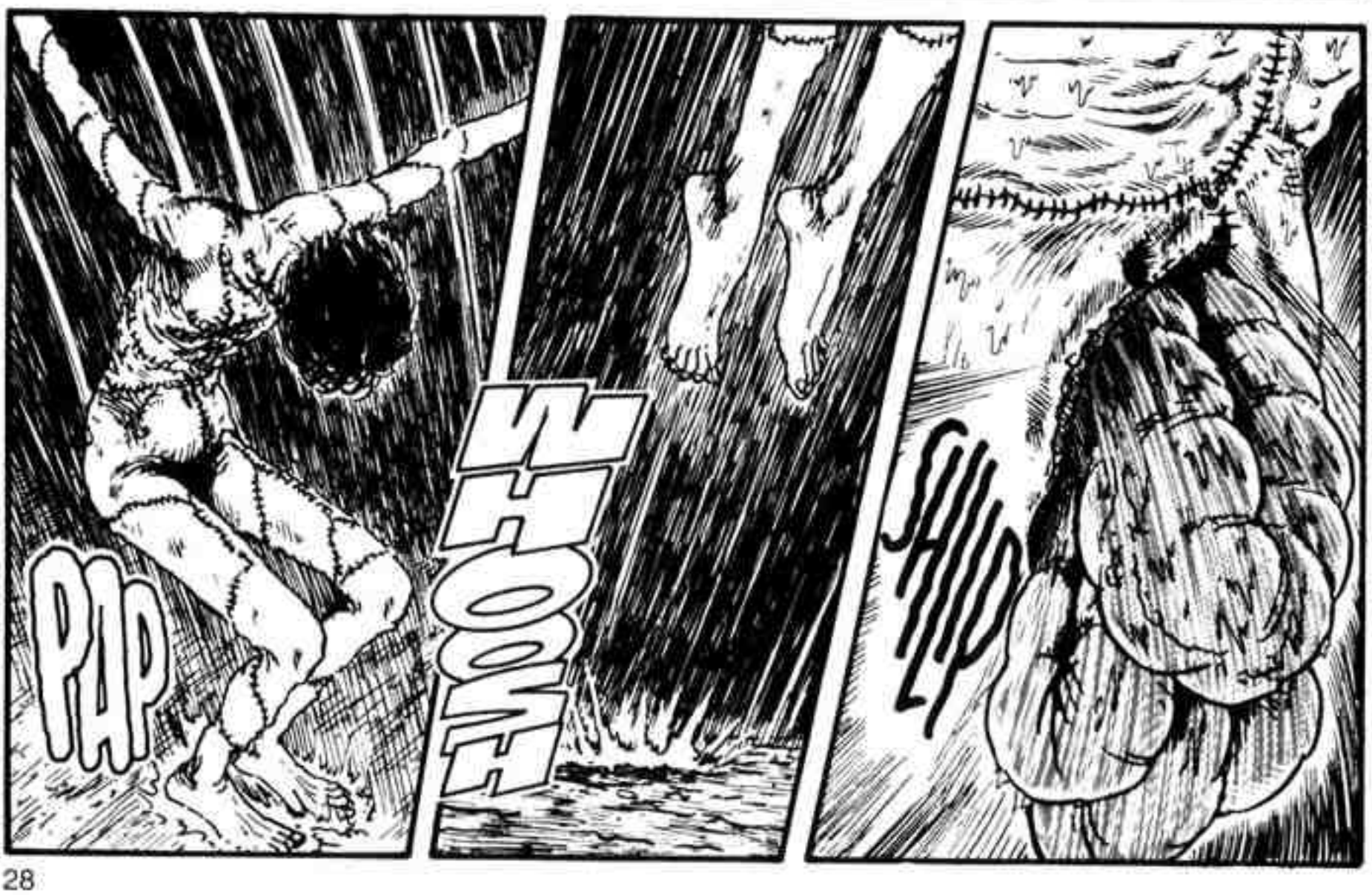
KIRIE...
...RUN!

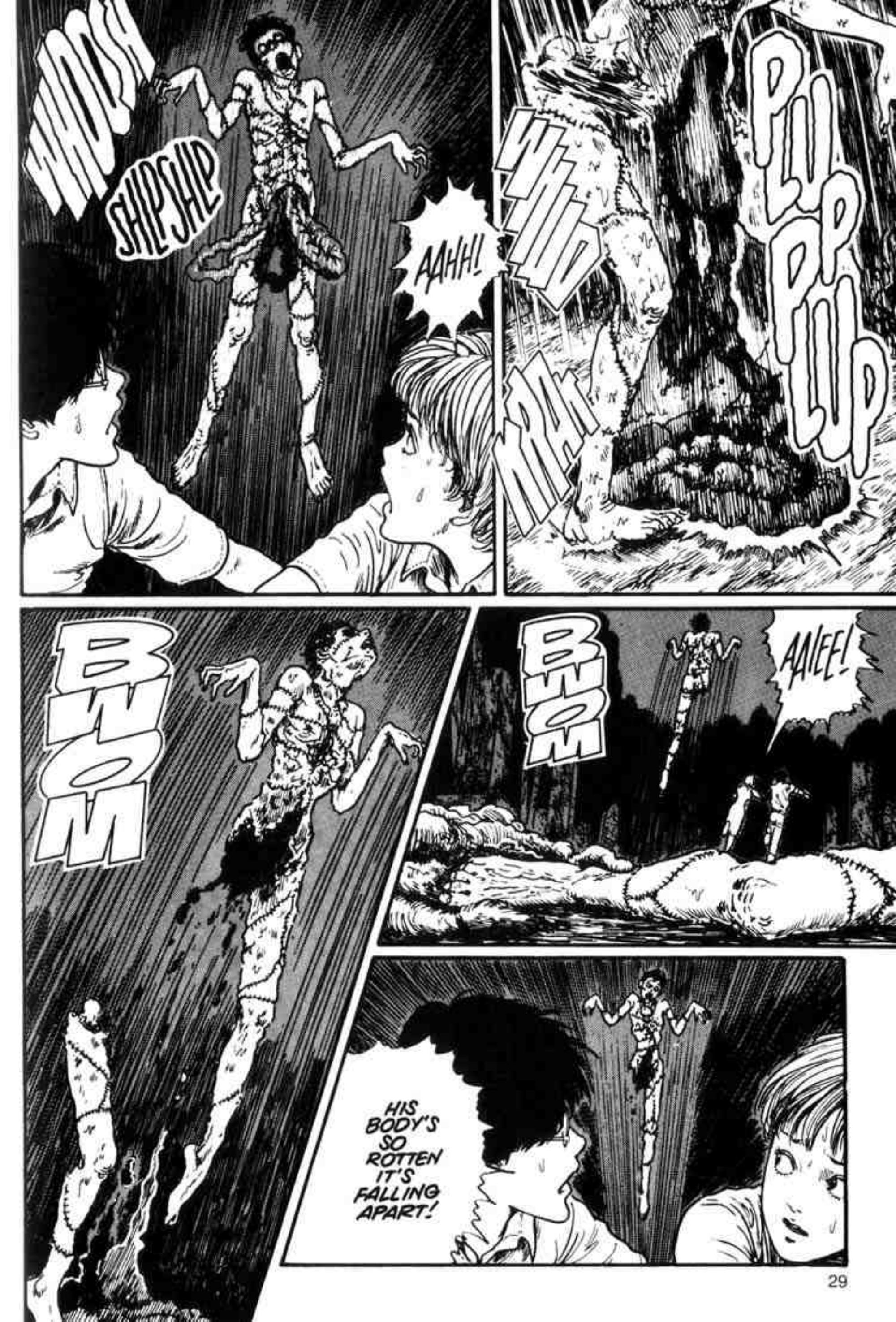
EIOO!
SPLP
BWOM
WOM

uff
hff

BWOM
BWOM
NO!

HOW CAN HE JUMP AROUND LIKE THAT?
I... I DON'T KNOW !!


PAP
WHOOSH
SLIP


WHOOSH
SHIPSHIP
AAHH!
WHIP
PAK
PLUP
PLUP
PLUP
BWOM
BWOM
AAIEE!
HIS BODY'S SO ROTTEN IT'S FALLING APART!

ウヒヒ
ウヒヒ
ドドド

uff
huff

I THINK IT'S ALL OVER...

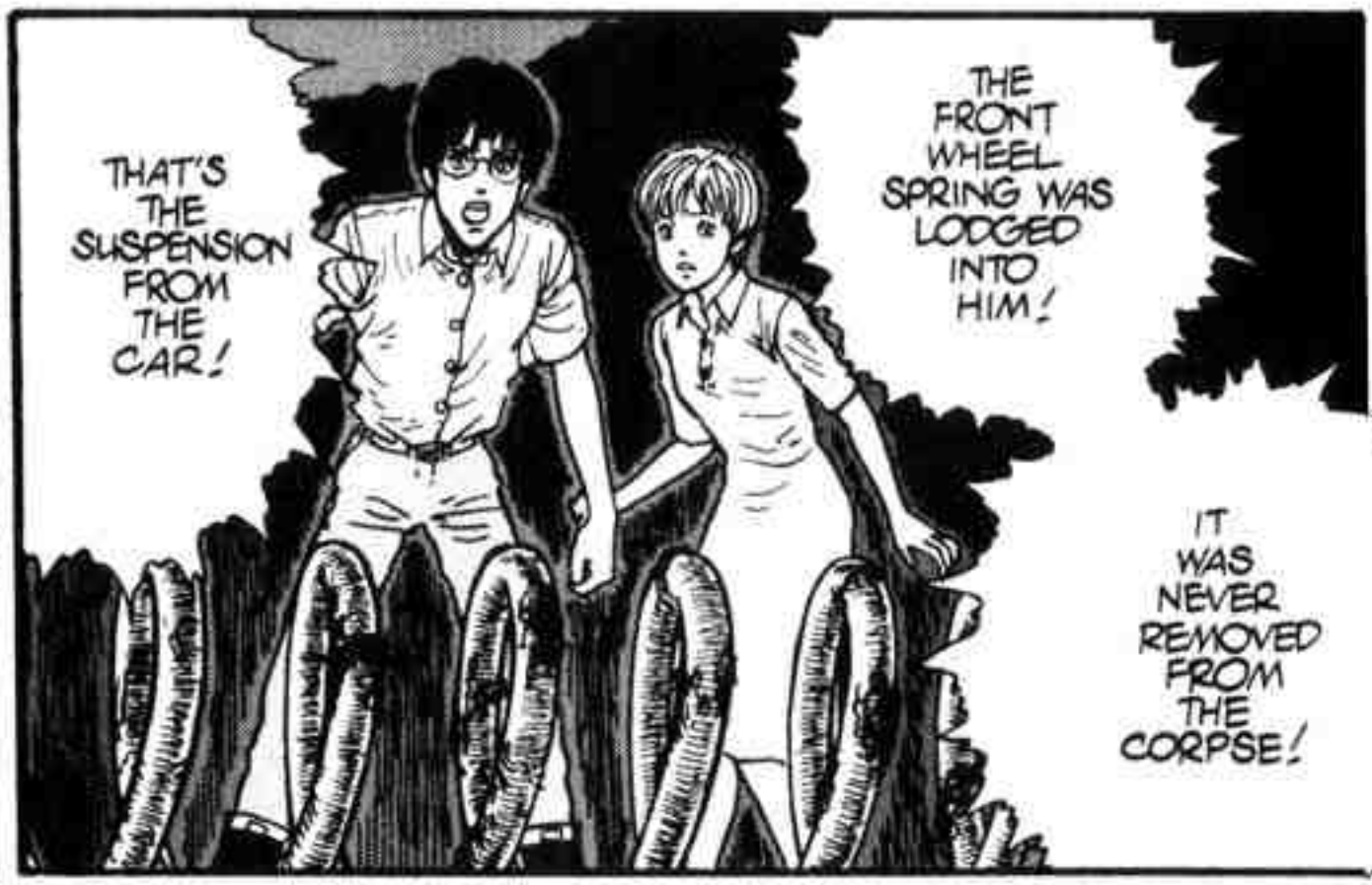
HHH!
EEYAA!
BU
MI
BWOM
BWOM

POP
POP
LOOK!
SHUICHI!
WHOM
WHOM
WHAT THE HELL?
HIS SPINE'S TURNED INTO A SPRING?

IT WON'T STOP!!
BIOM
WHO
Hhh!
KYAAA!

BONG
RRRRLLLL

uff
hff

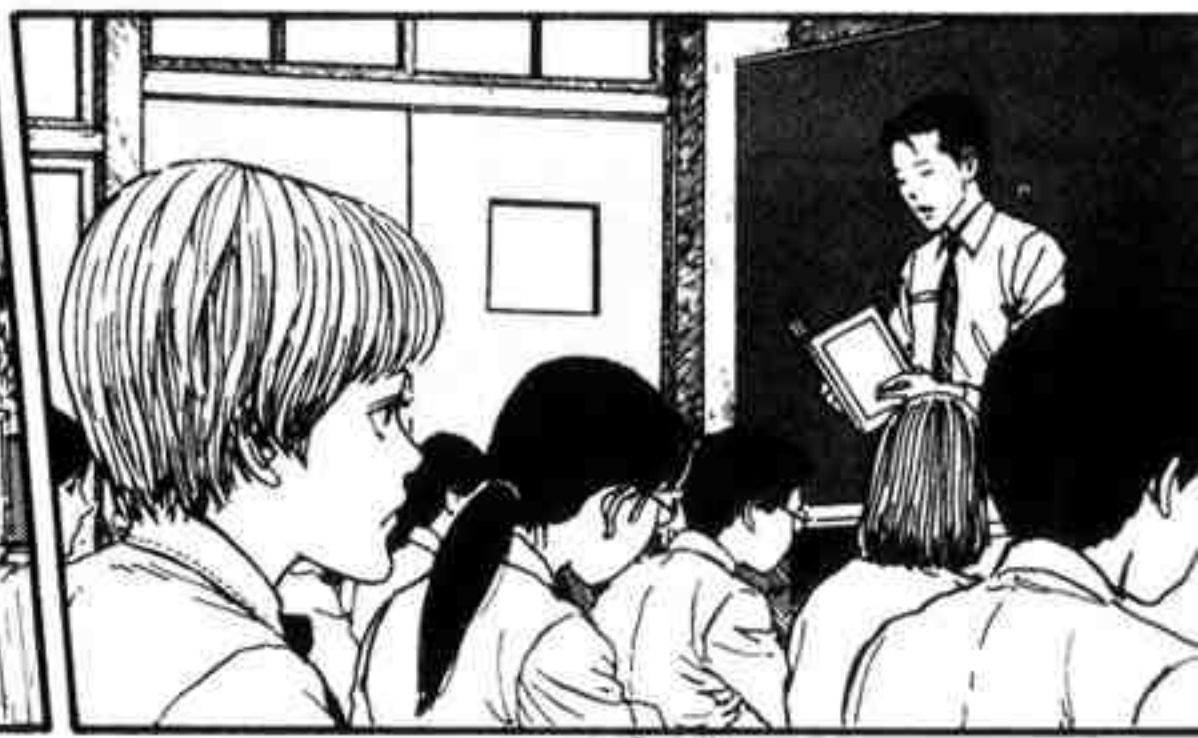

THAT'S THE SUSPENSION FROM THE CAR!
THE FRONT WHEEL SPRING WAS LODGED INTO HIM!
IT WAS NEVER REMOVED FROM THE CORPSE!

I DON'T THINK "JACK-IN-THE-BOX" ...
...WILL EVER BE BACK AGAIN...

CHAPTER 8 The Snail

SHAAAAAAAA
IT HASN'T RAINED IN A WHILE.
I HEARD IT'S GOING TO RAIN FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS.
IT'S REALLY POURING OUTSIDE.
I BET KATAYAMA COMES TODAY.
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
HE ONLY SHOWS UP WHEN IT'S RAINING.
SHAAAA

SHAAAA



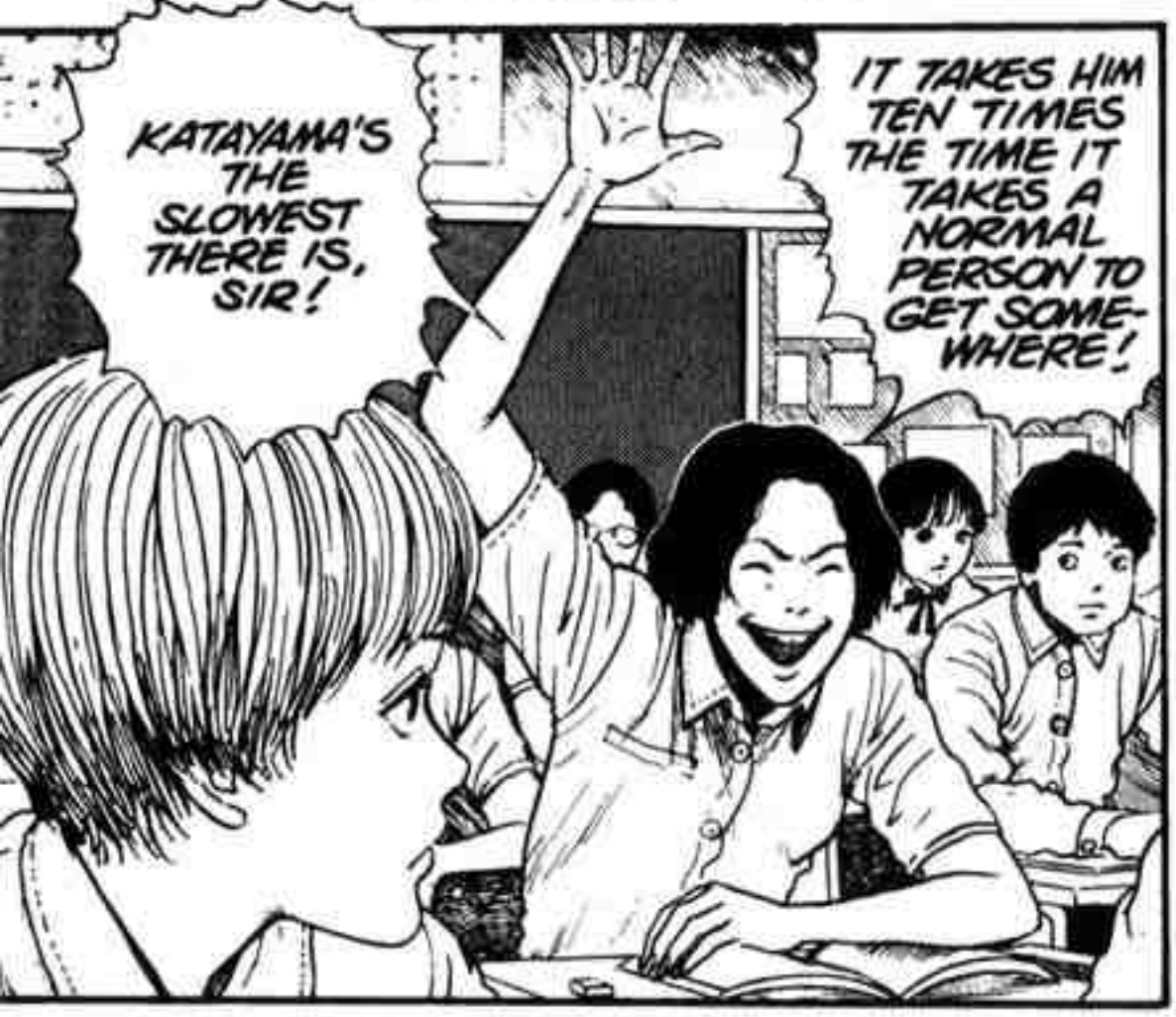
THD

REAR

REAR

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT TIME IT IS, KATAYAMA?
MR YOKOTA...
I'M SORRY I'M LATE.

I GOT UP EARLY... BUT IT TOOK A LONG TIME.


KATAYAMA'S THE SLOWEST THERE IS, SIR!
IT TAKES HIM TEN TIMES THE TIME IT TAKES A NORMAL PERSON TO GET SOME-WHERE!

WA HA HA!
THAT'S ENOUGH, TSUMURA!

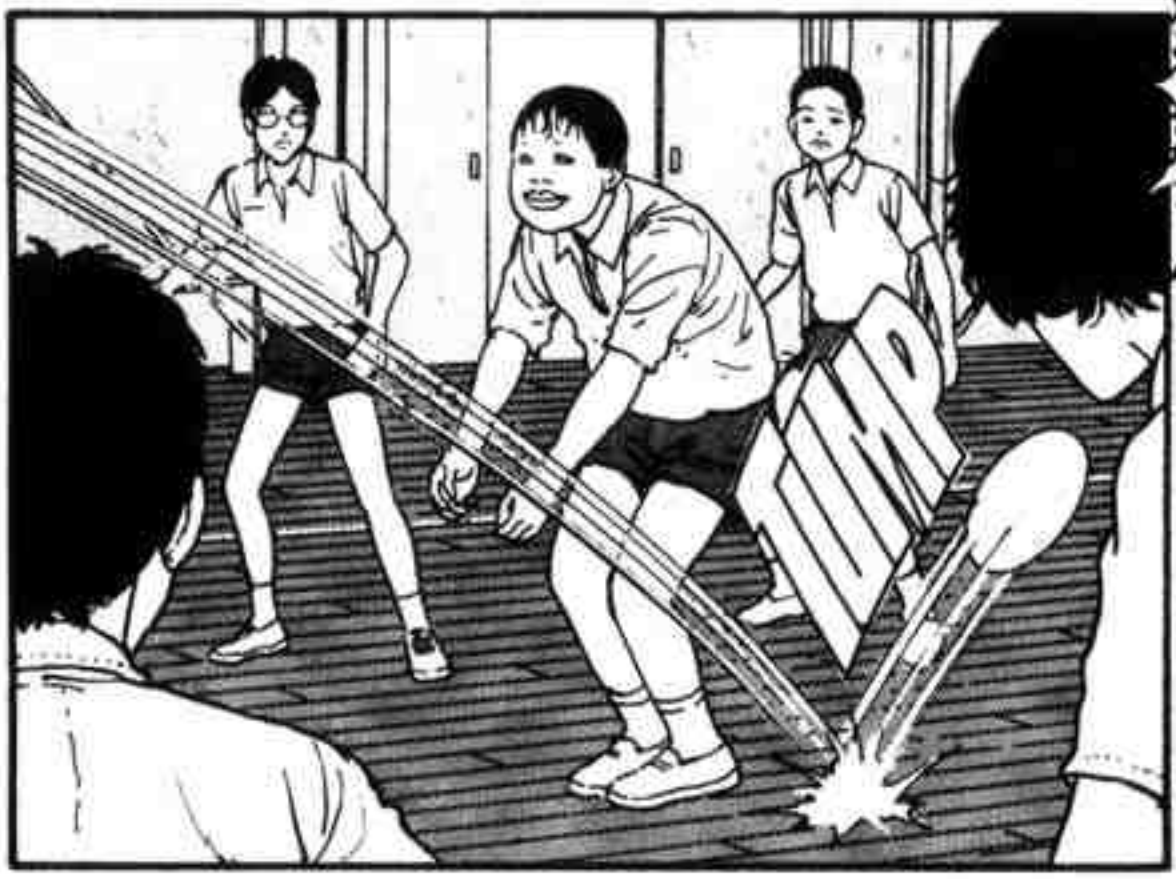
KATAYAMA, YOU'RE SOAKING WET AGAIN! WHY DON'T YOU BUY AN UMBRELLA?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU ONLY SHOW UP WHEN IT RAINS. DO YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST COME TO CLASS WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE IT?

Um...
Uh...

ENOUGH! JUST GO TO YOUR SEAT!

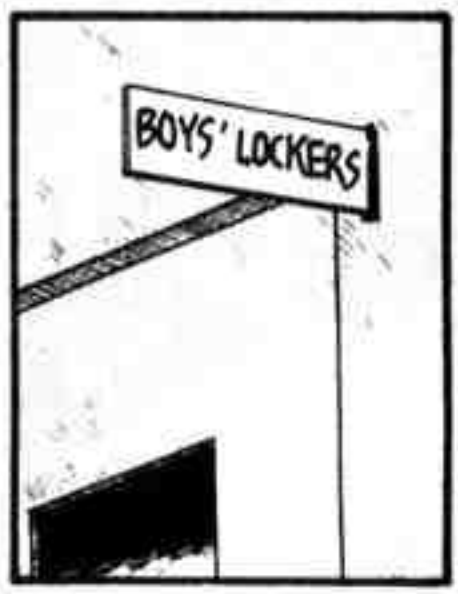
TSUMURA CAN BE A JERK, BUT HE'S RIGHT!
KATAYAMA REALLY IS SLOW.

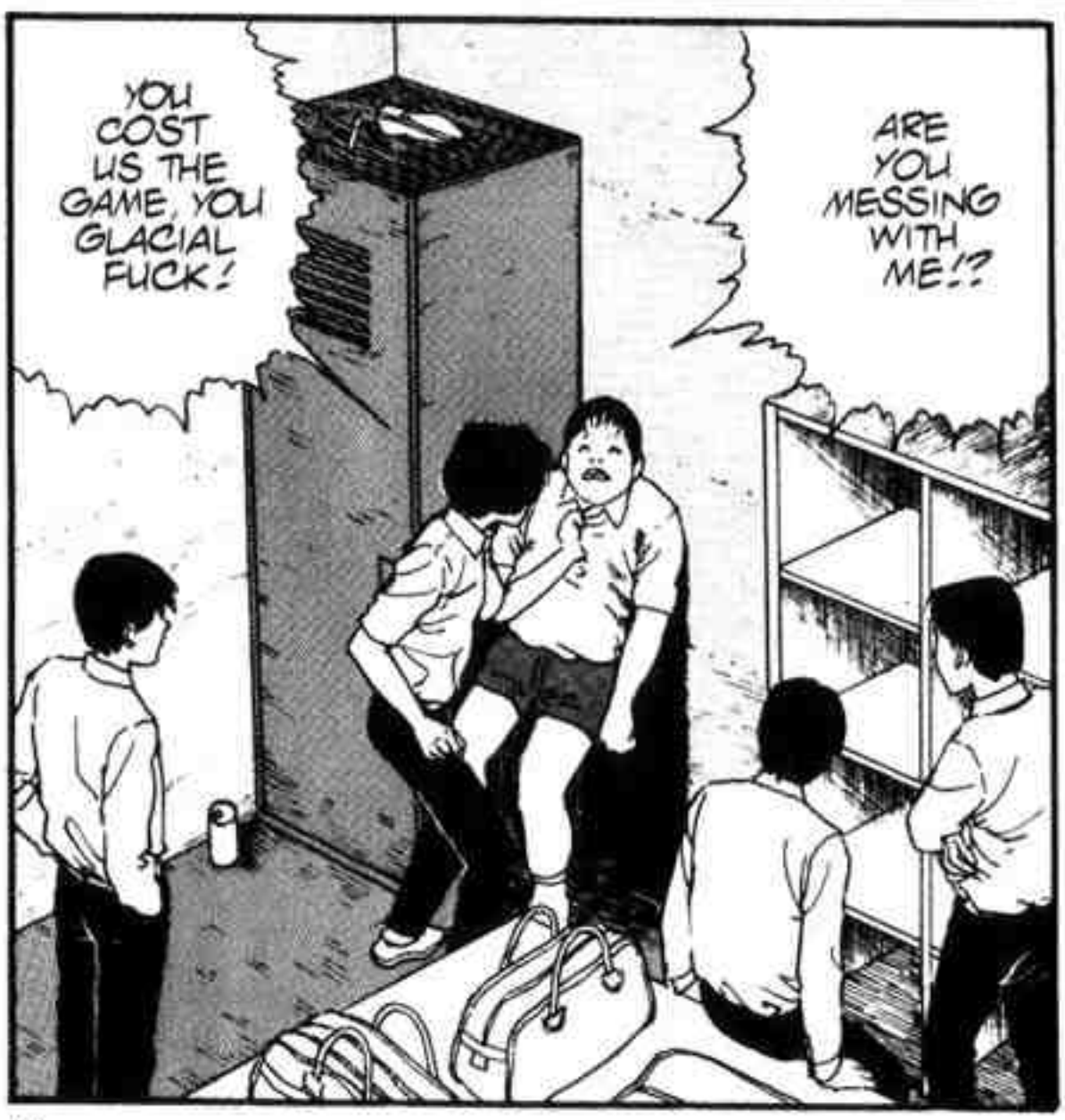
SHAAA
DDDD


THUMP

PICK IT UP, SLOW-ASS!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

...


BOYS' LOCKERS


YOU COST US THE GAME, YOU GLACIAL FUCK!
ARE YOU MESSING WITH ME!?

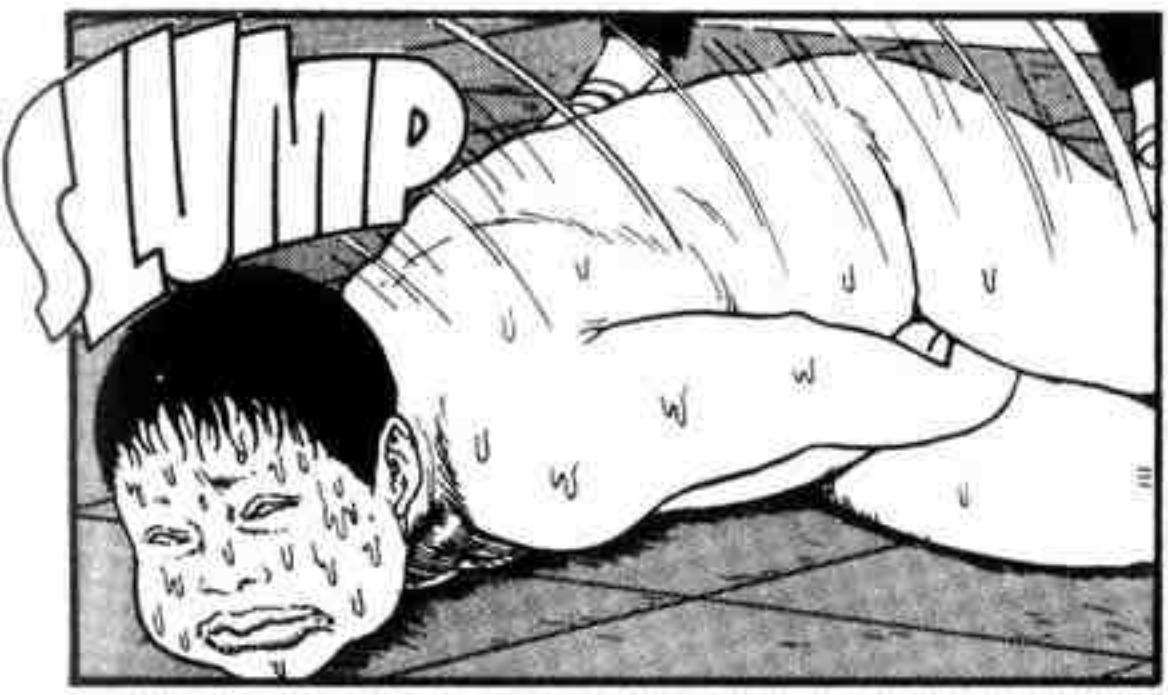
P-PLEASE ...TSUMURA.

DON'T YOU TALK TO ME LIKE WE'RE FRIENDS!

YOU'RE EVEN SLOW CHANGING YOUR CLOTHES!
WHY DON'T WE CHANGE THEM FOR HIM?
GOOD IDEA!
S-STOP IT!
STRIP HIM!

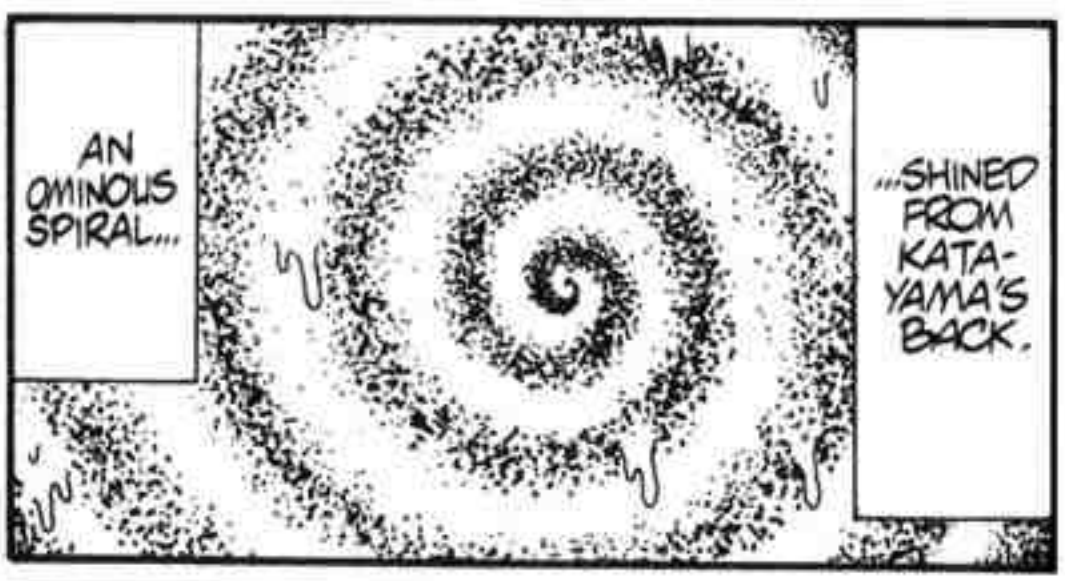
DRAG HIM OUT HERE!
STOP IT!

AIEEEE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?


SLUMP

WA HA HA HA!
GET A GOOD LOOK!

HUH?


AN OMINOUS SPIRAL...
...SHINED FROM KATA-YAMA'S BACK.

SLL
SLL
SLL

TUESDAY
SHAAAAA
HIS BACK WAS SO SWOLLEN ...
...WE COULD ALL SEE IT.
MR. YO-KOTA...
I'M SORRY I'M LATE AGAIN.
KATA-YAMA, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR BACK?
HUH?
LOOKS LIKE IT'S SWOLLEN UP.
HFF HFF...
...

D-DID YOU SEE THAT, KIRIE?
THE WET CLOTH CLUNG TO HIS BACK...
...SO YOU COULD SEE THROUGH HIS SHIRT.
YES...
A SPIRAL...
THE SPIRAL'S RISING.
MBL
MBL
THIS IS CREEPY, KIRIE.
HE LOOKS LIKE...
...A SNAIL.

WEDNESDAY
SHAA

MR. YO-KOTA...
I'M SORRY I'M LATE.

THE GROWTH WAS EVEN LARGER.

THURSDAY
SHAAAAAA

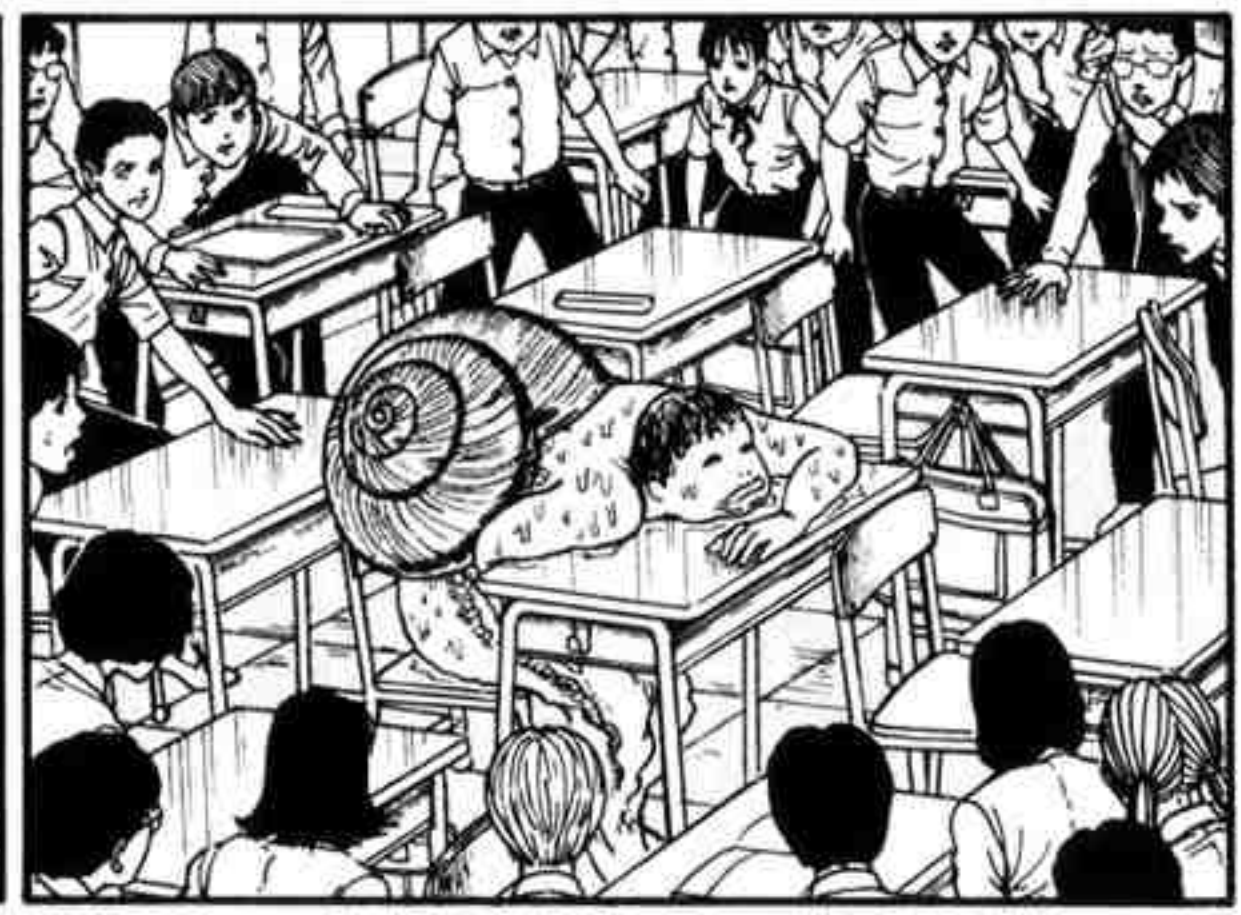
THD

SHHP

SHHP

SHP

K-
KATAYAMA
...



FRIDAY
SHAAAAA
THE RAIN KEPT ON POURING.
LOOK!
THERE HE IS! ON THE WALL!

HE'S CURSED..
HE'S CURSED BY THE SPIRAL...

LOOK AT THAT TRAIL HE'S LEAVING BEHIND.

HAAAAAAA

WHERE'S MY SON?
WELL, YOU SEE...

H-HE'S UP THERE.

SHAAA

W-WHAT?
THAT CAN'T BE OUR SON!

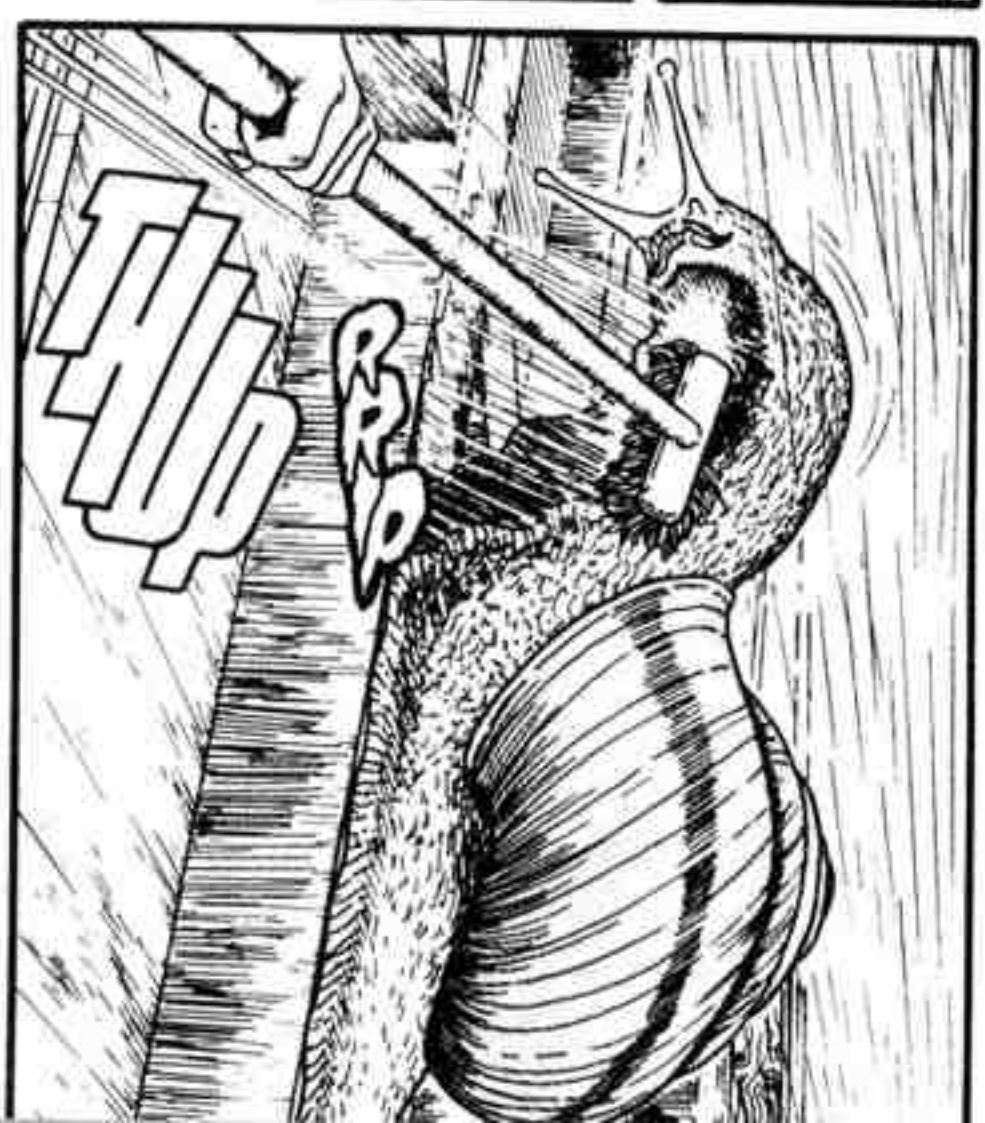
THIS IS PRE-POSTEROUS!

WE'RE GOING HOME!

BUT, BUT...

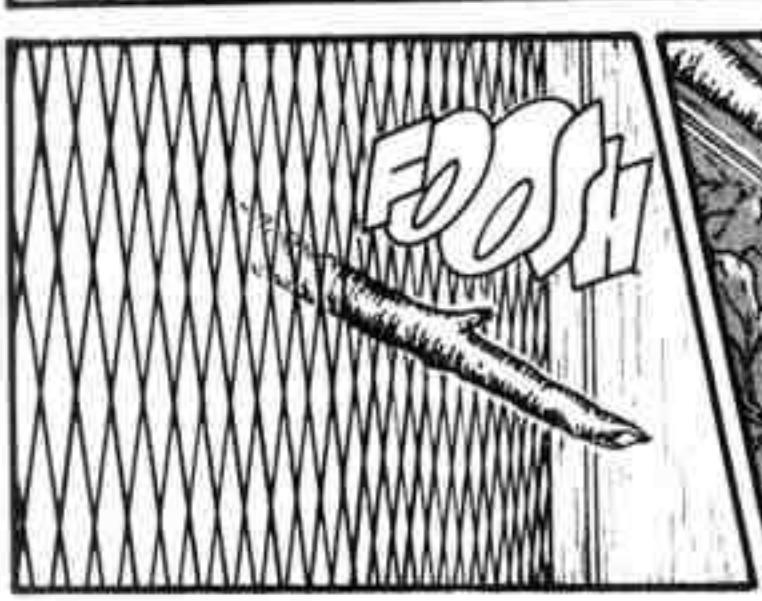
HIS FAMILY REFUSED TO TAKE HIM HOME.

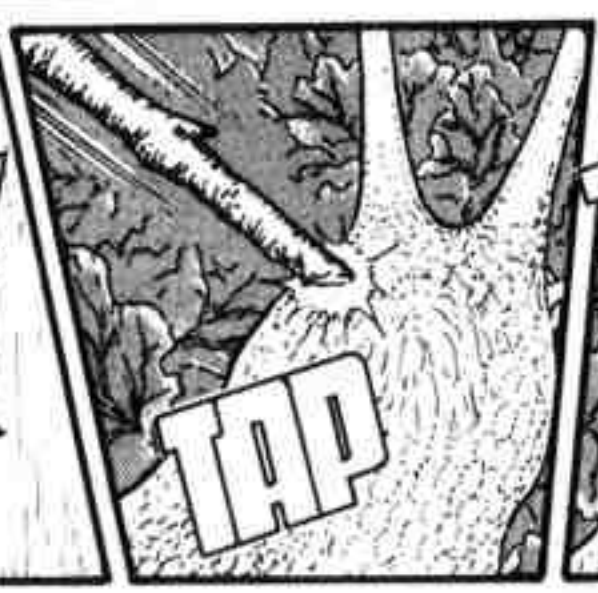
WE'RE READY DOWN HERE.

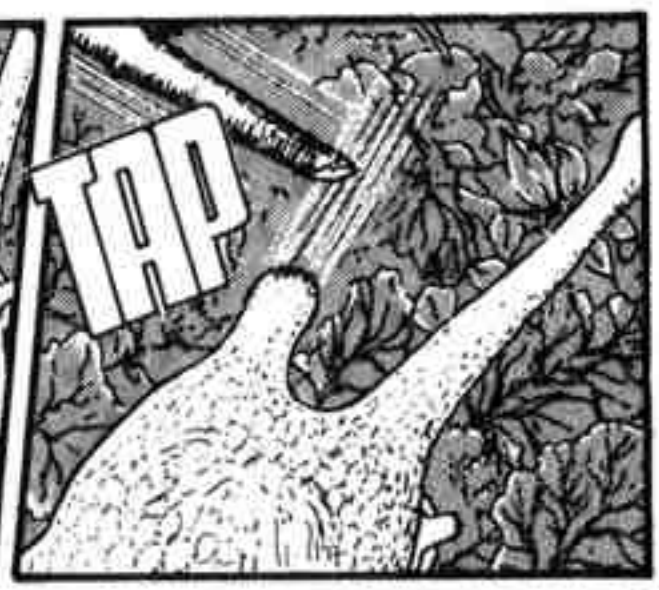


EVENTUALLY THE SCHOOL TOOK CARE OF HIM.

MNC
MNC


FOOSH


TAP


TAP

WA HA HA HA! THIS IS GREAT!
STOP IT, TSUMURA!
LEAVE HIM ALONE!

GET OFF MY BACK! HE'S JUST A SLUG NOW!
HE'S NOT HUMAN ANY-MORE!

ONCE IT STOPPED RAINING ...
...KATAYAMA RETREATED INTO HIS SHELL...

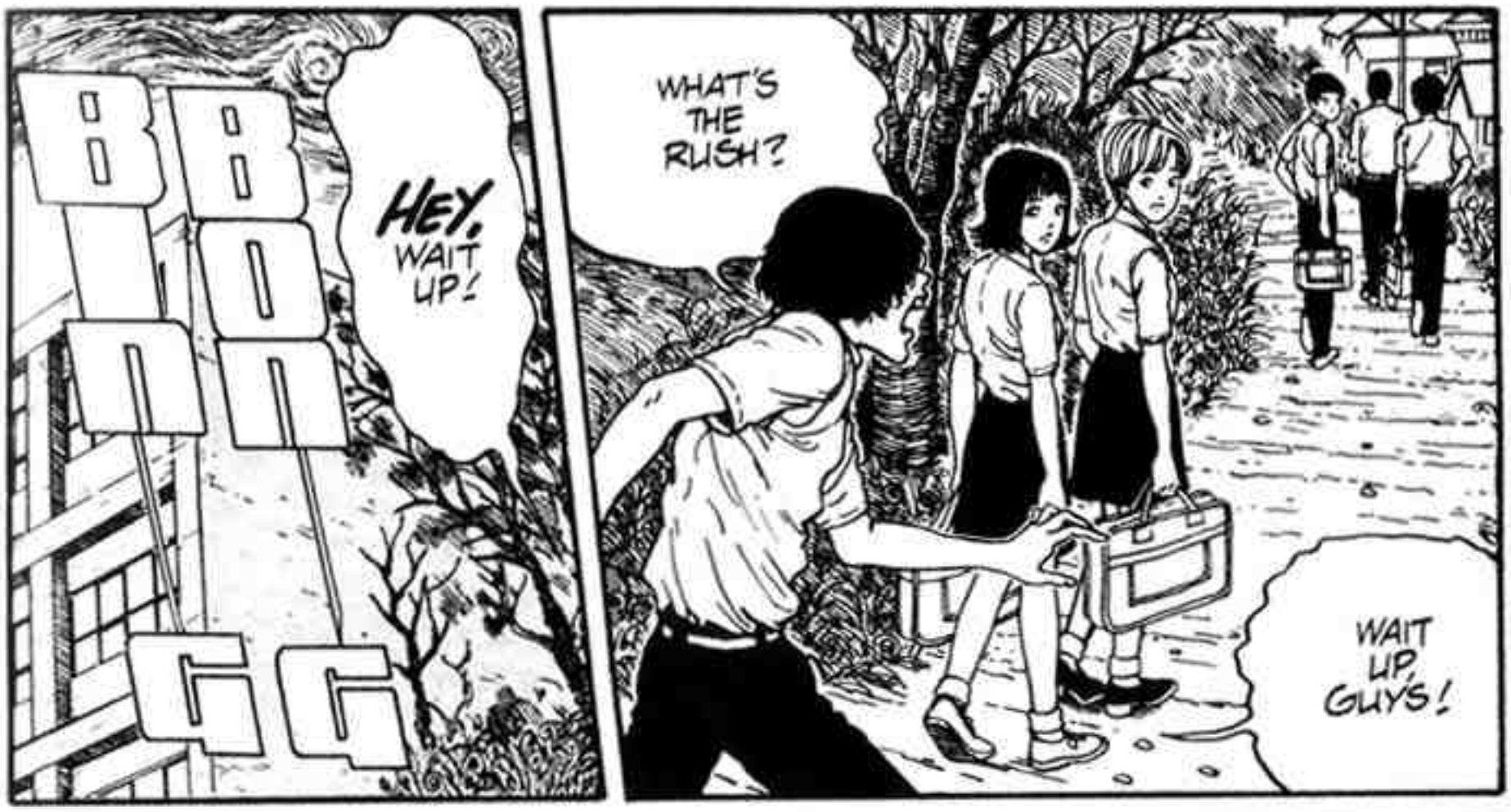
FSSHHHHH

GLUG
GLUG

YOU'RE GONNA DROWN DRINKING SO MUCH.

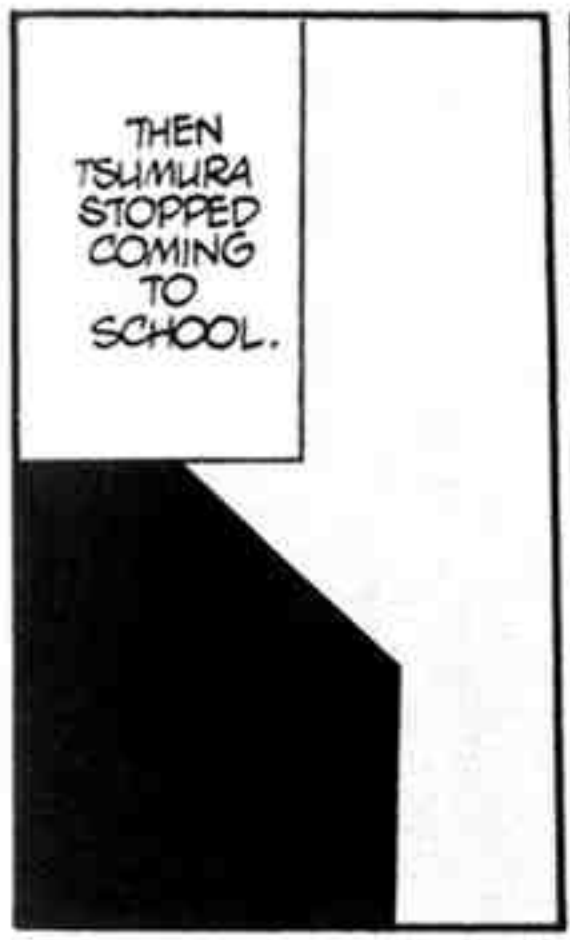
WHADDA YOU MEAN?
AREN'T YOU GUYS THIRSTY?

NOT REALLY... IT'S NOT THAT HOT.


BOOM
BOOM
HEY, WAIT UP!
WHAT'S THE RUSH?
WAIT UP, GUYS!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU'RE SO SLOW!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

I-I DON'T KNOW...
HFF HFF


THEN TSUMURA STOPPED COMING TO SCHOOL.

HE HASN'T COME OUT OF HIS SHELL.
WELL, IT HASN'T BEEN RAIN-ING.

WHY DON'T WE SPRAY HIM WITH WATER?
WHAT ?

HE MIGHT DIE FROM DEHYDRA-TION.
MAYBE, BUT...

... BUT WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN?
WHAT IF HE SHOWS HIS FACE?

THAT'S PROBABLY WHY NOBODY GIVES HIM WATER.
I DON'T WANT TO SEE THAT FACE ANY MORE.

THAT'S ALL RIGHT. I'LL HOLD THE HOSE.
YOU JUST TURN THE TAP ON.

SNEEK
SNEEK

SHOSHH

GLUG
GLUG

GLUG
GLUG

FUP

FUP

SLIPP

KYAAA!

HAAAAAAA

LISTEN UP EVERY-ONE.
TSUMURA HASN'T COME TO SCHOOL LATELY. IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN MISSING.

IF YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE HE IS, I WANT YOU TO TELL ME.
MRMR
MRMR

HEY...
MBL MBL
DO YOU THINK...?
WHAT IF HE'S...?

...

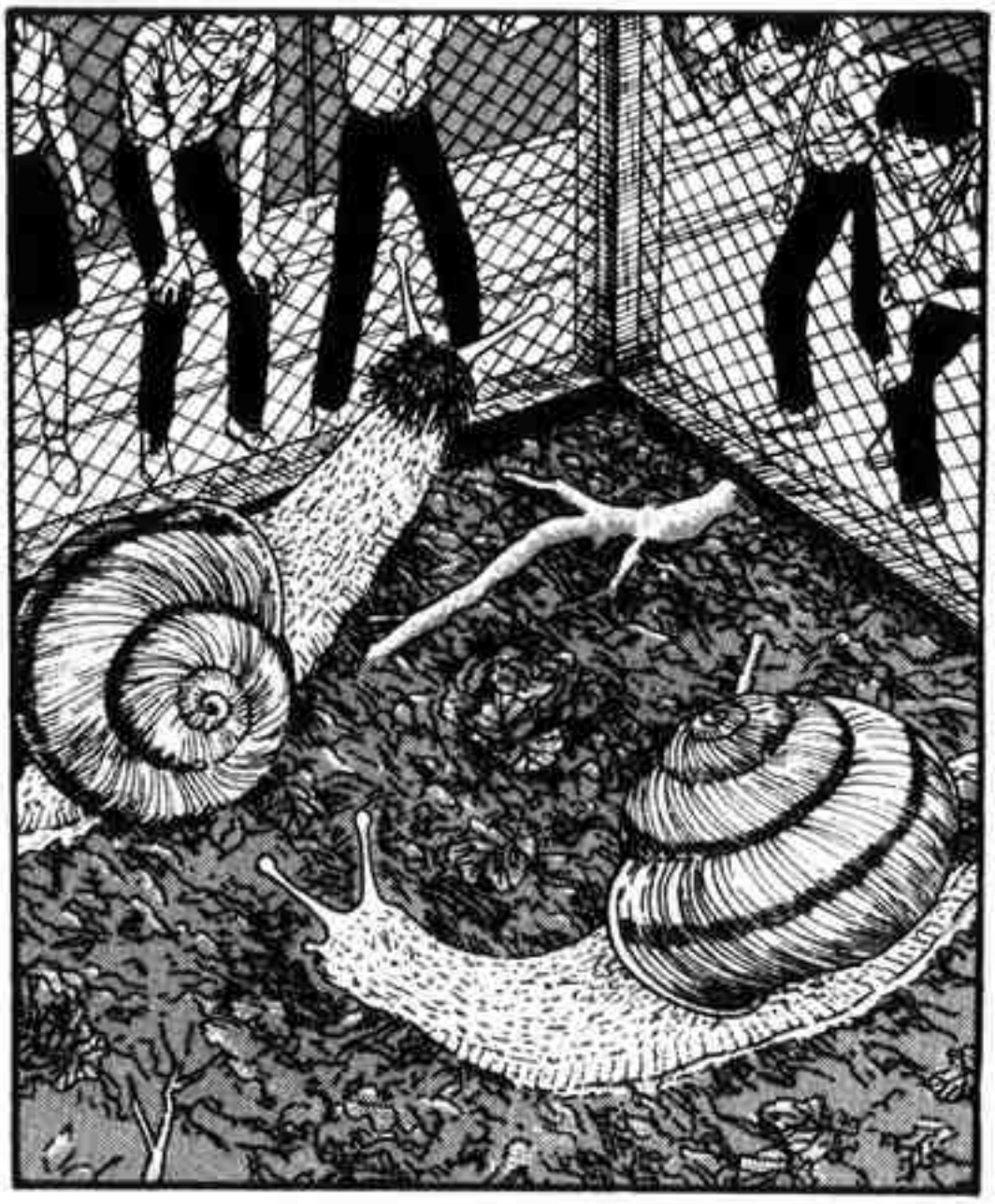
SHAAAAAA

SHAAAAAA

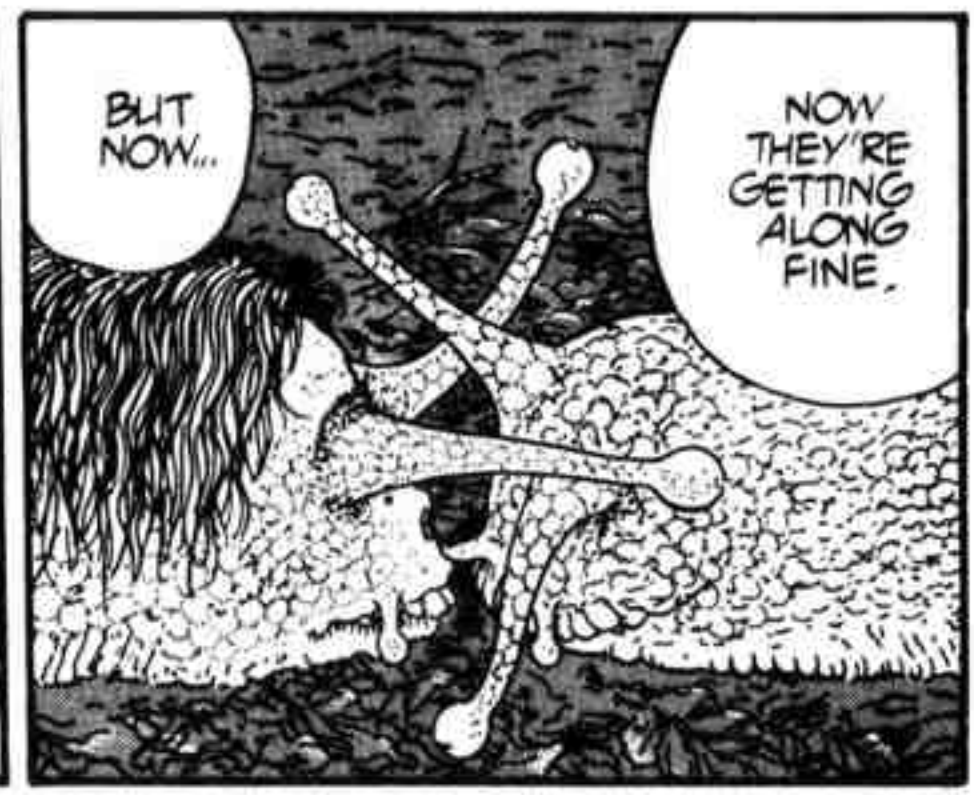
AIEE!
EEYAA!
ON THE GLASS!
DID KATAYAMA ESCAPE FROM THE CAGE?
NO, MR. YOKOTA!
THAT'S NOT HIM!

THAT'S TSUMURA!

HE'S BECOME A SNAIL, TOO!



HOW IRONIC.
TSUMURA WAS SUCH A BULLY.


BUT NOW...
NOW THEY'RE GETTING ALONG FINE.

WHAT ARE THEY DOING?
IT LOOKS KINDA STRANGE.

WH-WHAT THE HELL...
WHAT IS IT?

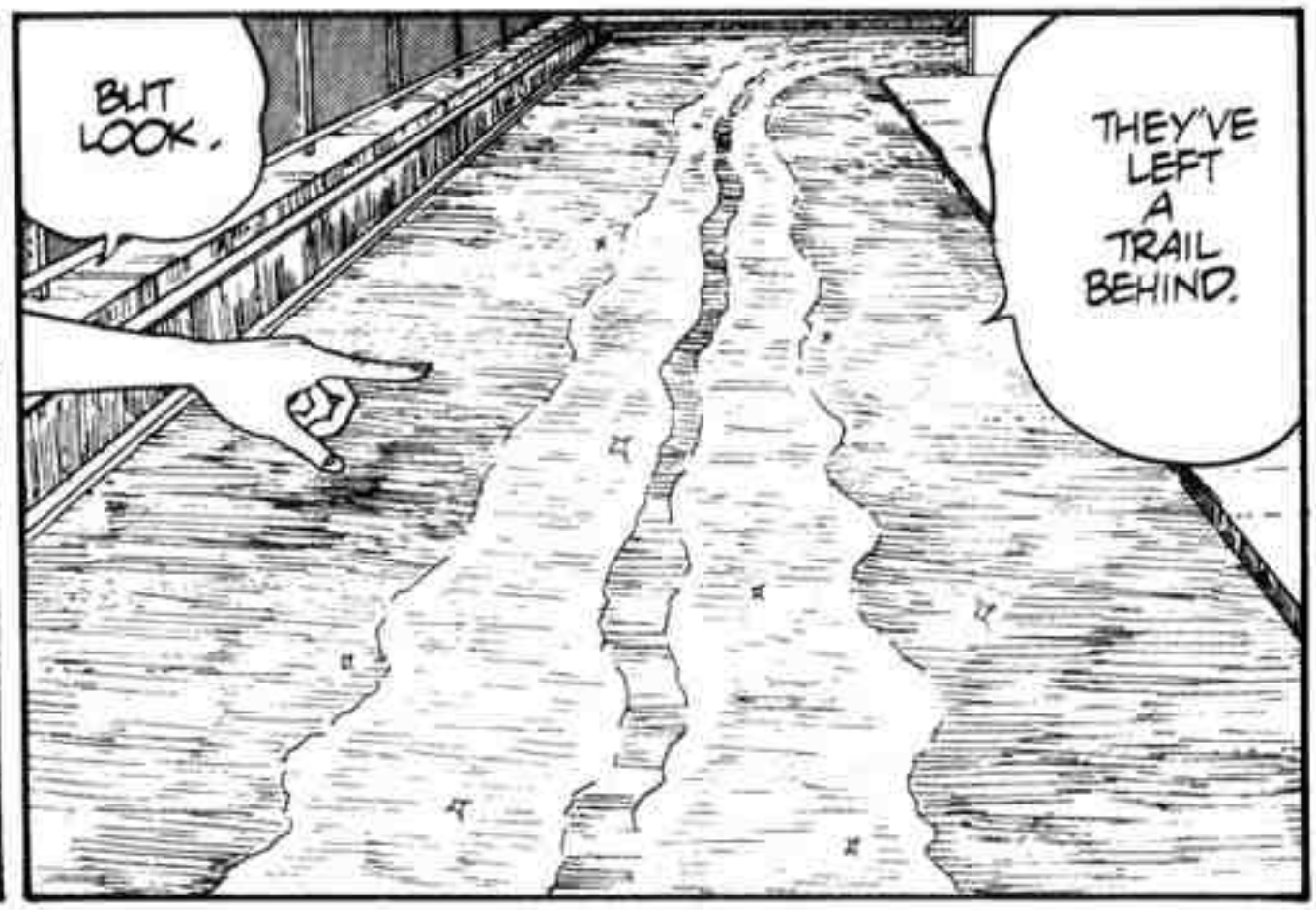
THEY'RE... THEY'RE...
NO WAY! THEY'RE BOTH MALES!

SNALS ARE HERMAPHRO-DITES!
THEY'RE MATING!

SEVERAL WEEKS LATER THEY ESCAPED FROM THE CAGE.

THEY DUG THROUGH THE GROUND.
SNAILS CAN DIG THROUGH SOIL?

YES...
...THAT'S WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.


BUT LOOK.
THEY'VE LEFT A TRAIL BEHIND.

LET'S FOLLOW IT.

THE TRAIL LED INTO THE HILLS.

HEY, LOOK!
SOMETHING'S BEEN BURIED OVER THERE.

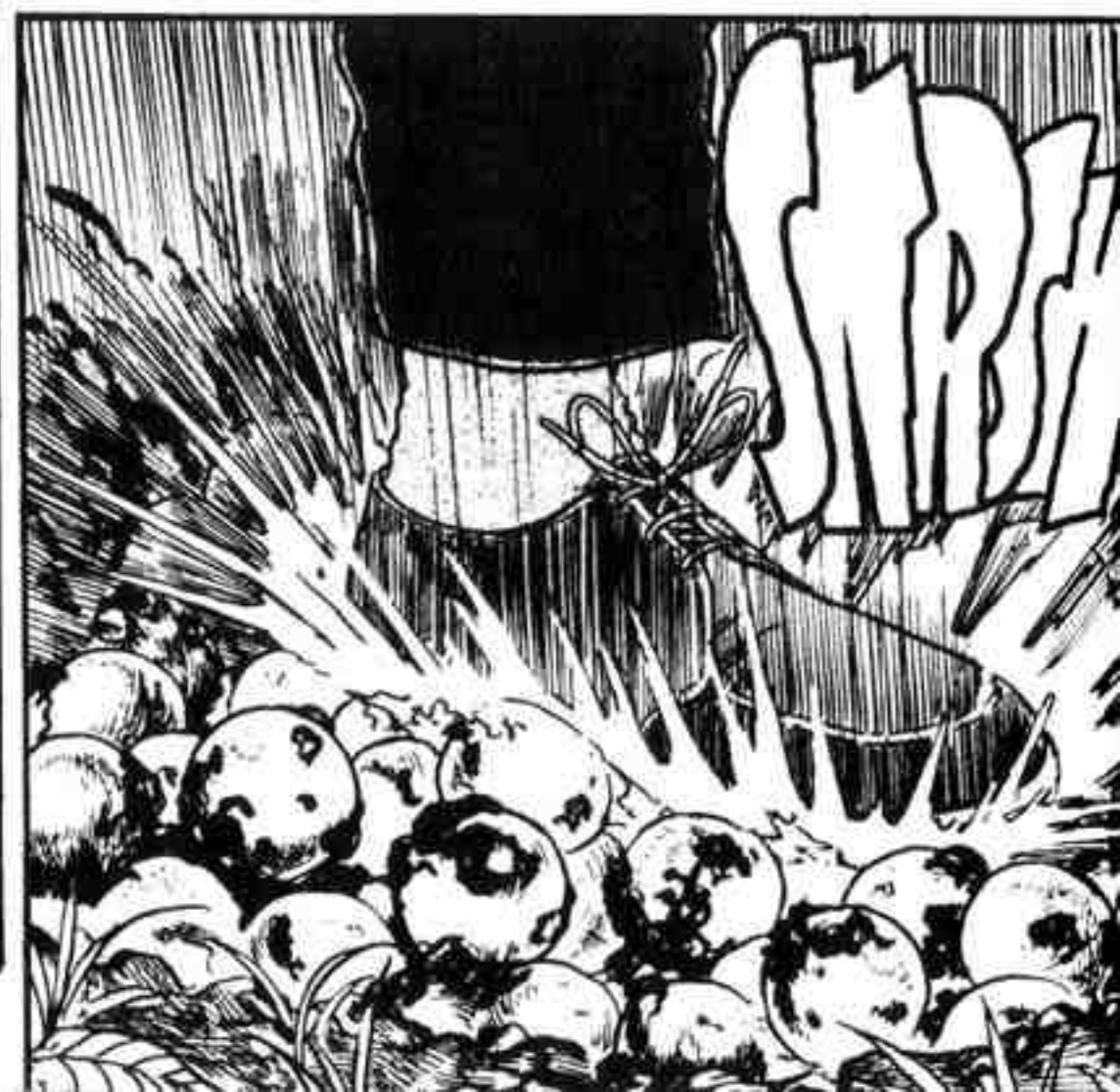
MR. YOKOTA ?
WHAT IS THIS?

I HAVE AN IDEA.
YOU'LL SEE IN A SECOND.

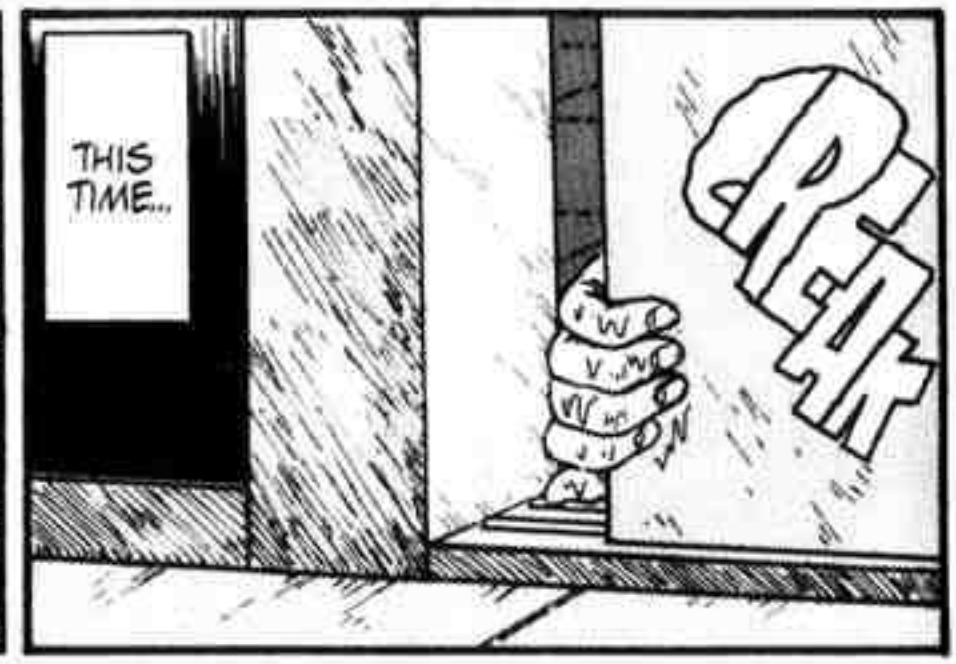
DIG DIG

LOOK!

ONE OF THEM LAID EGGS!

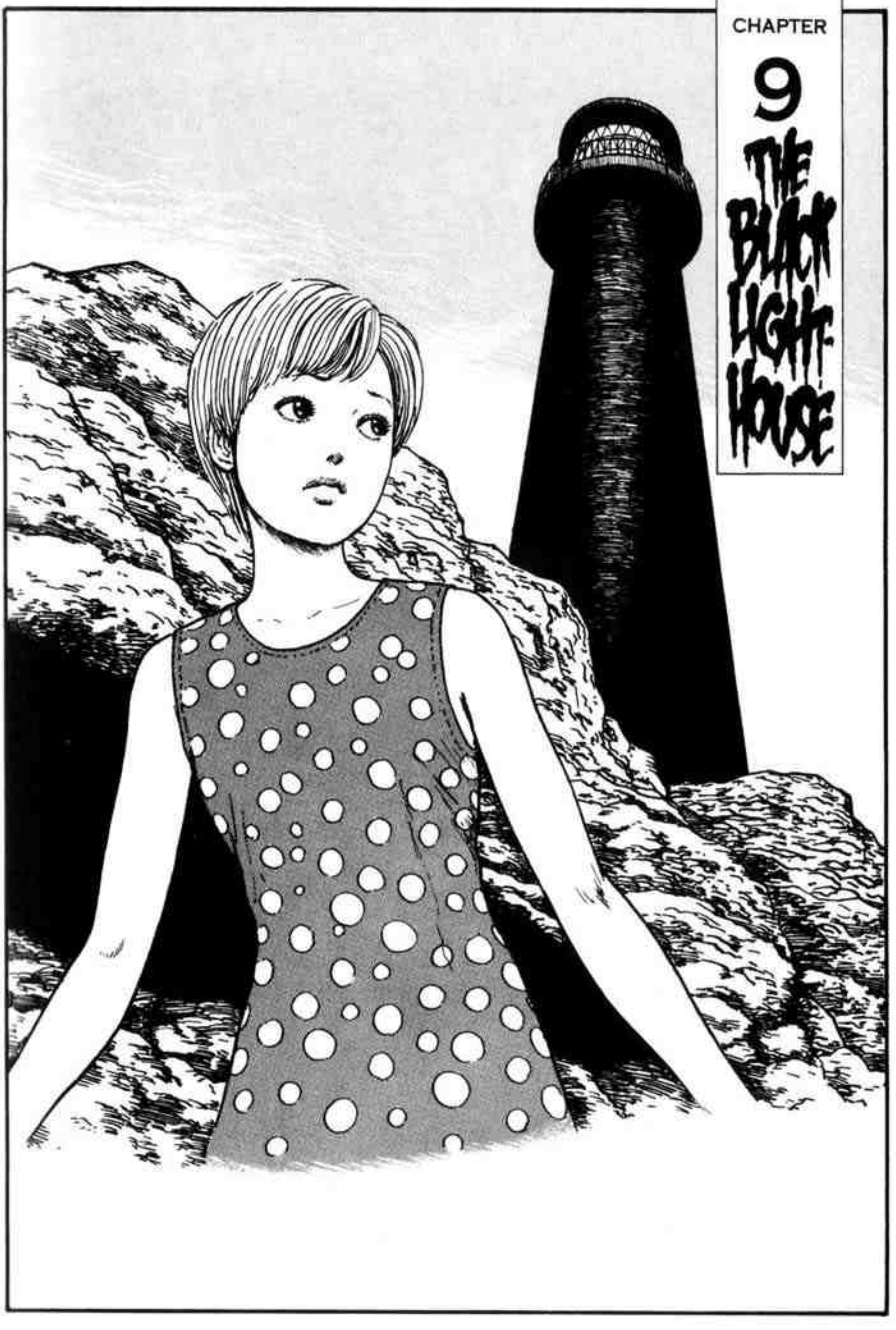


MR. YOKOTA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WHAT DO YOU THINK? I'M CRUSHING THEM!
IT'S DISGUSTING! IT'S UNNATURAL! WE CAN'T LET THESE CREATURES BREED!
SHLIP
SHLIP
SHLIP
SHLIP
HFF
HFF
THERE...
THEY MIGHT HAVE LAID OTHER EGGS. WE HAVE TO FIND THEM!
AND WE HAVE TO FIND THOSE SNAILS.
BUT IN THE END WE FOUND NOTHING-- NEITHER THE EGGS NOR THE ORIGINAL PAIR.



SLIP

MR. YOKOTA CAME TO CLASS ...



CHAPTER

9 THE BLACK LIGHT HOUSE

ONE NIGHT, THE BLACK LIGHTHOUSE ON THE CAPE OF KUROZU-CHO...

...SUDDENLY STREAMED FORTH A BRIGHT, MESMERIZING GLOW.

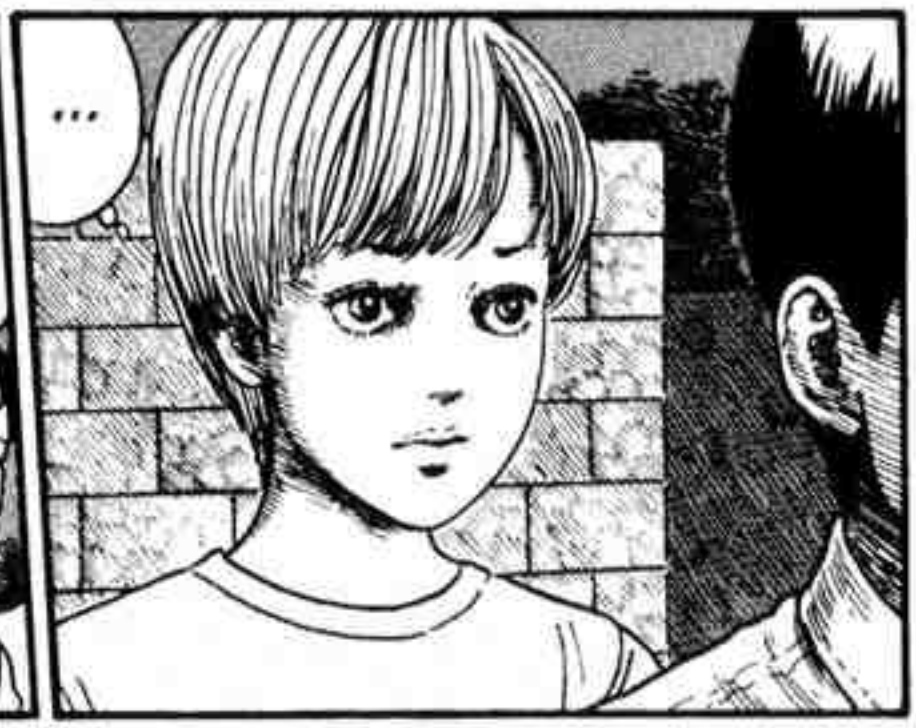
IT SWIRLED LIKE A TORNADO OVER THE ROOFTOPS.

HUWOOOOOOO

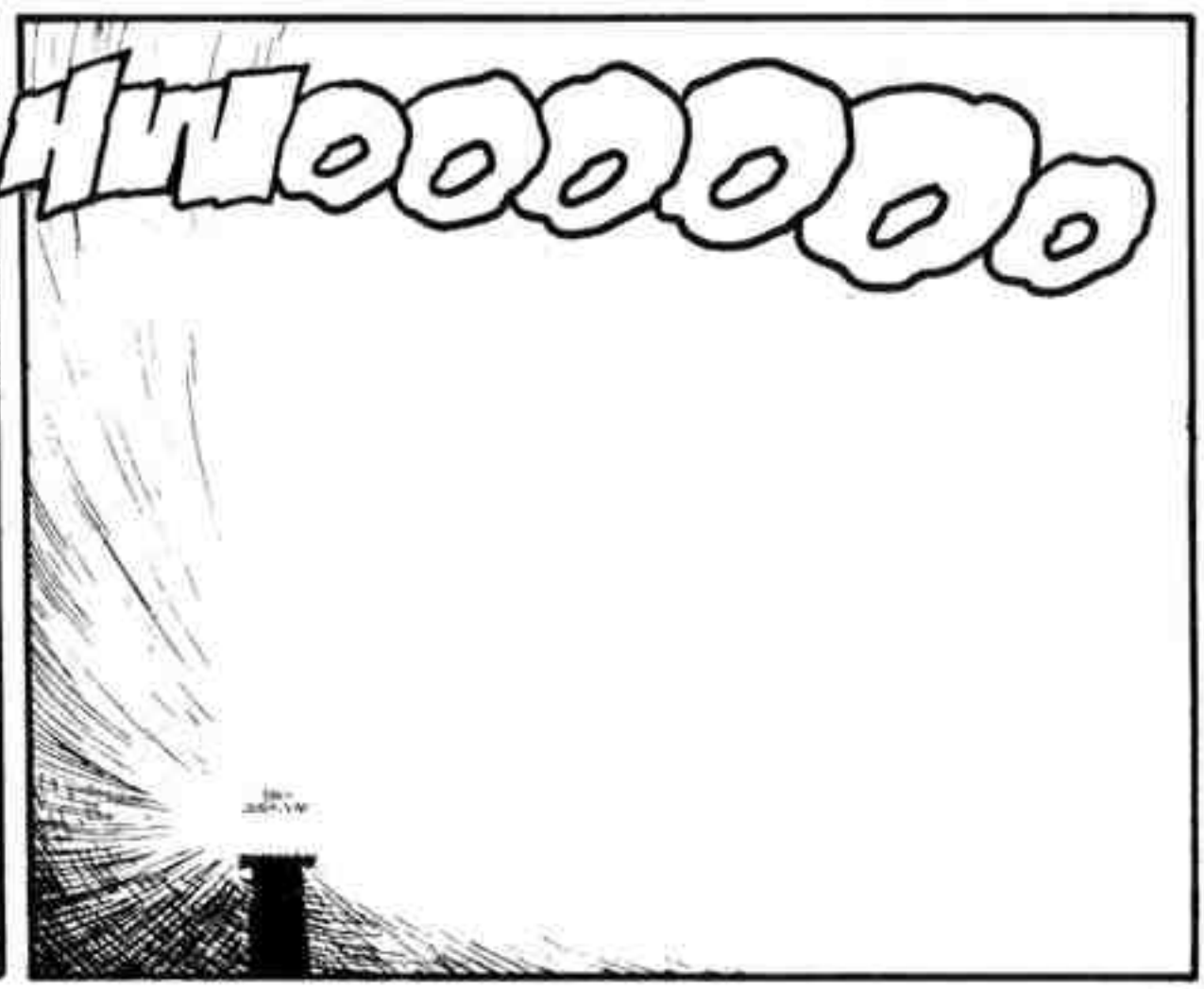
MRR
MRR

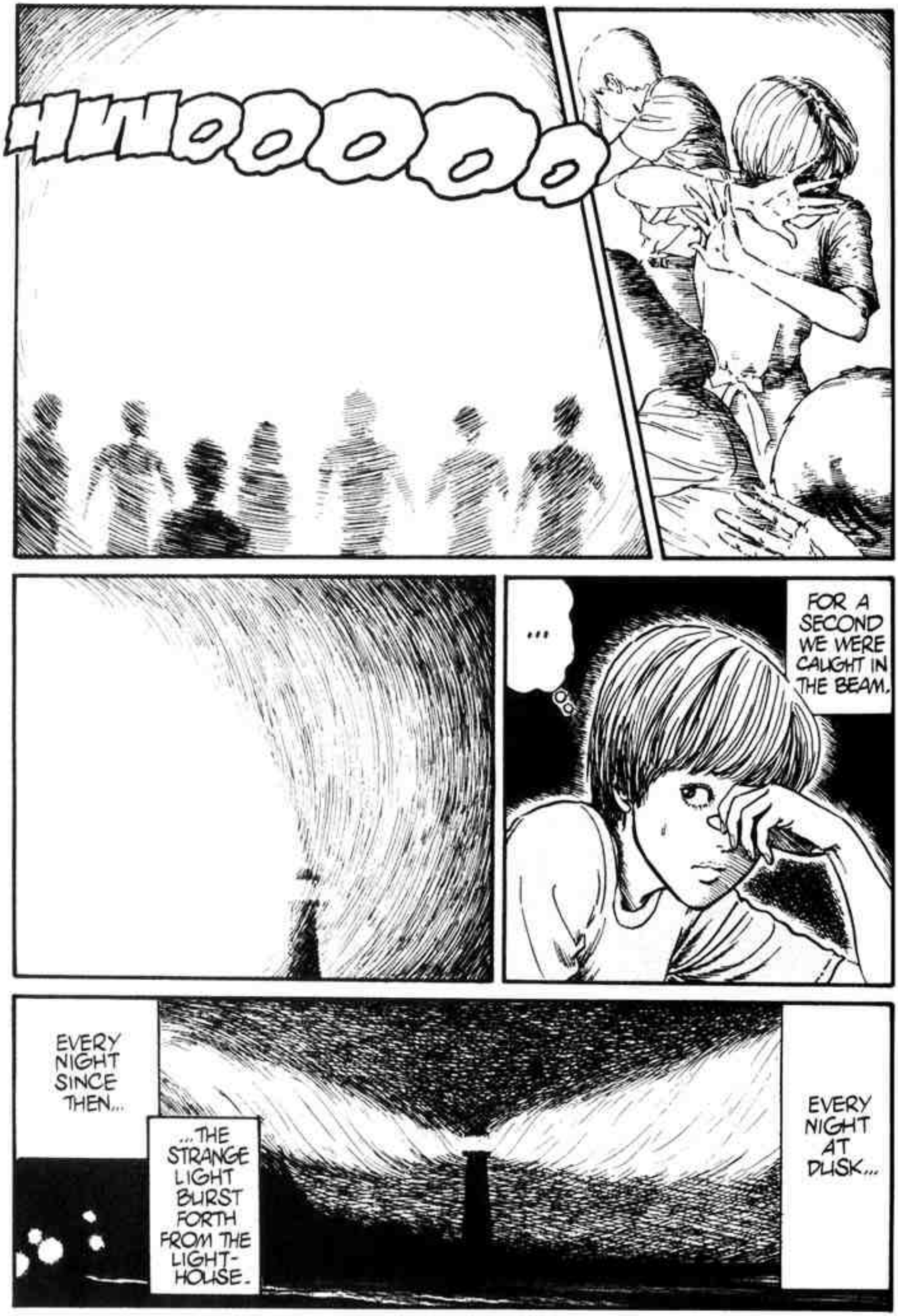
MRR
MRR

WHAT'S MAKING IT?
ISN'T THAT OLD LIGHTHOUSE ABANDONED ?

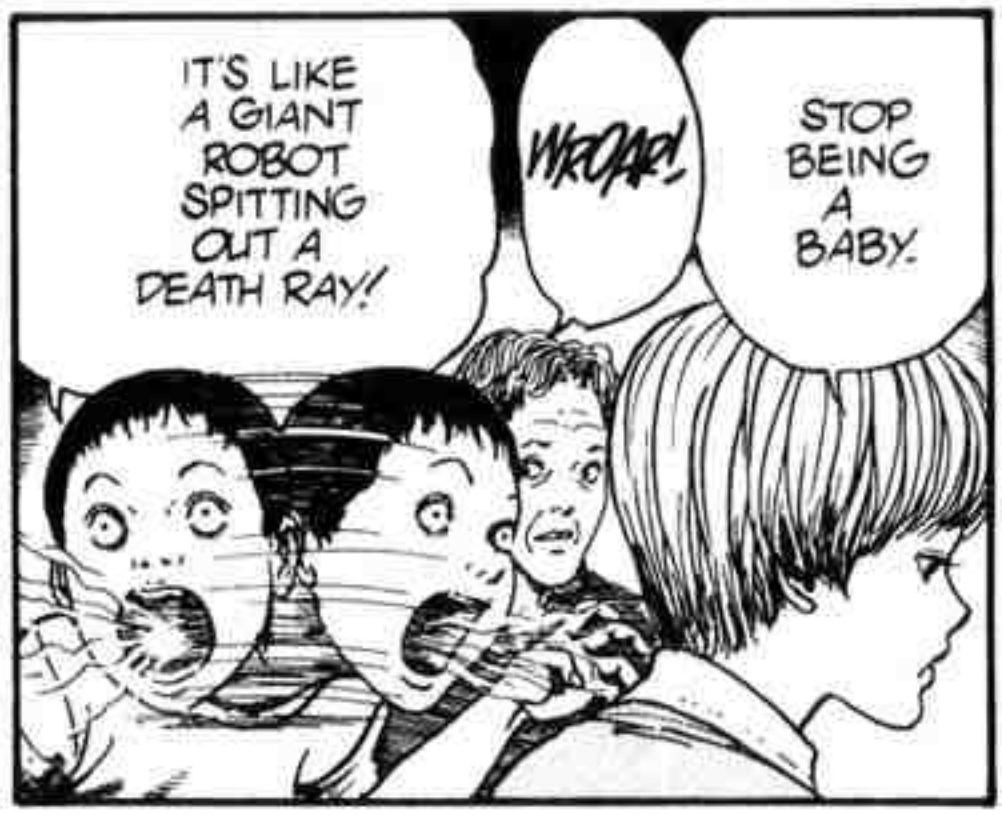

...

HERE IT COMES AGAIN...


HUUOOOOOO


HUUOOOOOO
...
FOR A SECOND WE WERE CAUGHT IN THE BEAM.
EVERY NIGHT SINCE THEN...
...THE STRANGE LIGHT BURST FORTH FROM THE LIGHT-HOUSE.
EVERY NIGHT AT DUSK...

KIRIE, ISN'T THAT LIGHTHOUSE COOL?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


IT'S LIKE A GIANT ROBOT SPITTING OUT A DEATH RAY!
WROAR!
STOP BEING A BABY.

YOU SHOULDN'T STARE AT THAT LIGHT.
THERE'S SOME-THING WRONG WITH IT.

I DON'T LIKE IT, EITHER.
IT MAKES ME FEEL DIZZY.

MITSUO, PROMISE ME YOU WON'T GO NEAR THE LIGHTHOUSE.
AW, MOM!

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT, ANYWAY?

WE'VE BEEN GETTING COMPLAINTS FROM RESIDENTS.
THIS LIGHT WAS PUT OUT OF SERVICE A LONG TIME AGO. IT SHOULDN'T EVEN HAVE POWER.

WE'LL GO INSIDE AND SEE WHAT'S WRONG.

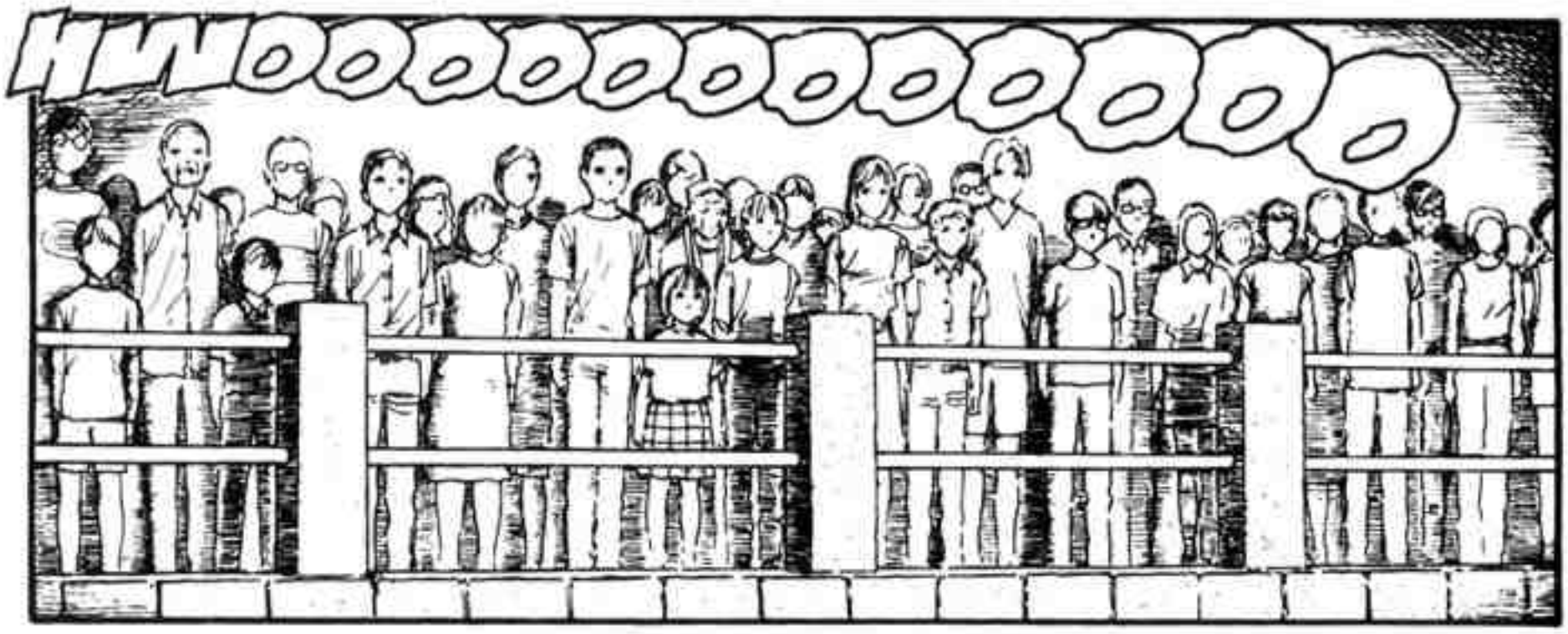
KACHA
SCREEE

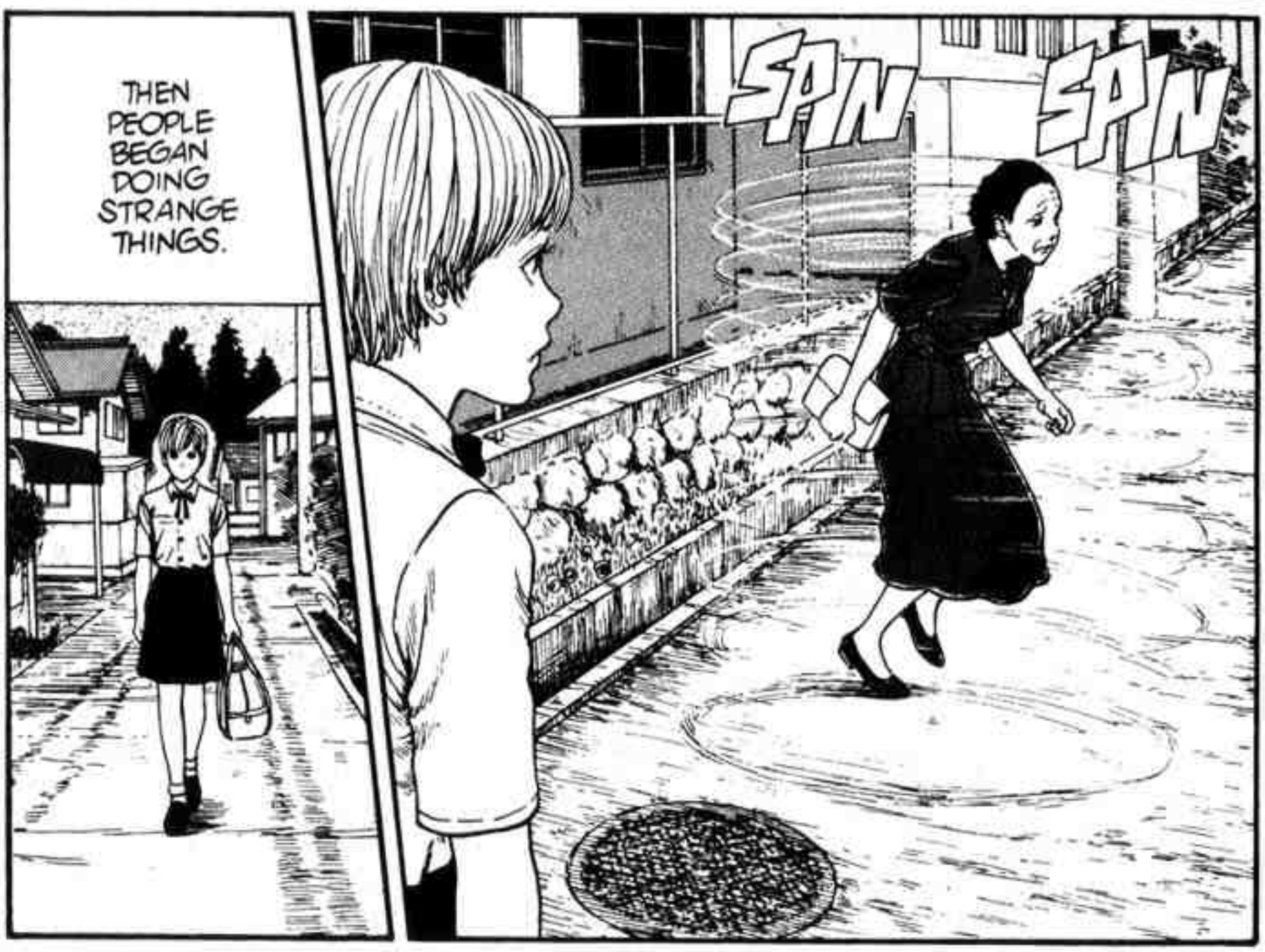
AFTER YOU.

FL-
ASH

HHOOOOOOOOOO

HHOOOOO


HWOOOOOOOOOOOOOO


THEN PEOPLE BEGAN DOING STRANGE THINGS.
SPIN
SPIN

SPIN
SPIN

EXCUSE ME...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

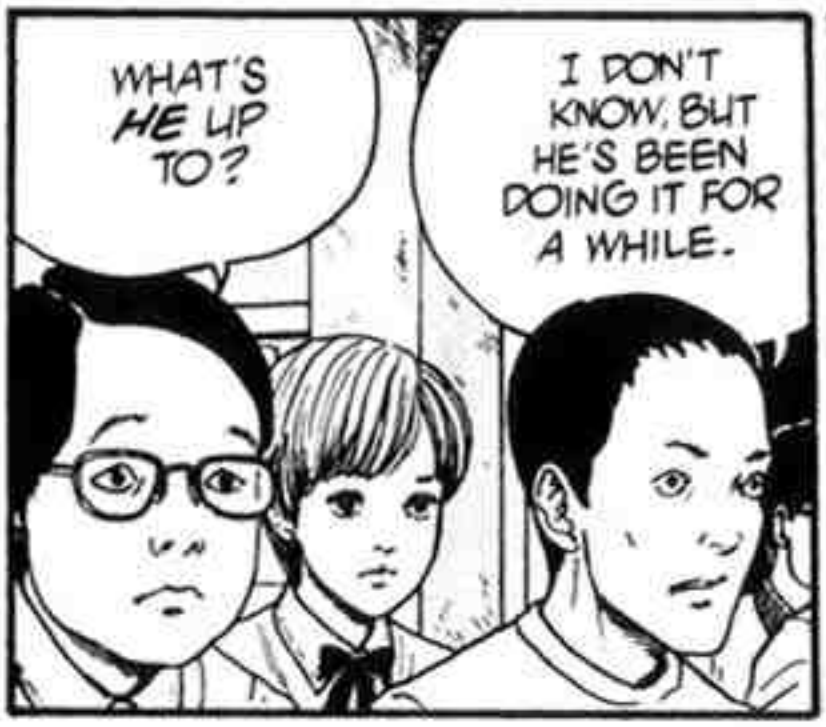
HMM? I'M JUST WALKING HOME...

...BUT IT'S TAKING LONGER THAN I REMEMBER.

...

KURO
STATIO

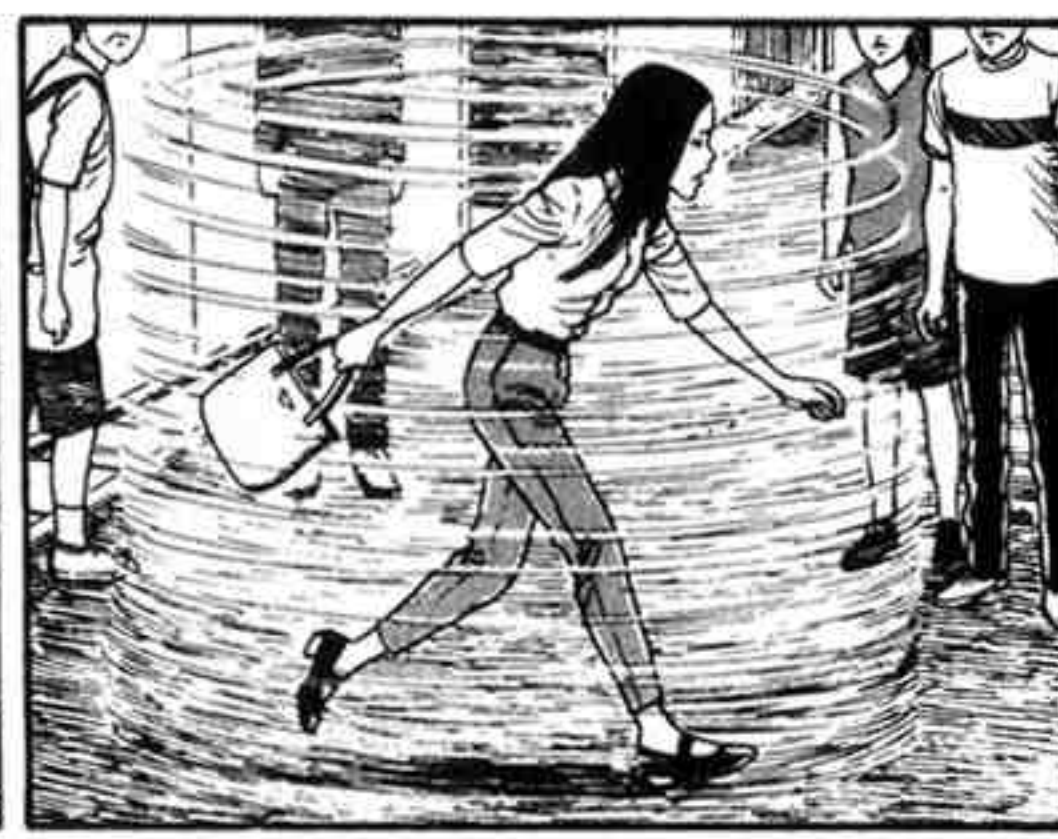
MRR
MRR


WHAT'S HE UP TO?
I DON'T KNOW, BUT HE'S BEEN DOING IT FOR A WHILE.

PLEASE, SOME-ONE HELP ME!
I CAN'T WALK STRAIGHT!!

IT'S BECAUSE OF THE RAY FROM THE LIGHT-HOUSE!
THAT SWIRLING FLASH IS BURNED INTO MY EYES!!

WHAT IN THE...
LOOK OVER THERE!



uff
hfff

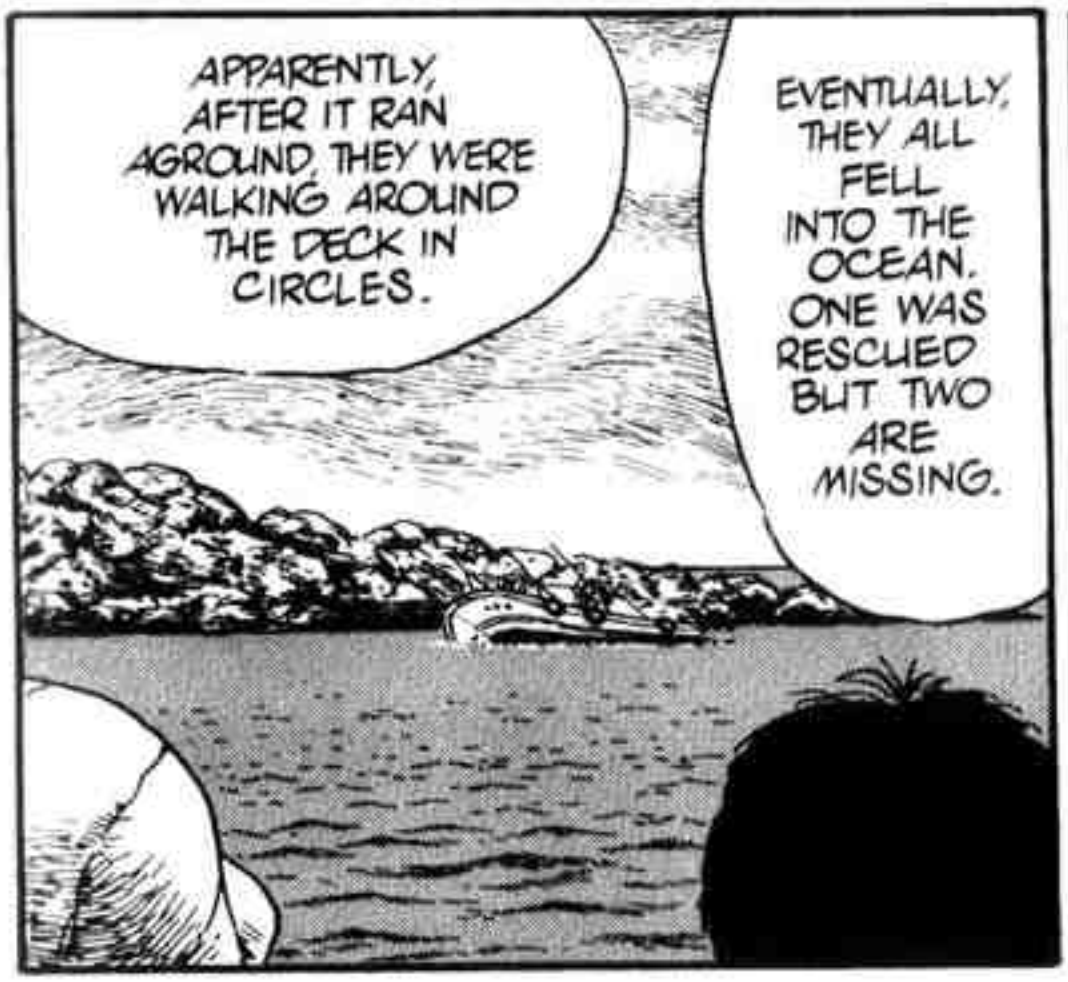
WH-
WHAT IS GOING ON?

THERE'S A FISHING BOAT STRANDED ON THE CAPE!
LOOKS LIKE IT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT.

SHAAAA

THAT'S WEIRD. THERE WASN'T ANY WIND.
THEY SHOULD HAVE SEEN THE LIGHTHOUSE, TOO.
BLAZE OF GLORY

WHAT ABOUT THE CREW?


APPARENTLY, AFTER IT RAN AGROUND, THEY WERE WALKING AROUND THE DECK IN CIRCLES.
EVENTUALLY, THEY ALL FELL INTO THE OCEAN. ONE WAS RESCUED BUT TWO ARE MISSING.

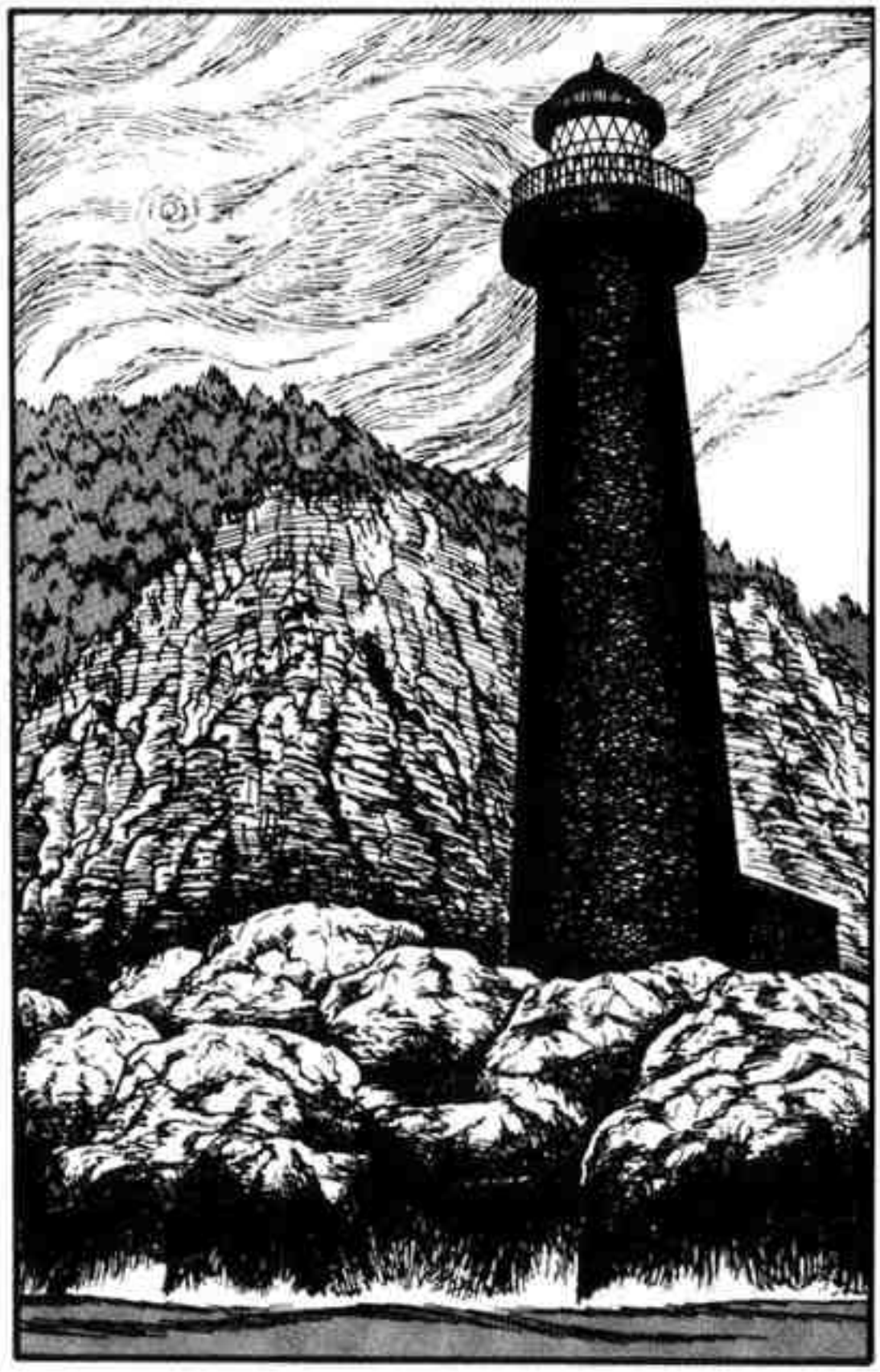
SPEAKING OF MISSING... I HEARD THAT THE MEN WHO WENT TO CHECK ON THE LIGHTHOUSE HAVEN'T COME BACK...

MITSUO! WE'RE GETTING CLOSER!
YOU CAN SEE THE BOAT BETTER FROM THE CAPE!

WAIT FOR ME!
HEY!

DON'T GO THERE! IT'S DANGEROUS!

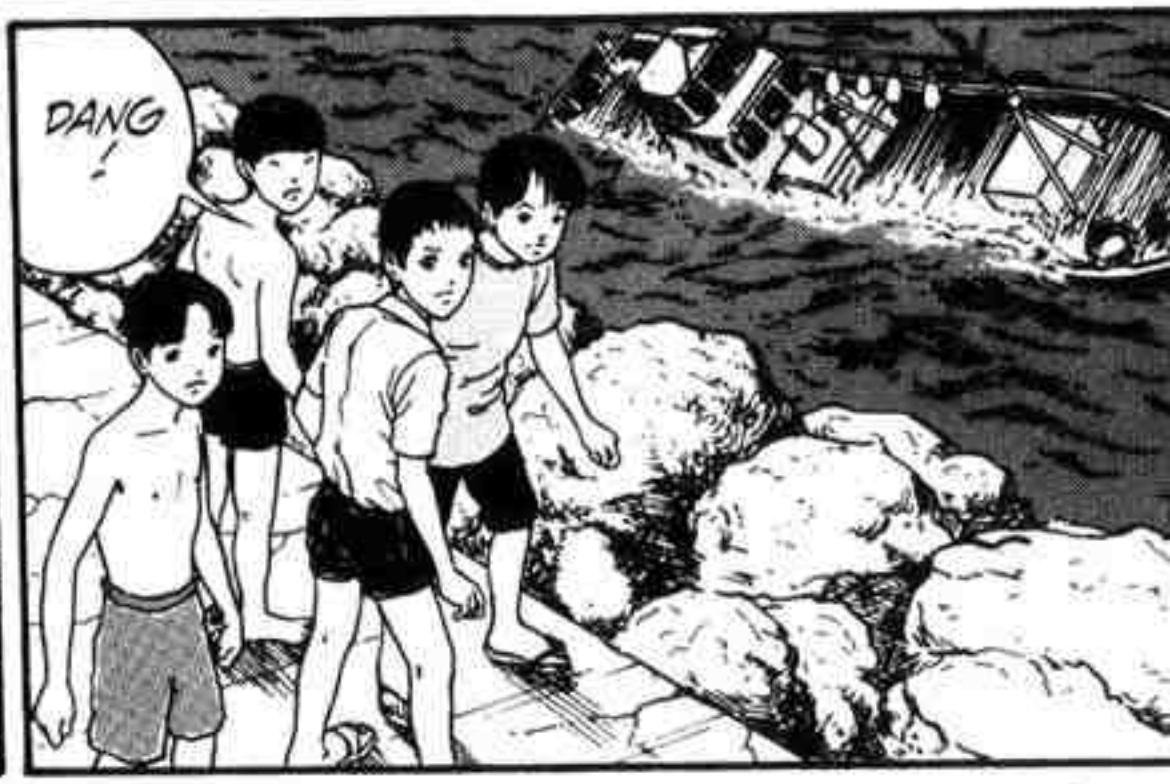
NO!



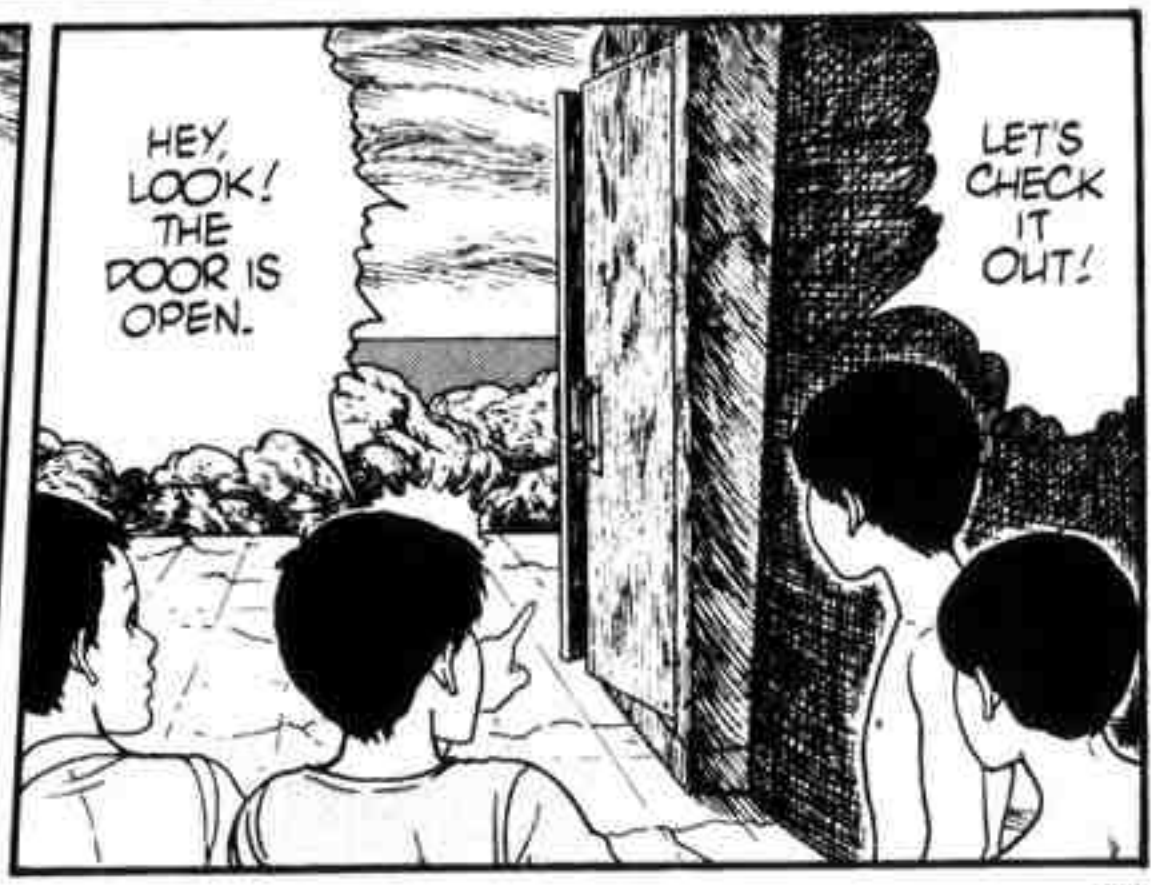
SHAAAAA

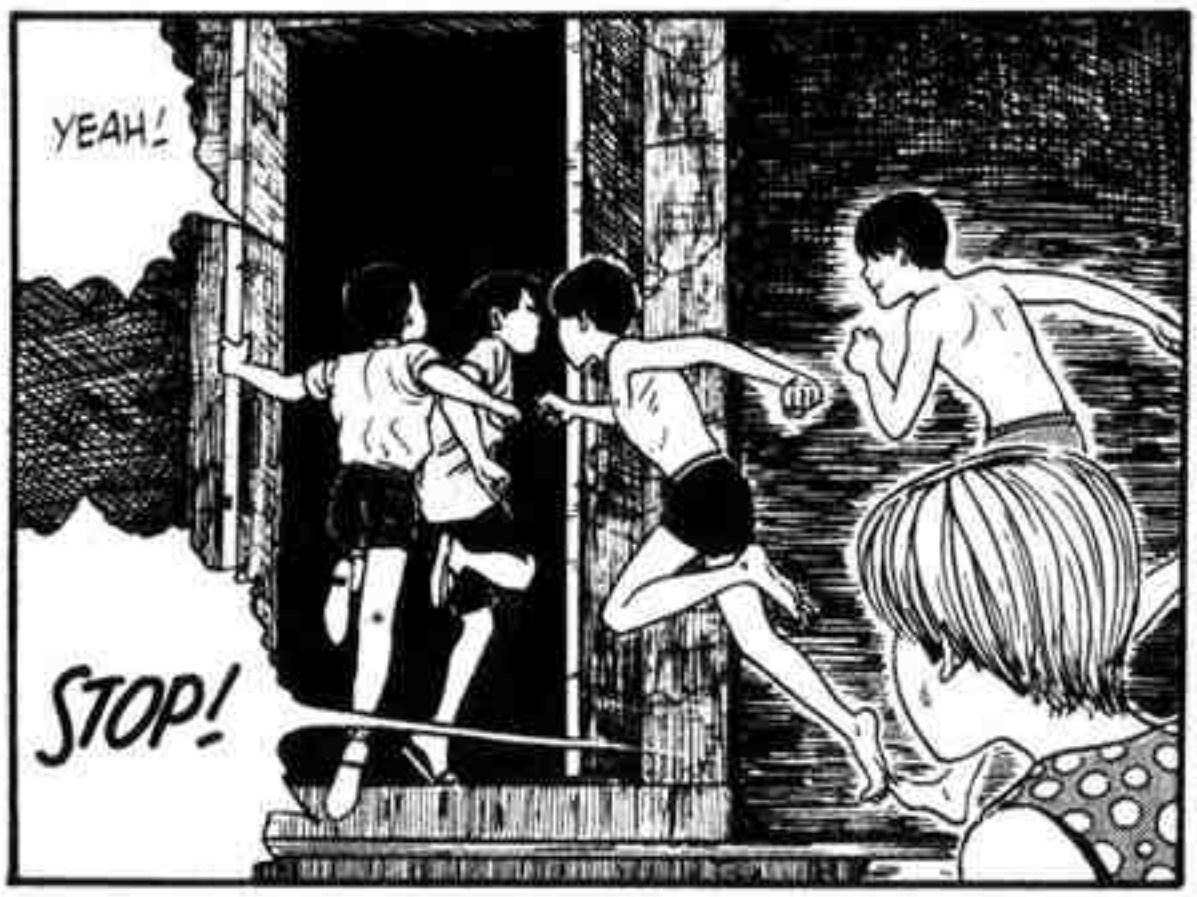
SHAAAA

MITSUO, COME DOWN HERE!
OR ELSE I'LL TELL ON MOM!


DANG!

OKAY, OKAY.


HEY, LOOK! THE DOOR IS OPEN.
LET'S CHECK IT OUT!


YEAH!
STOP!

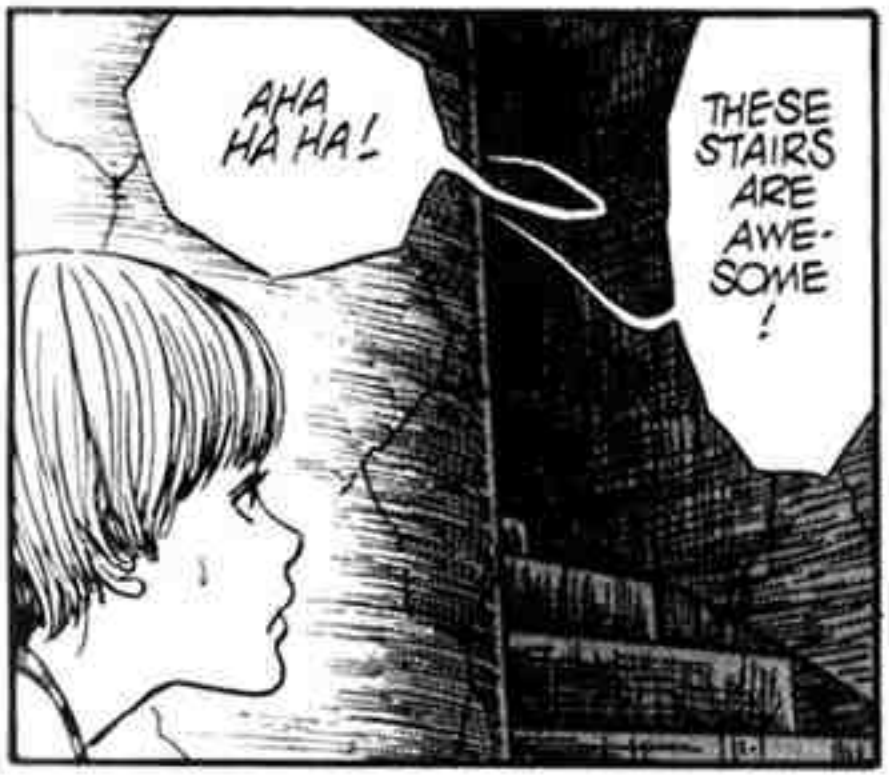
MITSUO!
TMPTMP

COME BACK!

...

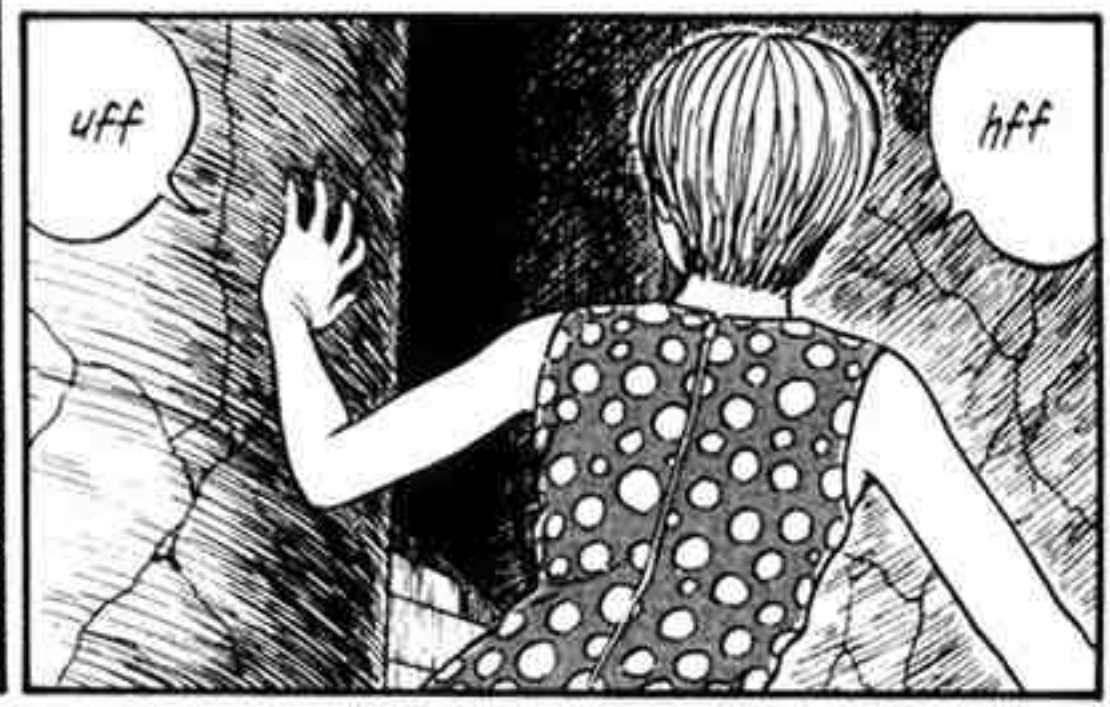
MITSUO!

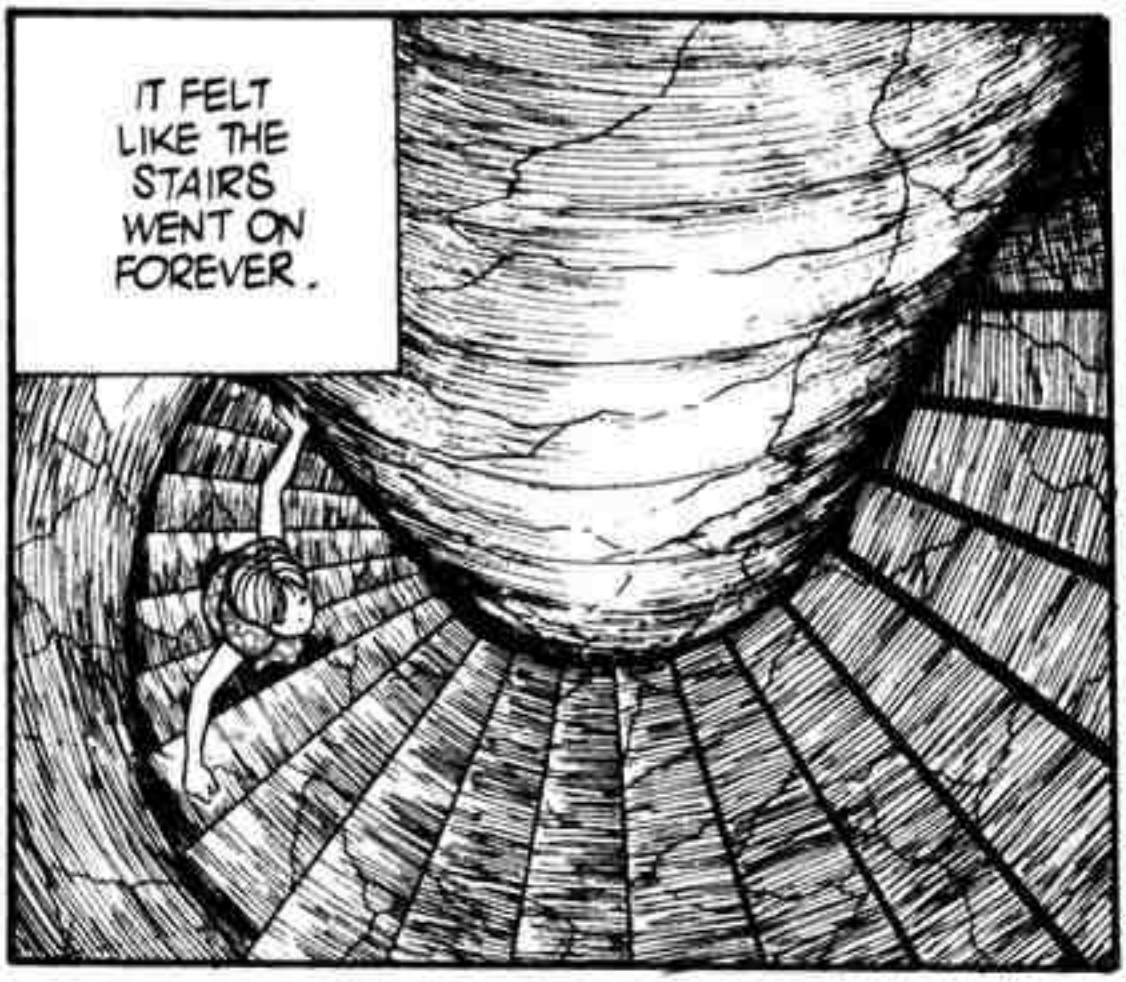
MITSUO !!
COME DOWN HERE!

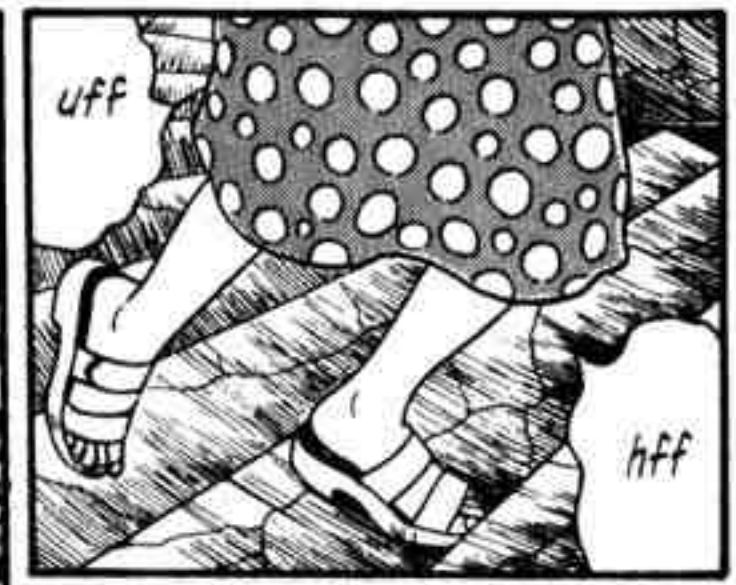

AHA HA HA!
THESE STAIRS ARE AWE-SOME!

...
THAT'S IT...

uff
hff

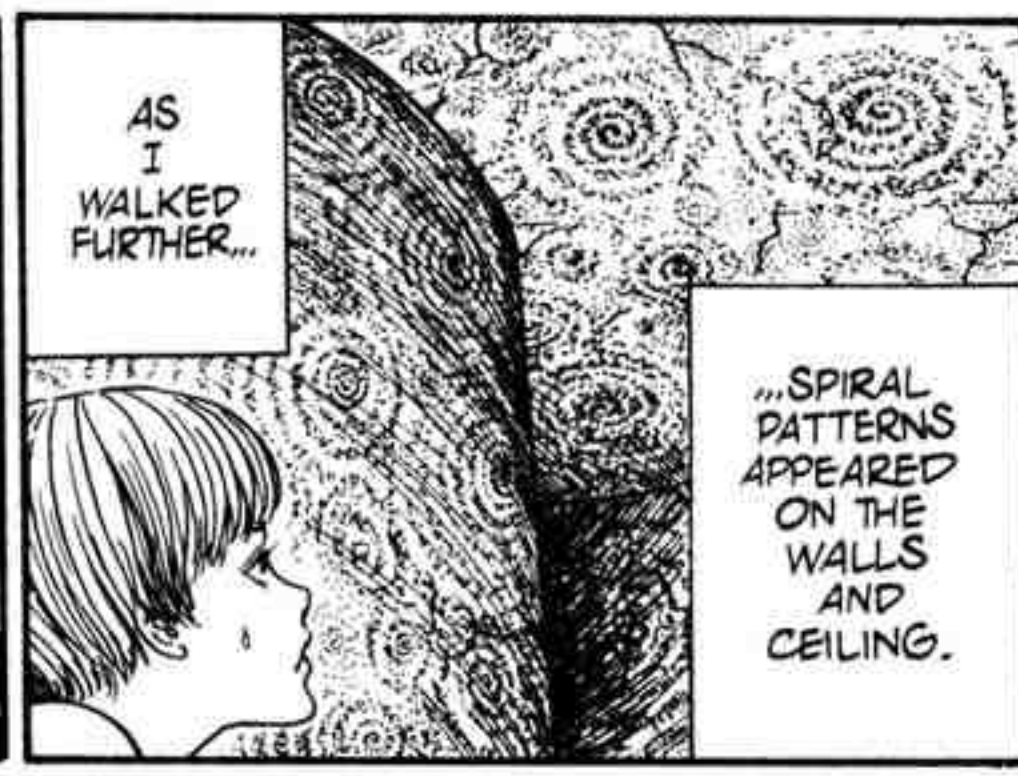

uff
hff


IT FELT LIKE THE STAIRS WENT ON FOREVER.


uff
hff

uff
hff

I DON'T GET IT... WHERE AM I NOW?
I SHOULD HAVE CLIMBED UP PRETTY FAR...


AS I WALKED FURTHER...
...SPIRAL PATTERNS APPEARED ON THE WALLS AND CEILING.

THEY GLOWED EERILY IN THE DARK.
THEY WERE THE ONLY LIGHT IN THE WINDOWLESS STAIRCASE.

THE LIGHTHOUSE HAS BECOME PART OF THE SPIRAL...

uff
hff

THIS IS TOO STRANGE.. NO MATTER HOW MUCH I CLIMB THE STAIRS, I CAN'T REACH THE TOP.
I FEEL LIKE I'M JUST GOING AROUND IN CIRCLES.

MITSUO!

HUHUOOOO

SOMETHING'S BURNING... I CAN SMELL IT...
I FEEL LIKE I'M GOING CRAZY...

I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH TIME ELAPSED.

KIAAA!

THREE BURNT BODIES...
MITSUO AND HIS FRIENDS? NO!

THEY'RE NOT. THEY'RE ADULTS...
BUT WHO?
MAYBE THE ONES WHO WERE REPORTED MISSING...

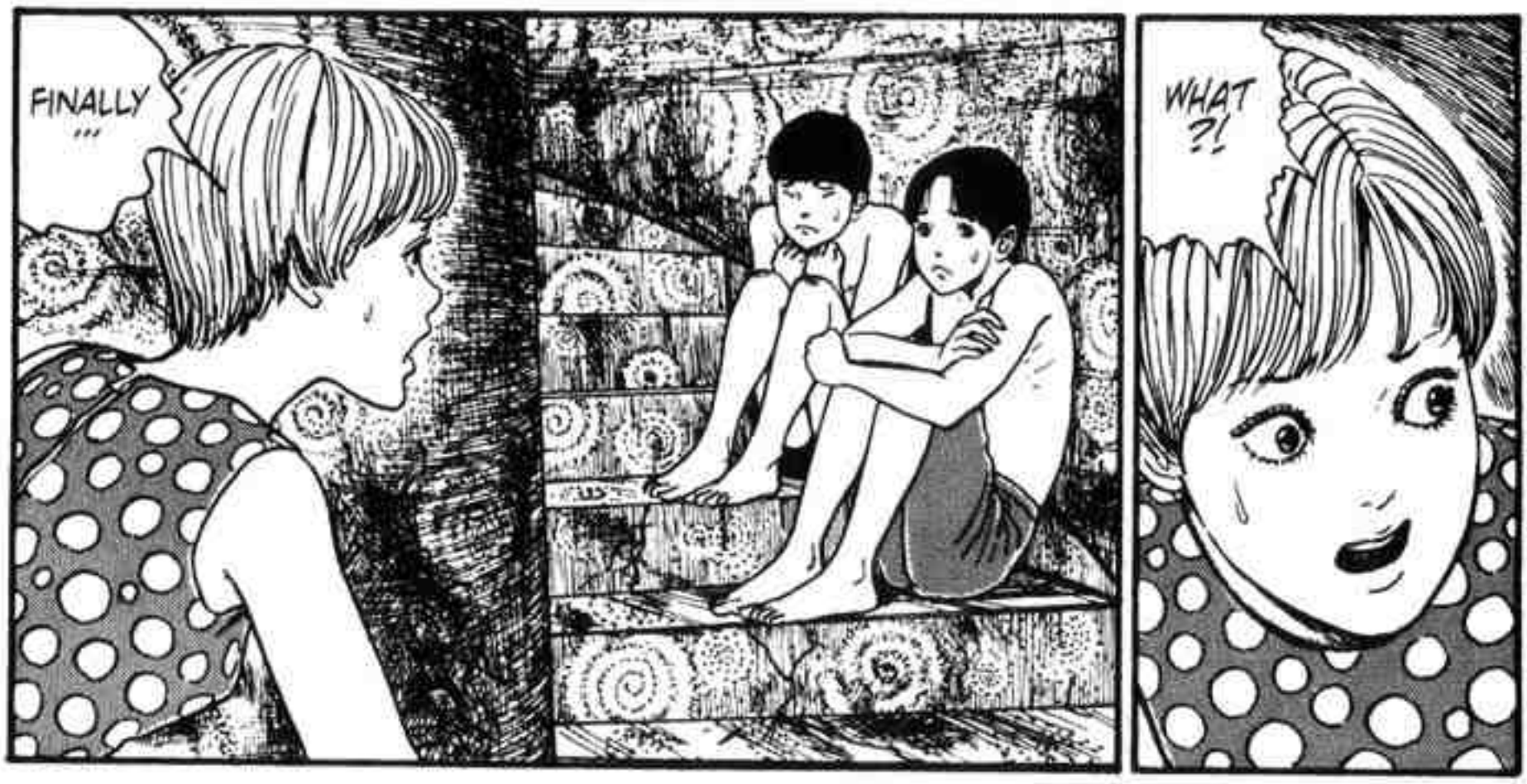
WHERE ARE MITSUO AND HIS FRIENDS ?!

MITSUO!

HELP US!
AH!

MITSUO!
HELP!

uff
hff



TWO MORE BODIES...

WERE THEY WITH THOSE MEN I JUST SAW? WHAT HAPPENED TO ALL OF THEM?

DO YOU KNOW WHERE MITSUO AND HIS FRIEND ARE?

THEY WENT UPSTAIRS.
THEY WANTED TO SEE.

THEY WANTED ?! ....! LISTEN, YOU TWO GO DOWN-STAIRS.
OKAY.

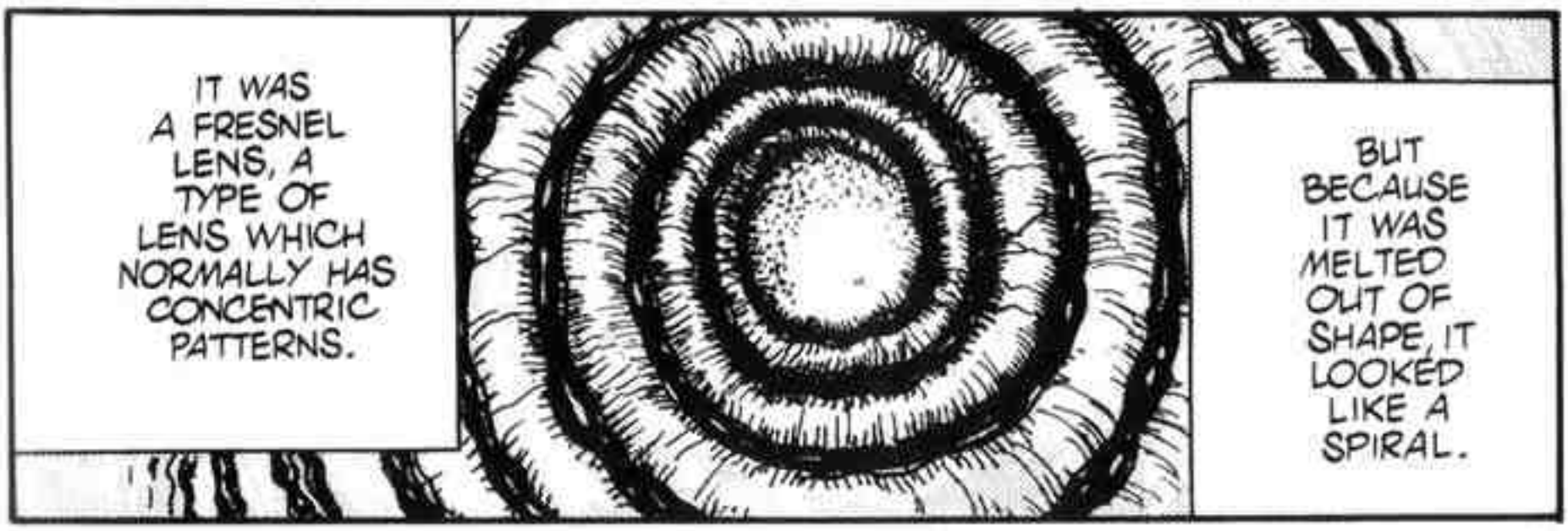
GET OUT OF HERE! HURRY HOME!
TMPTMPD

WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING? COME ON, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

I- I'M TOO SCARED ...
IT'S LOOKING AT US...

...

THIS IS-- WAS-- THE LIGHT OF THE LIGHT-HOUSE.
THE GLASS LOOKS LIKE IT'S MELTED FROM HEAT.


IT WAS A FRESNEL LENS, A TYPE OF LENS WHICH NORMALLY HAS CONCENTRIC PATTERNS.
BUT BECAUSE IT WAS MELTED OUT OF SHAPE, IT LOOKED LIKE A SPIRAL.

I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED HERE.

IT'S LIKE THE ENTIRE ROOM LIQUEFIED...

...

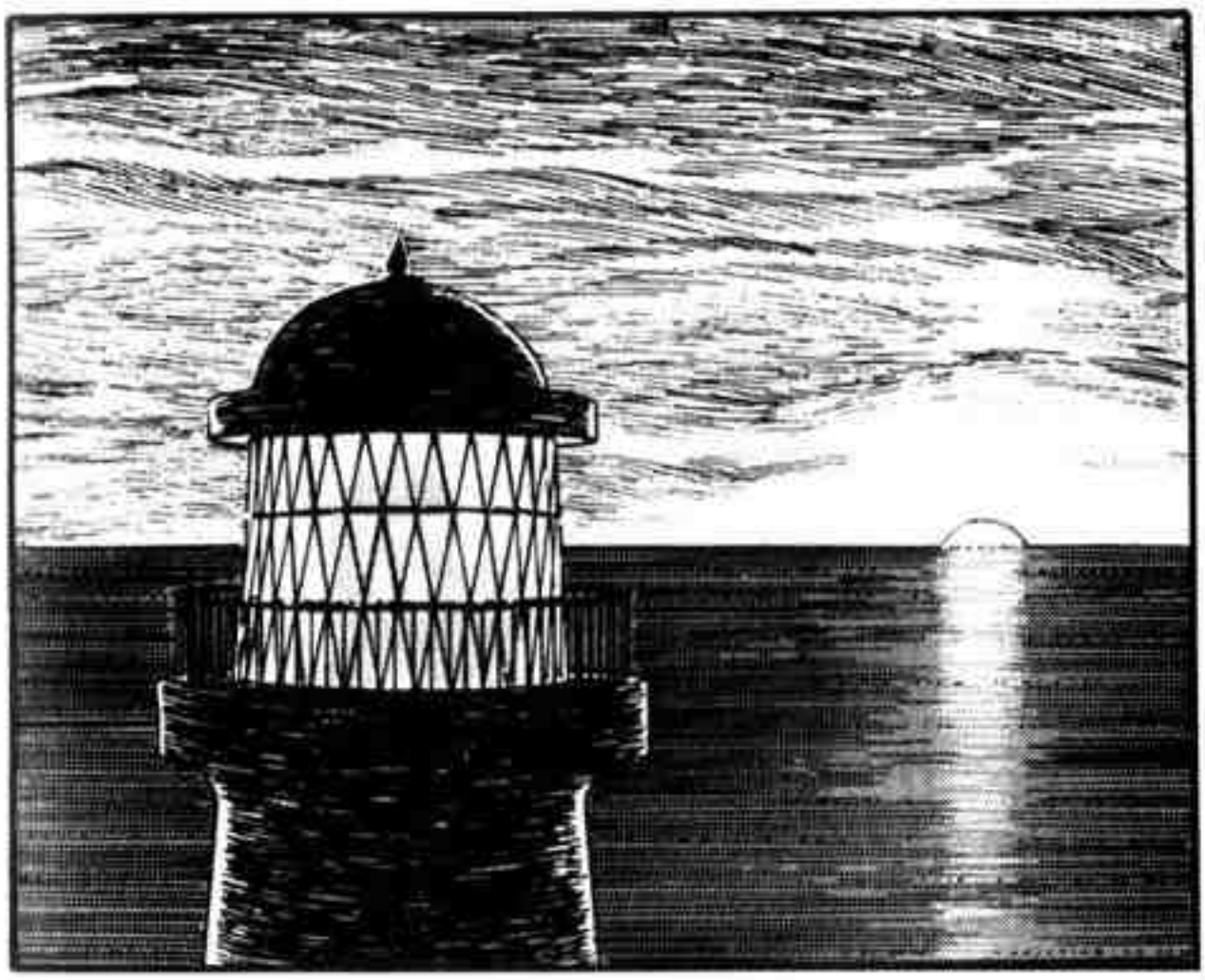
AND THOSE BURNT BODIES...

...

NO?!

MITSUO! WHAT TIME IS IT?

Uh... I DON'T KNOW.



OH NO!
IT'S ALMOST DUSK!

GO DOWN-STAIRS NOW!
THE LIGHT BEGINS SHINING AT SUNDOWN! WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE BY THEN!

W-WHY?

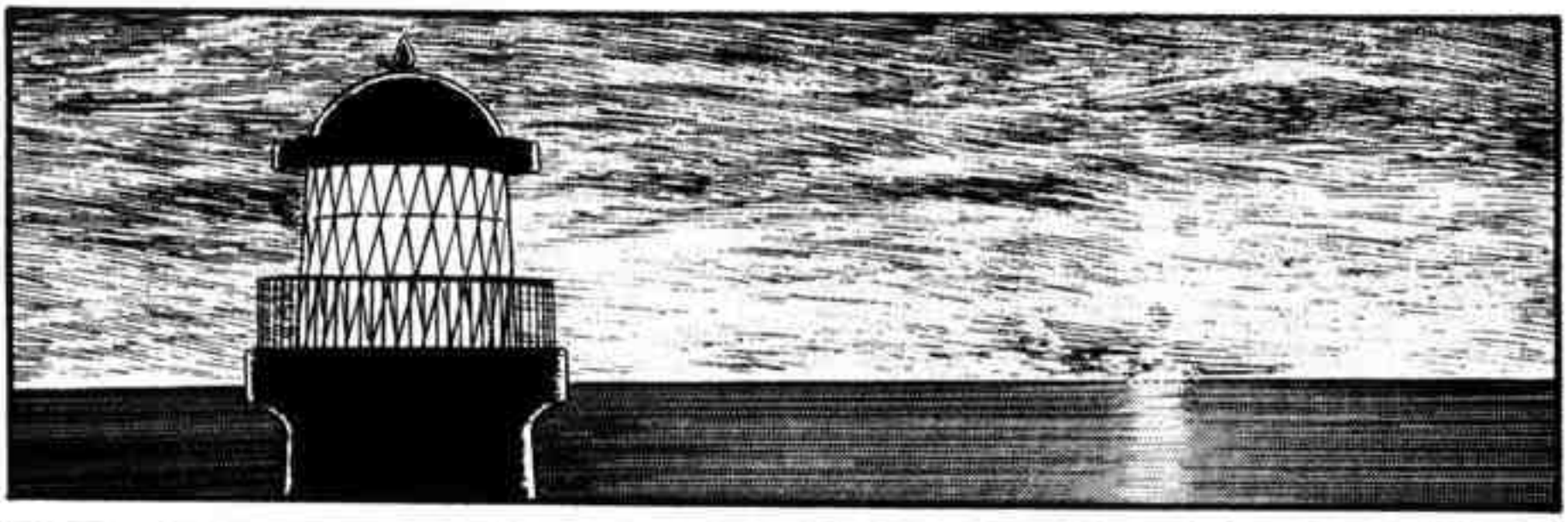
IF THE GLASS IS THIS MELTED, THIS LIGHT MUST BE INCREDIBLY HOT! SO HOT IT CAN MELT...
COME ON, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

HURRY UP!
RUN!

HURRY!
TPTPTPTP
HURRY!

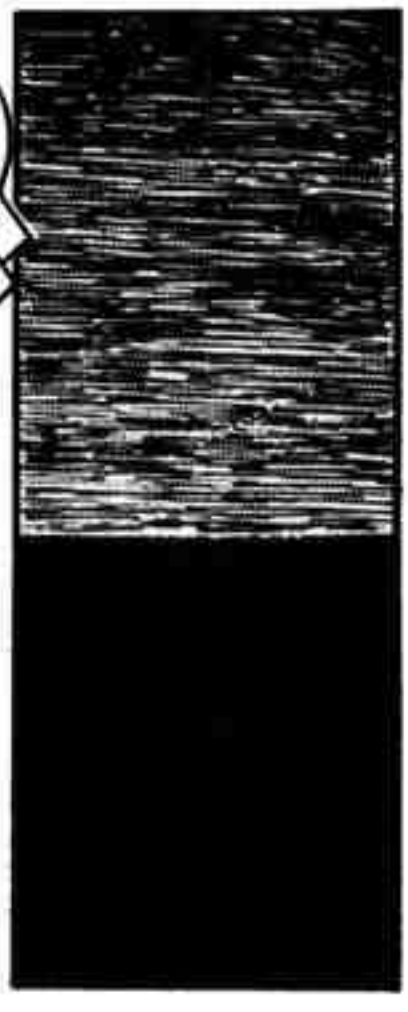
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN?!

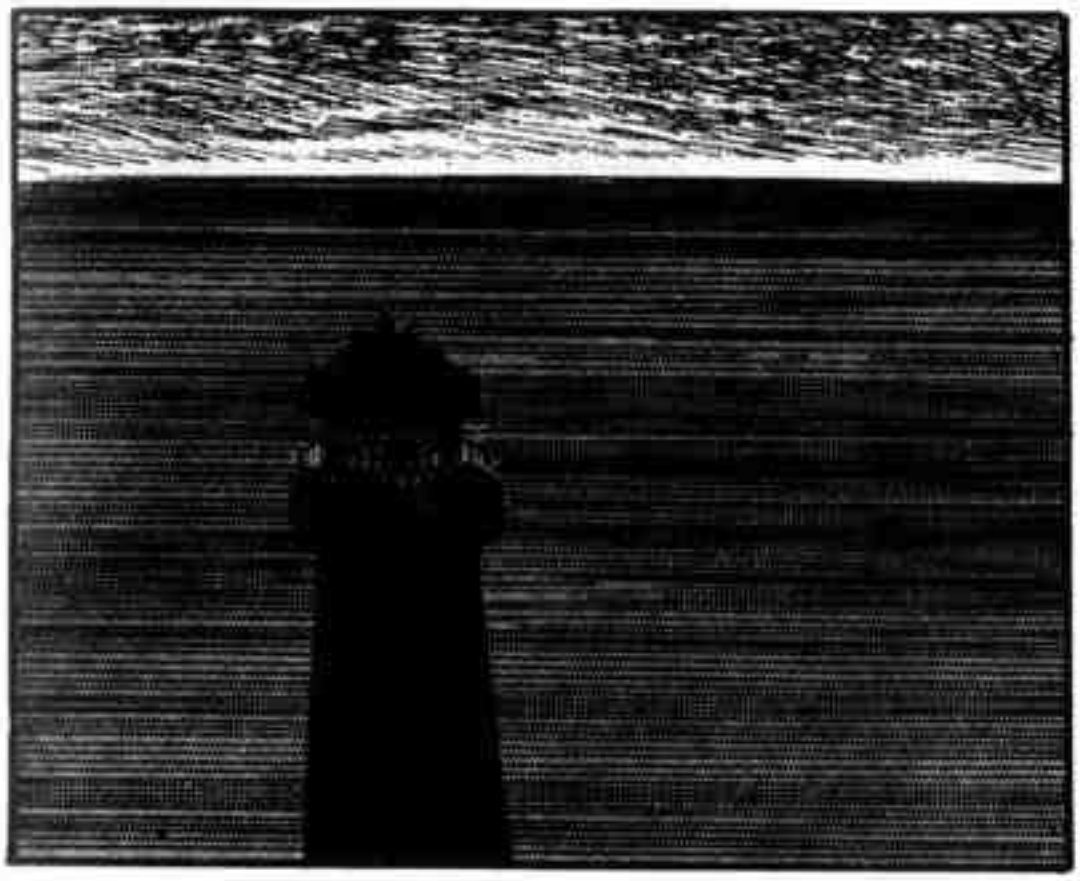
JUST GO!

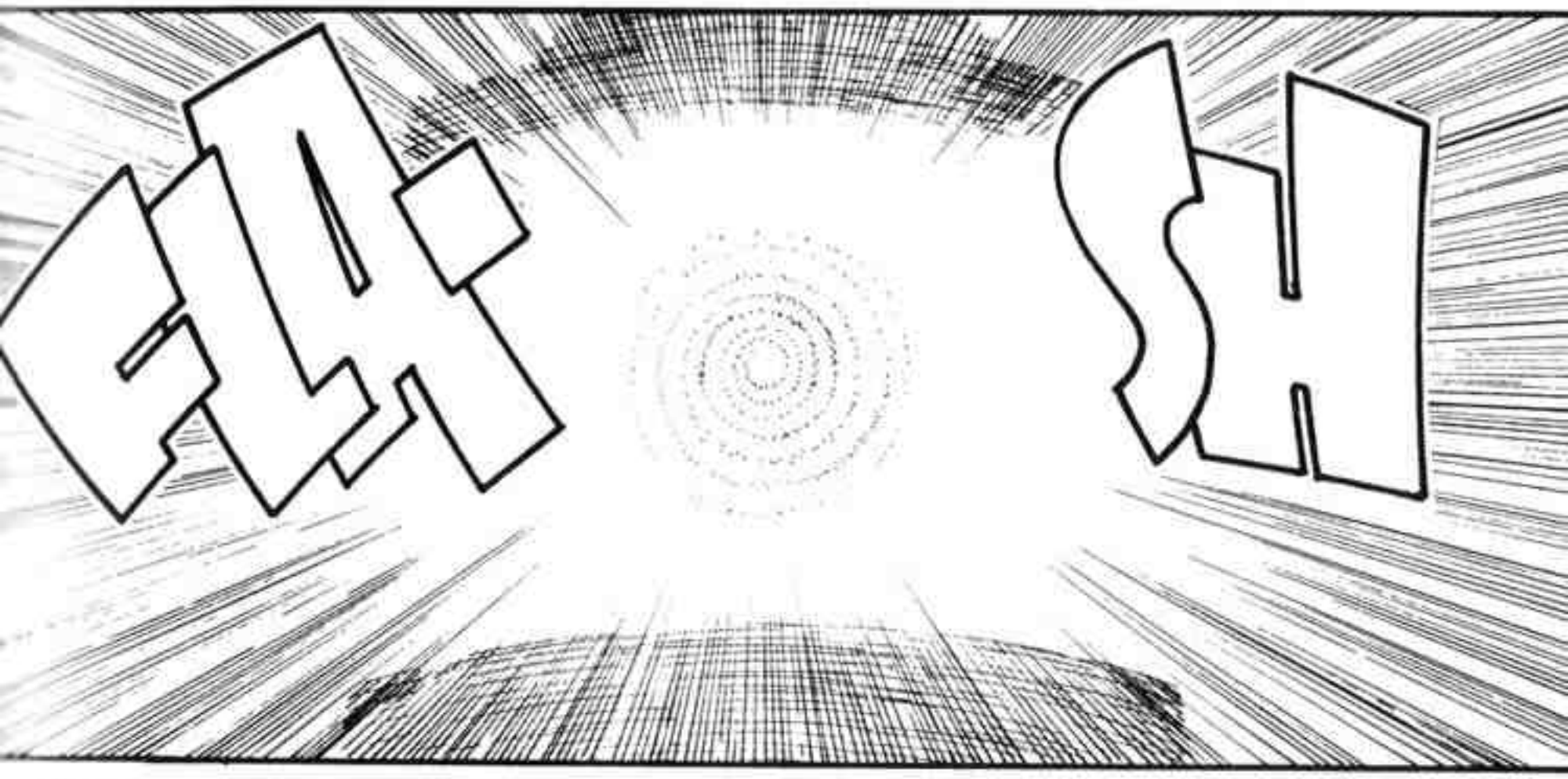


I CAN'T RUN ANY FASTER!

TPTPTP






FLASH

WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT OUT OF HERE!

HUHOO

THE LIGHT!
HWOOOOOO
IT'S COMING ...
THE HEAT IS COMING!
DON'T LOOK! RUN!
HID
TRIP
UHH!
!

WU
AIEE
HUUOOOOO

I THOUGHT I SAW THE BOY...

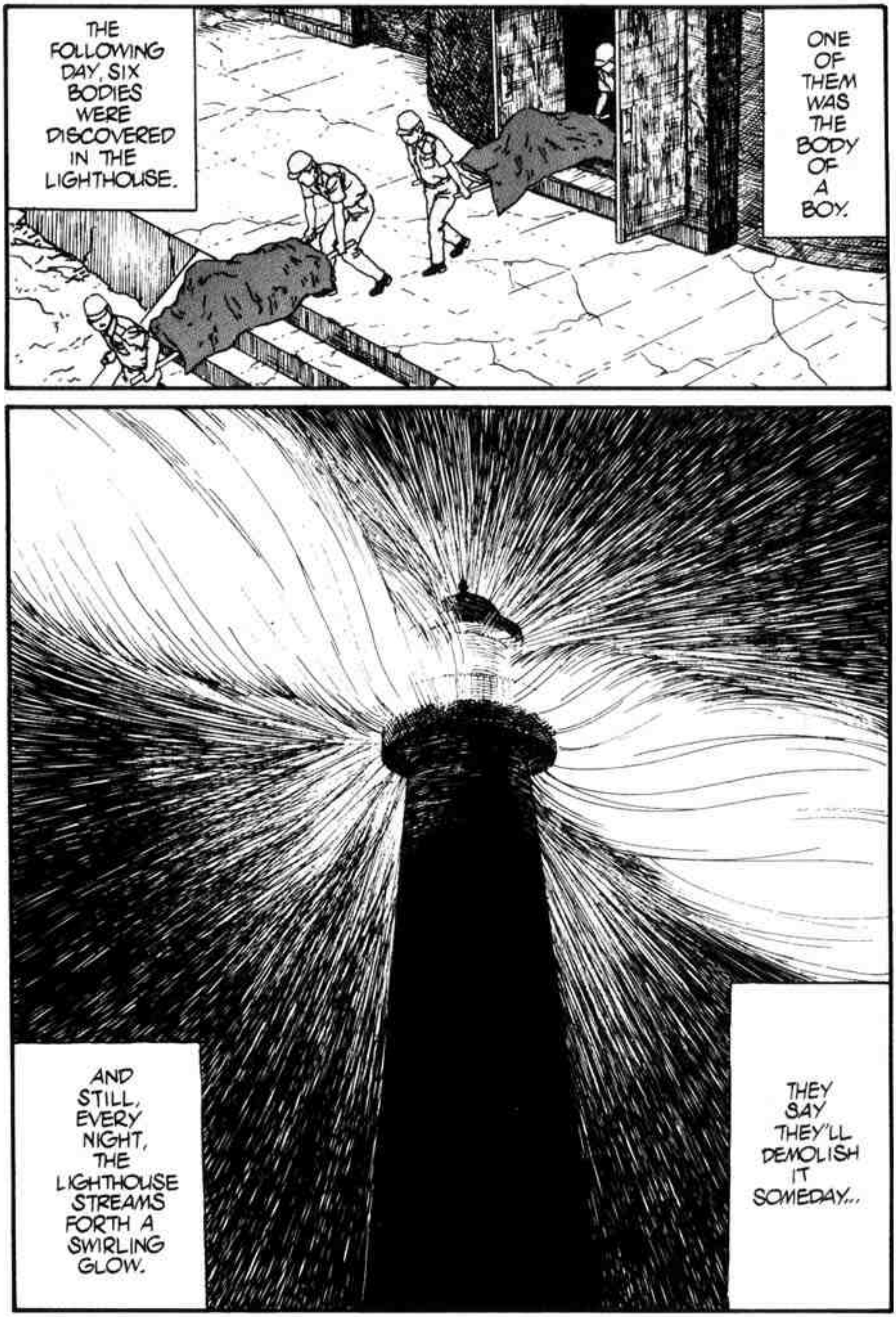
...CONSUMED IN AN INSTANT.

WE MADE IT OUTSIDE.

MITSUO!
MITSUO!
AAAA

KIRIE, IT HURTS!
YOU WERE BURNED... SO WAS I...
LET'S GO HOME SO WE CAN TAKE CARE OF YOU.

uff
hff


THE FOLLOWING DAY, SIX BODIES WERE DISCOVERED IN THE LIGHTHOUSE.
ONE OF THEM WAS THE BODY OF A BOY.
AND STILL, EVERY NIGHT, THE LIGHTHOUSE STREAMS FORTH A SWIRLING GLOW.
THEY SAY THEY'LL DEMOLISH IT SOMEDAY...

CHAPTER
10
MOSQUITOES

THAT SUMMER OUR TOWN SWARMED WITH MOSQUITOES.

KURÔZU HOSPITAL

LLEEEEE

LLEEEEEE

105

KIRIE GOSHIMA

AS FOR ME, I HAD TO SPEND HALF THE SUMMER IN THE HOSPITAL.

THE BURNS AND BRUISES I RECEIVED IN THE LIGHTHOUSE WERE UNEXPECTEDLY SEVERE.

BIG COMIC

LLEEEEEEE

MY BROTHER MITSUO WASN'T HURT AS BAD, SO HE WAS RELEASED THE OTHER DAY.

NOT AGAIN.
LLEEEEE
ANOTHER MOSQUITO.
LLEEEEEEE
WHF
WHF
LEEEEE
LLEEEEE
...
THE MOSQUITOES THAT YEAR WERE STRANGE.
THEY WOULD FLY IN DROWSY SPIRALS.
JUST WATCHING THEM MADE YOU SLEEPY, AND THE NEXT THING YOU KNEW, YOU WERE STUNG.
LEEEEE

HOW ARE YOU FEELING, KIRIE?
KURÔZ HOSPIT

BETTER, I GUESS.
IT STILL HURTS TO WALK. AND MY BURNS...

WHEN THE MOSQUITOES STING THEM, IT HURTS LIKE MAD.

Oh! LOOK OVER THERE!

IS THAT... A WHIRL-WIND?
IT'S A MOSQUITO COLUMN.

"MOSQUITO COLUMN"?

LLLEEEEEEEE

THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL THEM WHEN THEY SWARM LIKE THAT. THEY'RE ALL MALE MOSQUITOES WAITING TO MATE.

I'VE SEEN A LOT OF THEM LATELY.

THEY BREED OVER IN DRAGON-FLY POND.

I DON'T KNOW IF I'D CALL IT A COLUMN...

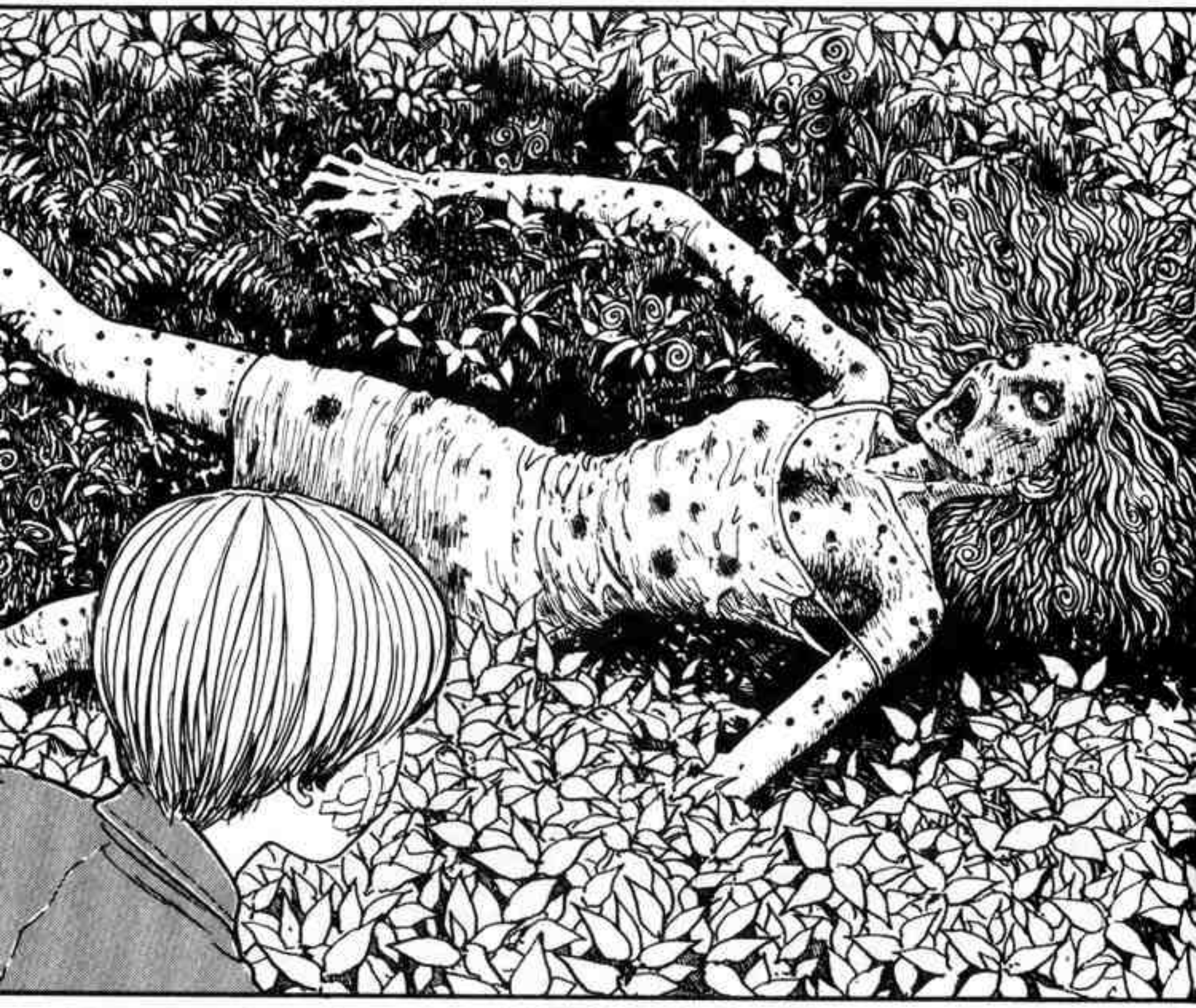
THE WAY THEY SPIN AROUND LIKE THAT...

IS THIS ANOTHER SIGN OF THE SPIRAL?

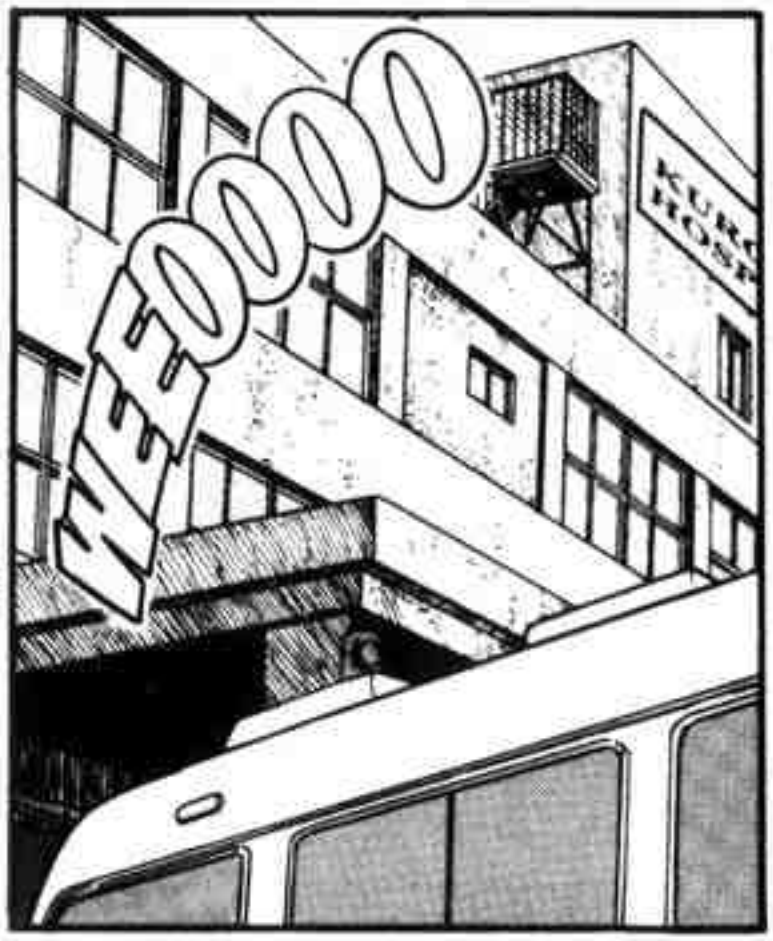
YOU LOOK TIRED. LET'S GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM.

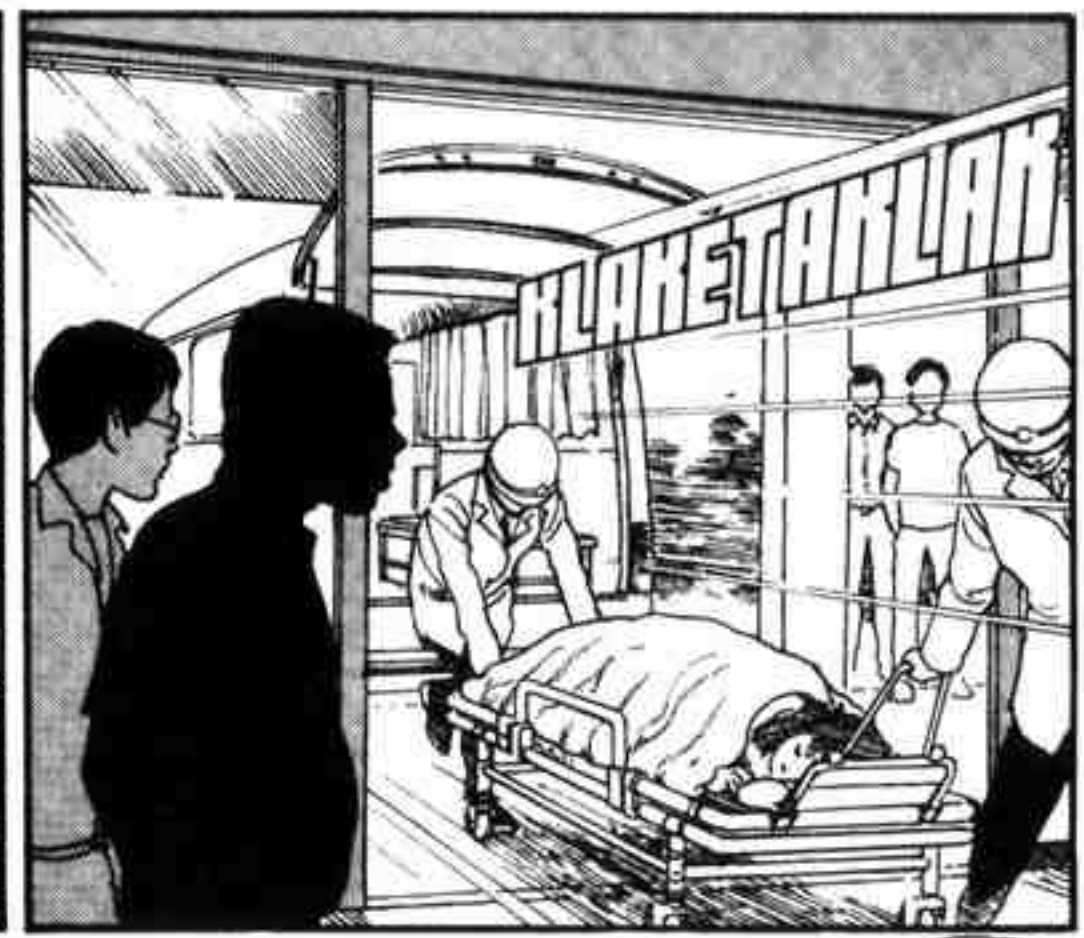
YES.

?!



THE DISCOVERY OF THE BODY WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING OF WHAT HAPPENED.


WEEOOOO


KLAKETAKLAK

EVERY-ONE'S IN A STIR OVER THIS DEAD WOMAN. NOW WHAT?
LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER PREGNANCY.

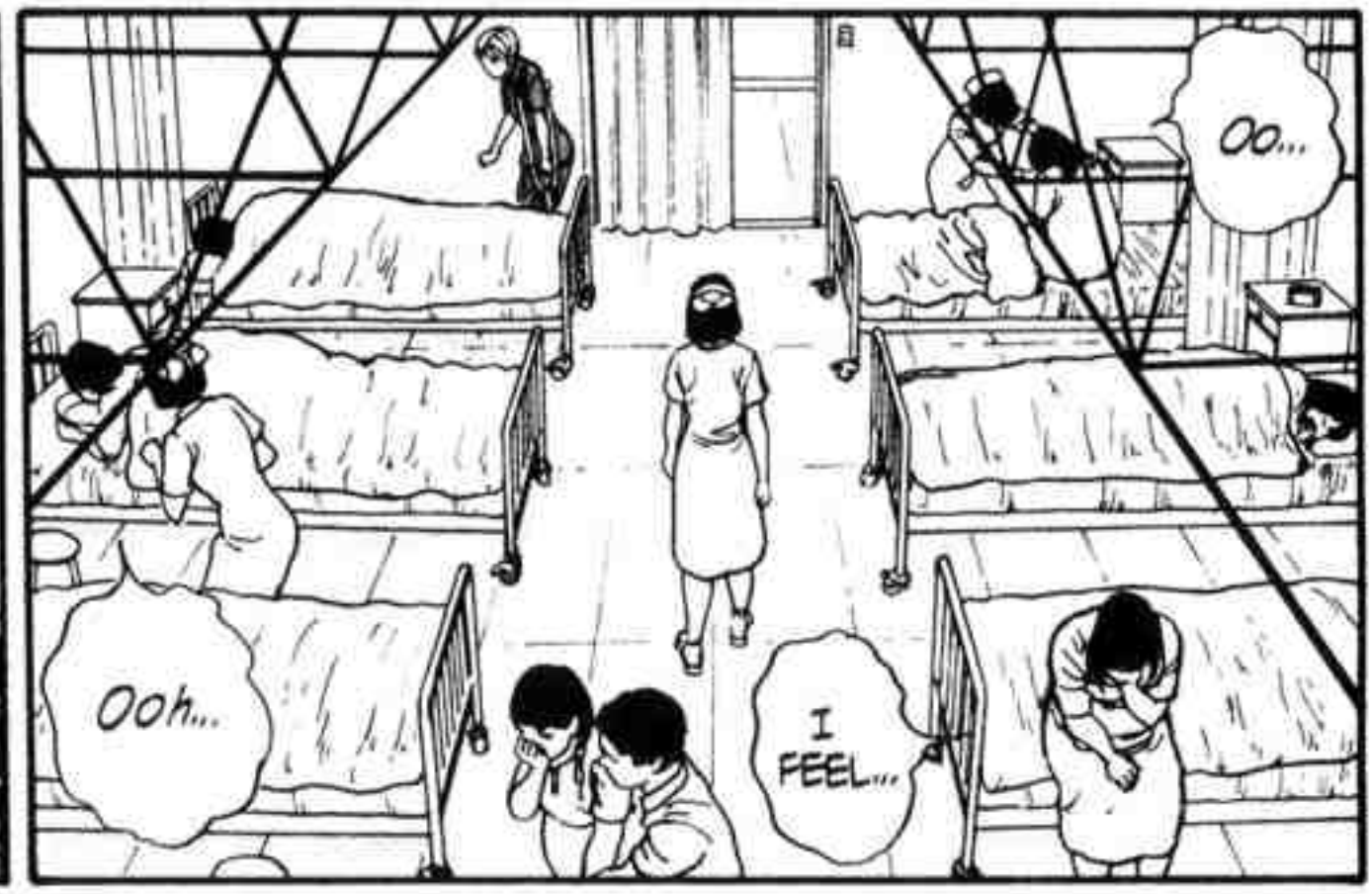
AGAIN?
THERE'S OVER TEN PREGNANT WOMEN WHO'VE BEEN HOSPITALIZED SUFFERING FROM MOSQUITO SWARM ATTACKS.

KLAKETAKLAKETA

WHAT?!

THAT'S MY COUSIN KEIKO!!

MATERNITY WARD
Ooh...


Oo...
Ooh...
I FEEL...

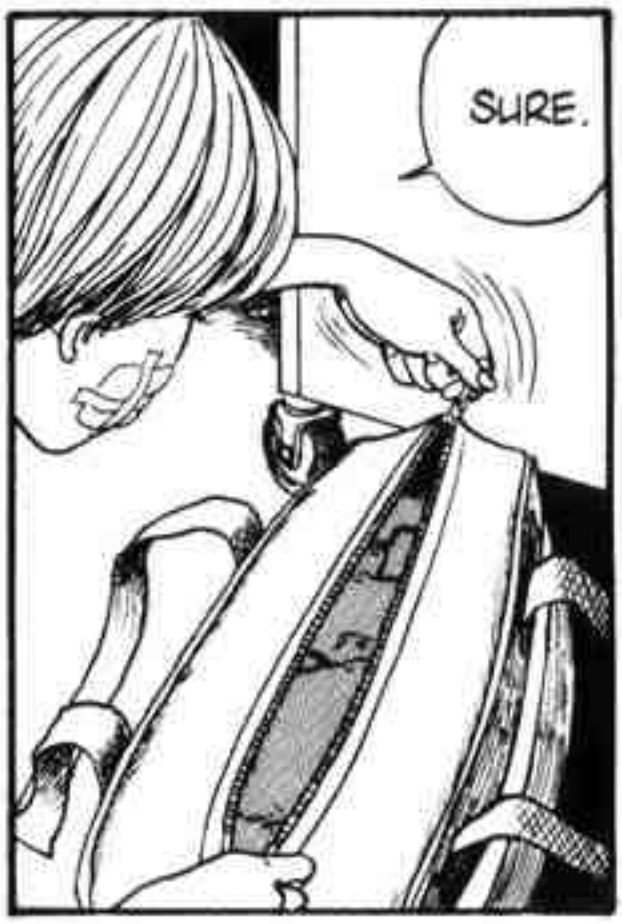
KEIKO, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

KIRIE...
I JUST NEED TO REST. I THROW UP EVERYTHING I EAT.

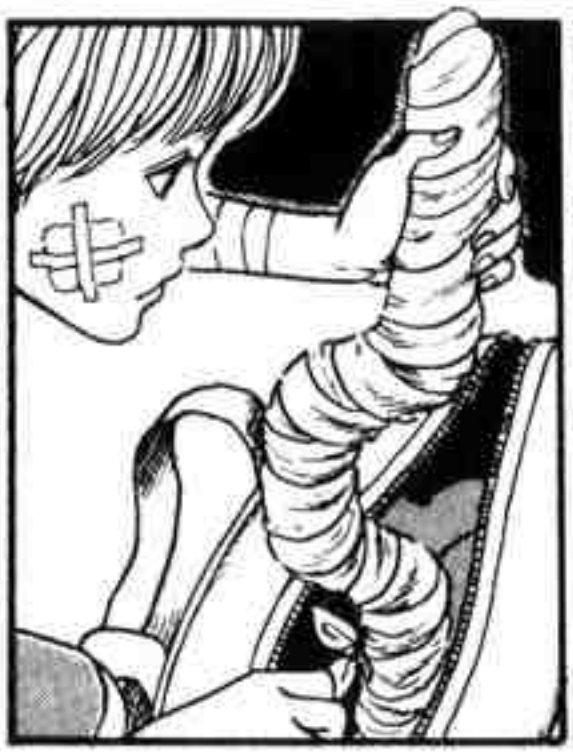
NURSE, SHE'S BEEN BITTEN REALLY BADLY. IS THAT WHAT'S CAUSING IT?

WELL, I CAN'T SAY THAT IT'S NOT RELATED. BUT I THINK IT'S MOSTLY PSYCHO-LOGICAL.
IT'S STRANGE SO MANY PREGNANT WOMEN ARE BEING HOSPITALIZED.

MS. GOSHIMA, COULD YOU UNPACK HER THINGS FOR HER?
HER HUSBAND BROUGHT OVER HER BAG.


SURE.

SHOULD I TAKE OUT HER TOWEL, TOO?
PLEASE.



?

KEIKO, WHAT'S INSIDE THIS WRAPPED CLOTH? IT'S HEAVY...
Oh... JUST LEAVE IT IN THE CUPBOARD.

OKAY.

THE NEXT MORNING ...

...THE OUTBREAK OCCURRED IN THE HOSPITAL ITSELF.

WE HAVE AN EMER-GENCY!

ONE OF THE PATIENTS IN ROOM 203 IS DEAD!

THERE'S TWO MORE DEAD IN ROOM 217!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

...

ZEEEEEEE

ZEEEE

IT MUST HAVE HAPPENED LAST NIGHT.

ALL THREE DIED THE SAME WAY.

JUST LIKE THAT BODY WE DISCOVERED YESTERDAY IN THE YARD.

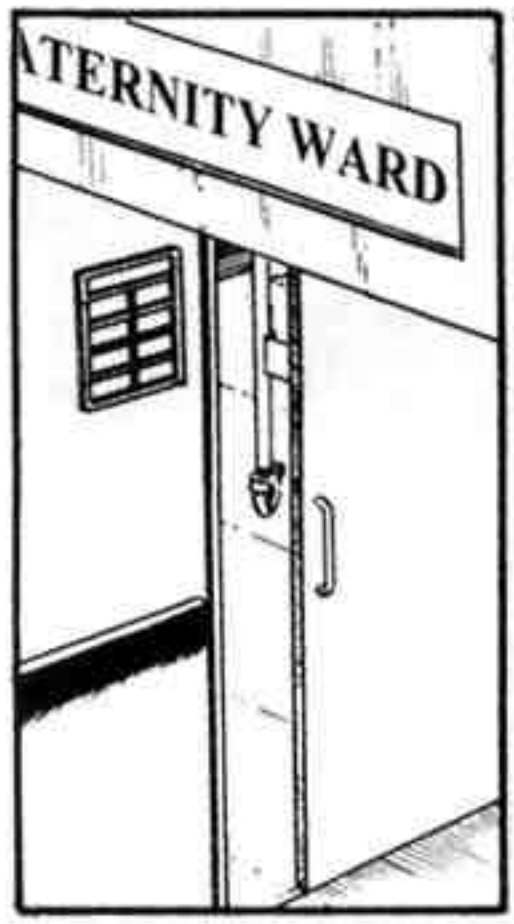
BUT DOCTOR... WHAT ARE THESE HOLES? ARE THEY STAB WOUNDS?

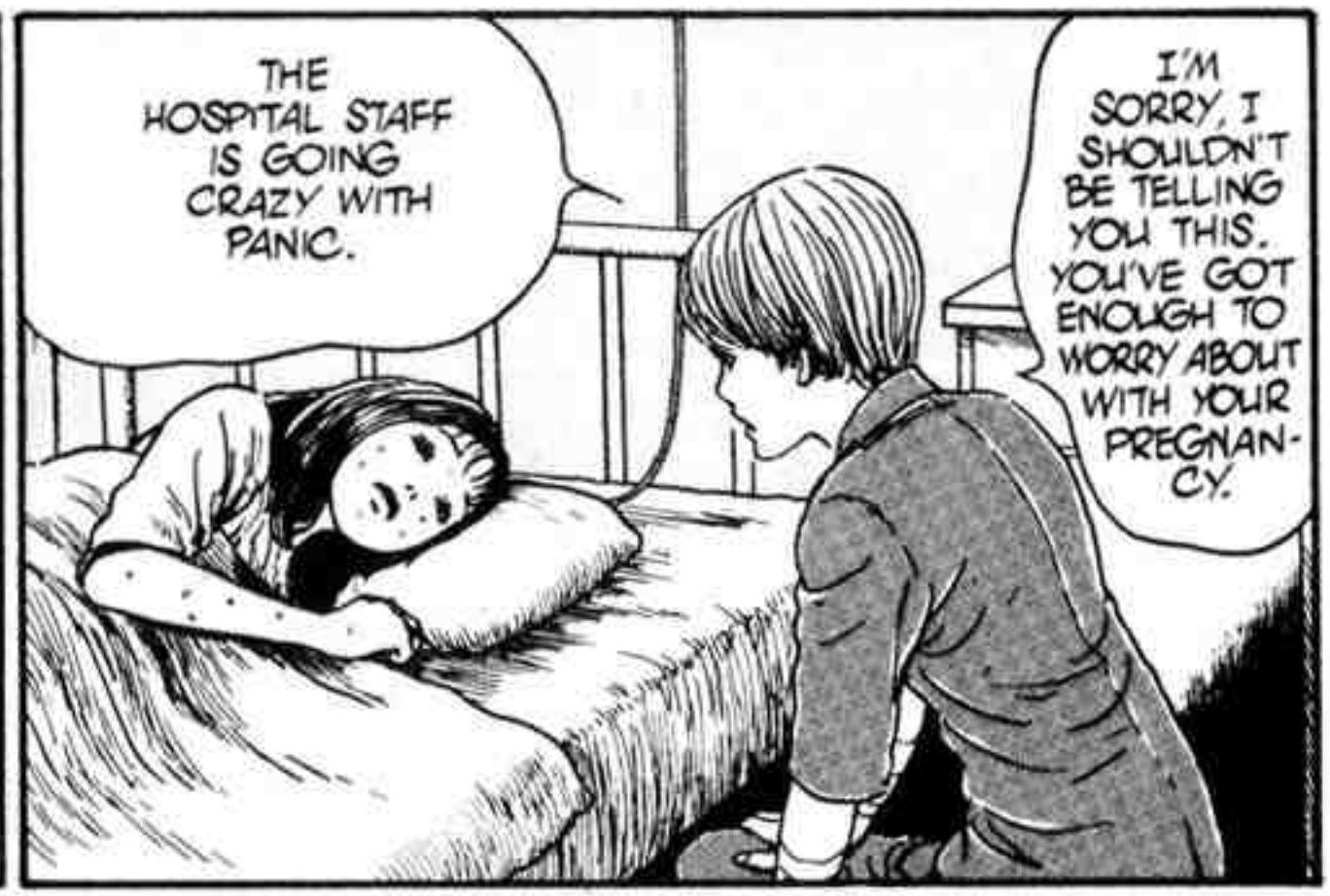
I DON'T KNOW, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THEIR BLOOD'S BEEN DRAINED OUT.

ZEEEEEEE

C-CALL THE POLICE!

WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED? WERE THEY MURDERED ?
BUT I DIDN'T HEAR A SOUND LAST NIGHT.
JUST THOSE MOSQUITOES BUZZING...


ATERNITY WARD


THE HOSPITAL STAFF IS GOING CRAZY WITH PANIC.
I'M SORRY, I SHOULDN'T BE TELLING YOU THIS. YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH TO WORRY ABOUT WITH YOUR PREGNAN-CY.

OH, NO. I FEEL BETTER NOW ANYWAY.

CAN YOU HEAR MY BABY MOVING?
HE'S STARTED KICKING.

KURÔZU HOSPITAL
REALLY? CAN I FEEL?

ZEEEEEEEEEE

KIRIE, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

SHUICHI!
YOU CAME TO SEE ME?

I FEEL LIKE I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN AGES.
I'VE BECOME SUCH A RECLUSE I HARDLY GO OUT ANYMORE.
GUKKUU
GUKKUU

KIRIE, YOU SHOULD CHECK OUT OF THIS HOSPITAL.
BUT WHY?
GUKKUU
GUKKUU

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG IN THIS PLACE.
GUKKUU
GUKKUU

MS. GOSHIMA?
YES?

I'M AFRAID WE'LL HAVE TO ASK YOU TO SHARE YOUR ROOM.

WE DON'T HAVE ANY MORE BEDS IN THE MATERNITY WARD.

SO YOUR COUSIN KEIKO WILL BE STAYING WITH YOU.

KEIKO.

PLEASE.

THANKS, KIRIE.

SIT DOWN.

LISTEN, YOU CAN'T LET HER STAY.

I GET A WEIRD FEELING FROM THAT WOMAN.

SHUICHI ...

HOW COULD YOU SAY THAT ABOUT MY COUSIN?

...

LLEEEEEE

DAMN MOSQUITOES !!
I WON'T LET YOU GET NEAR ME!
FAHHHHH
SHUICHI !

COUGH COUGH
FAHHHHH
HRRGH ...

HEY, YOU!
DON'T YOU DARE SPRAY THAT IN FRONT OF A PREGNANT WOMAN!

FLOOP

PHEW ...

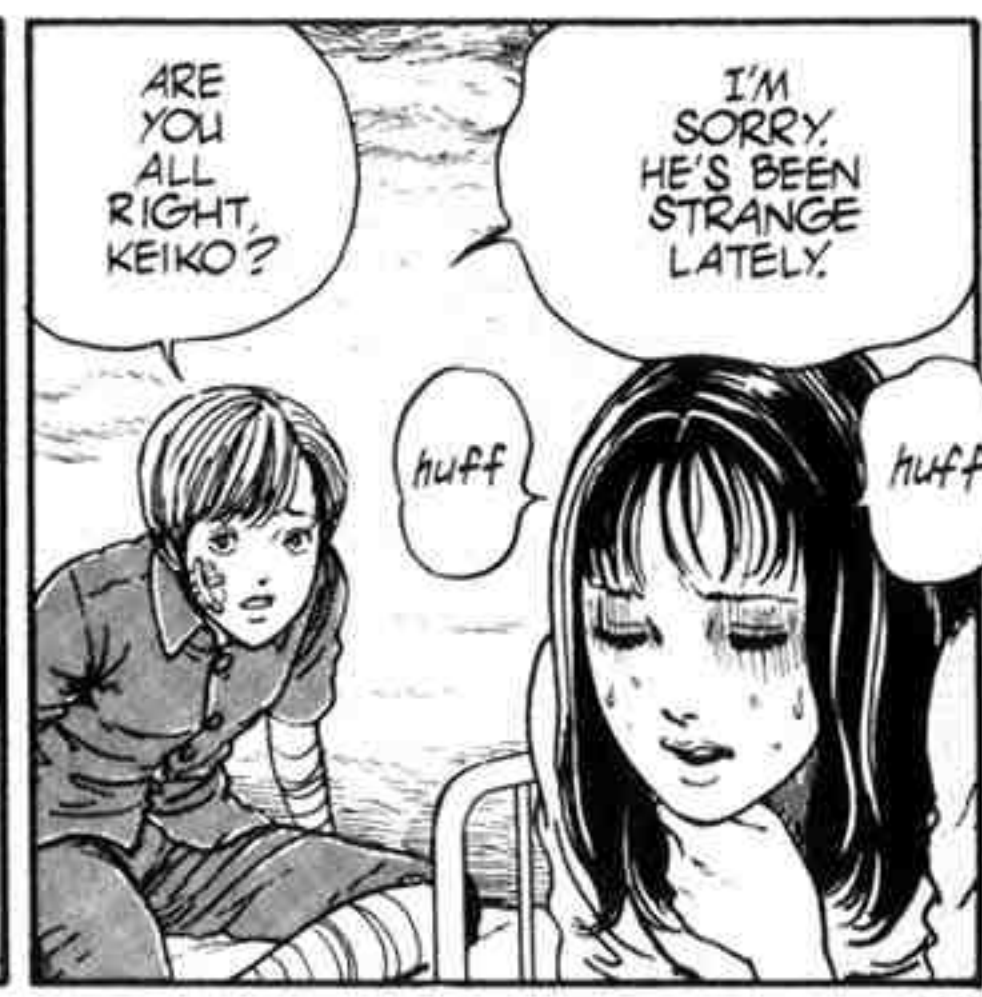
KIRIE, DID YOU KNOW...

...THAT FEMALE MOSQUITOES ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO SUCK BLOOD?
AND ONLY WHEN THEY'RE CARRYING A BATCH OF EGGS.
THEY SUCK THE BLOOD OF ANIMALS SO THE YOUNG IN THEIR BODIES WILL GROW.

COUGH COUGH
THAT SMELL!
PLEASE OPEN THE WINDOW!

YOU SHOULD LEAVE NOW!
SHHFFFFFFF
COUGH

NOW!


ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, KEIKO?
I'M SORRY. HE'S BEEN STRANGE LATELY.
huff
huff

THAT EVEN-ING
KURÔZU HOSPITAL
LEEEEEEEEEE

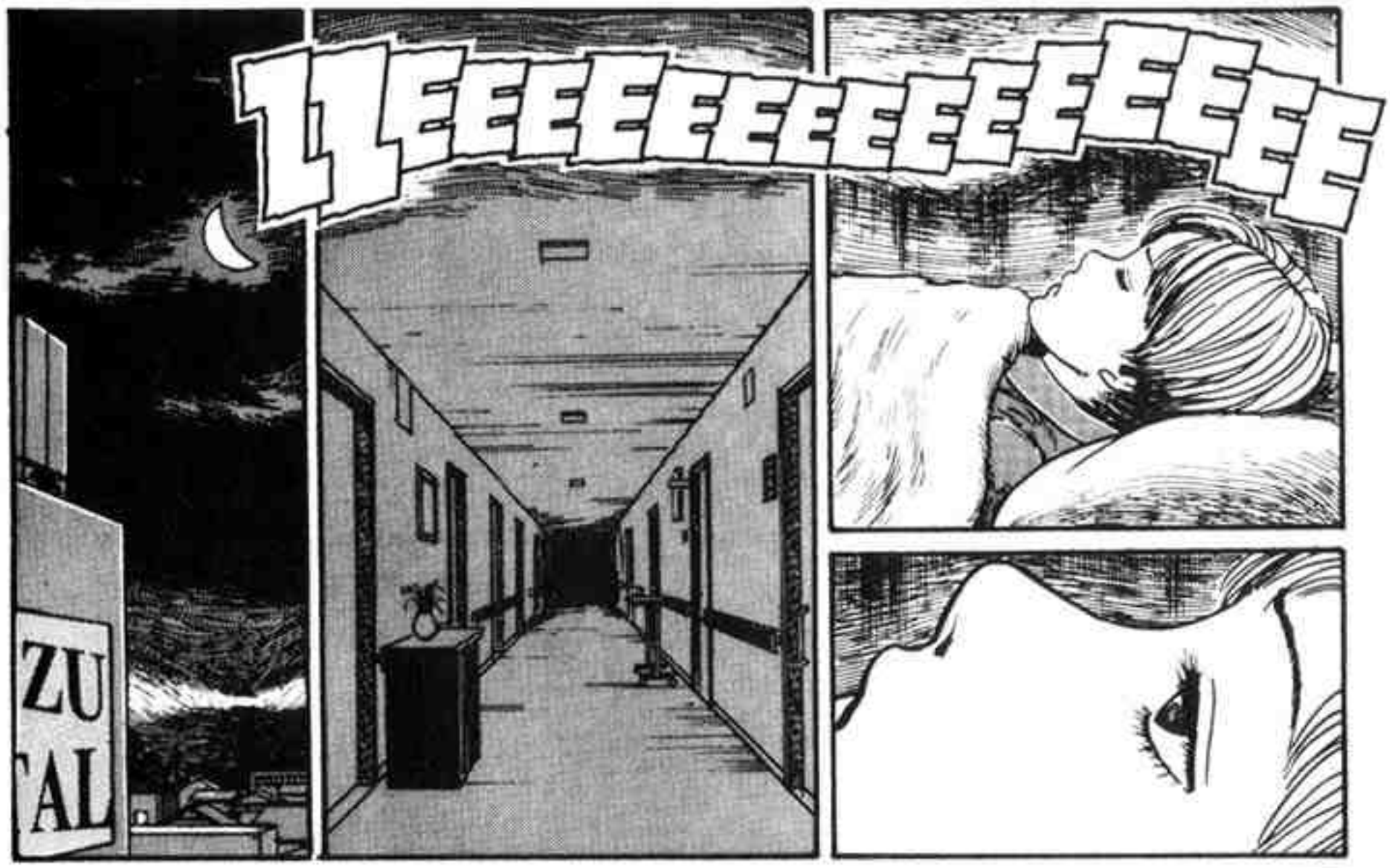
THERE'S ANOTHER MOSQUITO IN THE ROOM.
NNNNNNNN
BE CAREFUL IT DOESN'T STING YOU.

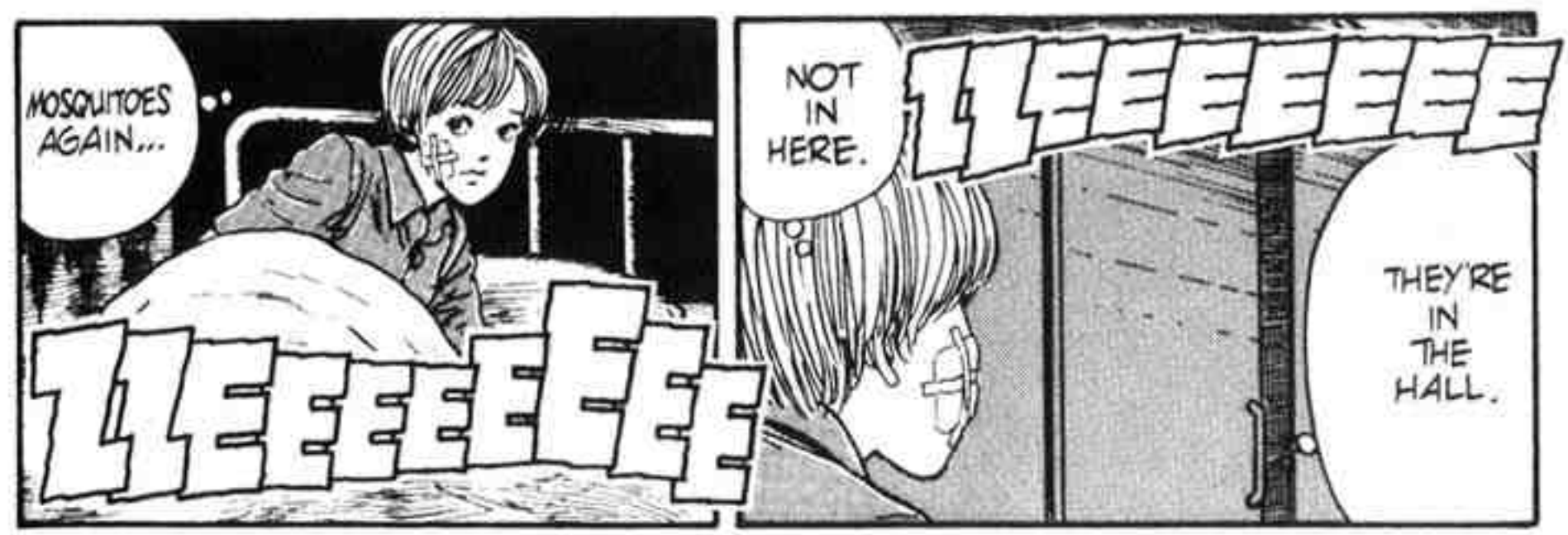
THANK YOU, BUT I'LL BE FINE.
I DON'T MIND MOSQUITOES.

BUT I THOUGHT YOU GOT SICK FROM BEING ATTACKED BY MOSQUITOES ?

THAT'S RIGHT, BUT...
I LIKE MOSQUITOES ...I LOVE THEM...

HMM...
ZZZ
ZZZ





LLEEEEEEEEEEEE

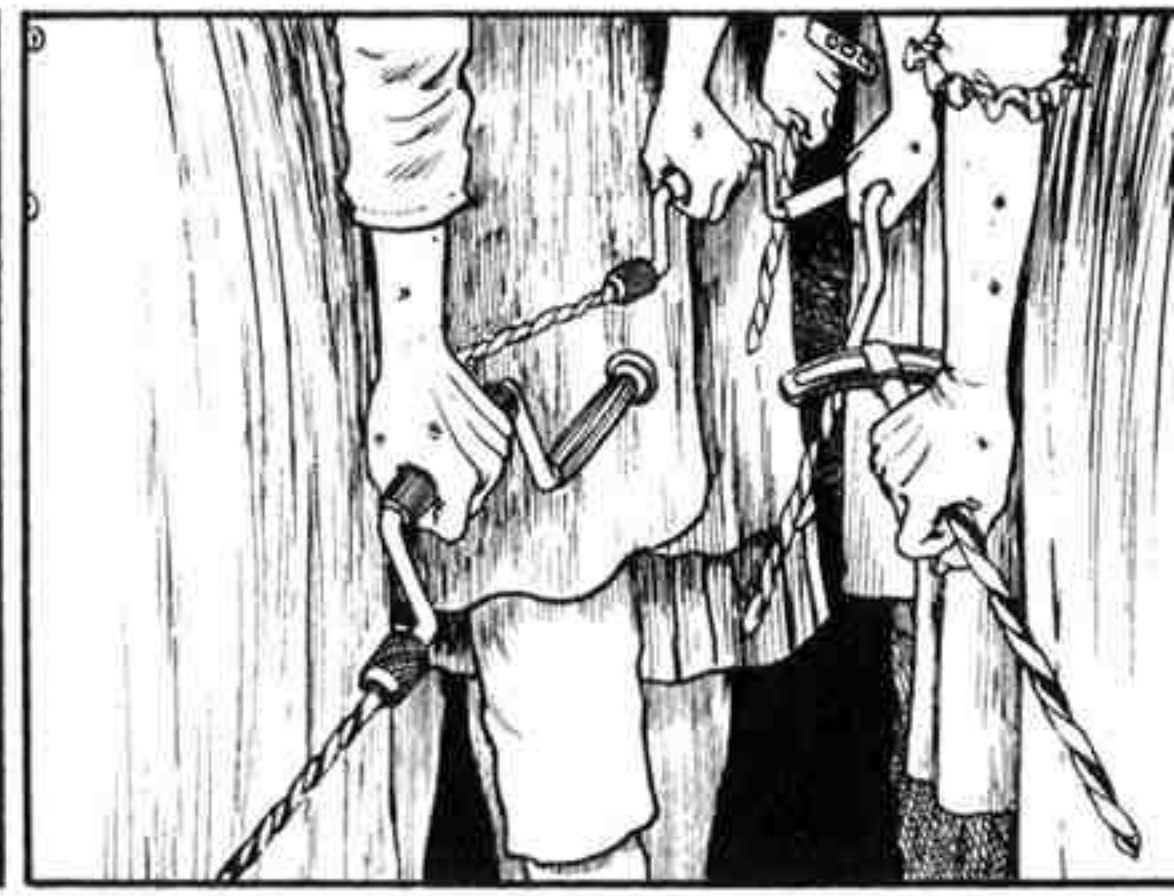
LLEEEEEEEE
STPSTP

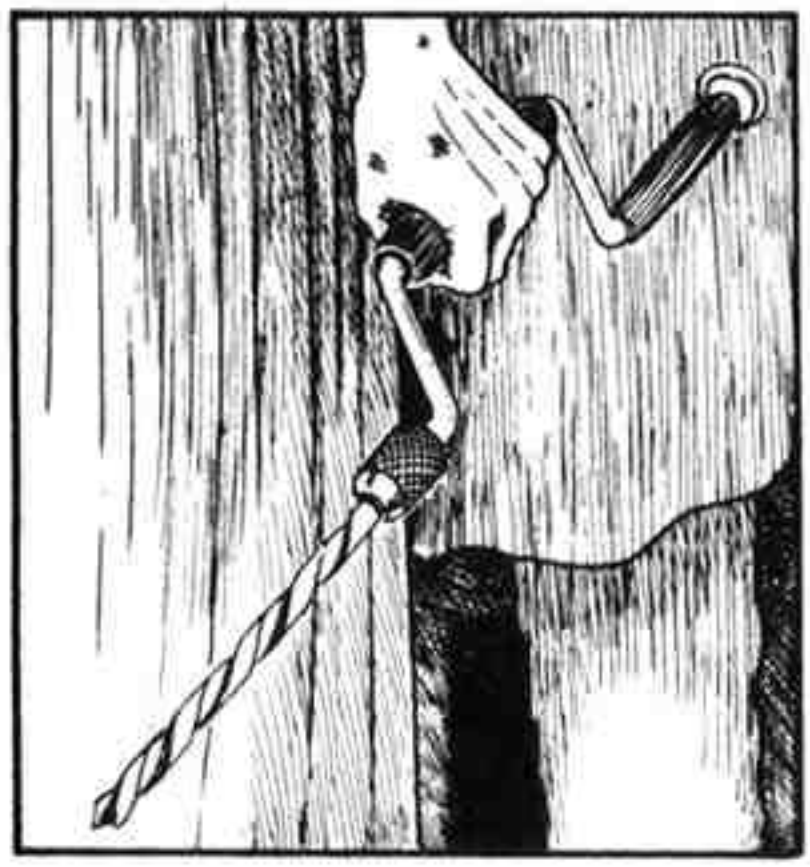
LLEEEEEE

LLEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
STP
STP
STP

THEY'RE THE PREGNANT WOMEN FROM THE MATERNITY WARD.

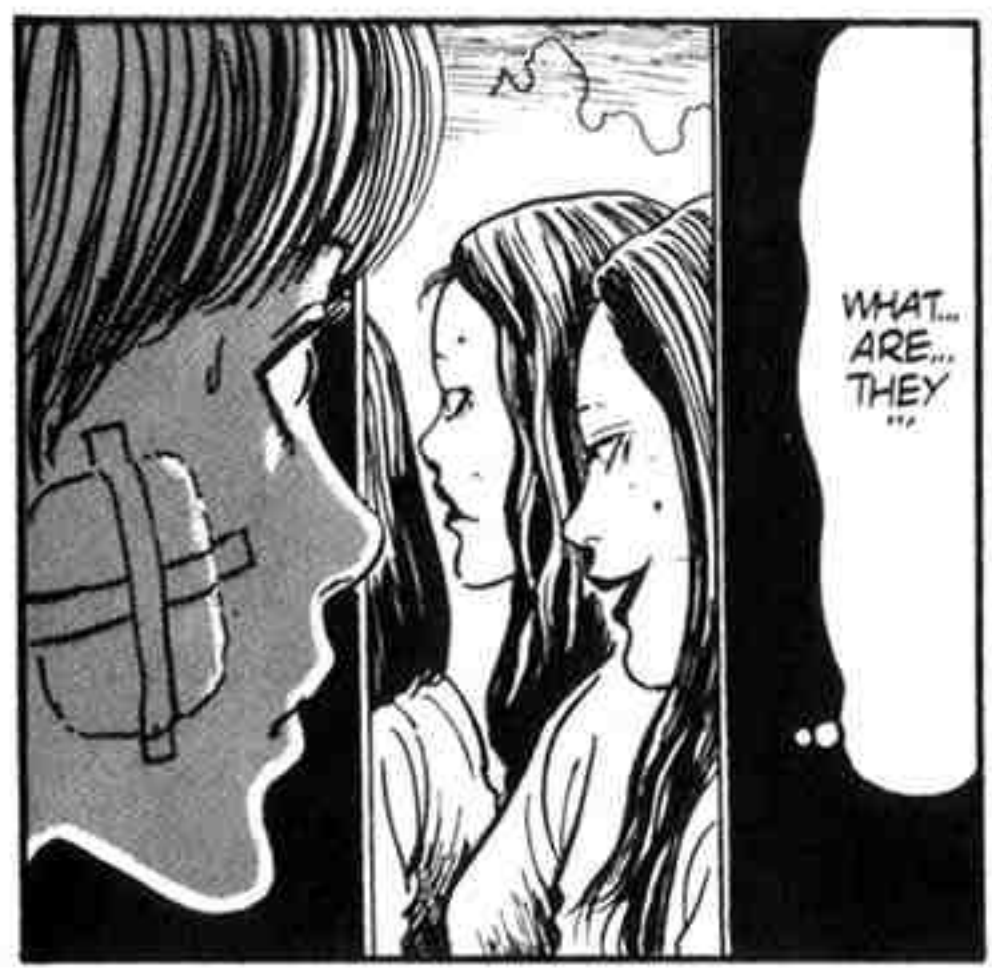
WHAT?!

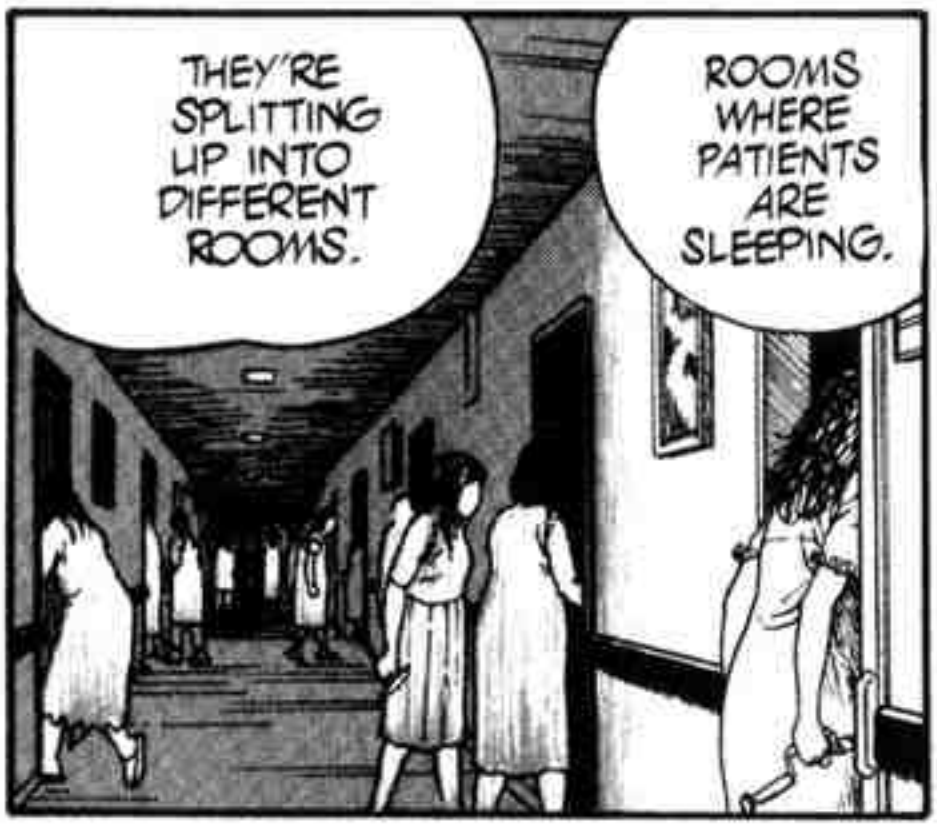


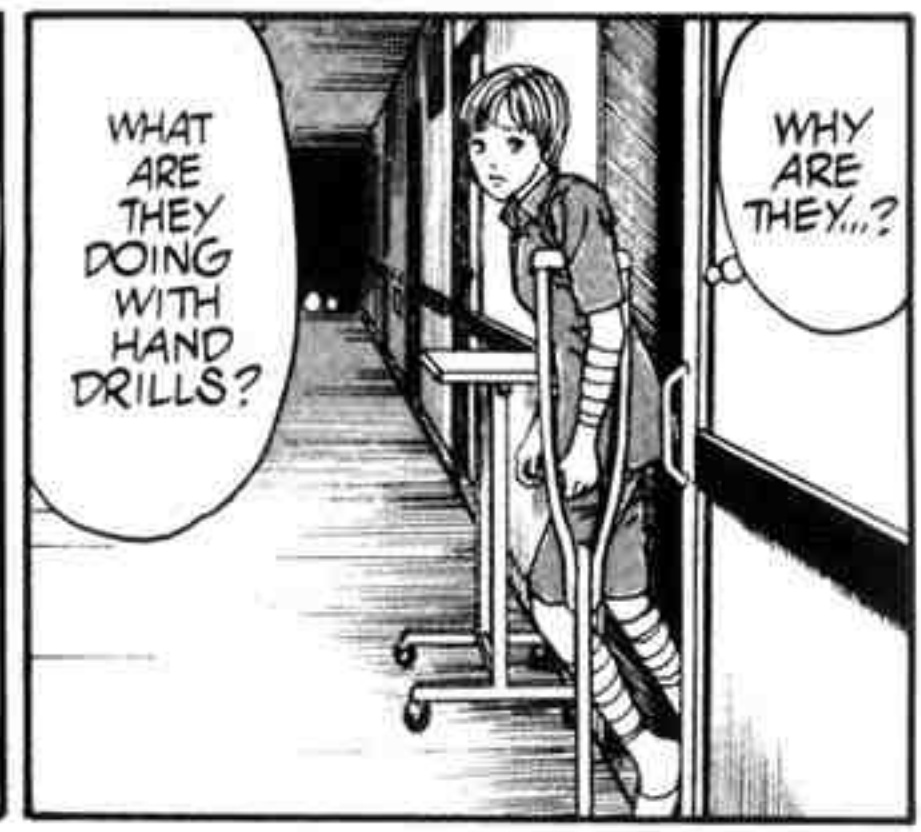


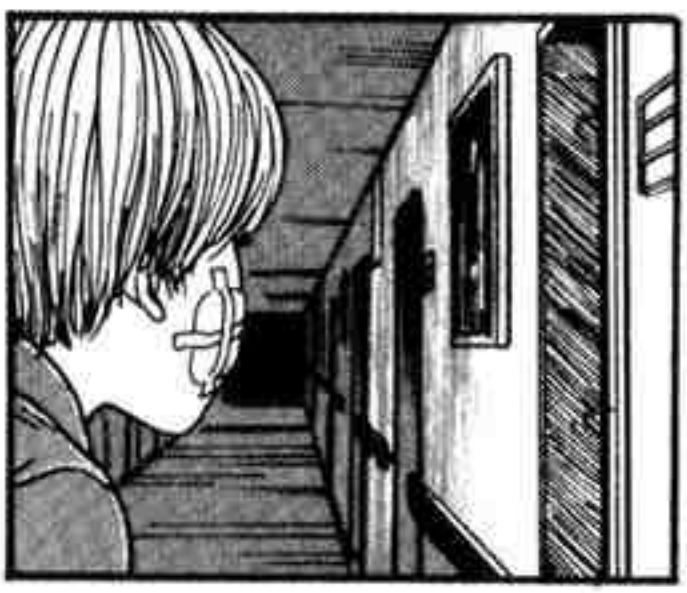
SIP

SIP


WHAT... ARE... THEY ...?


THEY'RE SPLITTING UP INTO DIFFERENT ROOMS.
ROOMS WHERE PATIENTS ARE SLEEPING.


WHAT ARE THEY DOING WITH HAND DRILLS?
WHY ARE THEY...?



TWEETWEE

TWEETWEE
TWEEE

PUP

SHSLG
HLPLGLG

NO...
NO!

YOU...
SAW...
YOU...
SAW
AHH!
YOU SAW
YOU SAW
AGH!

AHH!
OHH HOHO

HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON? IT'S LATE!
HELP ME!

AH!

WHAT?!

GET AWAY!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?

BLOOD

GIVE US BLOOD

WHUD

OHOHOHO

TWEETWEEEEEE

WHAT'S ALL THIS NOISE?
WHY ARE YOU IN THERE?

WHAT?

GIVE US BLOOD
KYAA!

SWEE
SWEE
SWEE
SWEE

GUG
SHLP
SLPP
GUG

OH
OHO HO HO

THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH FOR TONIGHT
IT WAS SO GOOD...

BACK TO OUR ROOMS NOW.
BACK TO SLEEP
WAIT!

SOMEONE SAW WHAT I DID.
A GIRL SAW WHAT WE DID.

THAT GIRL!

WE CAN'T LET HER LIVE IF SHE SAW US!

OH HO HO
hff uff

OH HA HA
hff
uff
SAH
REE
SNAP
OHH, IT'S USE-LESS.
OPEN THE DOOR.
STOP IT!
SOME-ONE HELP ME!
KEIKO, WAKE UP!
OH HO HO I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!
I'LL DRILL THROUGH YOUR CHEEK AND OUT YOUR EYE!

UH?!
BLOOD...
GIVE ME YOUR BLOOD.
KEIKO ?!
AH?!
BLAMM

STOP IT!

AHA HAHA

DIE!

TUMP

PRAY KILL

!

FIIIIIII

SHHH

MY KILLI

AAYAAA

THE MASSACRE AT THE HOSPITAL ...

KUROZU HOSPITAL

WHO WOULD BELIEVE IT WAS COMMITTED BY PREGNANT WOMEN?

ALL TRACES OF THE DRILLS AND BLOOD-SOAKED GOWNS HAD DIS-APPEARED THE NEXT MORNING.

EEE

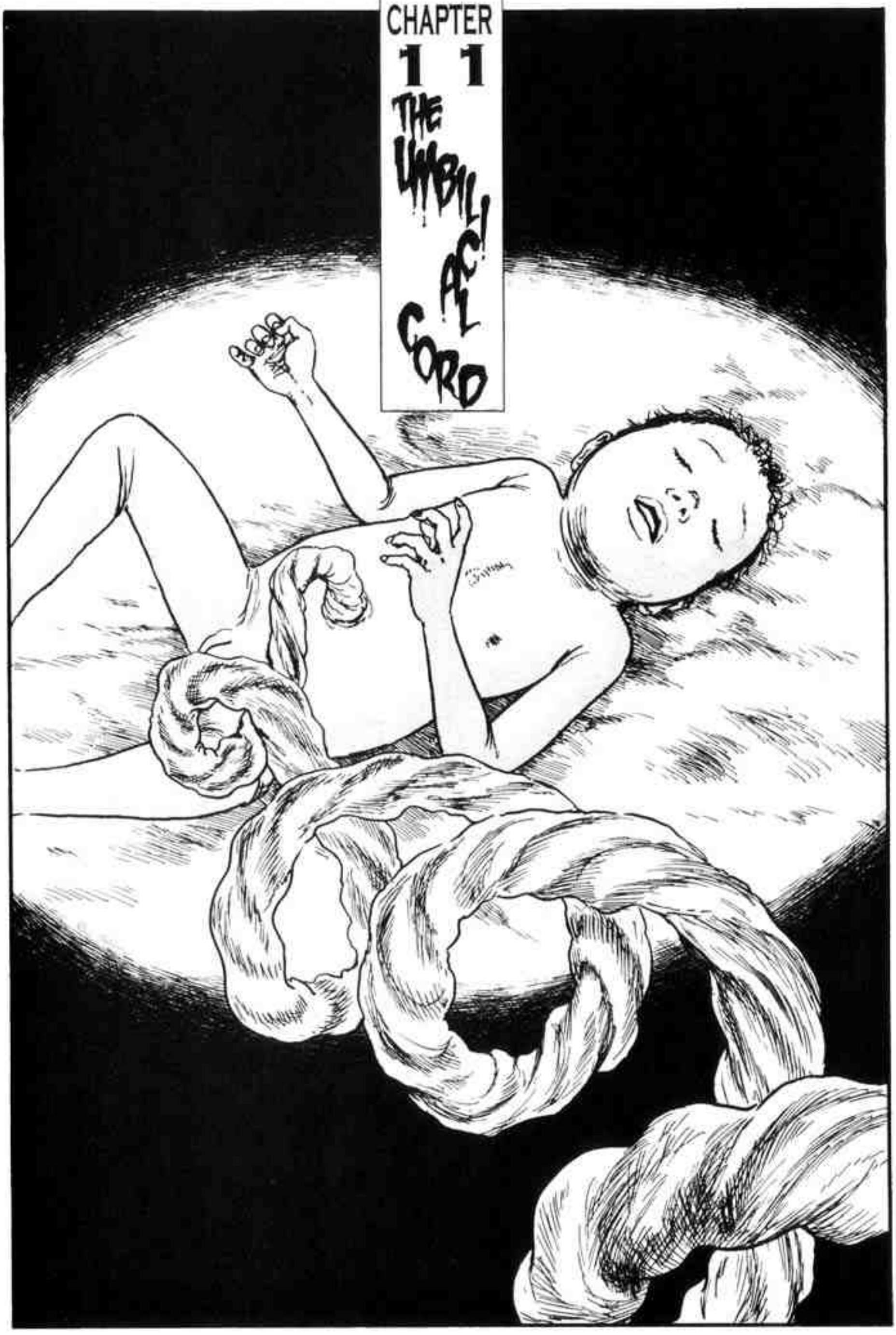
I HATE TO THINK THAT THEIR HUSBANDS GOT RID OF THE EVIDENCE.

THEY NEEDED RAW BLOOD FOR THEIR BABIES!

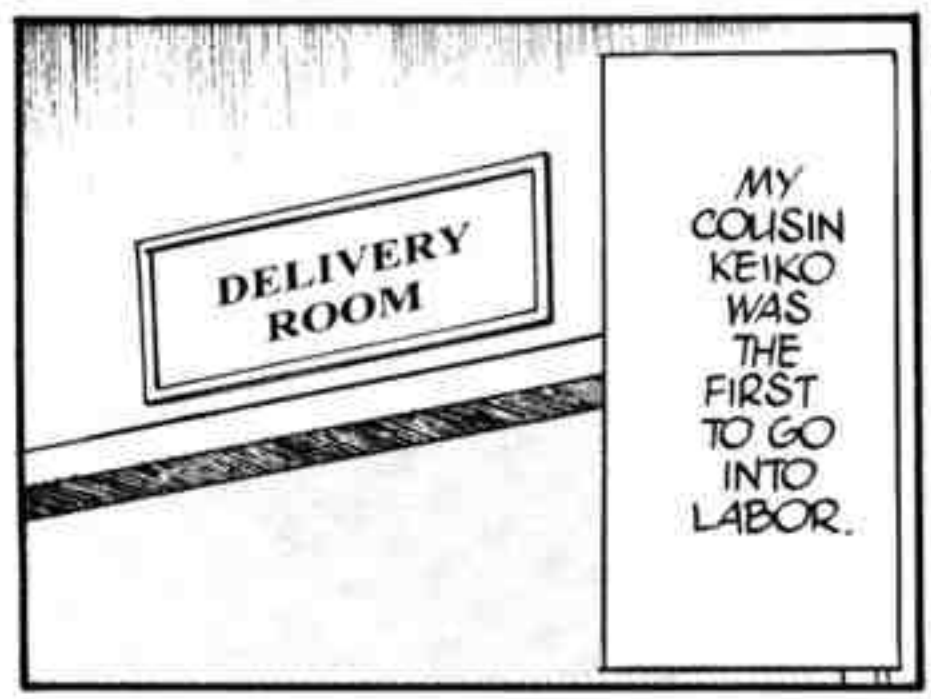
IN SEVERAL DAYS, THESE BABIES NOURISHED BY HUMAN BLOOD WERE ABOUT TO BE BORN!

CHAPTER 11

THE UMBILICAL CORD

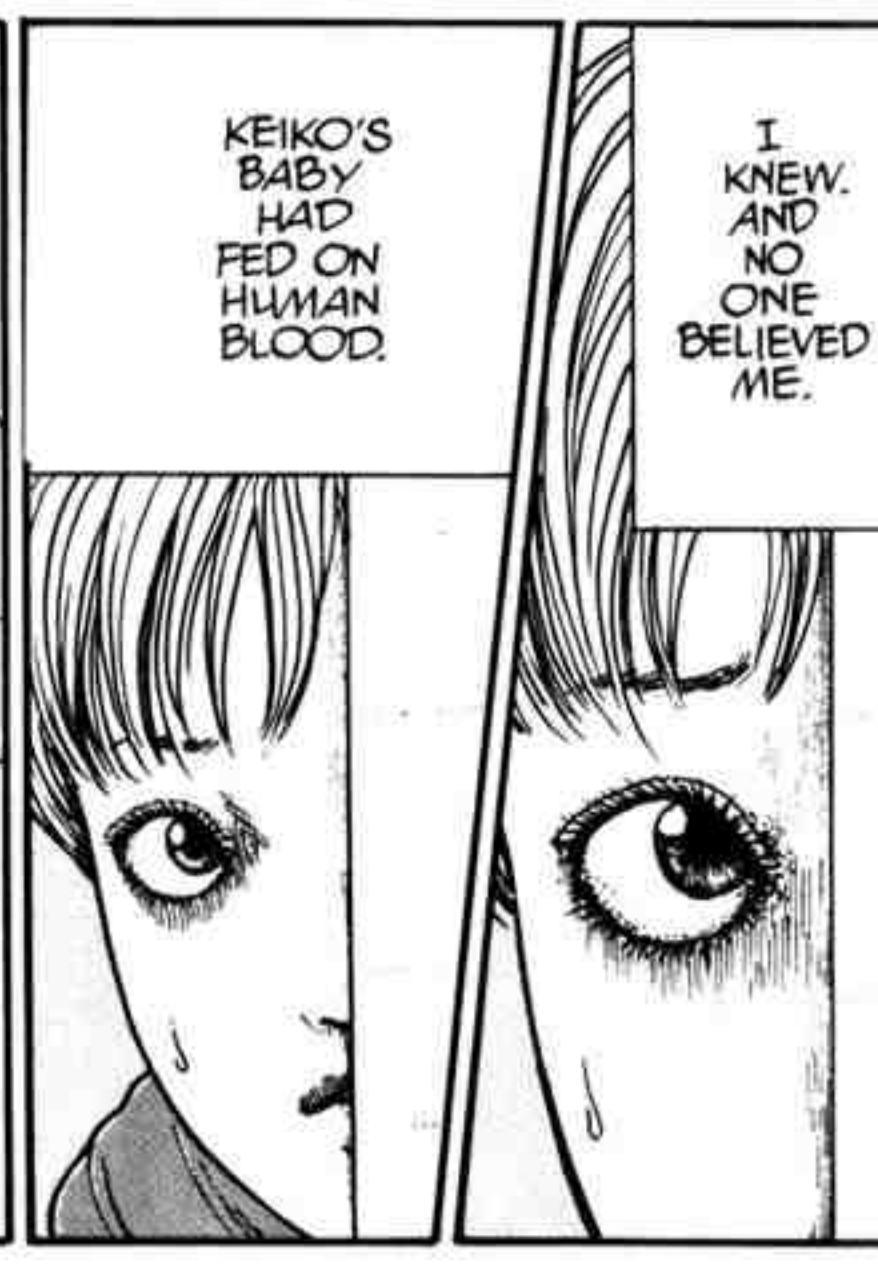


THE PREGNANT WOMEN AT KURŌZU HOSPITAL WERE APPROACHING THE LAST MONTH OF THEIR TERM.
KURŌZU HOSPITAL


DELIVERY ROOM
MY COUSIN KEIKO WAS THE FIRST TO GO INTO LABOR.

AAGHH!
DELIVERY ROOM
ELEAGH

I WAS AFRAID TO WATCH.
ELEAH!
EVERY PREGNANT WOMAN AT THE HOSPITAL HAD MURDERED PATIENTS AND DRANK THEIR BLOOD.


KEIKO'S BABY HAD FED ON HUMAN BLOOD.
I KNEW. AND NO ONE BELIEVED ME.

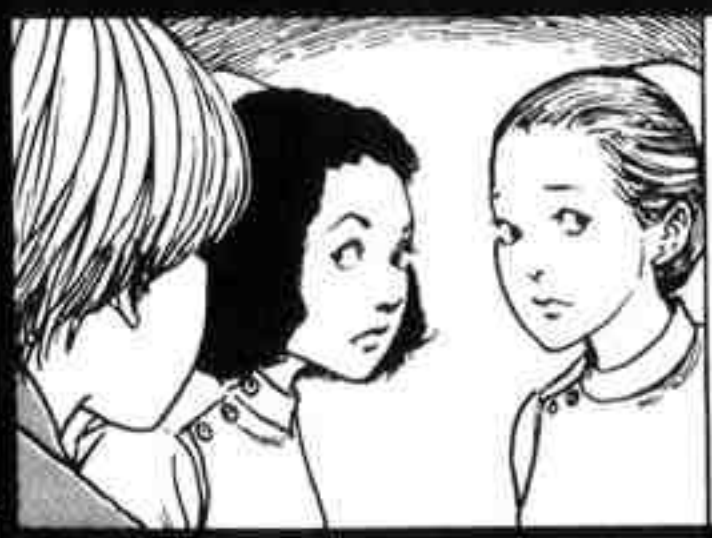
AFTER THE NIGHT OF THE MASSACRE ...

I TOLD MY STORY TO THE DIRECTOR AND DR. KAWAMOTO, THE HEAD OF THE MATERNITY WARD.

IT'S TRUE! THOSE WOMEN DID IT! IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING, THEY'LL KILL AGAIN!

MISS GO-SHIMA ... YOU MUST HAVE HAD A BAD DREAM.

NO ONE I TALKED TO BELIEVED ME.


THE MORE I INSISTED THE MORE THEY LOOKED AT ME LIKE I WAS CRAZY.

EVEN MY FAMILY WOULDN'T LISTEN.
KIRIE, THAT'S RIDICULOUS!
HOW COULD YOU ACCUSE KEIKO OF DOING SUCH A HORRIBLE THING?

I WAS COMPLETELY ALONE.

OF COURSE, THE PATIENTS WERE ALL TERRIFIED BECAUSE THE MURDERER WAS NEVER FOUND.

PERHAPS DUE TO THE MOUNTING POLICE INVESTIGATION, NO ONE ELSE WAS ATTACKED AFTERWARDS.

BUT IT WASN'T OVER.

THEY STILL DRANK BLOOD IN SECRET.

ONCE I CAUGHT ONE OF THEM.

AH?

SLURP

SLURP

I HEARD A STRANGE SOUND COMING FROM THE BATHROOM.

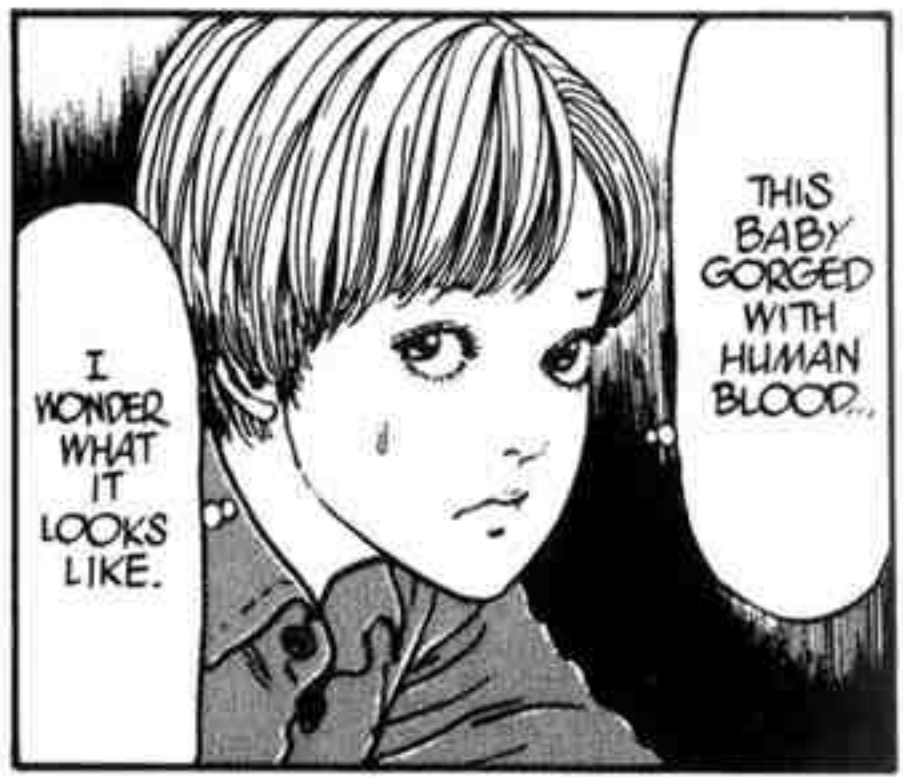
IT WAS KEIKO.

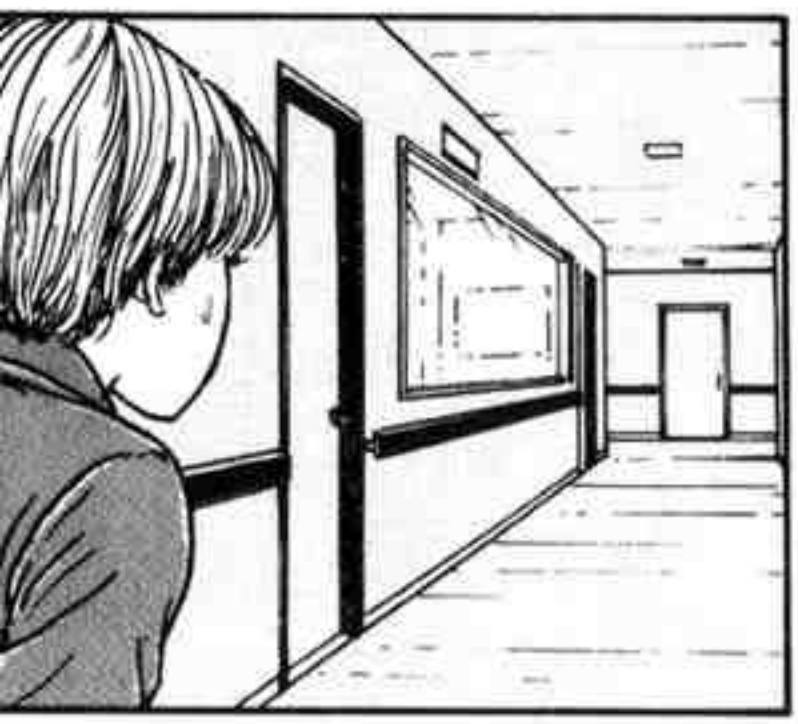
YOU SAW...

EEAH!

OHH...
AGH
EEAA EEAAH
ONE MORE PUSH!
AAGH
ONE MORE PUSH!
AAAGHH!
AAHH...
WAAAH!
DELIVERY ROOM
AAWHAA
KUROZU HOSPITAL
WAAAHH

SO IT'S BORN.


THIS BABY GORGED WITH HUMAN BLOOD...
I WONDER WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.



NEWBORNS

KEIKO NAKAYAMA

IT WAS THE SWEETEST BABY I HAD EVER SEEN.

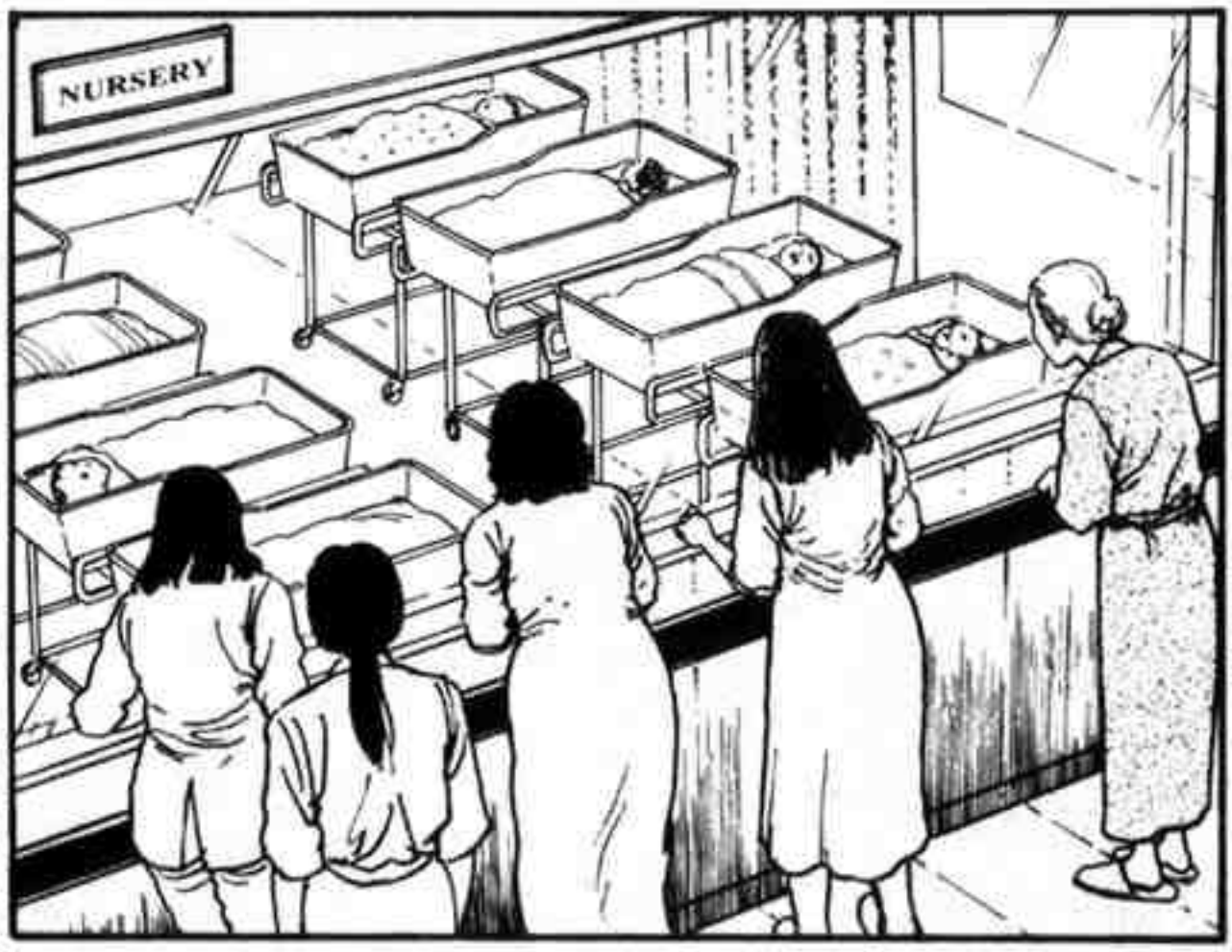
Oh, WHAT A DEAR!
WHAT A CUTE BABY!

COO, COO?

Gah, gah!

HE'S SO KEY-UUUTE!

THE BABIES WERE BORN IN SUCCESSION.
AAGH
DELIVERY ROOM
EEYH


NURSERY

LOOK AT THOSE FACES.
HISAKO UME
MIDORI SUGIYAMA
THEY'RE ALL SWEET THINGS.

ORTHOPEDICS
YOU'RE FULLY RECOVERED, MISS GOSHIMA.

YOU CAN BE DISCHARGED ANYTIME.
THANK YOU, DOCTOR.

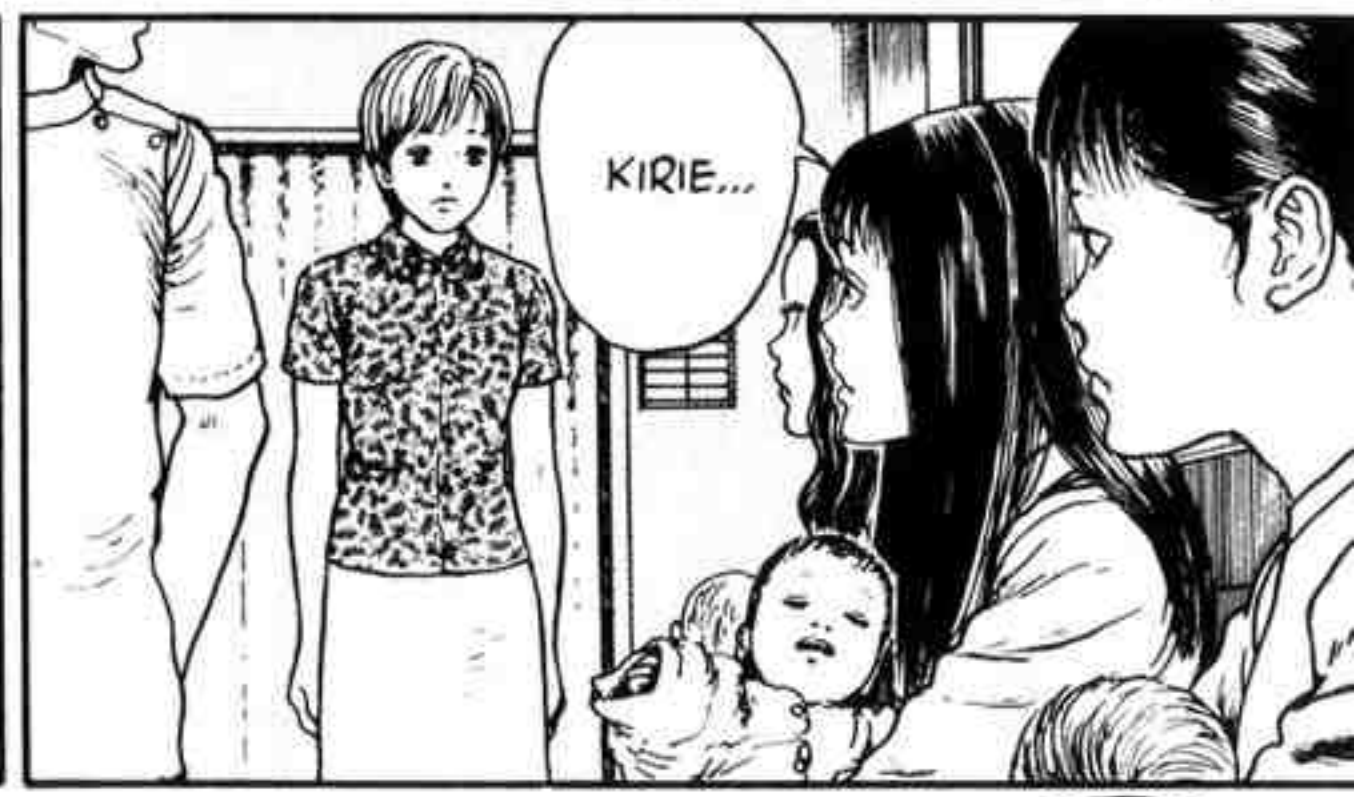
HA HA HA!
AHA HA HA!

HAHAHA!
HEE HEE... OH, MY...

IN ALL MY YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL, I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH WONDERFUL CHILDREN.
WHAT AN HONOR TO HAVE HELPED BRING YOUR BABIES INTO THE WORLD.

Oh, DOCTOR KAWAMOTO!
YOU'RE FLATTERING US!

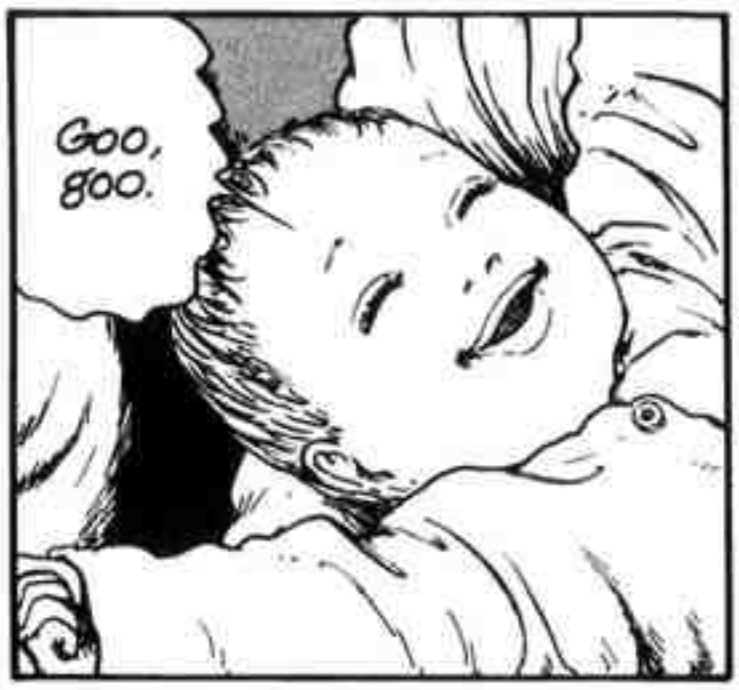
THERE YOU ARE, KEIKO.


KIRIE...

I WANT YOU TO KNOW I'M GOING HOME.

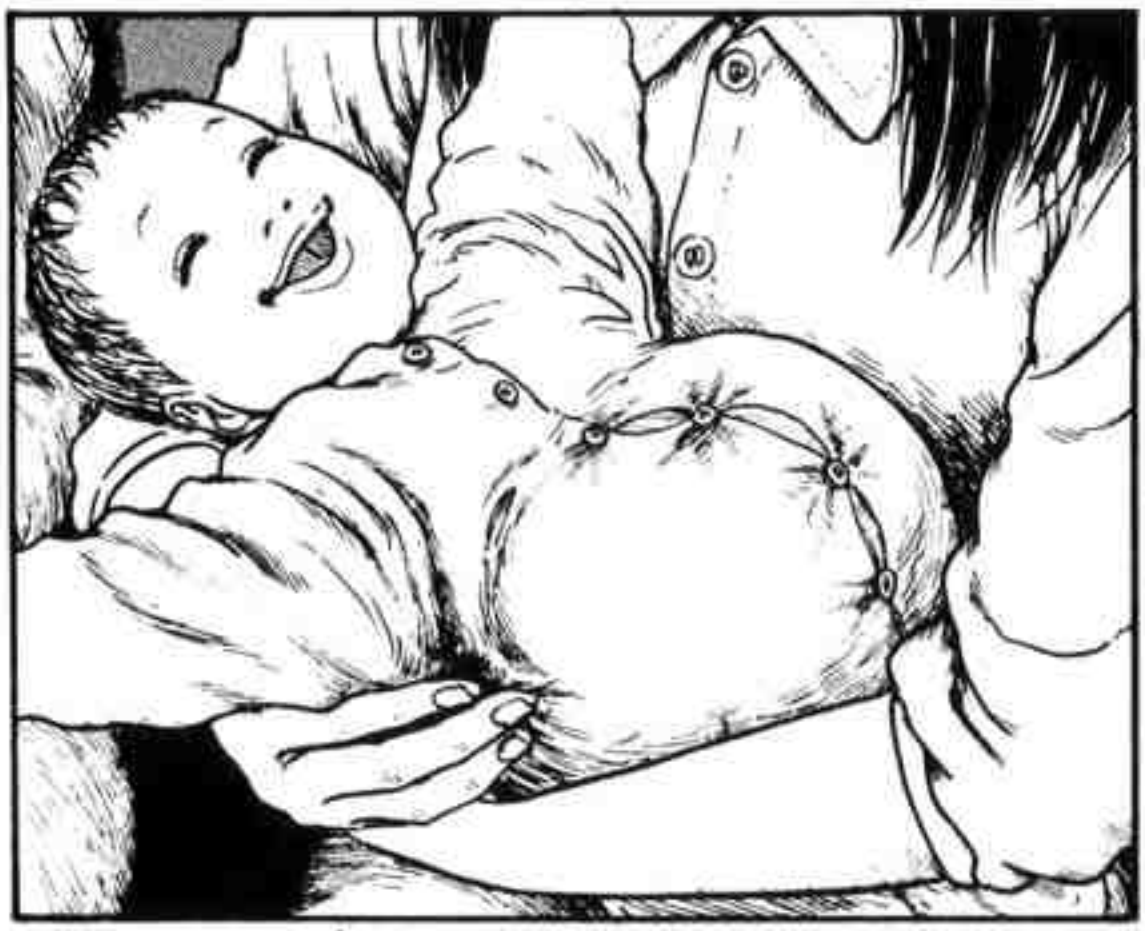
Ohh, HOW GOOD FOR YOU!

Oh! I HAVE A NAME FOR THE BABY.
IT'S MAKIO. MAKIO, SAY HI TO COUSIN KIRIE.


Goo, goo.

...
HE'S SO CUTE.

Hm?



Umm... KEIKO?
IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH MAKIO'S STOMACH?
IT'S ALL PUFFED UP.

!

...

THEY'RE ALL THE SAME.

Oh... Oh, THAT. IT'S NOTHING.
THEY'RE JUST WEARING BELLY BANDS.

...
BUT THEY LOOK SWOLLEN.

URR

WHAT?

AAWHAAAA!

AAAWHHAAAHH!

AAAWHHAAAHHH!

THAT SOUND!

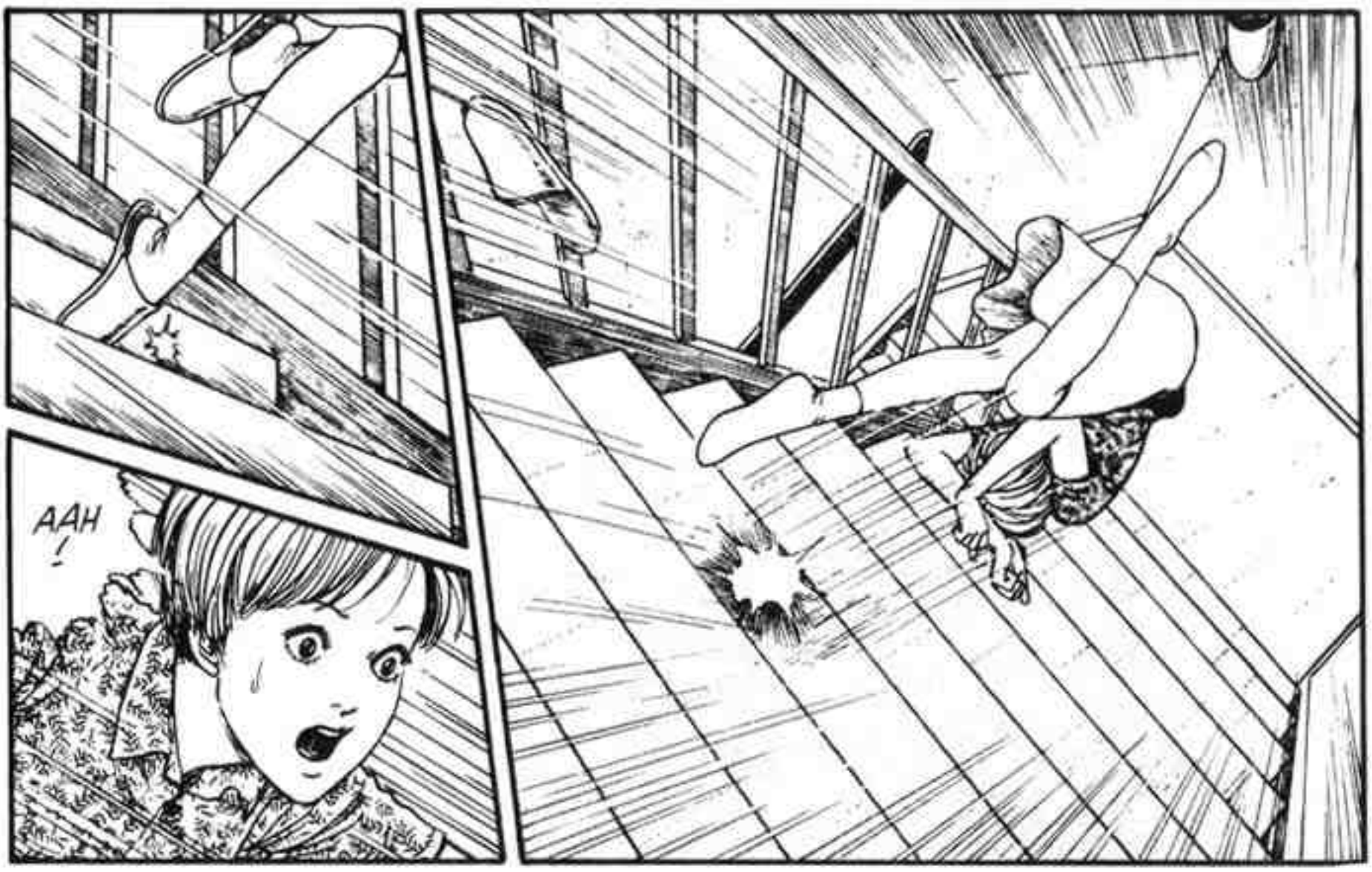
IT JUST PIERCES THROUGH MY EARS!

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAWWWAHHHH

AAAAWWAHHHH

AAAAWWAAAHHHH

AAAAWWAAAHHHH

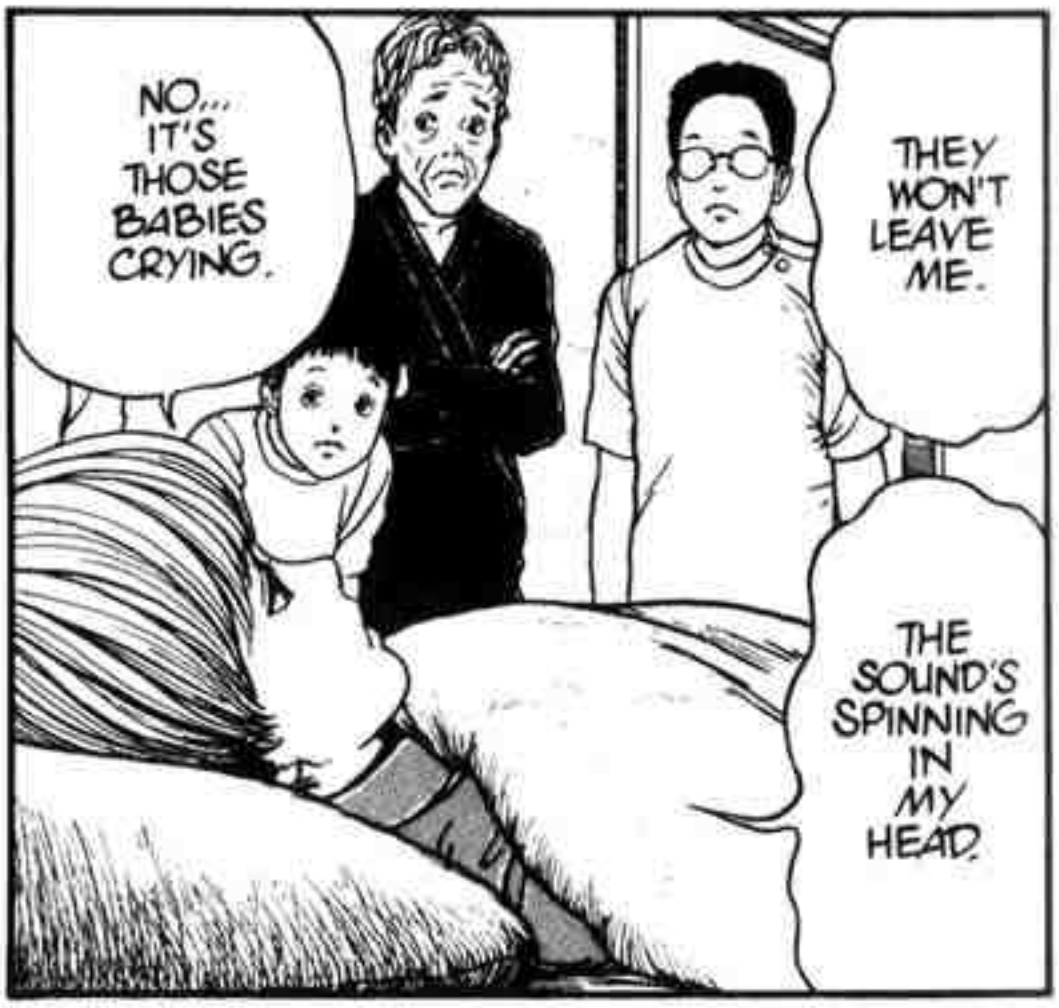

AAH!

KURÔZU HOSPITAL

205
KIRIE GOSHIMA
YOU'RE REALLY SOMETHING, YOU KNOW THAT?
TO GET INJURED ON THE DAY YOU WERE RELEASED!
AT LEAST SHE DIDN'T BREAK ANYTHING.
BUT SHE'LL HAVE TO STAY FOR ANOTHER WEEK.

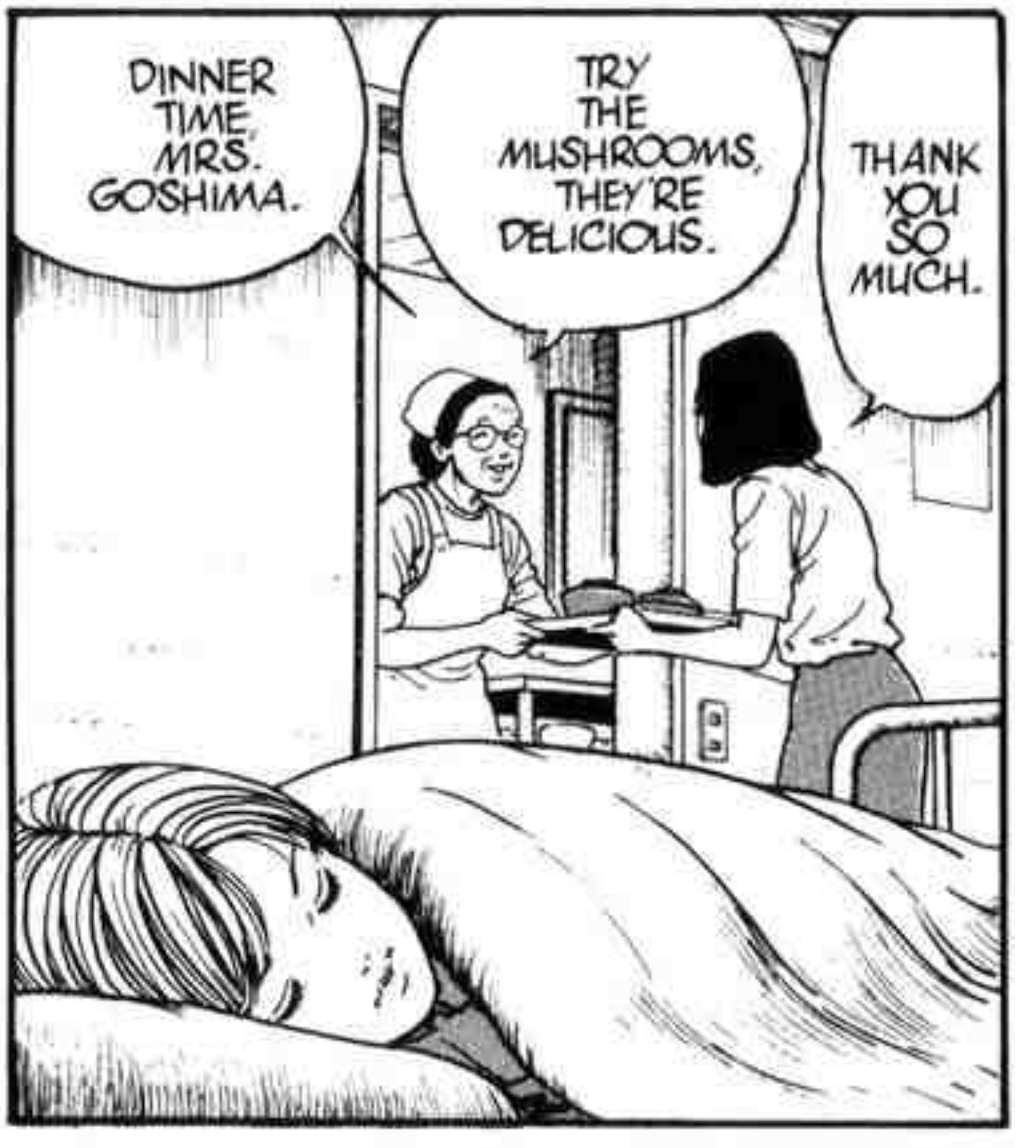
DOC-TOR... IT'S NOT MY LEG THAT HURTS... IT'S MY EARS.
THEY JUST KEEP ON RINGING.

YOUR EARS?
WAS IT FROM THE FALL?


NO... IT'S THOSE BABIES CRYING.
THEY WON'T LEAVE ME.
THE SOUND'S SPINNING IN MY HEAD.

KIRIE?
ARE YOU REALLY ALL RIGHT?

KREEK KREEK

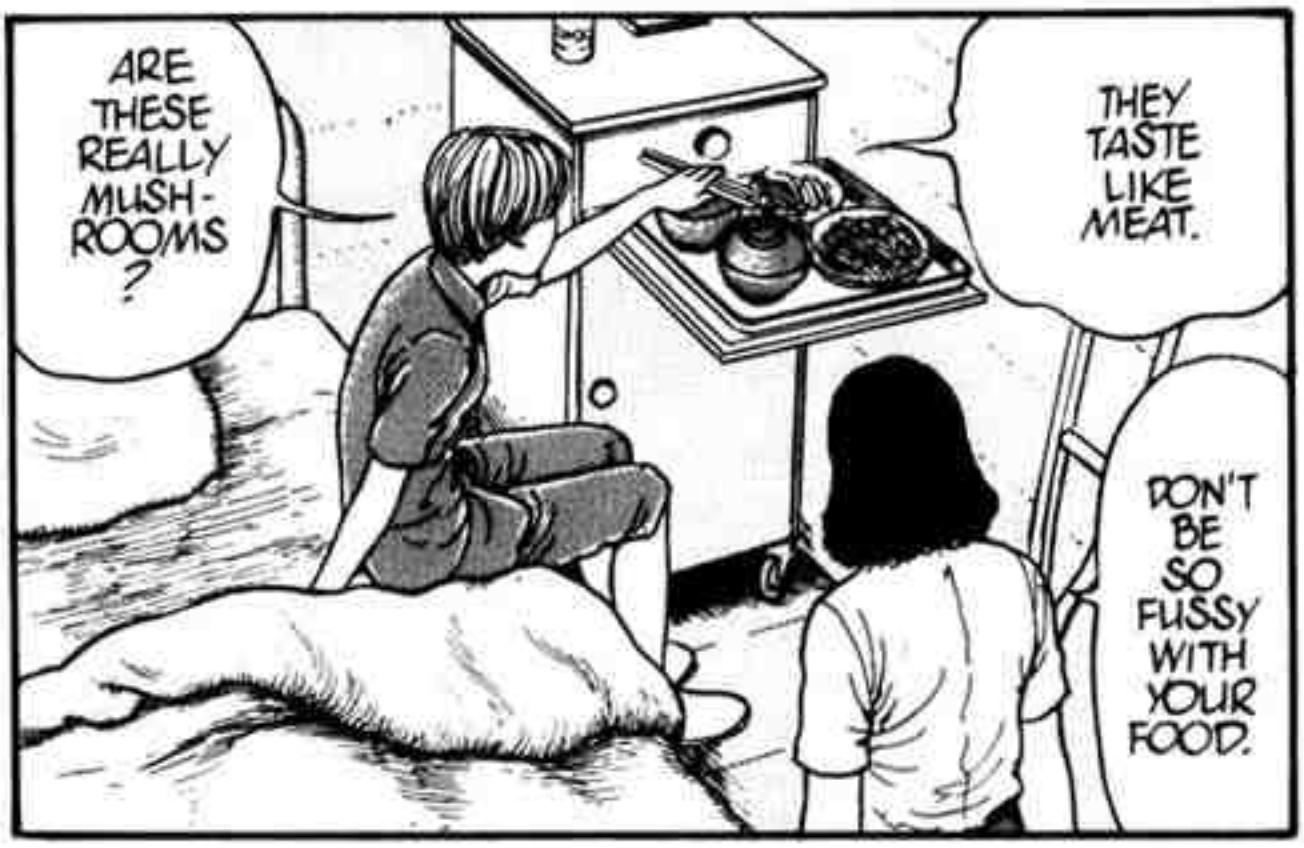

DINNER TIME, MRS. GOSHIMA.
TRY THE MUSHROOMS, THEY'RE DELICIOUS.
THANK YOU SO MUCH.

CAN YOU GET UP?
YES...

WHAT'S THIS?
MUSH-ROOMS?

MNCH MNCH

Ur...


ARE THESE REALLY MUSH-ROOMS?
THEY TASTE LIKE MEAT.
DON'T BE SO FUSSY WITH YOUR FOOD.

THE STRANGE FUNGUS BECAME A REGULAR INGREDIENT IN THE HOSPITAL MEALS.
I NEVER ATE THEM.

THANK YOU!
WHAT ARE THESE MUSHROOMS? THEY'RE SO GOOD!

...

THOSE MUSHROOMS ARE SO TASTY!
I WONDER WHAT THEY'RE CALLED.

THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE GOOD FOR YOU.
THAT'S WHAT DOCTOR KAWAMOTO SAID.

Oh, THEY DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TO EAT THEM!
I JUST CAN'T STOP!
I CAN'T GET ENOUGH! I WANT MORE!

...
I DON'T FEEL GOOD.
MY EARS ARE STILL RINGING...

Mrmr Mrmr...

NURSERY
mrmr mrmr...
mrmr mrmr...
mrmr mrmr...
It's so cold here.
I want to go back.
Yes... to go back to that warm place.
The water there was like heaven.
I want to go back to mother's womb.
The womb is the best.
MADA
Can we really go back?
YUKO KONISHI
Of course we can. Doctor Kawamoto will do it.
If he took us out, he can put us back in.

Right now, Makio is being returned.
He'll be the first.

I see. I hope my turn will come soon.
PPP
Uh-oh... I'm getting so excited, my belly's rising...

DING

YUKO KONISHI

Hee hee... How embarrassing.

I must be hearing things...
I must be seeing things...
I-I...

DELIVERY ROOM
"MAKIO IS BEING RETURNED"?
GGHH
OH, GOD!
DELIVERY ROOM
GGHAA
WHAT?
THAT'S KEIKO'S VOICE!
KEIKO!
GUP
GUP
DOCTOR!
SLREE
CHK CHK
CHK

WHAT...

WHAT IS THIS?

CLICK

!

CLID

SCREE

DOCTOR KAWA-MOTO!

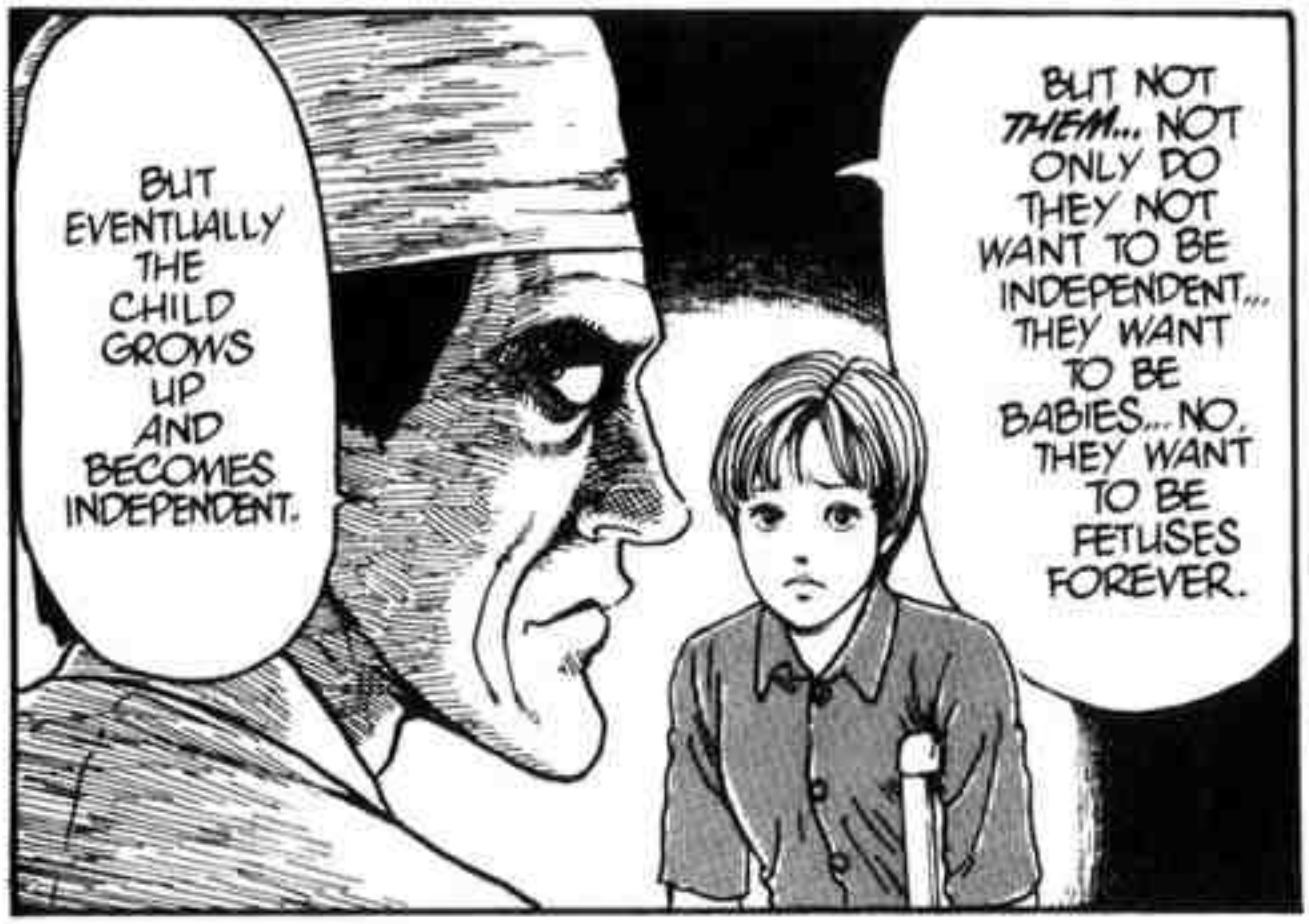
I JUST HEARD KEIKO'S VOICE!
IS SHE HERE?

WHERE IS MAKIO?!

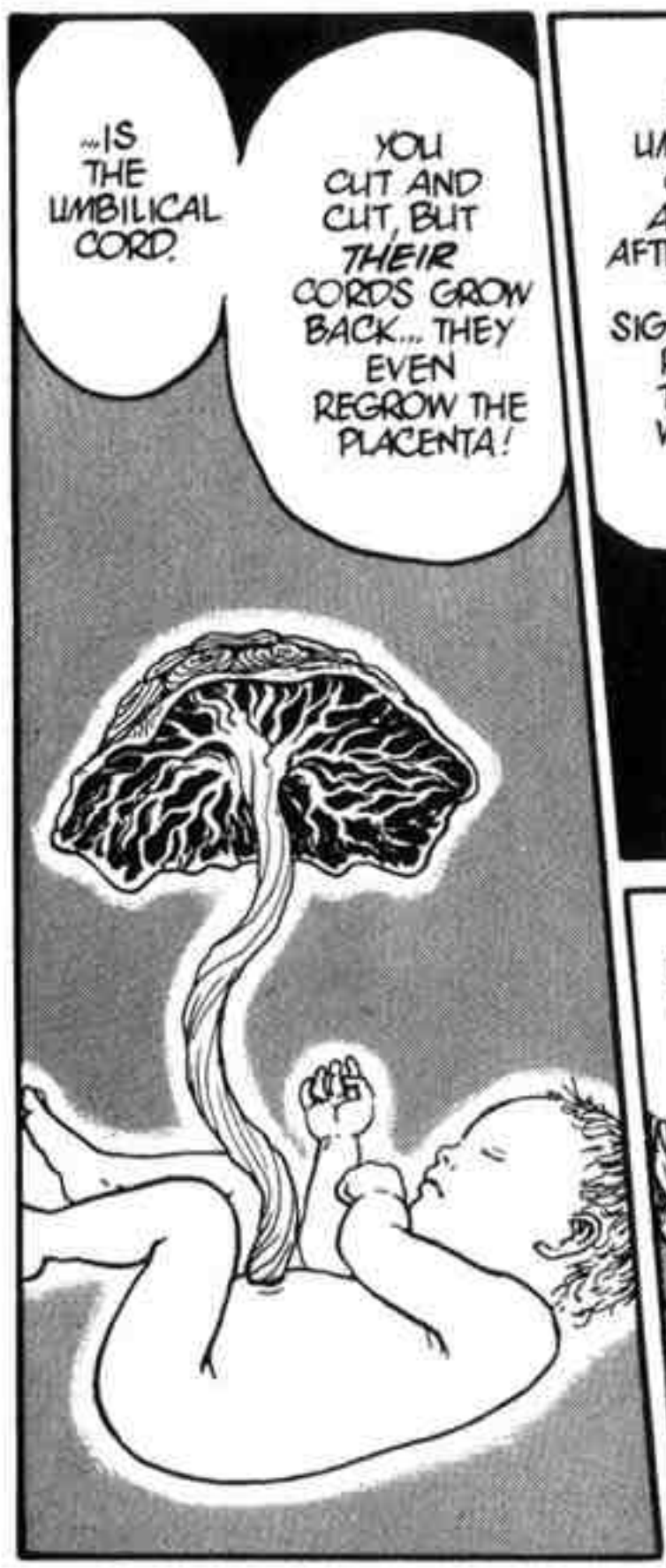
...
"CUTE-NESS" IS COMMON TO ALL BABY MAMMALS.

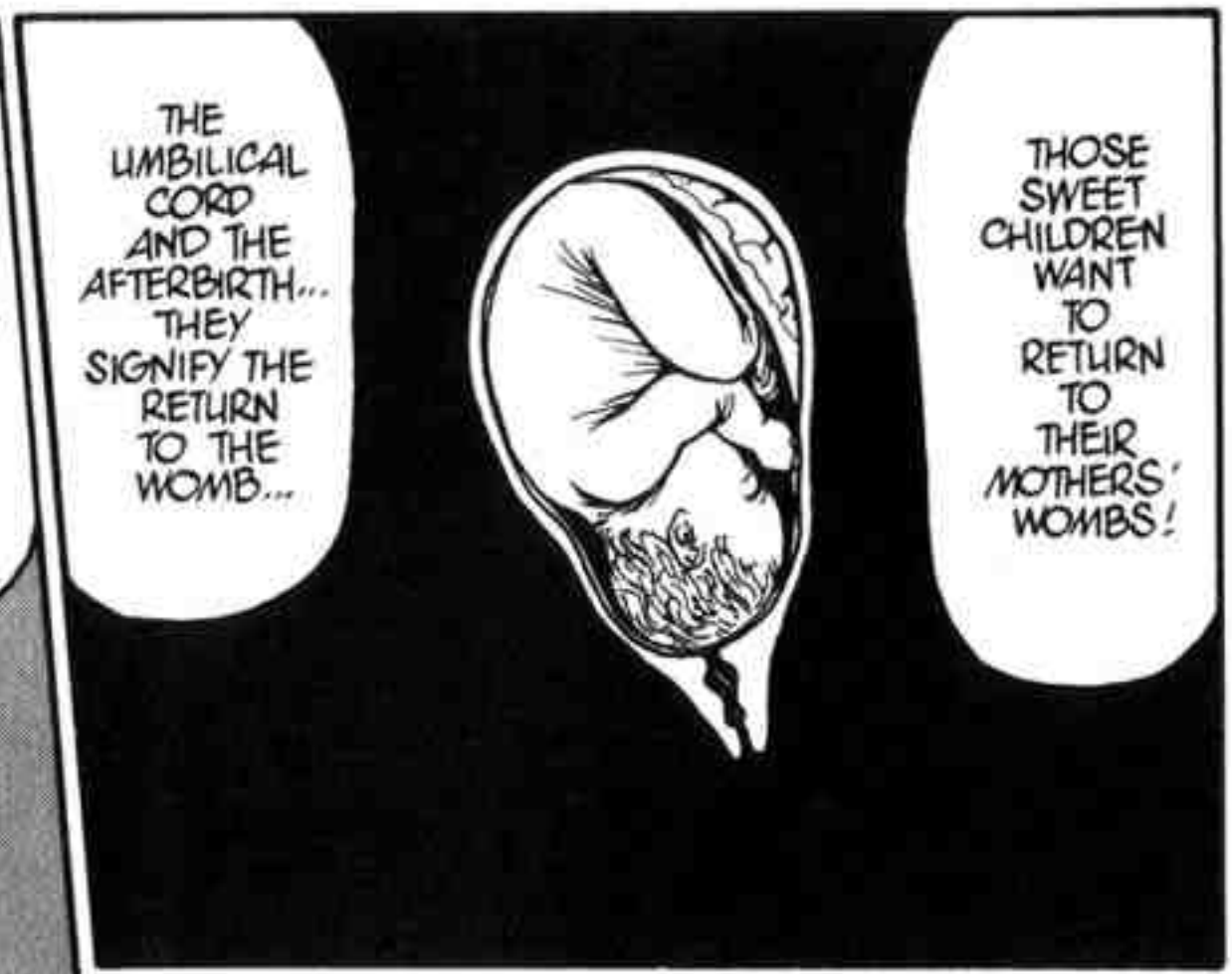
?

IT'S A WEAPON USED BY INFANT CHILDREN.
THEY USE IT TO INFLUENCE ADULTS... TO GET ATTENTION...
BECAUSE THEY NEED US TO SURVIVE.


BUT EVENTUALLY THE CHILD GROWS UP AND BECOMES INDEPENDENT.
BUT NOT *THEM*... NOT ONLY DO THEY NOT WANT TO BE INDEPENDENT... THEY WANT TO BE BABIES... NO, THEY WANT TO BE FETUSES FOREVER.

THE PROOF OF THAT...


...IS THE UMBILICAL CORD.
YOU CUT AND CUT, BUT *THEIR* CORDS GROW BACK... THEY EVEN REGROW THE PLACENTA!


THE UMBILICAL CORD AND THE AFTERBIRTH... THEY SIGNIFY THE RETURN TO THE WOMB...
THOSE SWEET CHILDREN WANT TO RETURN TO THEIR MOTHERS' WOMBS!

DOC-TOR...
SO THESE MUSH-ROOMS...

THAT'S RIGHT.
THEY'RE NOT MUSH-ROOMS.

AFTER WE DELIVERED THE BABIES, THESE ORGANS SPROUTED ON THEIR OWN.
THE PLACENTAS TOOK ROOT WHERE WE DROPPED THEM. EVERY BIT OF TISSUE STARTED TO GROW.
AND NOW...
AND NOW, JUST LOOK AT THEM!
I HAD TO TASTE ONE.
AS A DOCTOR, YOU SEE.
AND IT WAS DELICIOUS! IT REVITALIZED ME!
IT'S NATURAL WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT. ALL LIFE SPRINGS FROM THE PLACENTA AND UMBILICAL CORD.
IF IT WAS FED TO THE SICK, WOULDN'T THEY GET BETTER?
D-DOCTOR!

D-DOCTOR?
IS KEIKO IN THERE?
YES... THE MOTHER AND CHILD ARE IN THAT ROOM.
WHAT... WHAT IN THE WORLD DID YOU DO TO THEM?
WHAT WAS THAT SCREAMING?
DON'T WORRY.
THE OPERATION WAS SUCCESSFUL.
OPERATION?!
LET ME THROUGH!
AHH!
CHAK

HHH
HHH

HHH
HHH

KEIKO...

THE OPERATION WAS SUCCESSFUL.
THE CHILD HAS BEEN RETURNED TO ITS WOMB.

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE BABY INSIDE THE WOMB NOW.
ONE THING I KNOW FOR CERTAIN IS THAT SHE WILL ONCE AGAIN HAVE TO PROVIDE IT WITH NUTRITION ...

DOCTOR... DOCTOR KAWAMOTO...
BLOOD... I NEED BLOOD...

TUG

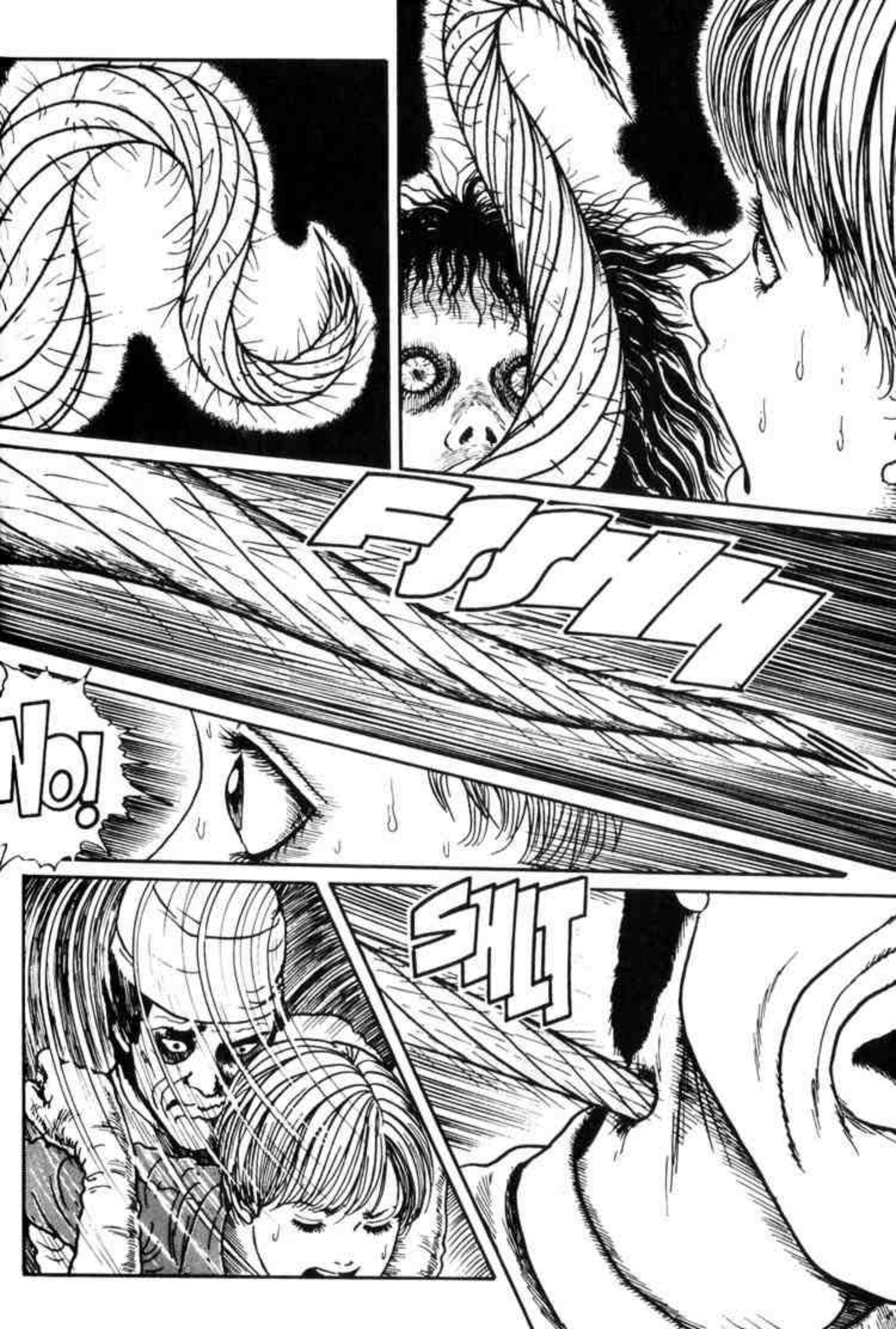
WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
LET ME GO!

LET ME GO!
NO!

HURRY... GIVE ME...

HERE... HERE!

KEIKO!


FUCK!!
No!
SHIT

KKHHAA...

uff...
hff...

KYAAA!

MORE... I NEED MORE BLOOD!

Ohh, LOOK AT ALL THESE MUSH-ROOMS!
THIS MUST BE WHERE THEY COME FROM!

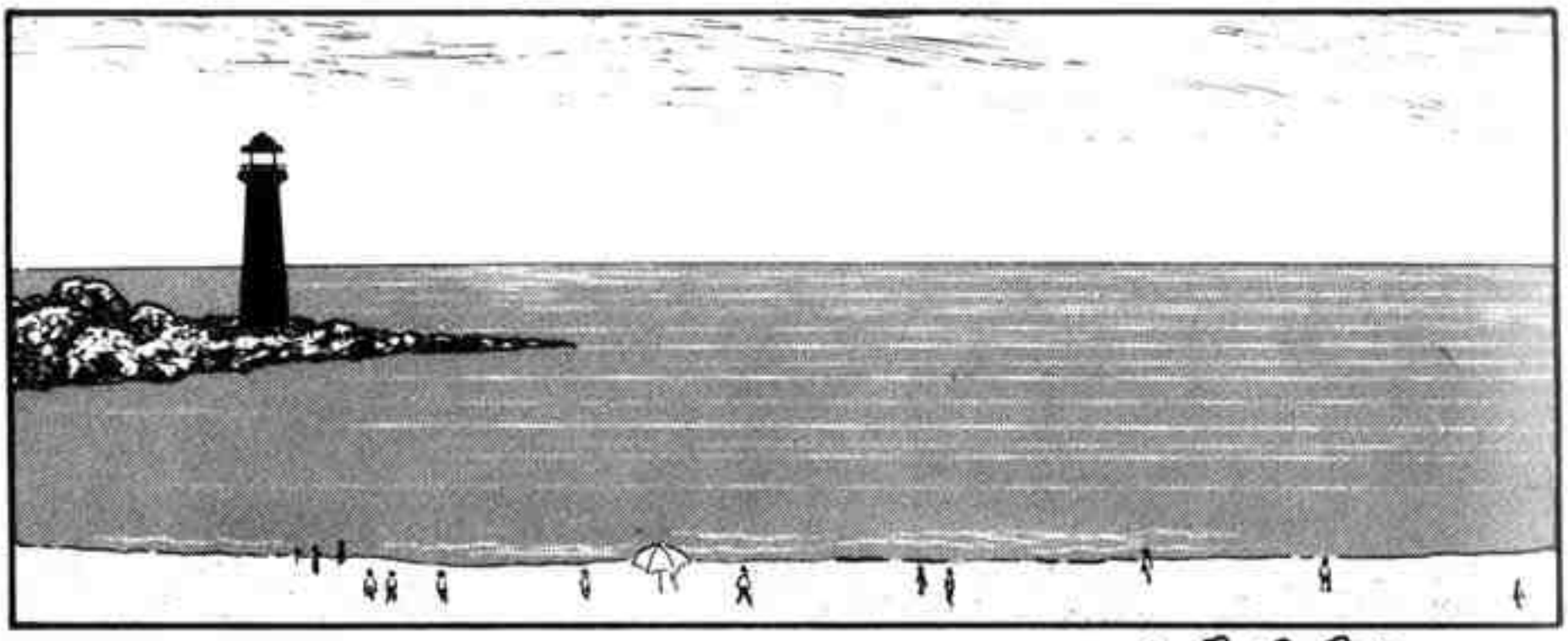
PLEASE HELP ME!
LOOK HOW MANY THERE ARE!
LET'S EAT!

GUU

AAAHHH
SHIT

I ESCAPED FROM THE HOSPITAL.
KUROZU HOSPITAL
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HAPPENED THERE. I WASN'T ABOUT TO GO BACK TO FIND OUT.

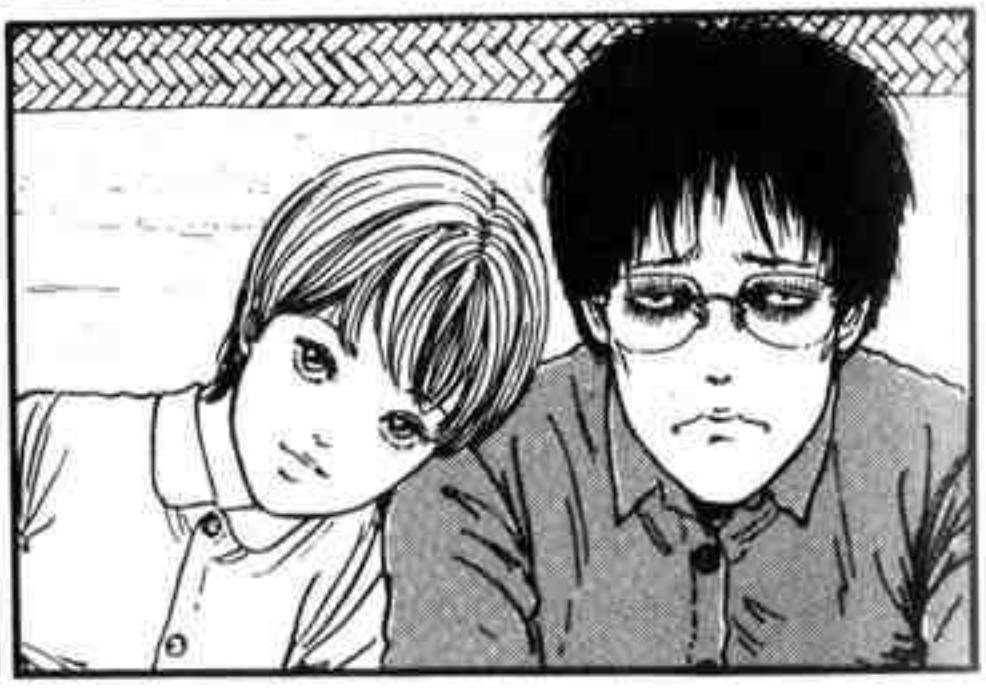
CHAPTER
12
THE
STORM

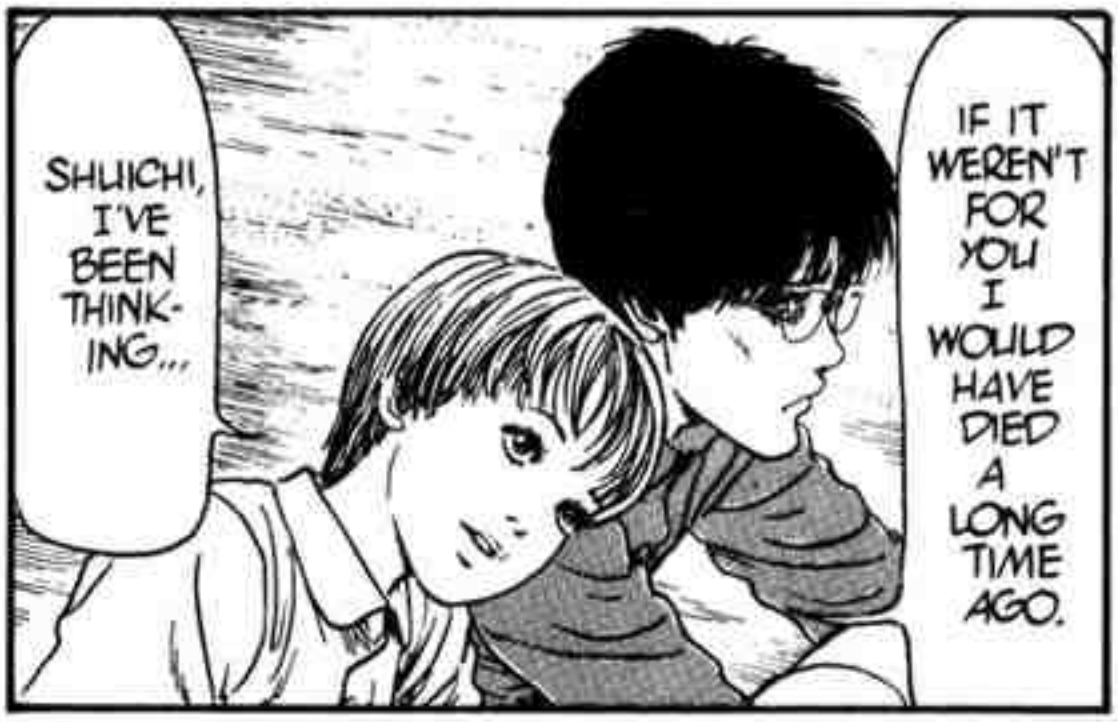


SHAAAAAAAA

SHAAAAAAAAAAA

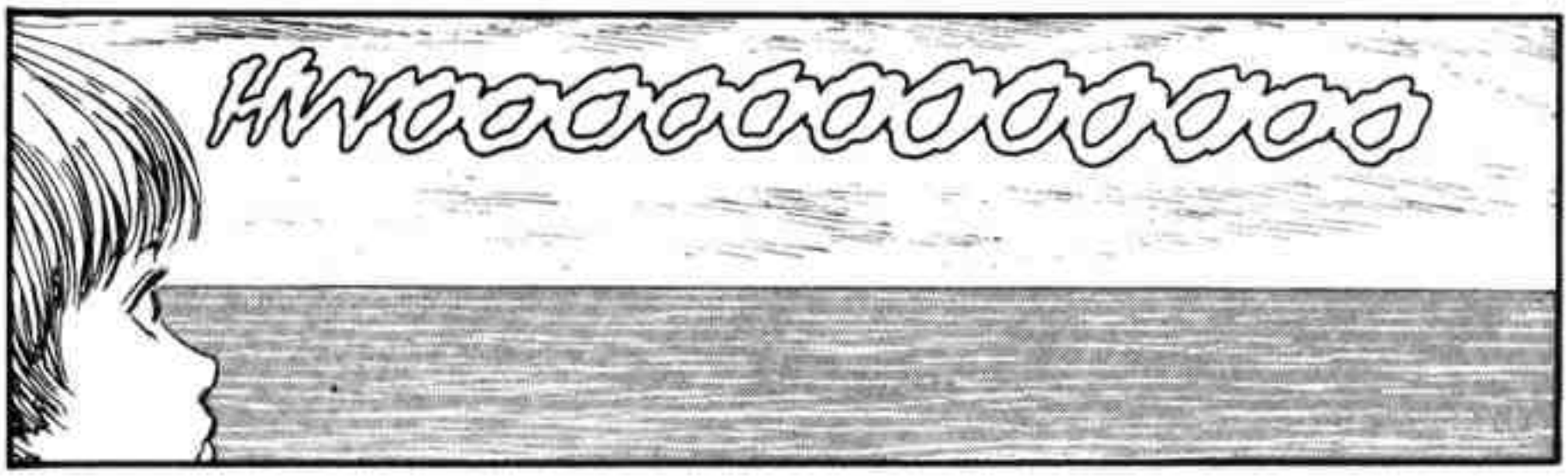
SHAAAAAAAAAA




SHUICHI, I'VE BEEN THINK-ING...
IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU I WOULD HAVE DIED A LONG TIME AGO.

SHAAA

HWOOO
HWOOOOOOOO
SHAA


HWOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

HWOOOOOO
WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

...
HWOOOO

IT'S THE WIND!
IT MEANS A STORM'S COMING!

TYPHOON SEASON!
IT'S FINALLY HERE... IT'S FINALLY HERE!

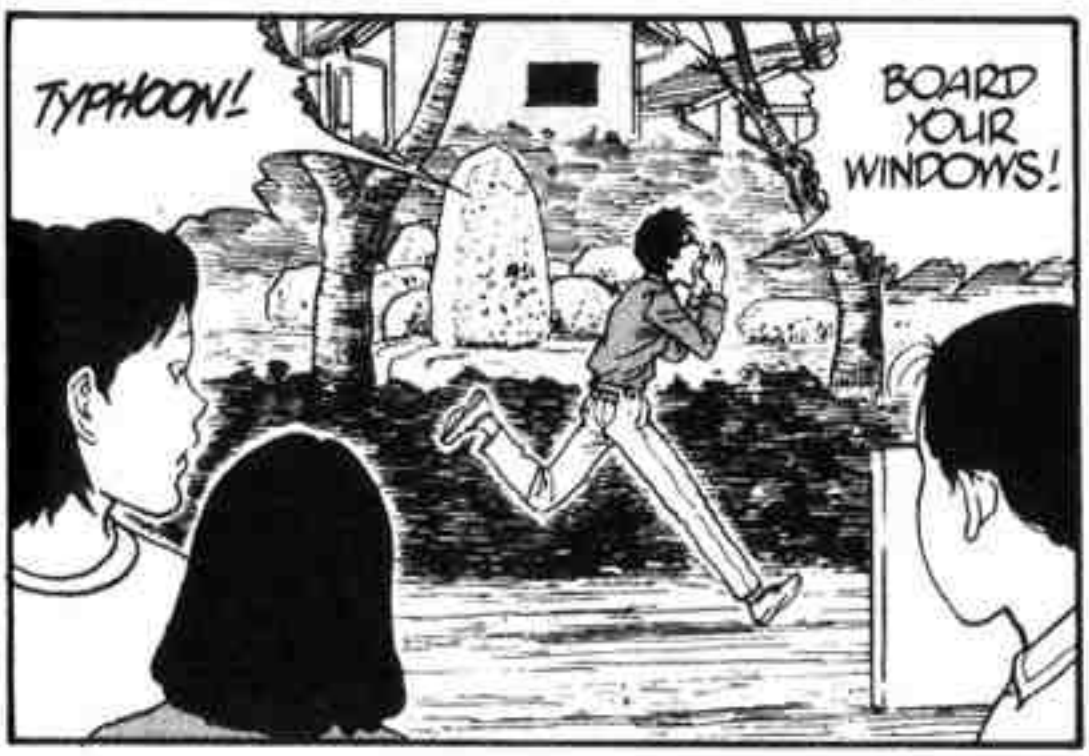
TYPHOON! TYPHOON!
WHAT?

...

HWOOOOOO

TYPHOON!
A TYPHOON'S COMING!

TPTPTPTP
A TYPHOON'S COMING!


TYPHOON!
BOARD YOUR WINDOWS!

TYPHOON!
WHAT A FREAK!

WE'VE SEEN ABNORMALLY CALM WEATHER SO FAR THIS SUMMER...
BUT GET OUT YOUR SHUTTERS AND RAINCOATS.
HURRICANE NO. 1 IS MAKING ITS WAY NORTH AND SHOULD PASS THROUGH KYŪSHŪ, SHIKOKU AND SOUTHERN KANSAI OVER THE WEEKEND.

THIS HURRICANE IS SAID TO HAVE A VERY STRANGE QUALITY.
THE "EYE" OF THE STORM IS VISIBLE DUE TO ITS UNUSUALLY SMALL DIAMETER.
THE JAPAN WEATHER ASSOCIATION HAS ISSUED A HURRICANE WARNING FOR KURŌZU-CHO...

HEY, KIRIE, I WONDER WHAT A HURRICANE'S EYE LOOKS LIKE?
DON'T BE SILLY, A HURRICANE DOESN'T REALLY HAVE AN "EYE."

FWOOOOOOO

SHWWWOOOOOOOO

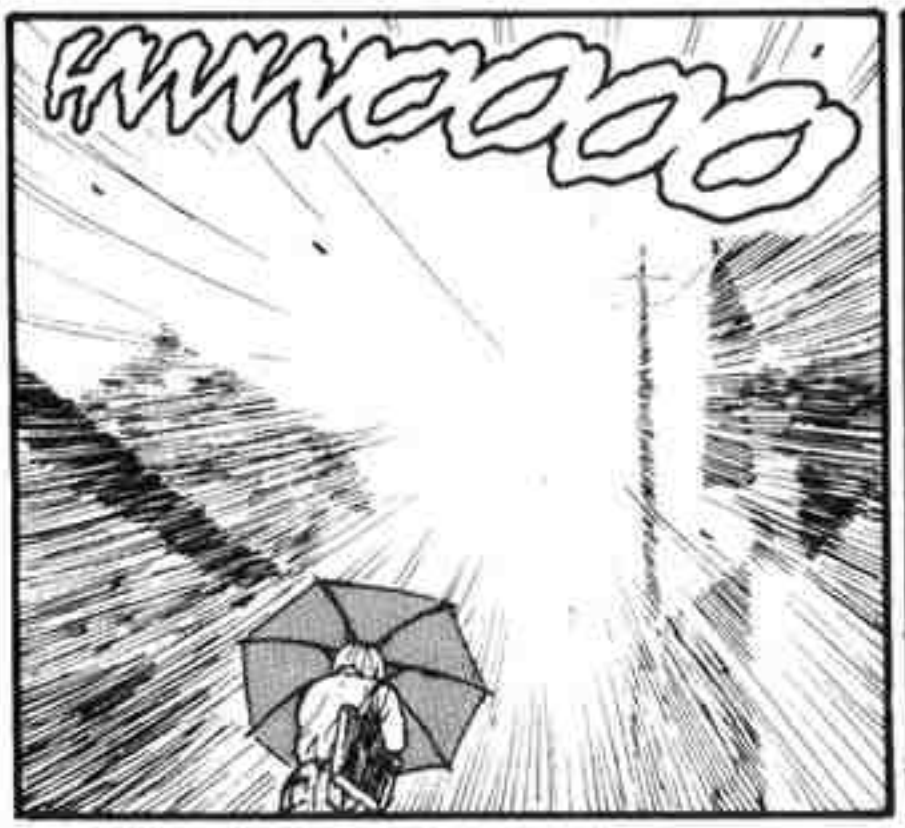
TUK
TUK

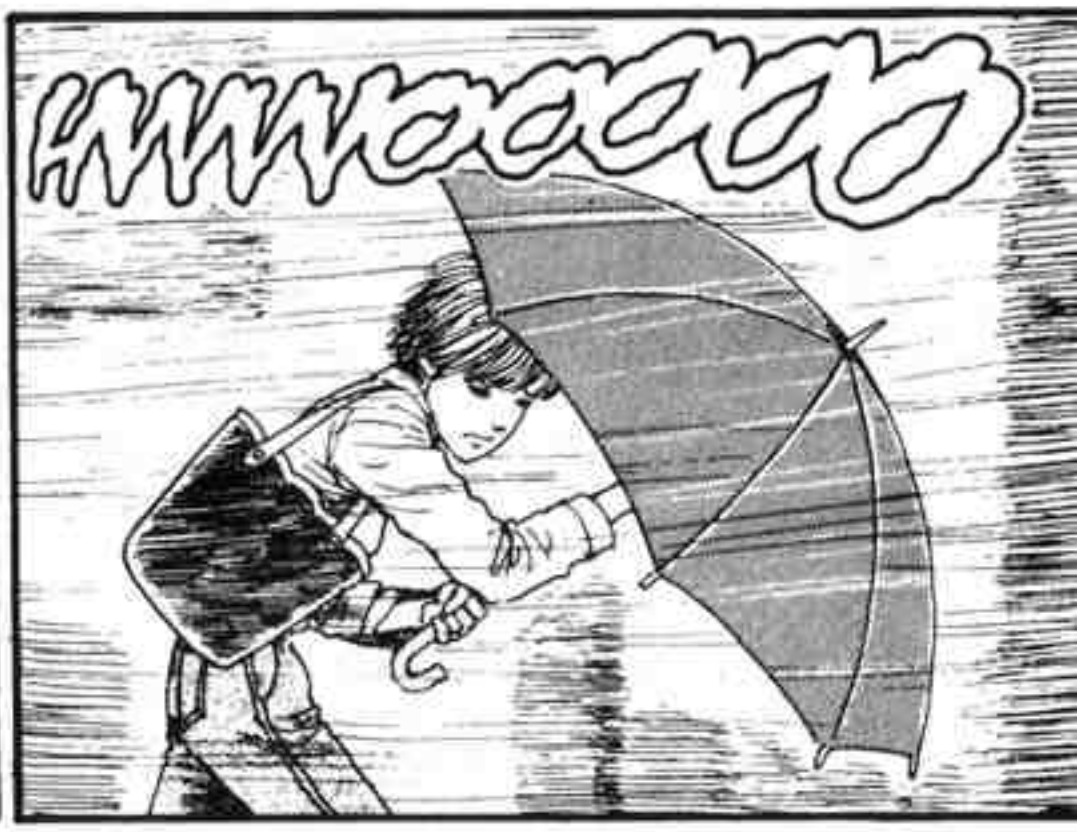
YOU SHOULD COME DOWN NOW...IT'S GETTING DANGEROUS.
YEAH.

FWWOOOOOOOO

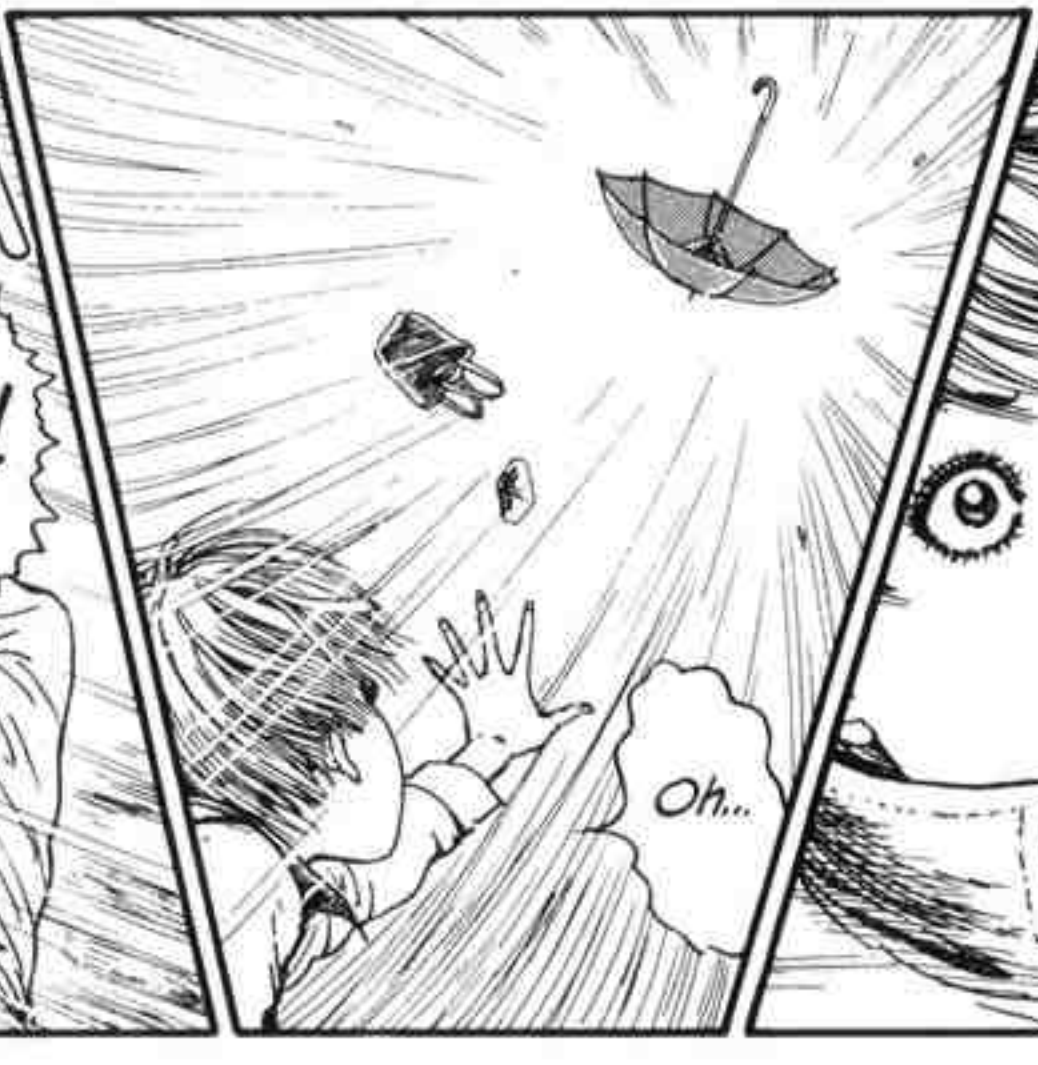
KIRIE!! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS TO GO OUT!
THE HURRICANE'S COMING!

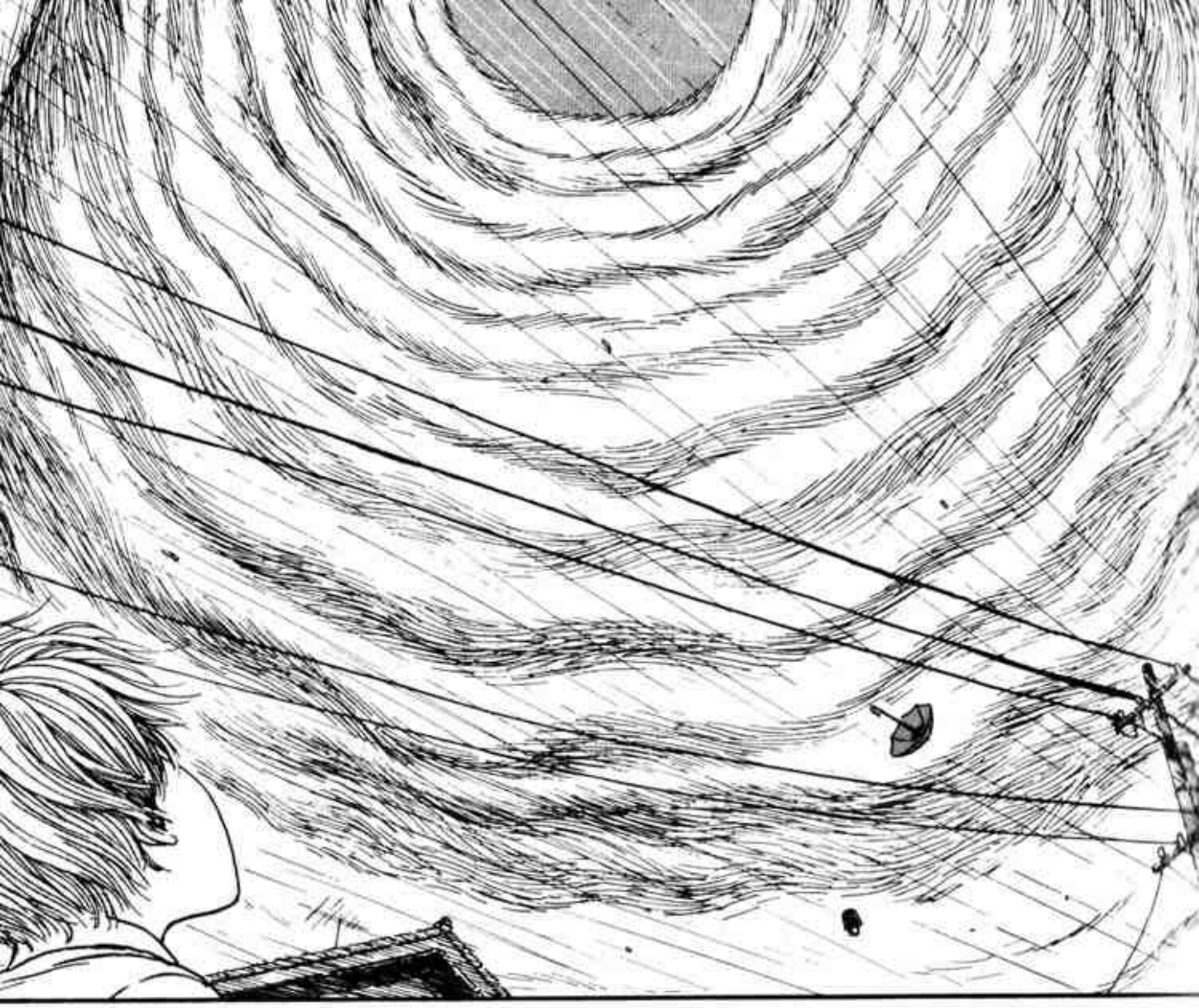
I'LL BE ALL RIGHT, MOM.
I JUST HAVE TO DELIVER SHUICHI'S LUNCH.


HHWaaaaa


HHWaaaaa

FUUM
EEK!


Oh...



IS THAT...
...THE EYE OF THE STORM?

THAT NIGHT...

HYUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU

HYUUUUUUUU

HYUUUUUUUUUUUUUU

HYUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU

KIRIE

KIRIE

KIRIE

KIRIE

KIRIE

KIRIE

KIRIE

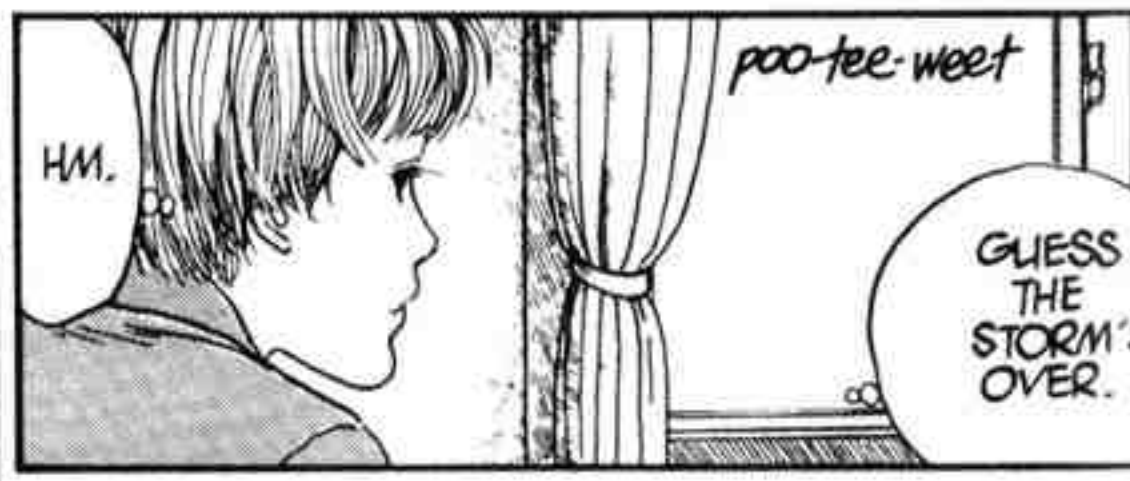
HWG

poo-tee-weet
poo-tee-weet

poo-tee-weet

poo-tee-weet
MMNN

YAWWN

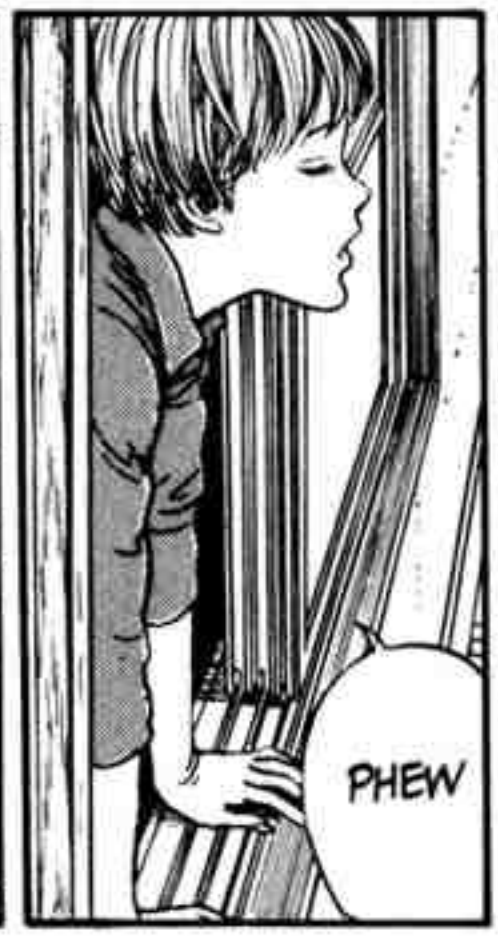

HM.
poo-tee-weet
GUESS THE STORM'S OVER.

I WONDER WHAT THAT SOUND WAS LAST NIGHT?
IT SOUNDED LIKE THE WIND WAS HOWLING MY NAME...

LIKE THE HURRICANE WAS CALLING ME.
I MUST'VE BEEN HEARING THINGS.

SHH
WELL, IT'S GONE ANYWAY.

YAWN


PHEW

...
HEY, IT'S STILL CLOUDY.

...

...

...

B-BUT... HOW?!
Whoaaaddd
SWOOB
THIS IS NOW THE SECOND DAY THAT HURRICANE NO. 1 HAS REMAINED STATIONARY OVER KURÔZU-CHO, WHERE IT STRUCK THE COAST YESTERDAY AFTERNOON.
METEOROLOGISTS HAVE NO EXPLANATION FOR THIS PHENOMENON. WE BRING YOU NOW TO...
Whaaaddd
WHERE'S KIRIE?
I TRIED TO STOP HER, BUT SHE WENT TO BRING SHUICHI HIS DINNER.
YOU KNOW, LAST NIGHT...
I HEARD SOMEONE SAYING "KIRIE, KIRIE..." IT SOUNDED LIKE THEY WERE ON THE ROOF.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?

KIRIE!
?!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING JUST WALKING AROUND?
SHUICHI ?

I BROUGHT YOUR DINNER.
YOU IDIOT!

CAN'T YOU SEE THE EYE OF THE STORM? THE CENTER OF THOSE SWIRLING CLOUDS?
THAT GIANT SPIRAL EYE...

...IS WATCHING YOU!

WHAT?!
THAT'S RIDICU-LOUS.
DIDN'T YOU HEAR THE WIND LAST NIGHT?
THE VOICE OF THE STORM WAS CALLING YOUR NAME!
WHAT ?!
SOUNDS LIKE IT'S TAKEN QUITE A FANCY TO YOU.
I THINK I MAY HAVE A RIVAL.
TH-THAT CAN'T BE...
YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING. ALL I'M SAYING IS THAT YOU'RE IN DANGER AS LONG AS YOU'RE OUT IN THE OPEN UNDER THAT STORM.

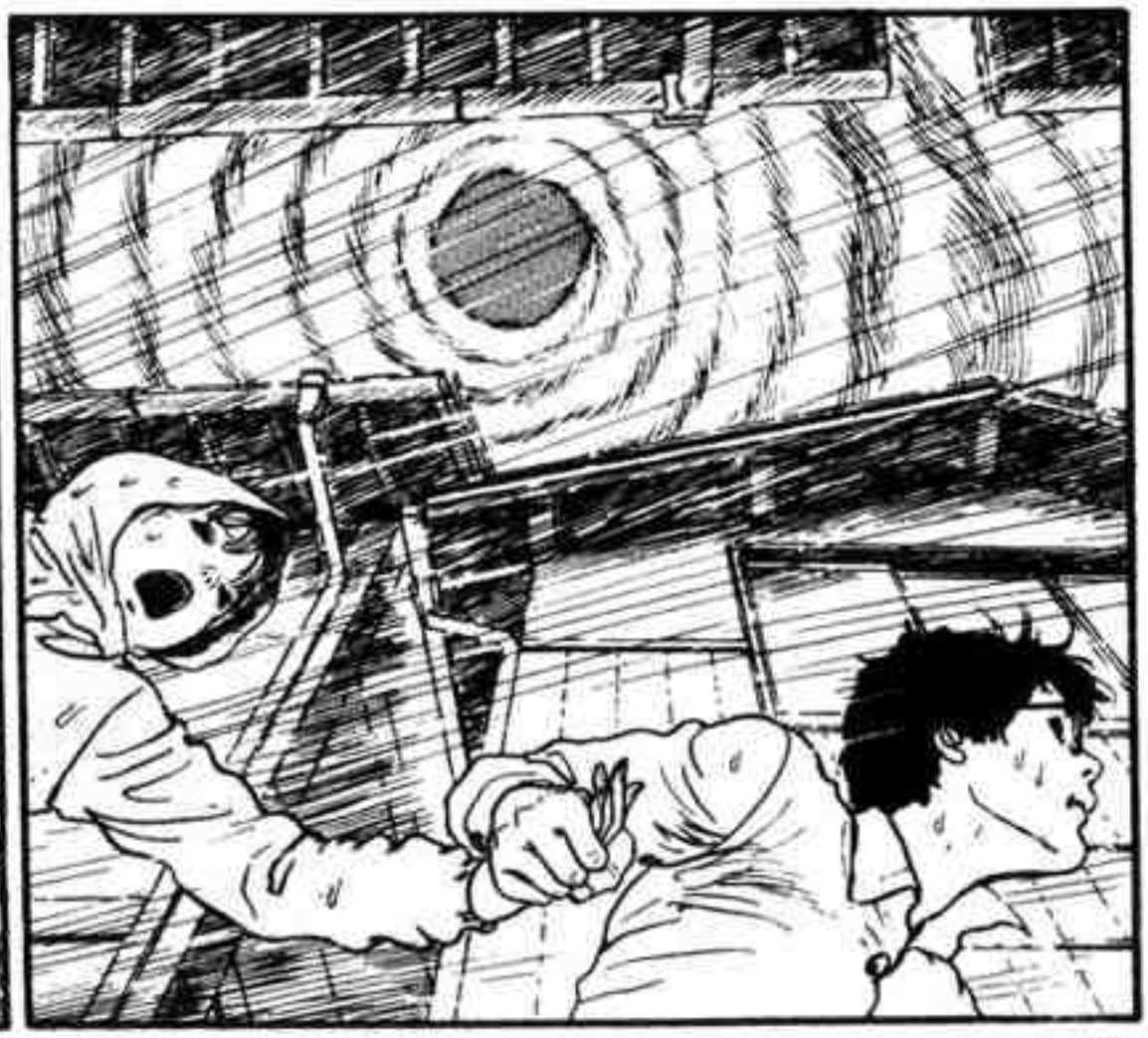
COME ON!
TPTPT!
SHA
OOOOO
KURI
KURIK
SHEEOOOOO

SHEEEEOW
AIEEEE!

TASHOM
CRNCH

HURRY!

THIS WAY!



SHWAA
KLAKLATTA
KLAKLAKLAKLAK
AAAH!
SHWAA
RMB RMB RMB RMB
STRUNGH
KKKKKKKK

SPP
OOMM

KIRIE?!

I'M STUCK!
D-DAMN IT!

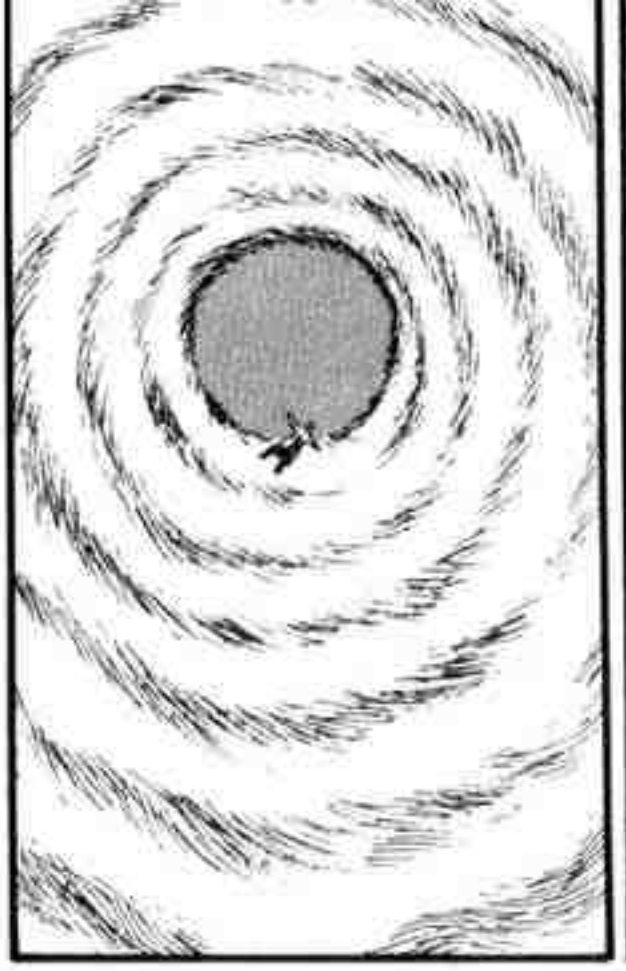
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? DO YOU NEED ANY HELP?

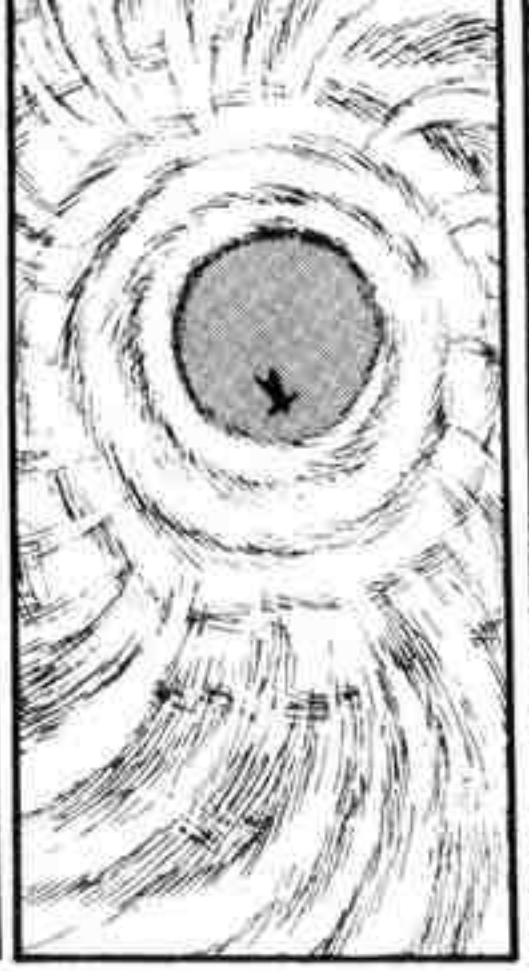
P-
PLEASE!

SH
WAA

AHH?

EEEEAA

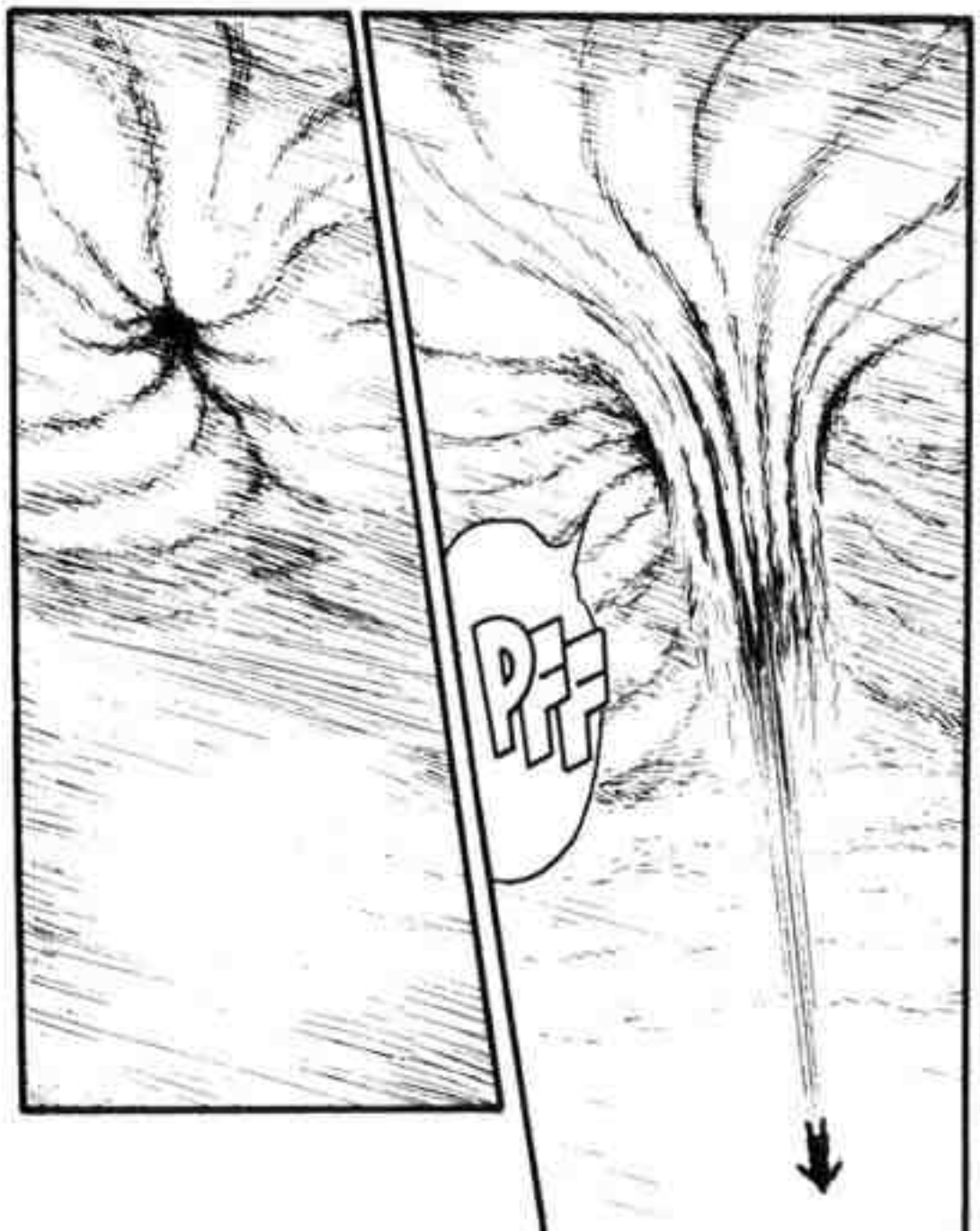




SLURP

SWALLOWED BY THE EYE...
B-BUT WHY?

IT MISTOOK HER FOR YOU!
BECAUSE YOU TWO LOOKED ALIKE!


PFF

WHAT?

LOOK OUT!

WHA-
AA
AA

AIEEE!

I CAN'T TAKE THIS ANY-MORE.
IT REALIZED ITS MISTAKE.

COME ON!
WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

HHHOOOOOO

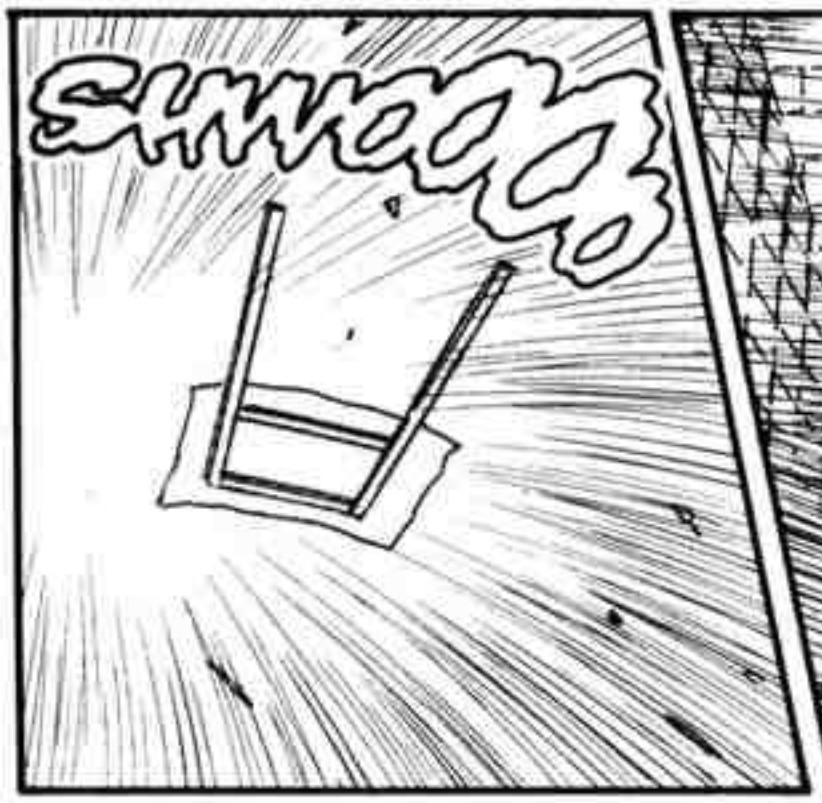
SHHOOOOO

KRRRE...
KRRRE...

KRUMM

BLHBAM!

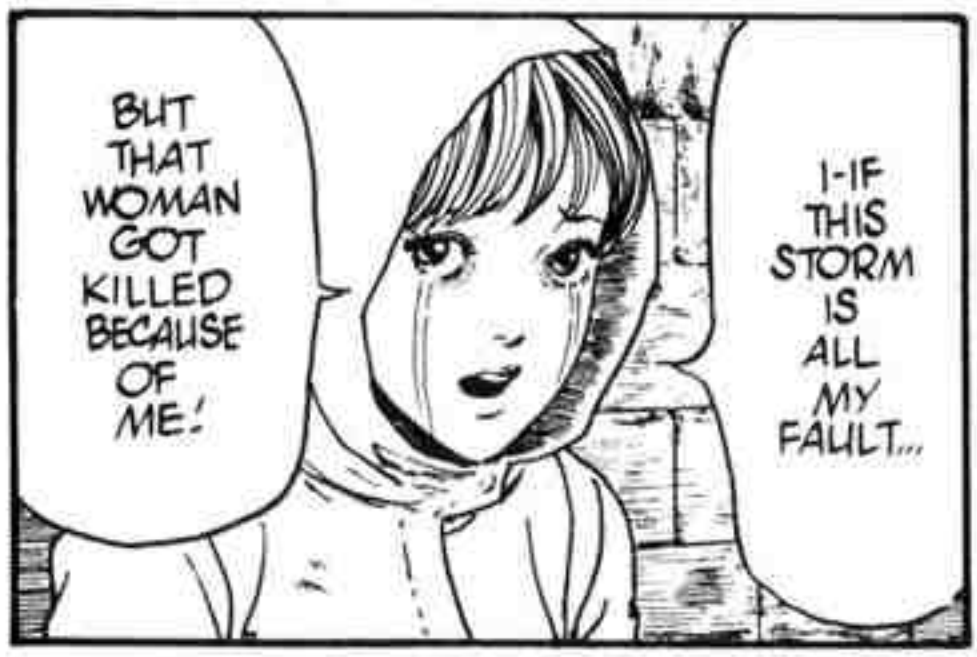
KIRIE
KIRIE


SHWOOB

KLANG

IT'S TOO MUCH...

KIRIE
IT'S GOING CRAZY TRYING TO FIND YOU.
KIRIE
BUT IT CAN'T SEE US BENEATH THIS OVERPASS.


BUT THAT WOMAN GOT KILLED BECAUSE OF ME!
I-IF THIS STORM IS ALL MY FAULT...

IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE SO HYP-NOTIC.
THE TYPHOON'S MADLY IN LOVE.

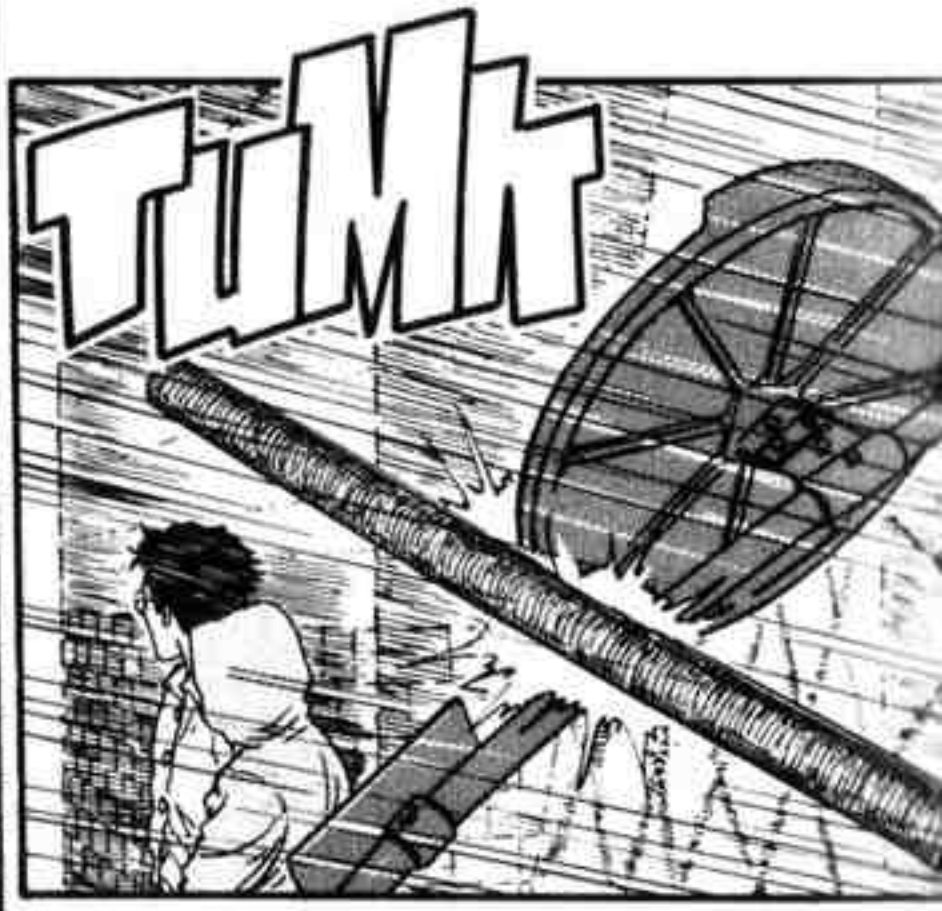
SO WHAT DO WE DO NOW? IS THIS HURRICANE JUST GOING TO STAY HERE?
WHY DON'T YOU ASK IT YOUR-SELF?

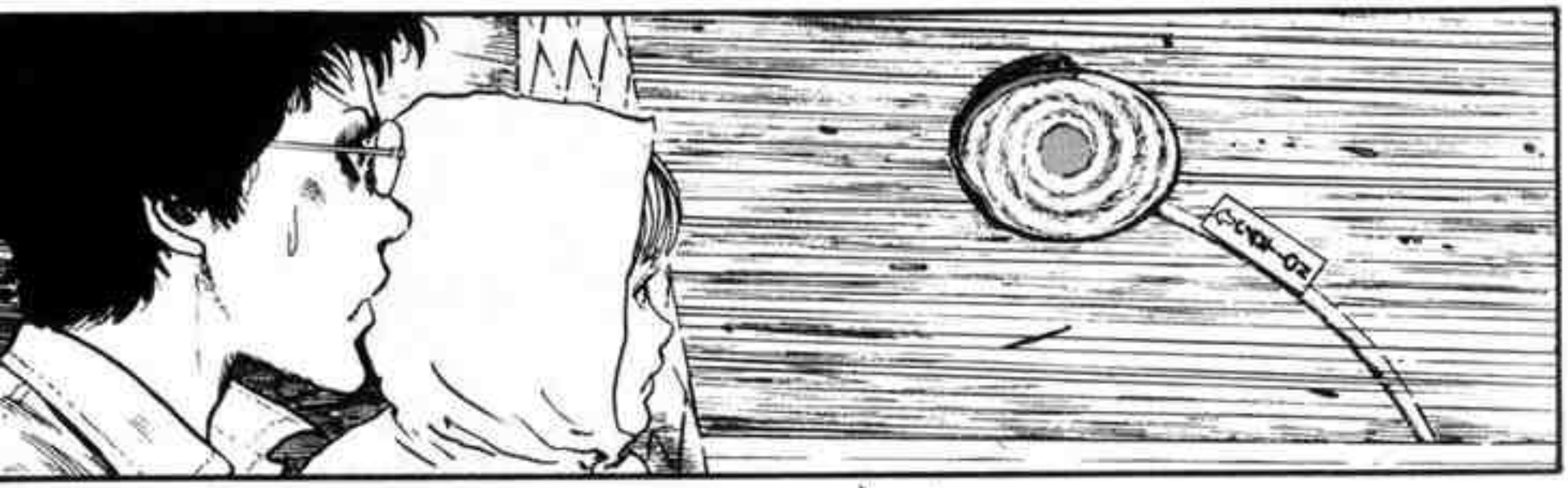
IF THIS STORM CONTIN-UES...
WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THIS TOWN?

HEY!

IT'S TRYING TO PEEK INSIDE!
GET BACK!

KIRIE
KIRIE


TUMH



NO!!

IT FOUND US!
THE MIRROR!

SHWOO

HHHHEEEGG
GET DOWN!

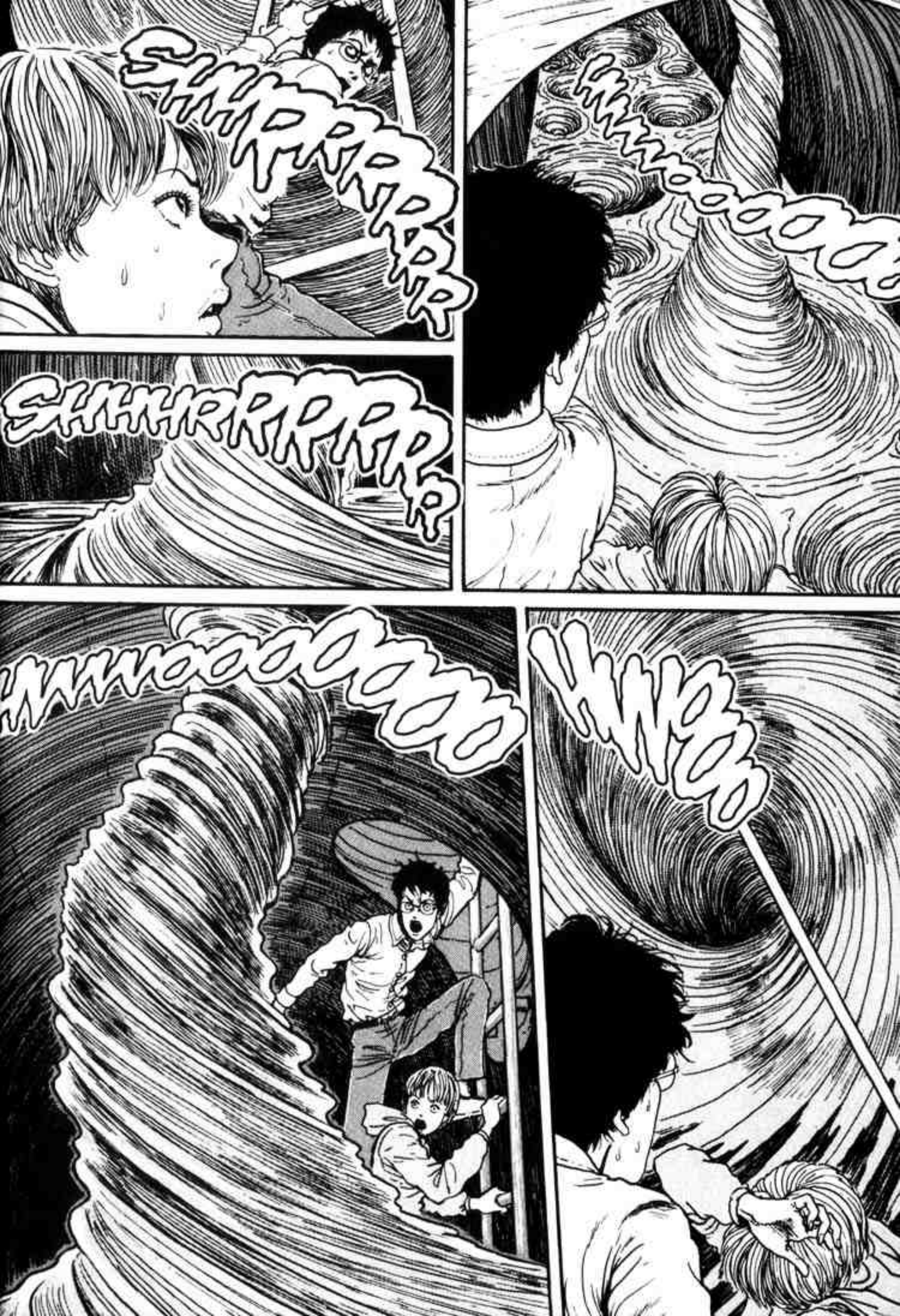
TONK

HHHHEEEGG

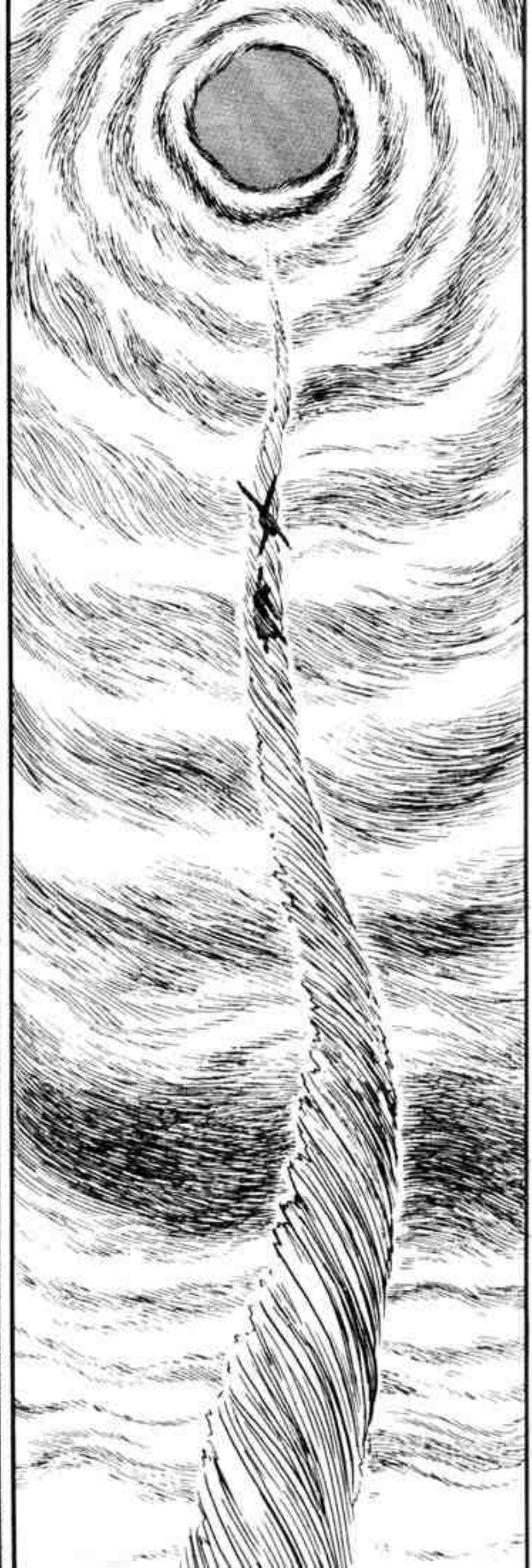
THAT'S IT! THE MANHOLE!
DOWN INTO THE STORM DRAIN!

HURRY!

AGGH!
DOWN!
CLIMB FASTER!
PLASH


SHHRRRRRR
SHHHRRRRRRR
HHHOOOOOO
HHHOOOOO

SHAW



HMMM

SOMETIME LATER THEY PULLED US OUT OF DRAGONFLY POND.

KIRIE, WAKE UP!

SHUICHI!

LIKE THE SMOKE FROM THE CREMATORIUM BEFORE IT, THE HURRICANE WAS DRAWN INTO THE LAKE.

THE LAKE WATER STIRRED FOR HOURS, SPLASHING THE GRASS, HEAVING UP CLAY...

AFTER HOVERING FOR TWO DAYS OVER KURÔZU-CHO...

HURRICANE NO. 1 HAS SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED.

THE NEXT SUMMER STORM, HURRICANE NO. 2...

HWWOOOOOO

IS NOW APPROACHING FROM THE SOUTH CHINA SEA...

SHHHA

TO BE CONTINUED...

AFTERWARD

RRIIINNGG

HELLO, THIS IS SPIRAL RESEARCH LABORA-

I MEAN, uh, JUNJI ITO MANGA INCORPOR-ATED.

ITO! THIS IS NAKAGUMA FROM BIG COMIC SPIRITS! I'VE GOT INCREDIBLE NEWS!

WHAT? WHAT'S GOING ON?

LISTEN! THIS IS BIG! B-I-G!

I'VE FOUND SOMEONE WHO KNOWS THE SECRET OF THE SPIRAL!

WHAT? SOMEONE WHO KNOWS THE SECRET OF THE SPIRAL? WHO IS IT?

I'M NOT REALLY SURE. ALL I KNOW IS IT'S SOME GUY WHO LIVES BY HIMSELF UP IN THE MOUNTAINS OF G___ PREFECTURE!

ITO! LET'S GO MEET HIM!

SLAM

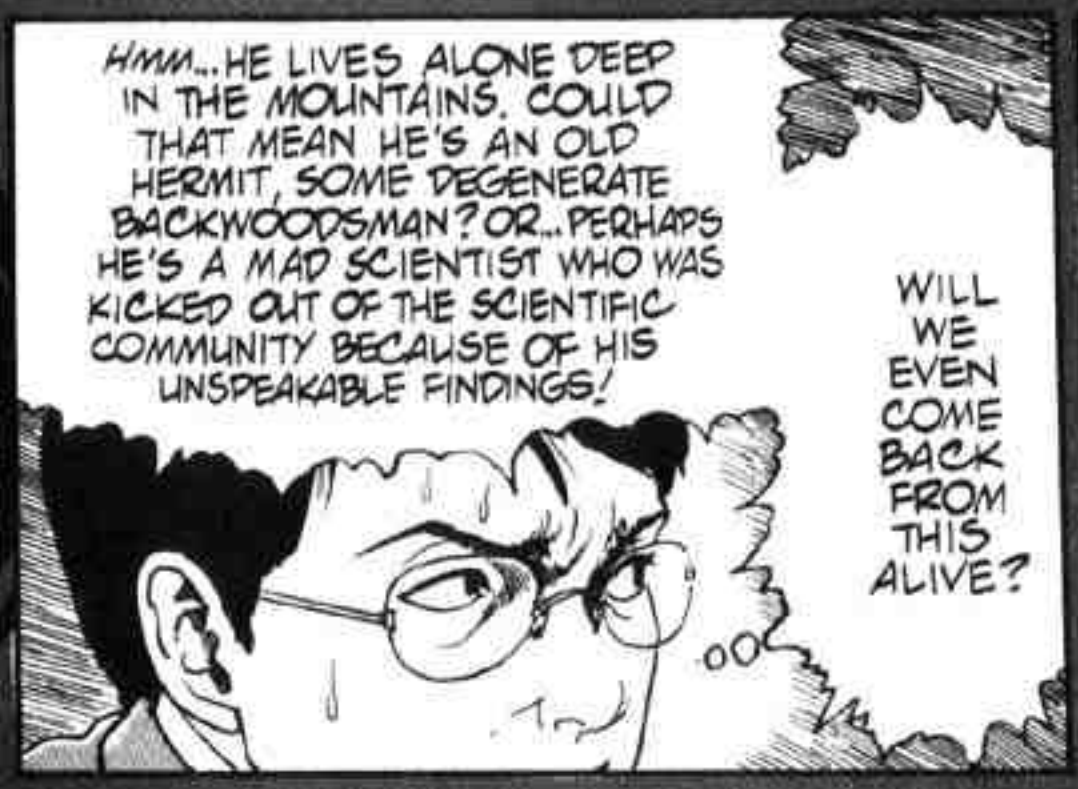
YES! SEE YOU IN G___ PREFEC-TURE!

K. MINAMI! TAKE CARE OF THINGS WHILE I'M GONE!

YES, SIR!

UZ
SHOOOOM

EVEN I COULDN'T SOLVE THE ENIGMA OF THE SPIRAL. WHO COULD THIS MYSTERIOUS MAN BE?
MY CURIOSITY GROWS DEEPER BY THE SECOND!
ZZZ
MY EDITOR, NAKA-GUMA

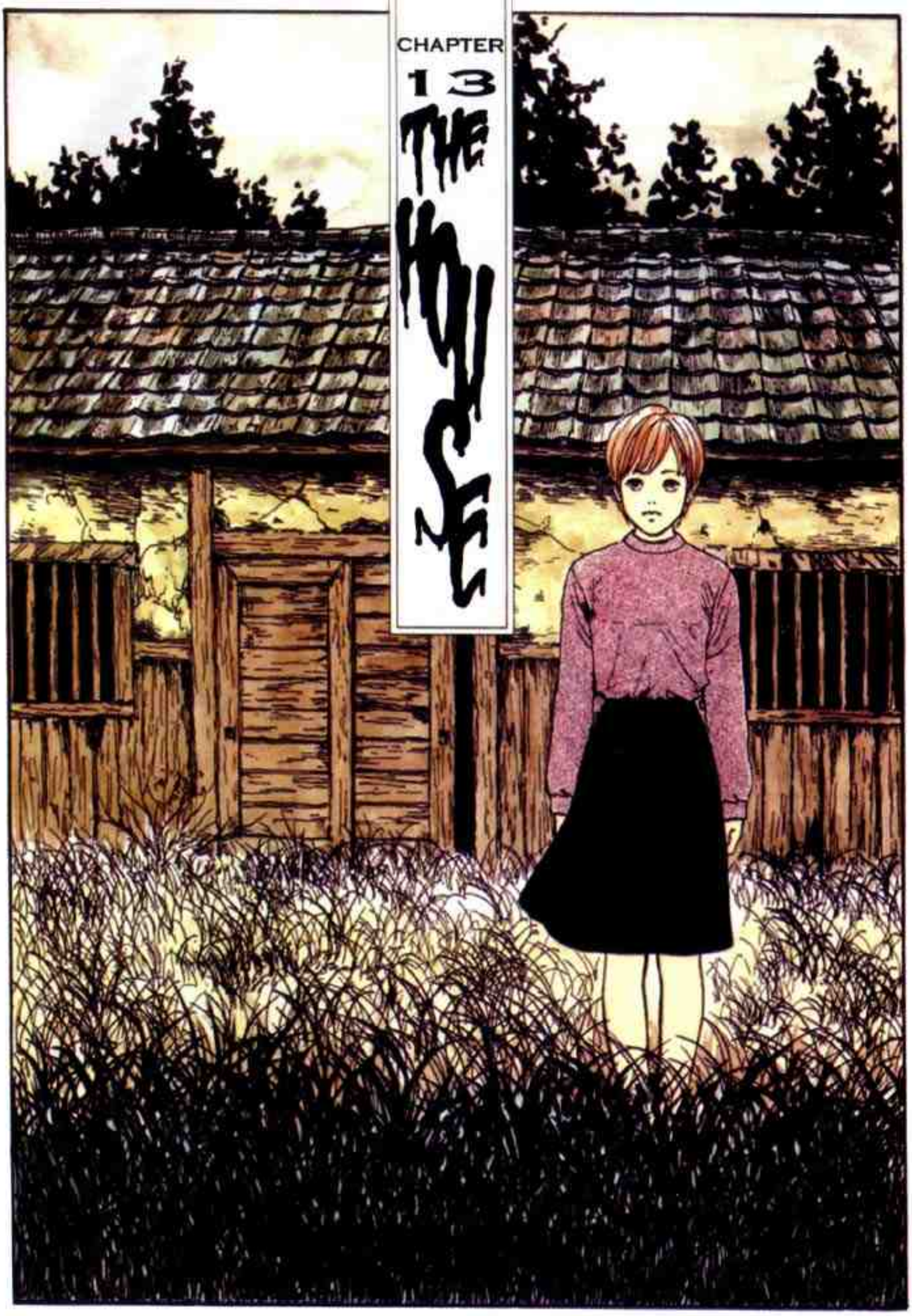

HMM... HE LIVES ALONE DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS. COULD THAT MEAN HE'S AN OLD HERMIT, SOME DEGENERATE BACKWOODSMAN? OR... PERHAPS HE'S A MAD SCIENTIST WHO WAS KICKED OUT OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY BECAUSE OF HIS UNSPEAKABLE FINDINGS!
WILL WE EVEN COME BACK FROM THIS ALIVE?

AND WHAT IS THE SECRET OF THE SPIRAL ?!

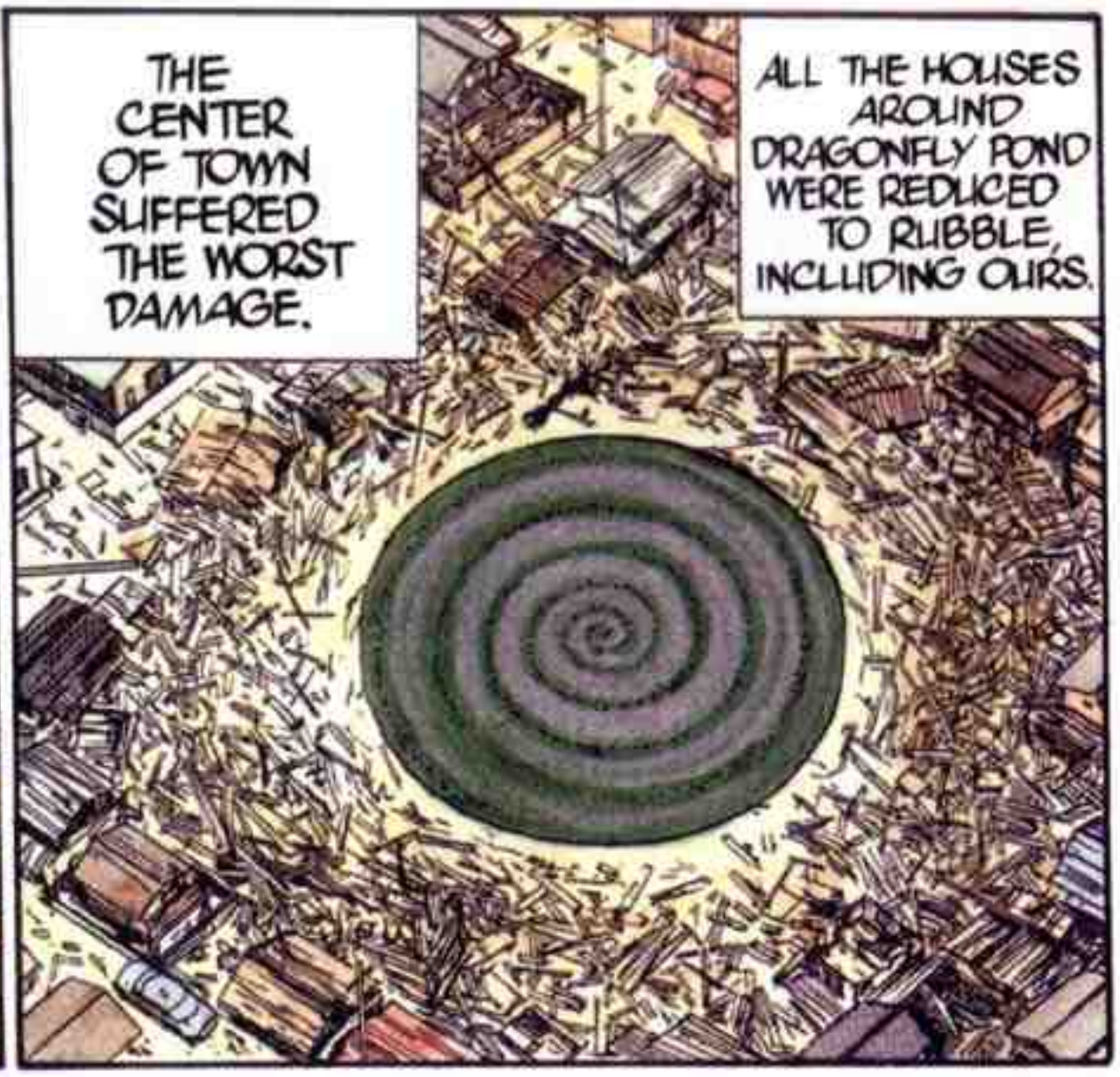
AT LAST OUR DESTINATION LAY BEFORE US!
BUT WERE THOSE LOWERING CLOUDS A PREMONITION OF THE DOOM THAT AWAITED US BEYOND THOSE MOUNTAINS OF--

AAHH!
WHOOSH!
Spiral Theory

IT WAS JUST A DREAM!
WHAT A RIP-OFF!


CHAPTER
13
THE HOUSE

SEVERAL DAYS AGO, KURÔZU-CHO WAS DEVASTATED BY A HURRICANE.

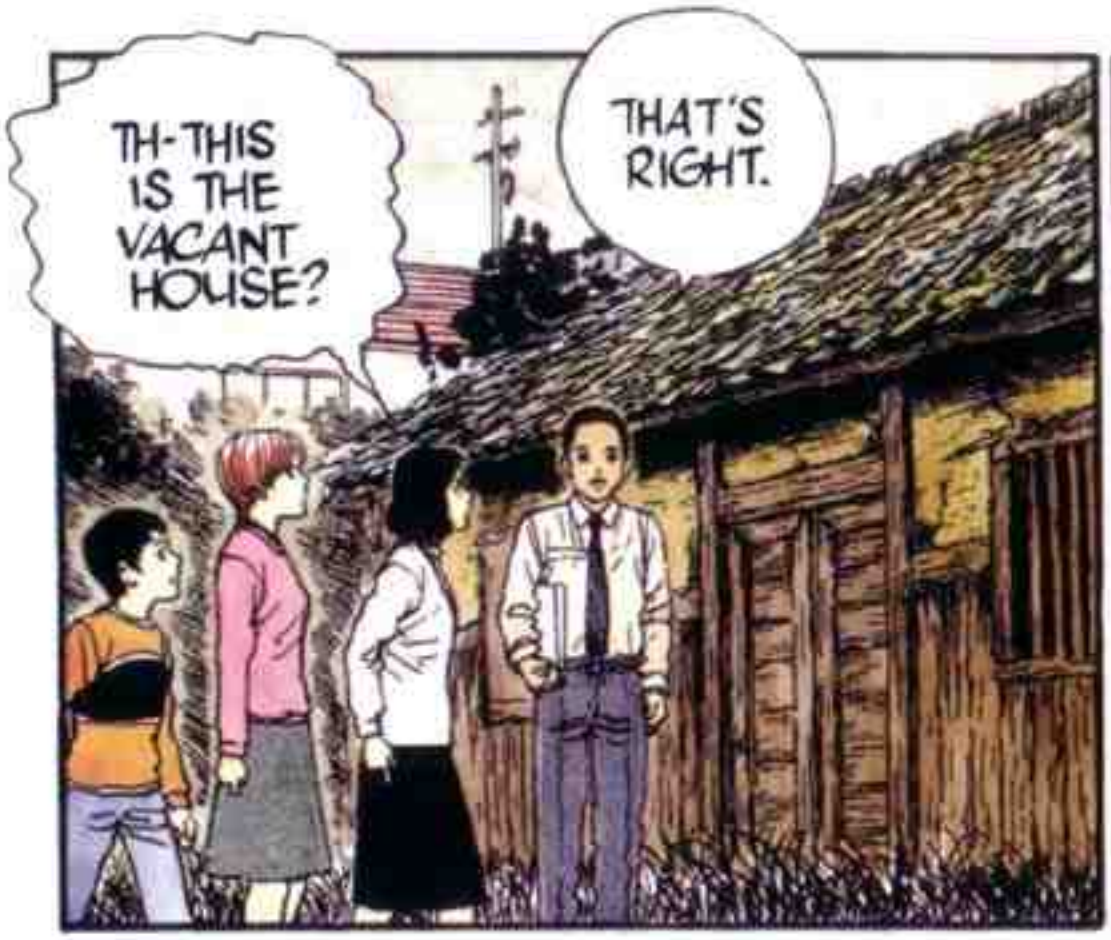

THE CENTER OF TOWN SUFFERED THE WORST DAMAGE.
ALL THE HOUSES AROUND DRAGONFLY POND WERE REDUCED TO RUBBLE, INCLUDING OURS.

AS IF BY SOME MAGNETIC ATTRACTION, THE HURRICANE WAS SUCKED INTO THE POND.
THE HOUSES NEARBY WERE DESTROYED.

MY FAMILY MIRACULOUSLY SURVIVED ...
BUT WE HAD TO FIND ANOTHER PLACE TO LIVE.

IT'S TERRIBLE YOU LOST YOUR HOUSE IN THAT STORM.

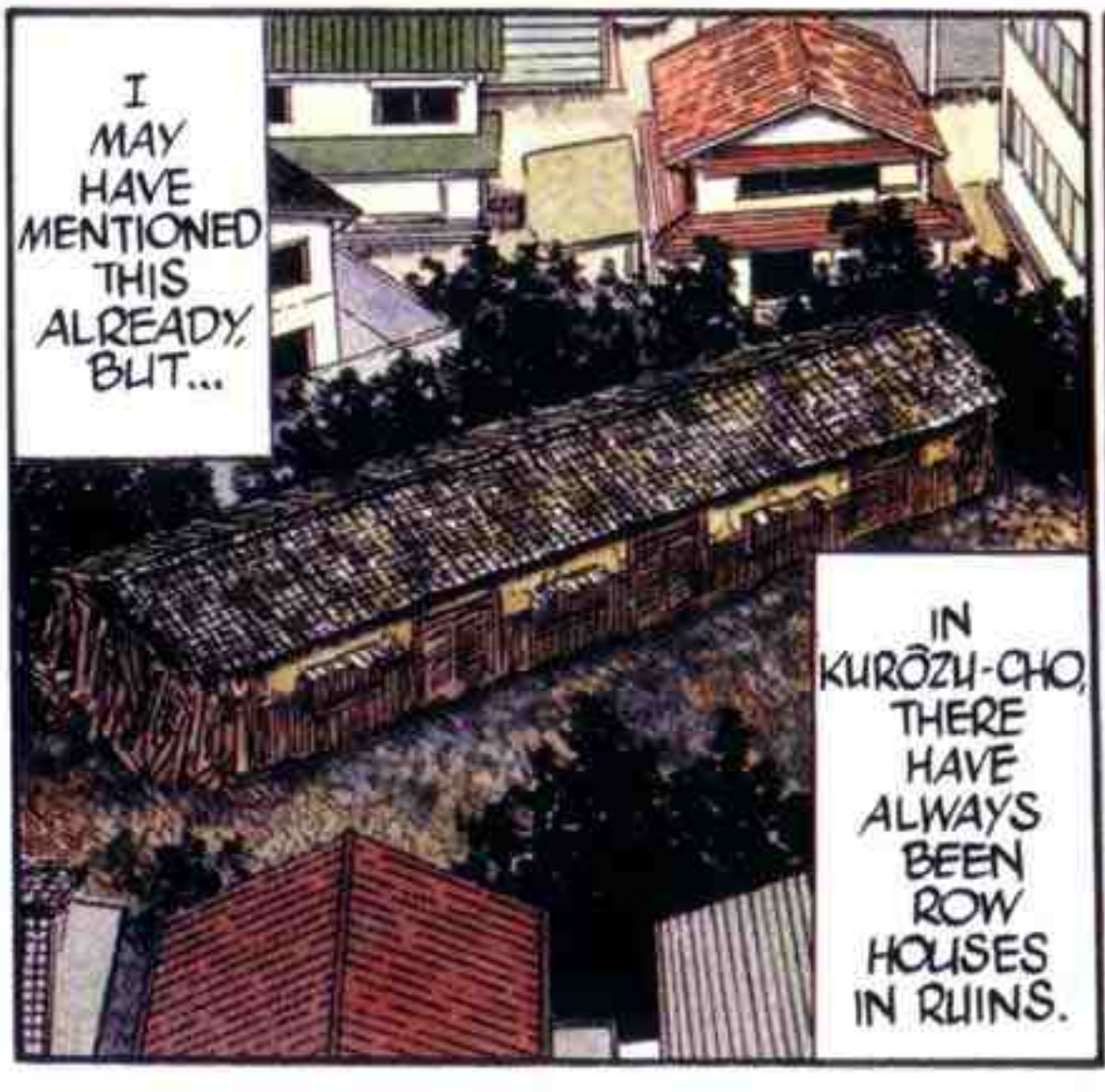
BUT YOU'RE NOT ALONE. A LOT OF PEOPLE LOST THEIR HOMES.

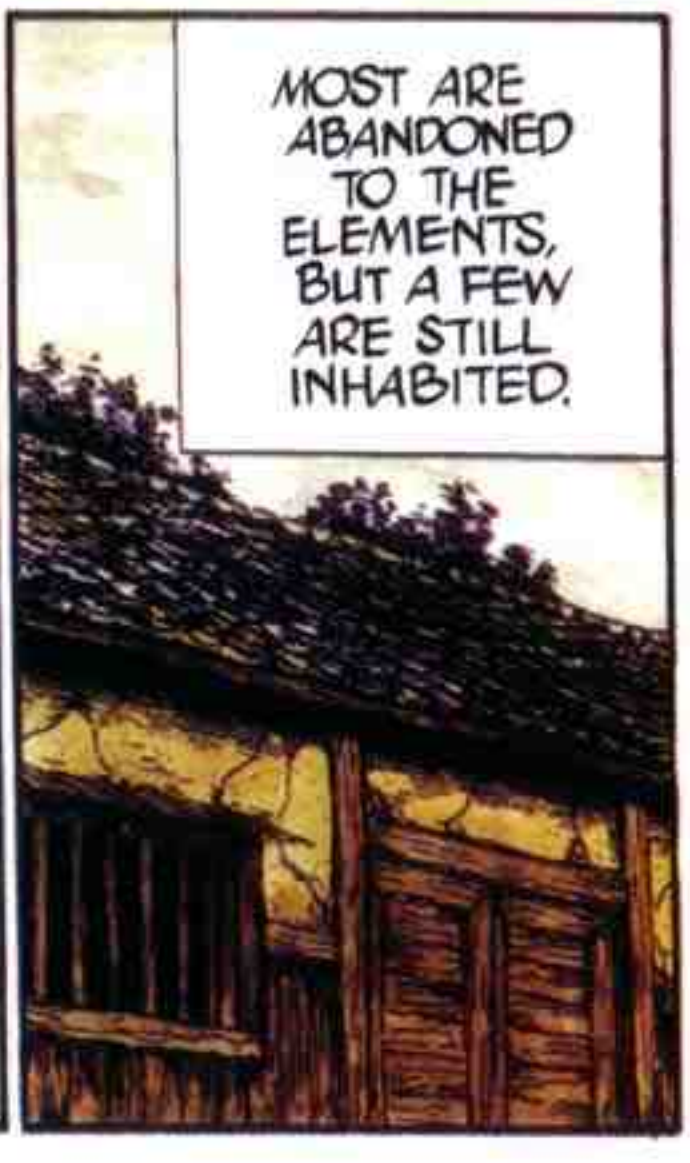

TH-THIS IS THE VACANT HOUSE?
THAT'S RIGHT.

BUT THIS IS ONE OF THOSE OLD ROW HOUSES.
YOU EXPECT US TO LIVE IN THAT DUMP?!

NOT THIS PLACE ...
MOM, WE CAN'T!

DON'T YOU KNOW THE STORY ABOUT THIS HOUSE?!


I MAY HAVE MENTIONED THIS ALREADY, BUT...
IN KURŌZU-CHO, THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ROW HOUSES IN RUINS.


MOST ARE ABANDONED TO THE ELEMENTS, BUT A FEW ARE STILL INHABITED.

Spiral Into Horror

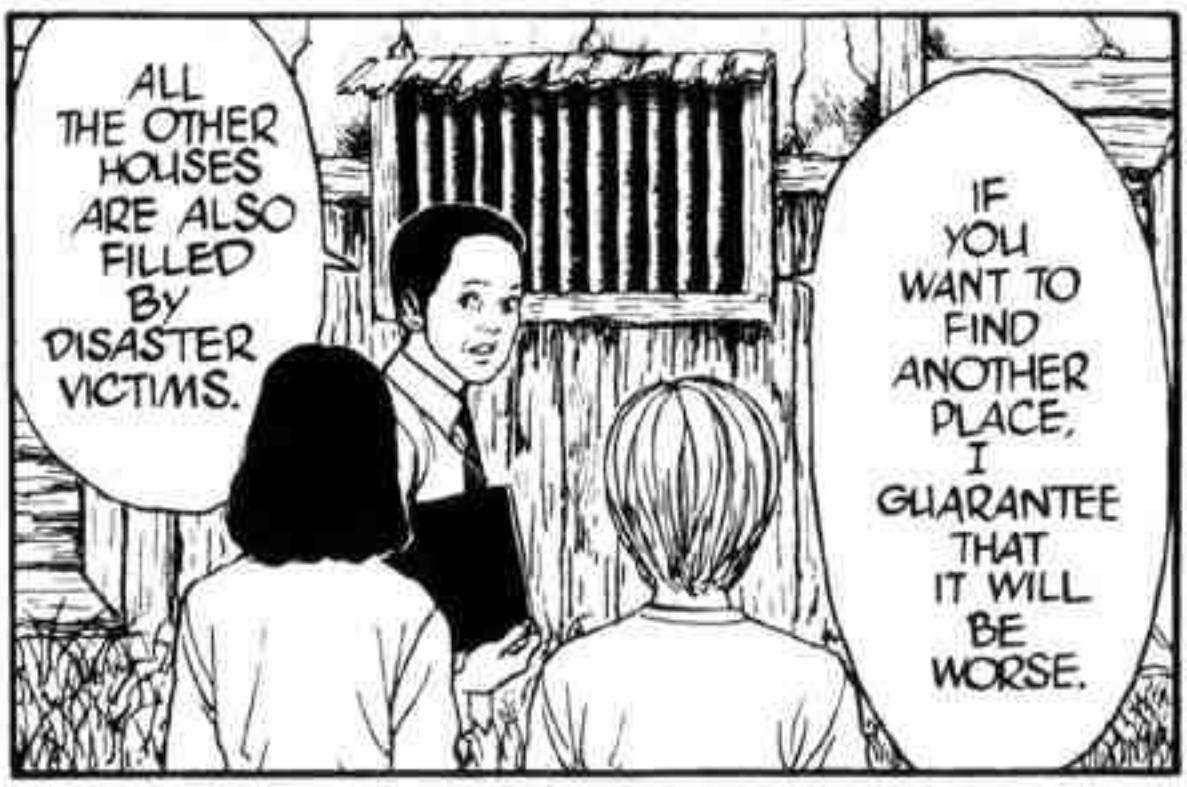
UZUMAKI

by Junji Ito

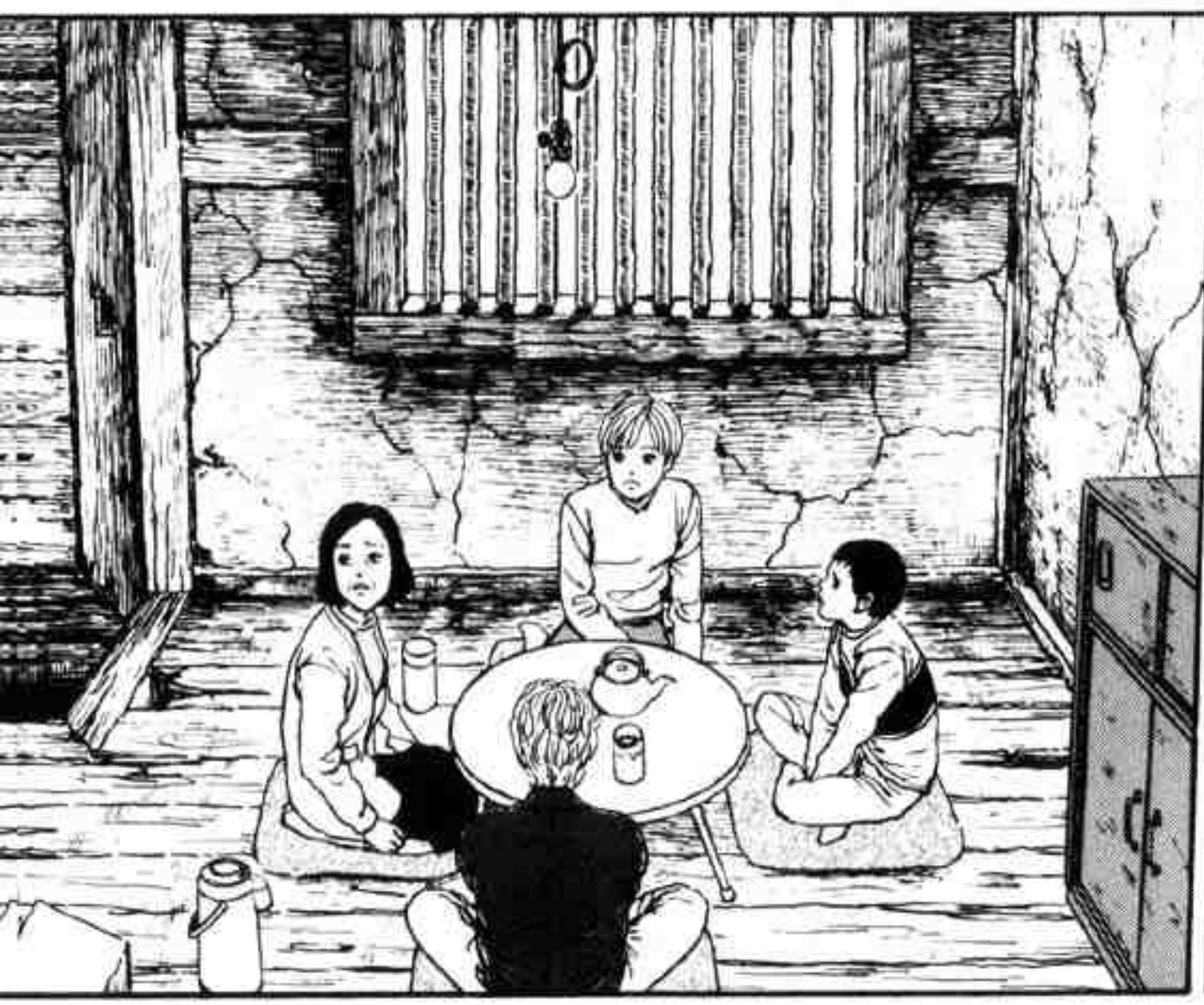
3

PULP GRAPHIC NOVEL

BUT THERE WAS MORE TO THIS PARTICULAR HOUSE.
THE HOUSE ON THIRD STREET WAS SAID TO BE HAUNTED BY A MONSTER WHO CAME OUT AT NIGHT.
SEVERAL PET DOGS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD HAD BEEN FOUND SLAUGHTERED, EATEN ALIVE.
SPOT
HA HA HA... THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS MONSTERS.
NEVER MIND THAT NONSENSE, BUT WE ARE NOT GOING TO LIVE IN THIS WRECK!
I'M SORRY, BUT THIS IS WHAT THE TOWN HAS MADE AVAILABLE FOR THE DISASTER VICTIMS.
THE BUILDING HAS BEEN REPAIRED, AND ELECTRICITY WAS INSTALLED.
WE'VE EVEN BUILT A TOILET. THERE'S ALL THE COMFORTS OF HOME.
THERE'S THREE SEPARATE APARTMENTS... TWO ARE ALREADY OCCUPIED.

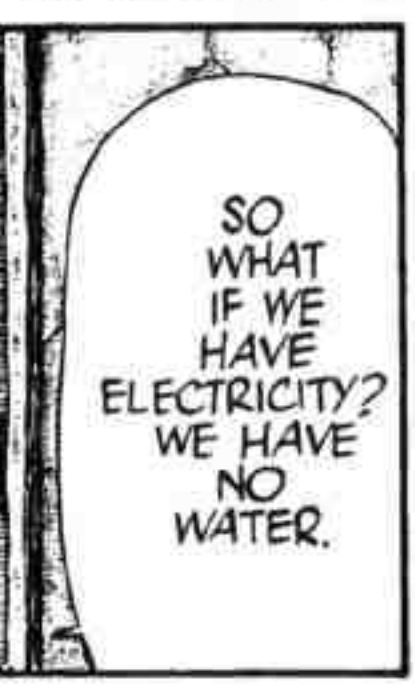

ALL THE OTHER HOUSES ARE ALSO FILLED BY DISASTER VICTIMS.
IF YOU WANT TO FIND ANOTHER PLACE, I GUARANTEE THAT IT WILL BE WORSE.

HE MADE IT CLEAR WE HAD NO CHOICE.



SCRP SCRP SCRP SCRP
SOUNDS LIKE MICE.

THIS IS AWFUL! WE CAN'T STAY HERE.
ALL THEY DID FOR REPAIRS WAS COVER UP THE HOLES IN THE WALLS.


SO WHAT IF WE HAVE ELECTRICITY? WE HAVE NO WATER.

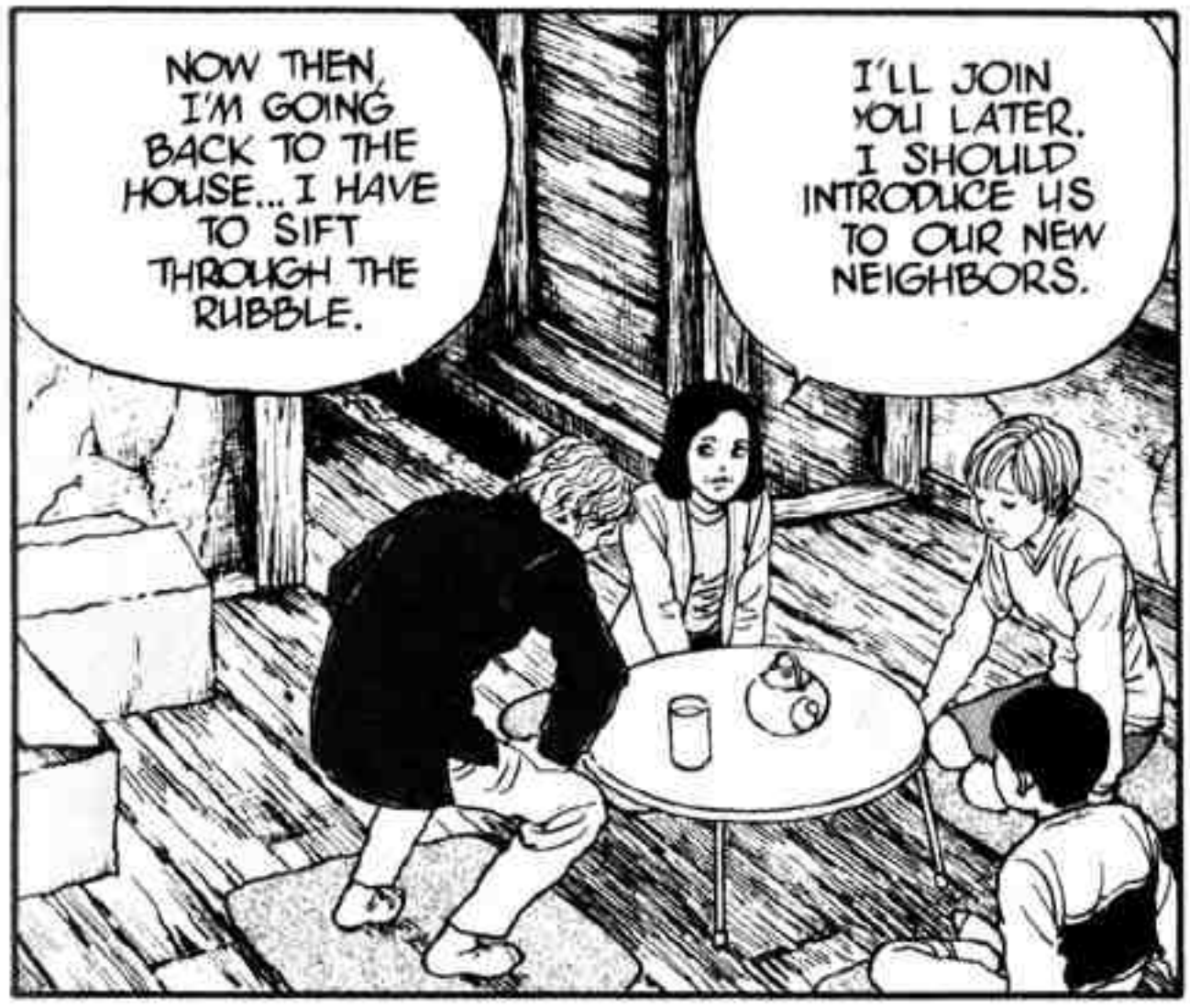
DAD, IF THIS PLACE DIDN'T HAVE ELECTRICITY OR PLUMBING, THEN WHEN DO YOU THINK IT WAS BUILT?
I DON'T KNOW... I HEARD IT WAS BEFORE THE 19TH CENTURY.

WHAT?! THAT LONG AGO?

WOULDN'T SURPRISE ME IF IT WAS HAUNTED.

I DON'T WANT TO LIVE HERE. IT GIVES ME THE CREEPS.

STOP WHINING! BE THANKFUL WE HAVE A ROOF ABOVE OUR HEADS.


NOW THEN, I'M GOING BACK TO THE HOUSE... I HAVE TO SIFT THROUGH THE RUBBLE.
I'LL JOIN YOU LATER. I SHOULD INTRODUCE US TO OUR NEW NEIGHBORS.

KIRIE AND MITSUO, YOU COME TOO.

GOOD AFTERNOON! WE'RE THE GOSHIMAS. WE JUST MOVED IN.

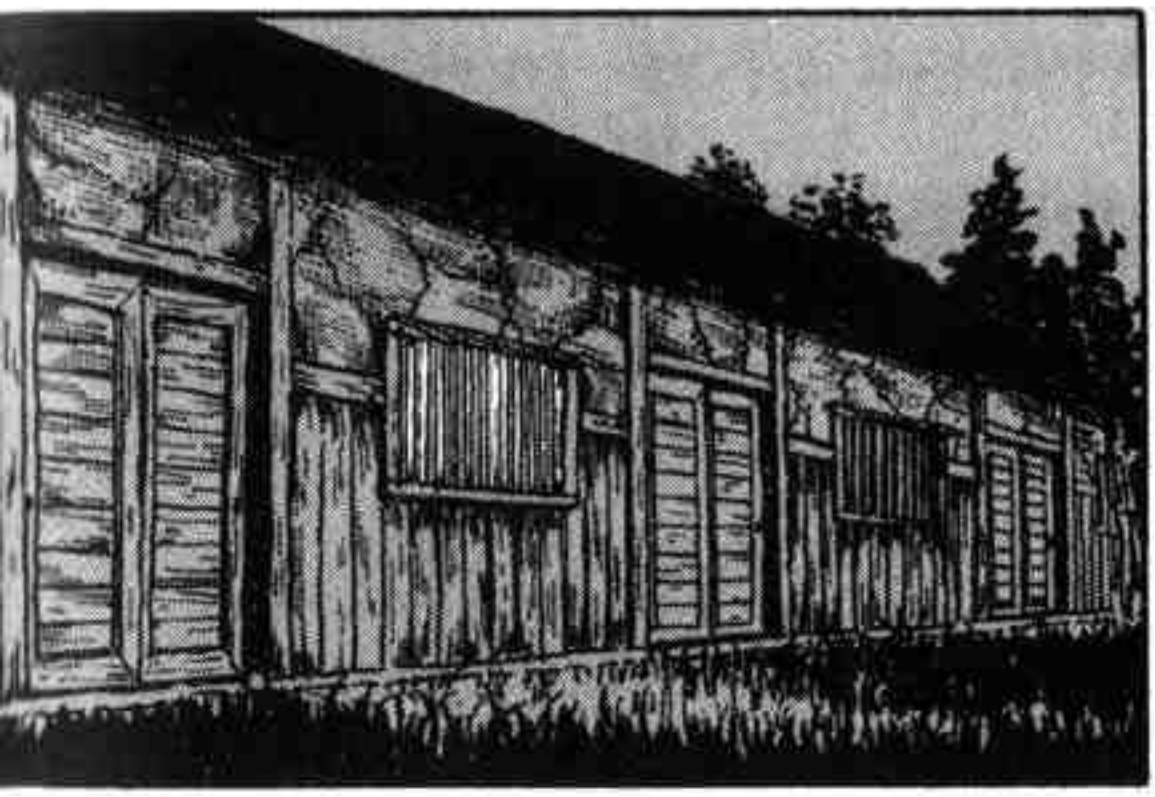
OH, HELLO. MY NAME IS WAKA-BAYASHI.
IT WAS A TERRIBLE STORM, WASN'T IT?

OH... YOU PROBABLY SHOULDN'T BOTHER VISITING THE PEOPLE NEXT DOOR.
THEY'RE NOT DISASTER VICTIMS. THEY MOVED IN THERE WITHOUT PERMISSION LONG BEFORE THE STORM.

KNOCK KNOCK

KNOCK
KNOCK

...



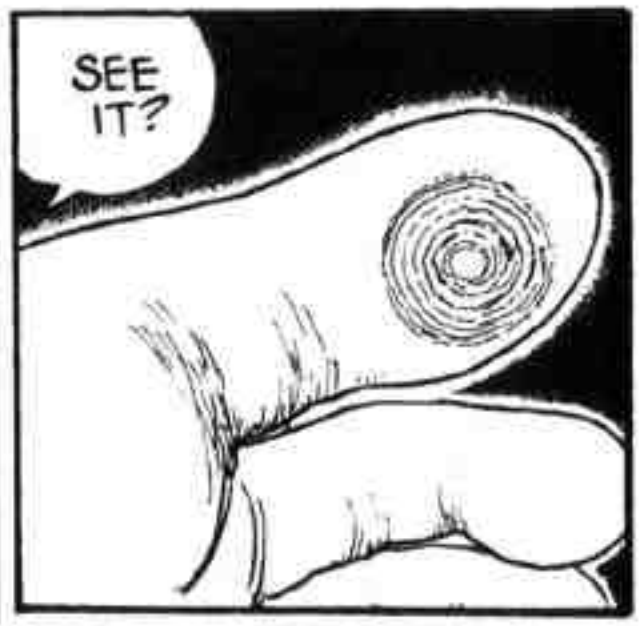
MOM ...
I THINK THE MONSTERS LIVE NEXT DOOR!

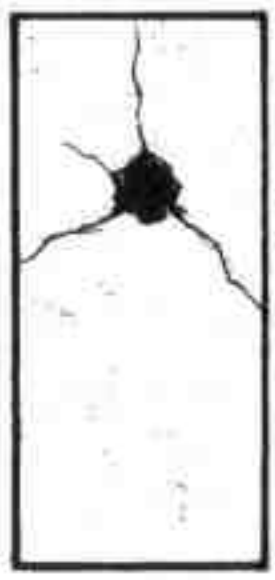
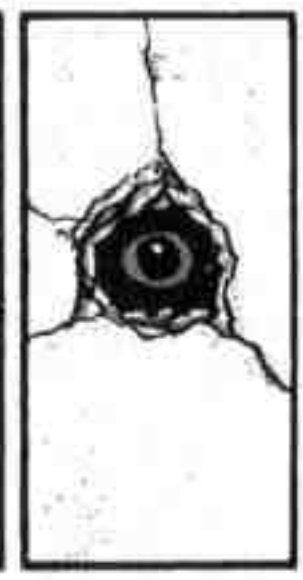
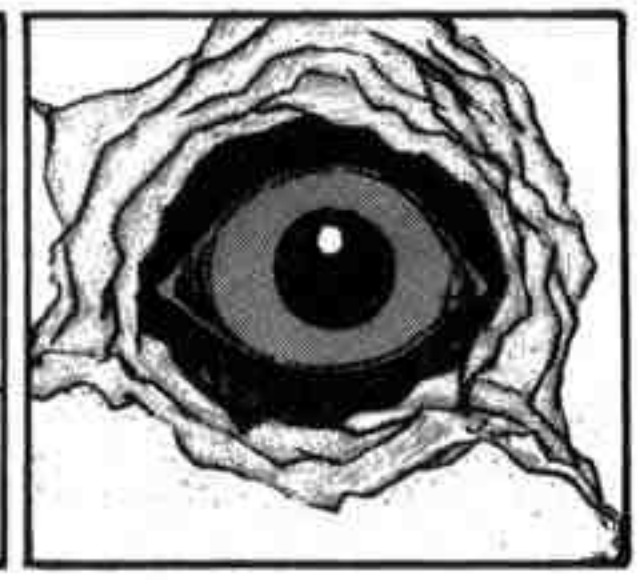
DON'T TALK SUCH NON-SENSE!
BUT IT'S SCARY!

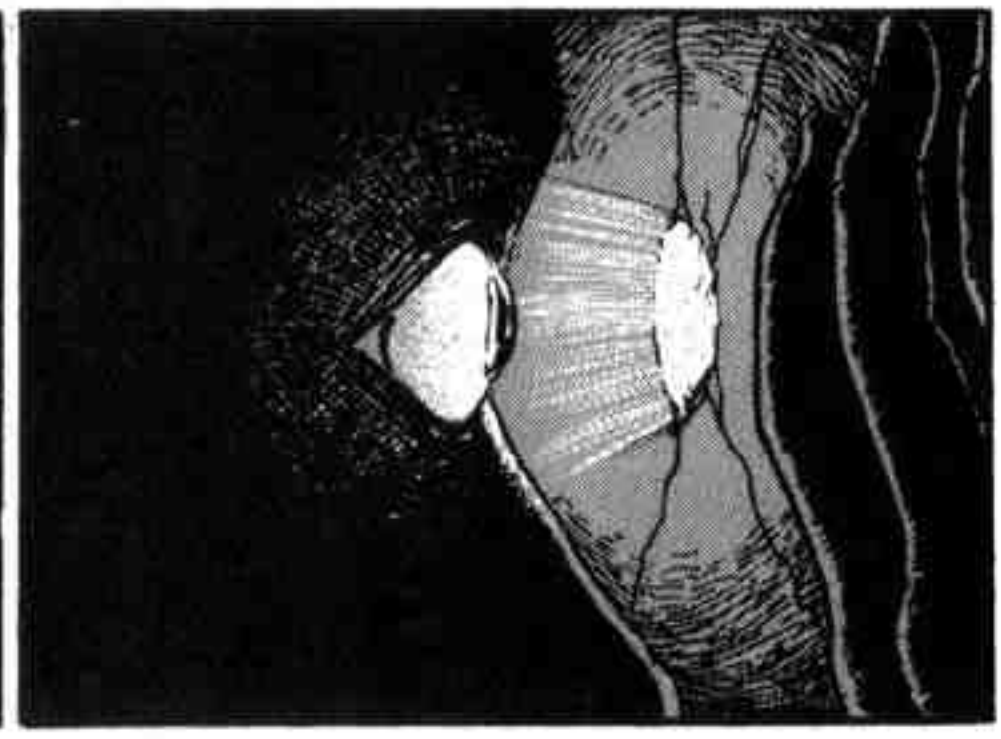
QUIET! THEY'LL HEAR YOU!!

Ouch... WHAT'S THIS?
LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF WART. I WONDER WHEN I GOT IT.

CAN I SEE?
HERE.


SEE IT?



UUUUOOOHHHH

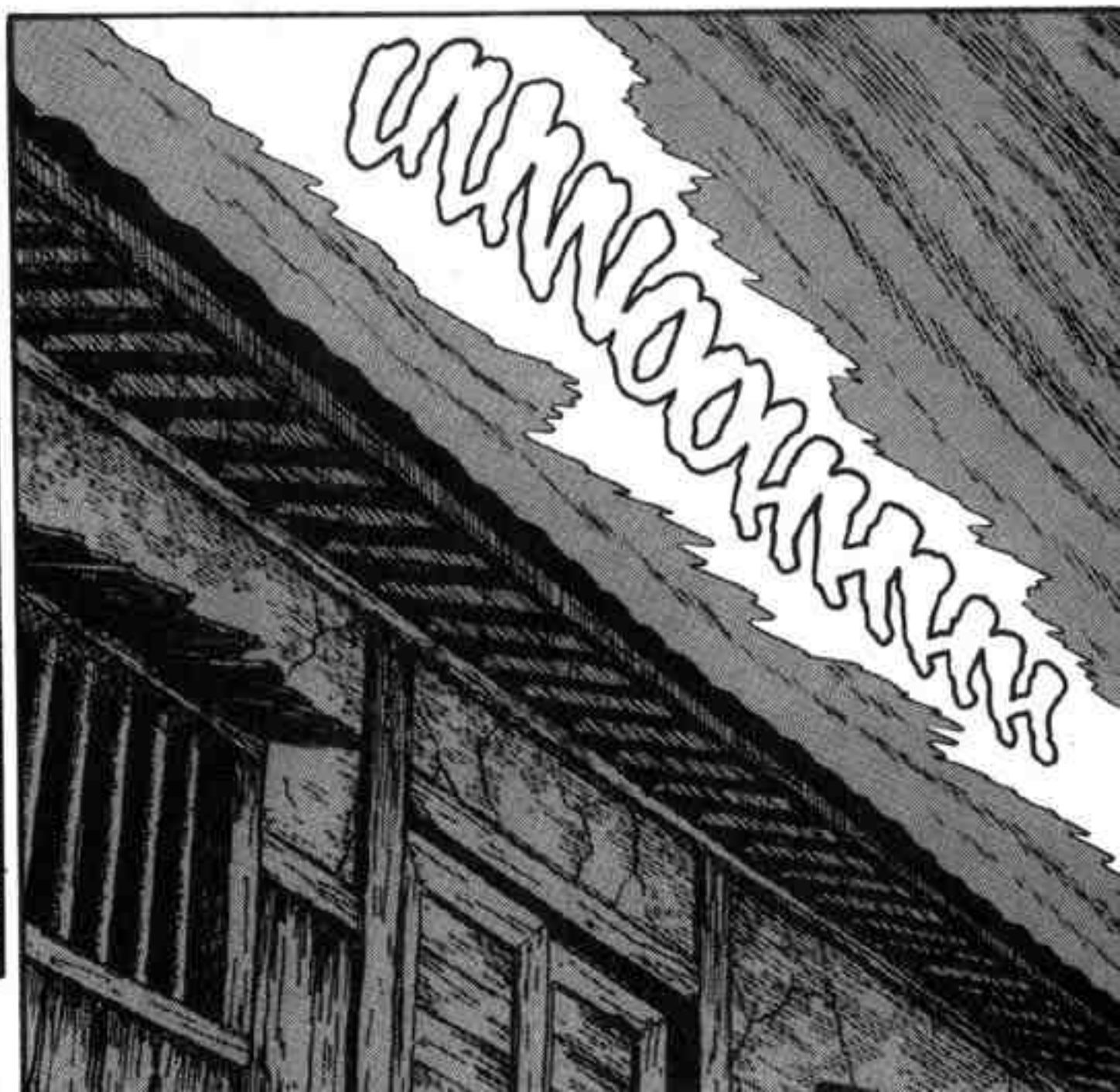
OOHHH

OOHHH
MOM... WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
HM?

IT SOUNDS LIKE SOME ANIMAL HOWLING...

IT'S THE MONSTER!
OHH
IT'S GOT TO BE!

LISTEN! IT'S COMING FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL!
FROM THE ROOM WHERE THE WEIRD FAMILY LIVES!


UUUUOOOHHHH

THE NEXT MORNING...

CRUNCH
CRUNCH

HOUSE-CLEANING?
HM?

Oh... MR. WAKA-BAYASHI.
YES, BUT I'M NOT GETTING TOO FAR.
OF COURSE NOT.

BY THE WAY...
DID YOU HEAR THE NOISE LAST NIGHT?

IT SOUNDED LIKE IT WAS COMING FROM THE PEOPLE ON THAT SIDE OF THE HOUSE.

A TOWN OFFICIAL TOLD ME WHO LIVES THERE.
THEY'RE AN OLD WOMAN AND HER SON, WHO LIVE ON WELFARE.

APPARENTLY, THE SON HAS A SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITION. THAT WAS HIM, CRYING FROM THE PAIN.

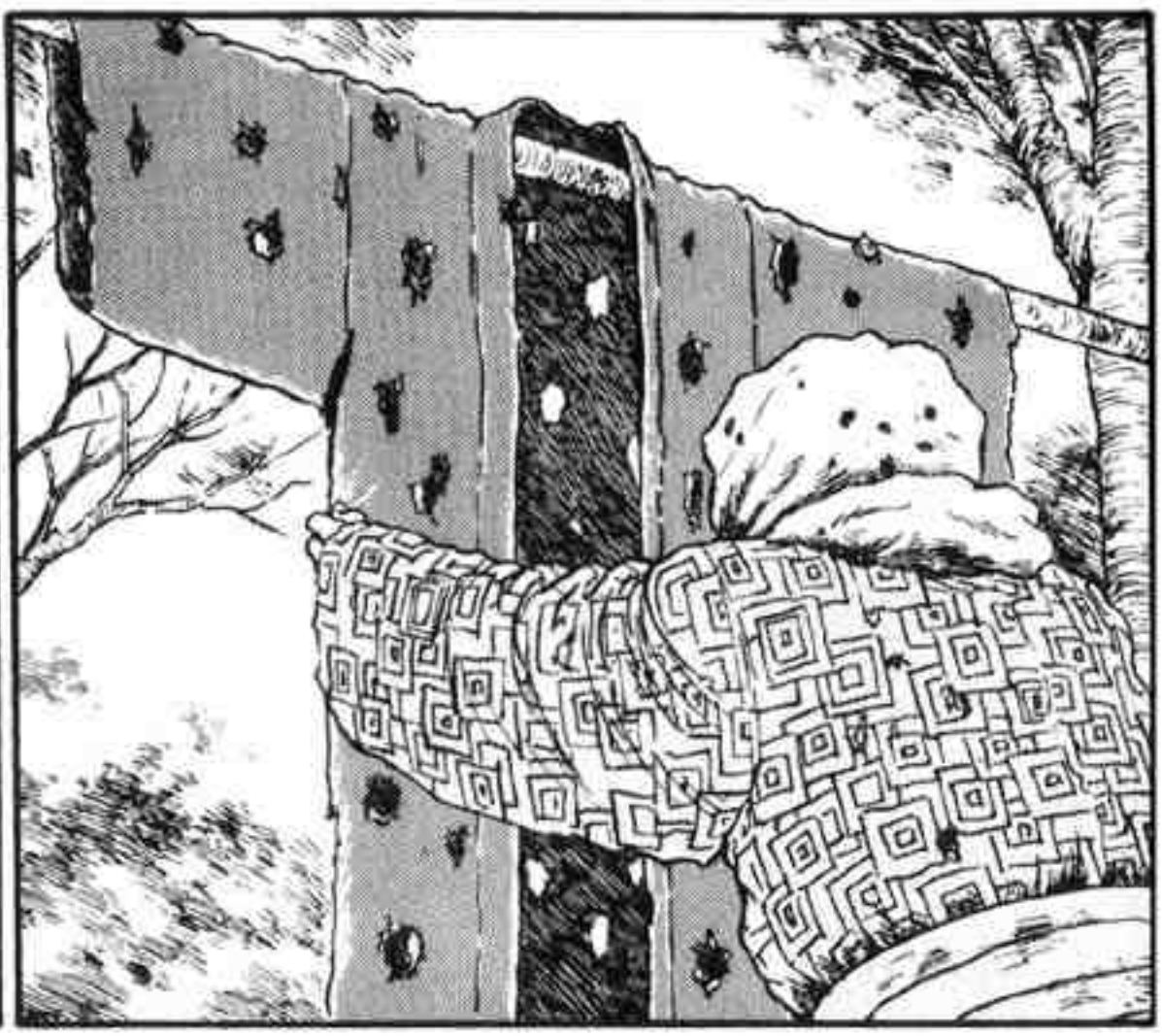
BUT NO ONE KNOWS WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM. THE OLD WOMAN WON'T LET HIM BE SEEN.

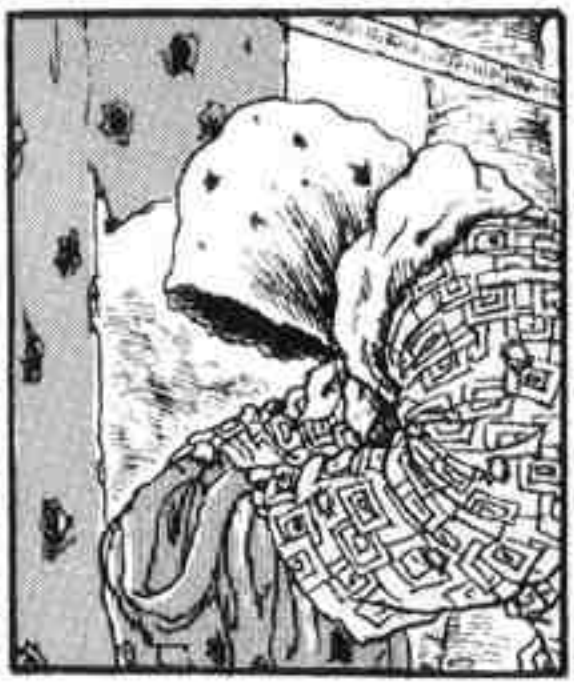
THEY SAY HE'S DEFORMED DUE TO HIS ILLNESS.

CREAK

IF HE LOOKS BAD ENOUGH...

THAT WOULD EXPLAIN RUMORS ABOUT A MONSTER.



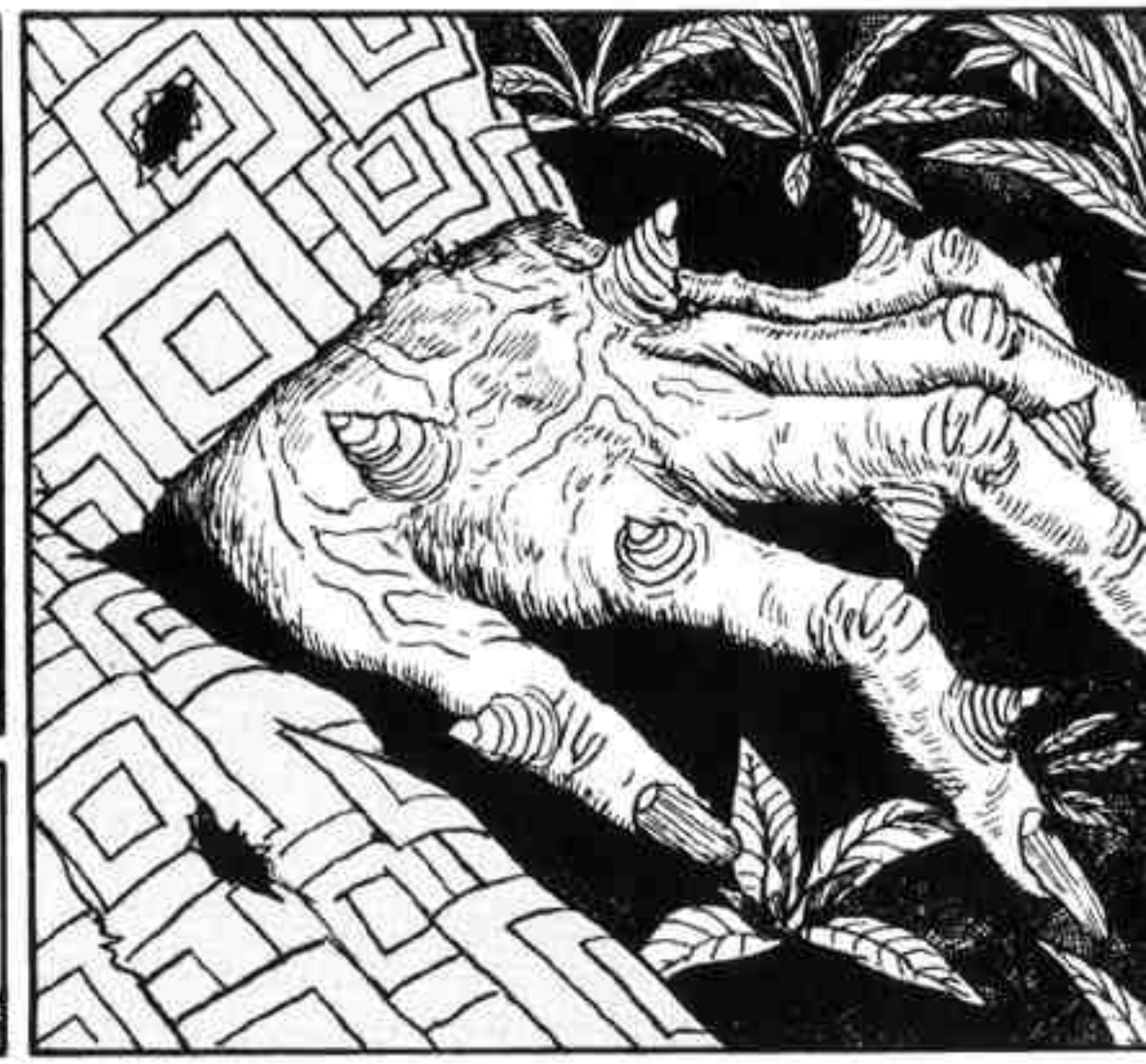


TREMBLE

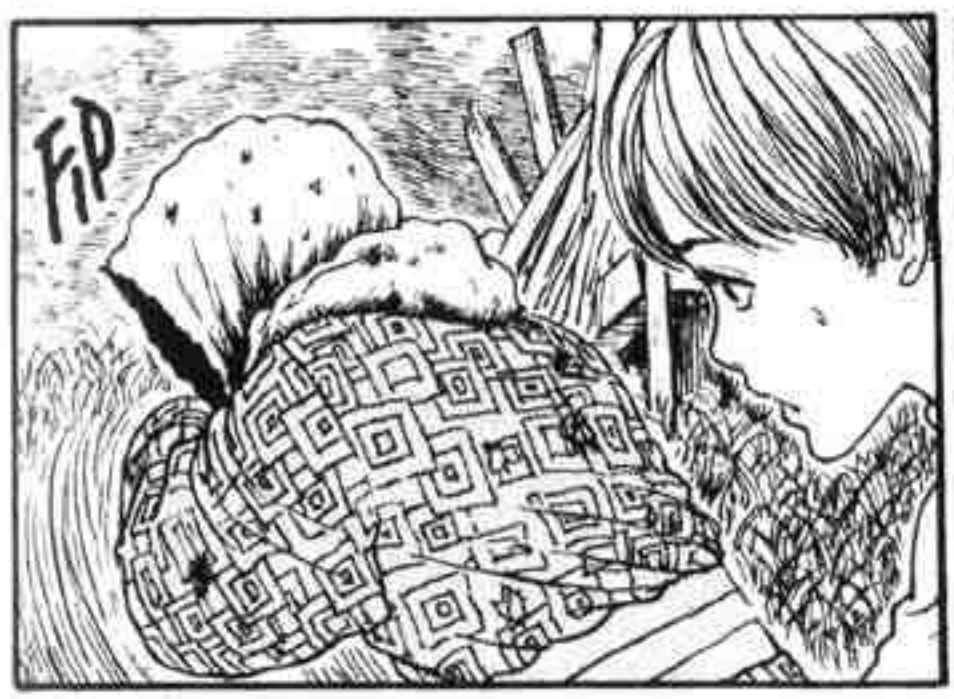
TREMBLE
SLUMP
Oh!

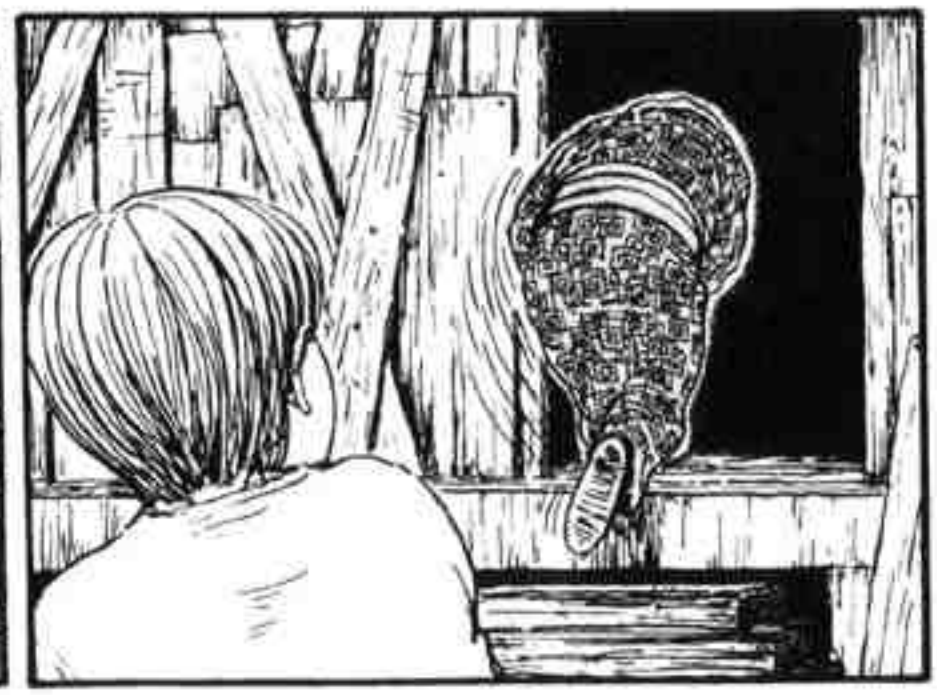
EXCUSE ME...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

CAN YOU STAND UP?



AH!


FIP



WHAT HAP-PENED?
WHAT'S WRONG?

O-Oh...
IT WAS NOTHING.

THAT AFTERNOON ...
AWAAHH

AWAAHH!

IT'S HOWLING AGAIN!

NO! THAT'S A DIFFERENT NOISE! THAT'S THE OLD WOMAN CRYING!
AND IT SOUNDS URGENT!

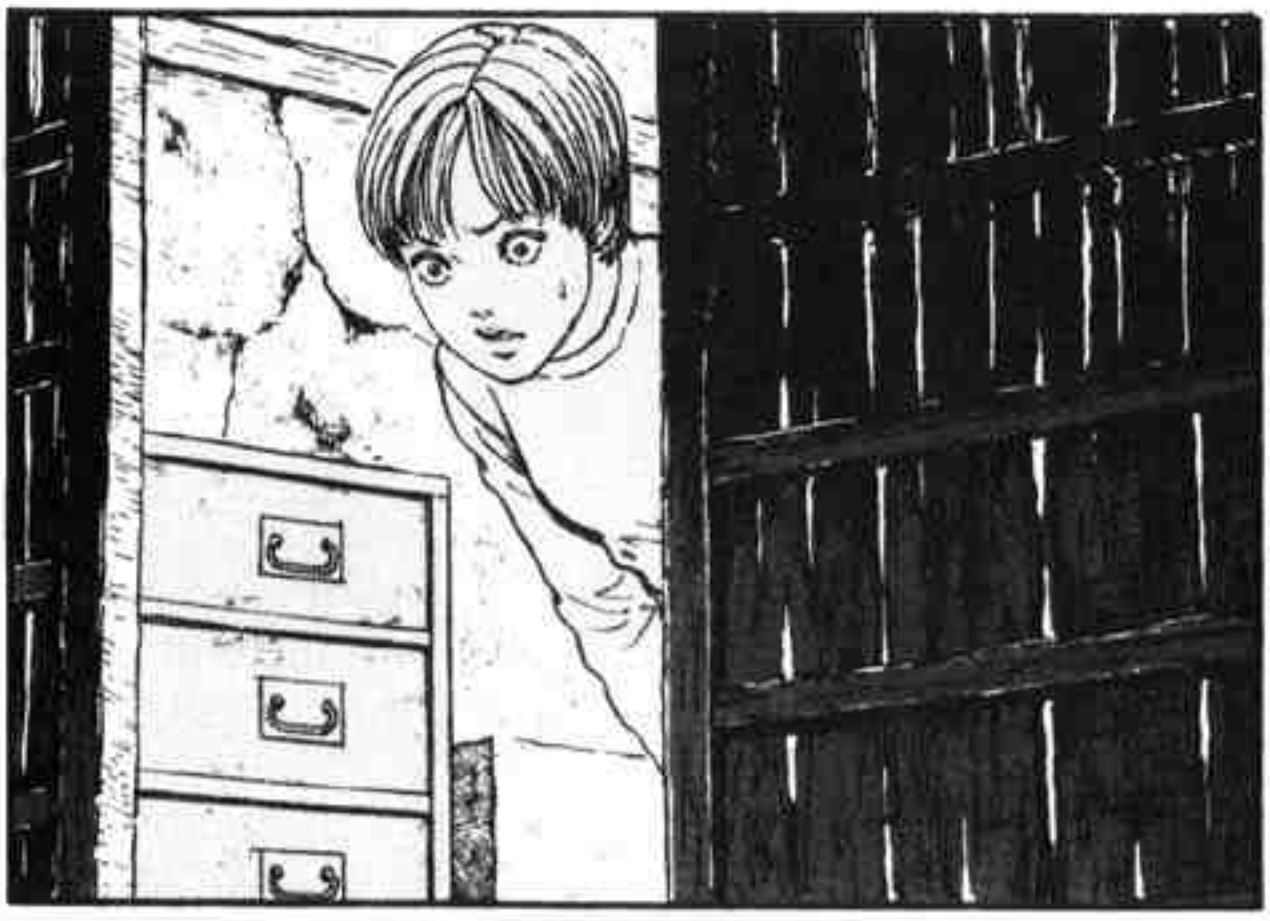
SHE MIGHT BE IN DANGER!
KIRIE!

AWAAHH
EXCUSE ME!

AAAAHH!

AHAHAH
HAHAHAHAHA
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
MY SON... MY SON...
MY SON HAS DIED ...

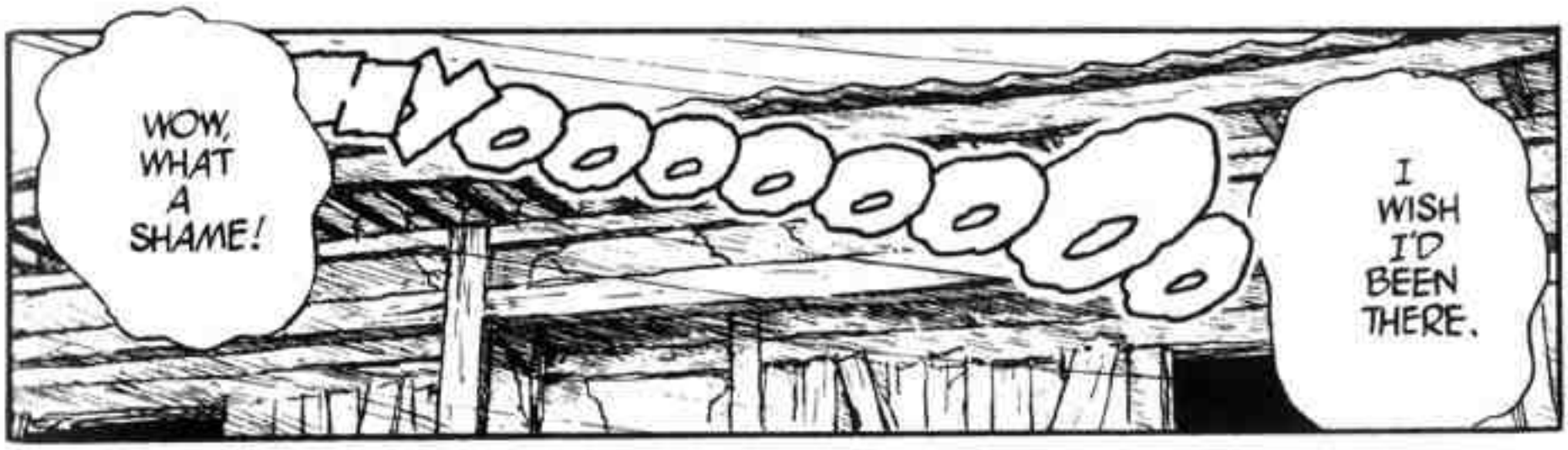
HE'S DIED ...
AAAA



AIEE!

THE AMBULANCE CREW TOOK A LONG TIME REMOVING THE SON'S BODY FROM THE HOUSE.

YAMADA HOSPITAL ORTHOPEDICS DERMATOLOGY
AT THE HOSPITAL, DOCTORS DIAGNOSED THE OLD WOMAN WITH AN UNKNOWN SKIN DISEASE, AND KEPT HER FOR OBSERVATION.
THE SON HAD SUFFERED FROM THE SAME THING.


WOW, WHAT A SHAME!
YOOOOOOOOO
I WISH I'D BEEN THERE.

SO HOW DID THE SON LOOK?
PLEASE TELL ME. I'M REALLY INTERESTED.

YOU SEE...
I WENT INTO THEIR ROOMS THE OTHER NIGHT.

THE FLOOR WHERE THE SON SLEPT WAS COVERED WITH SMALL HOLES.
SMALL HOLES... NOW WHAT WERE THEY?

I HAVE NOTHING TO TELL YOU.
BUT HE WASN'T NORMAL, WAS HE?

COME ON. I PROMISE NOT TO TELL ANYONE.

I'M SORRY, I'D RATHER NOT.

HAH...

I SEE... YOU'RE PRETTY HEADSTRONG, AREN'T YOU?

HYOOOOOOOOO

HURRICANE NO.2 HAS NOW REACHED KYŪSHŪ.

IT IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE ITS COURSE UP THROUGH JAPAN.

WE HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS THAT, LIKE HURRICANE NO. 1, THE SPIRAL-SHAPED "EYE" OF THE STORM IS ACTUALLY VISIBLE FROM THE GROUND.

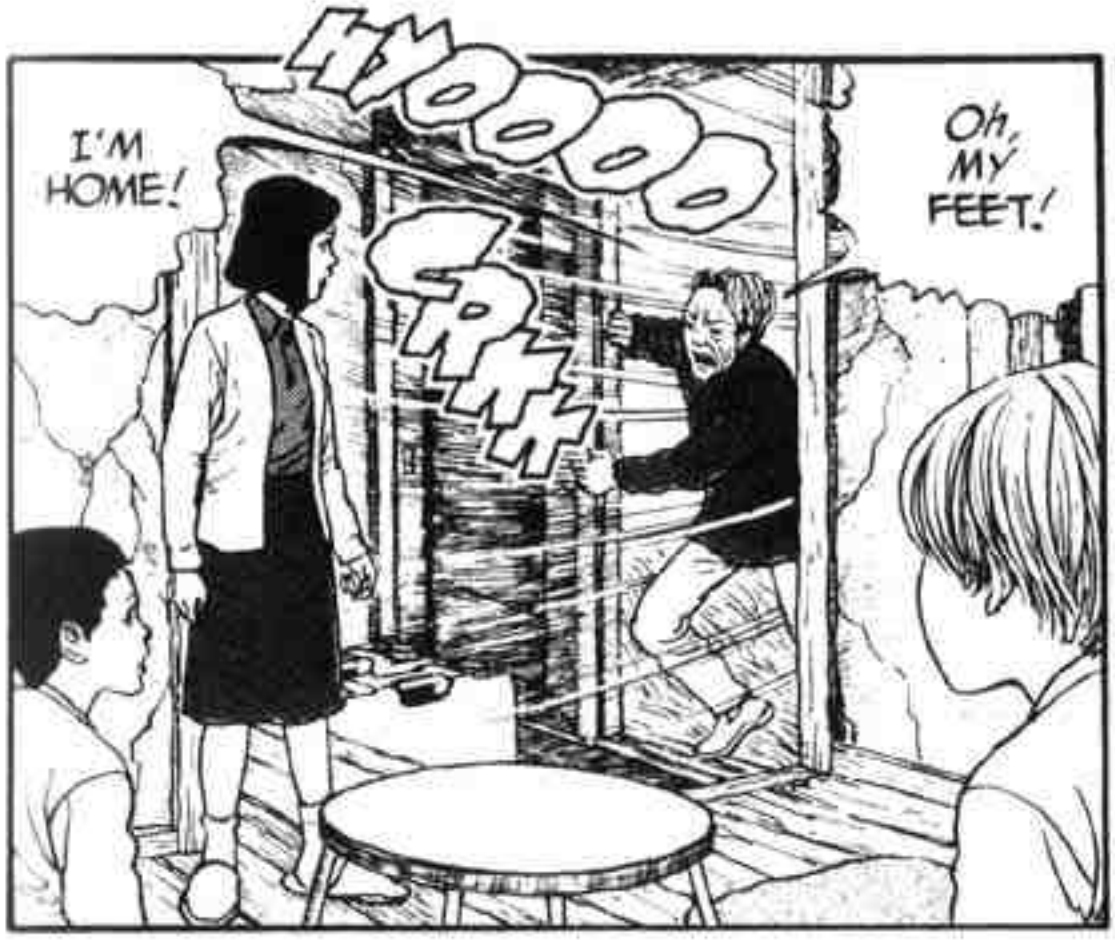
I'VE GOT SOME KIND OF WARTS ON MY FEET.

THERE'S LOTS OF THEM.

ME, TOO. THEY HURT!

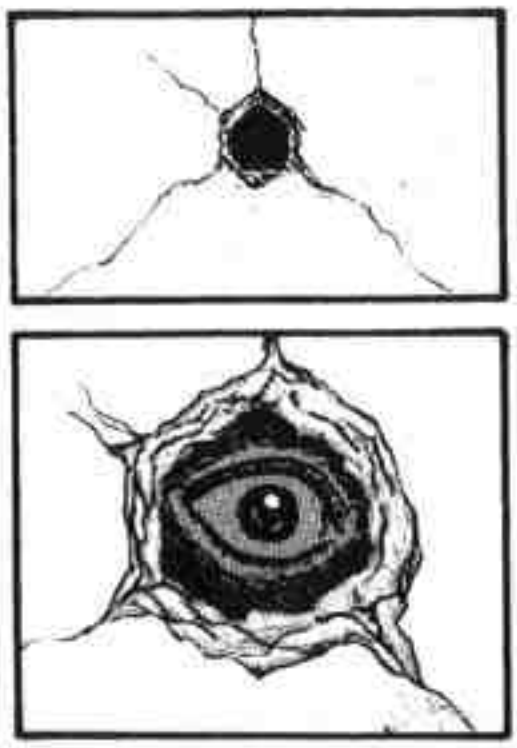
THEY'RE ON MY HANDS.

BOTH OF YOU? I HAVE THEM, TOO.


I'M HOME!
HYOOOO
GRAAA
Oh, MY FEET!

THOSE GROWTHS HAVE SPREAD!
I'VE GOT THEM ALL OVER MY BODY!

Oh, NO...

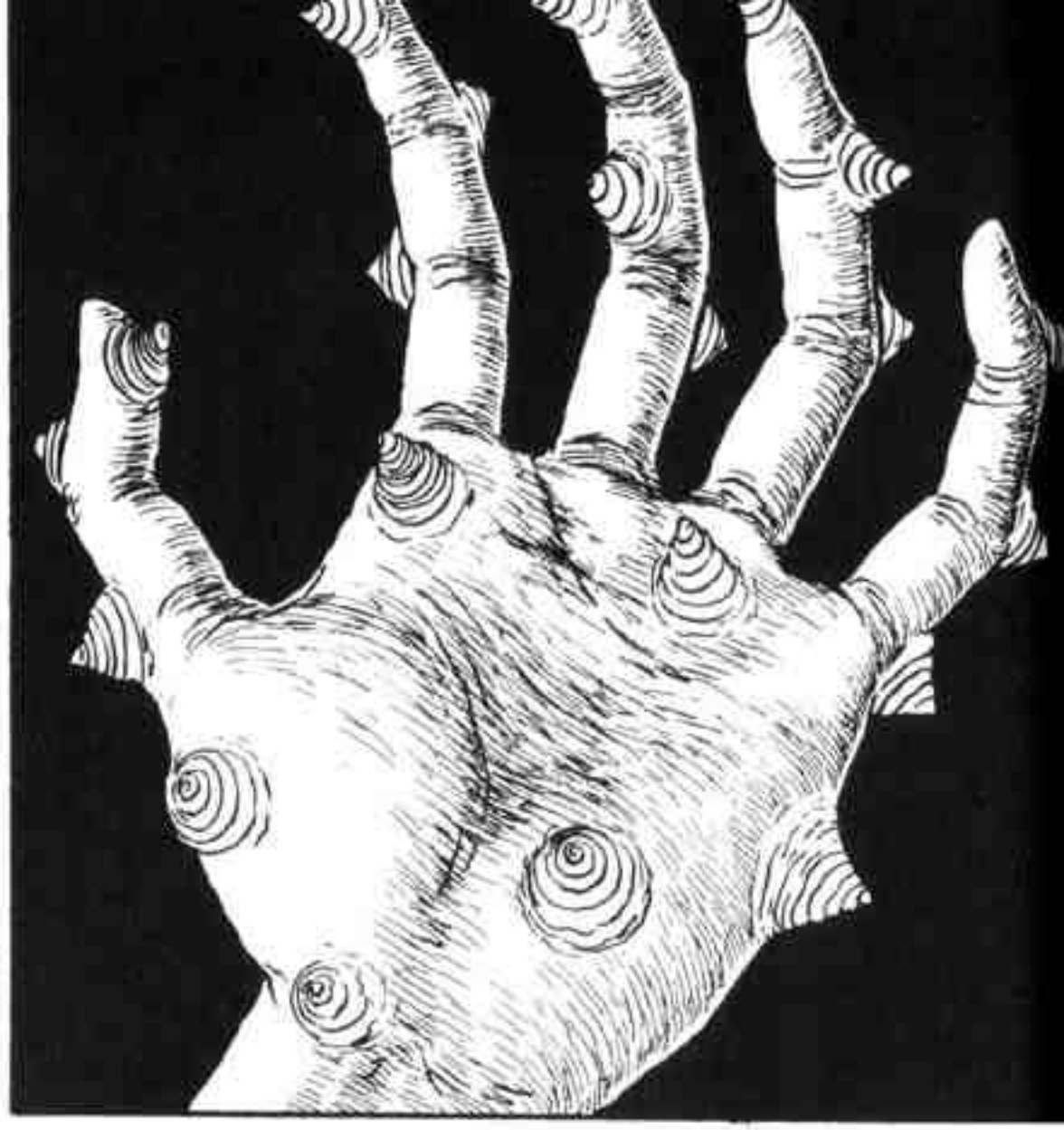


HA HA HA...
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU EVER SINCE YOU MOVED IN HERE.

KIRIE, YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL AND HEADSTRONG ...I CAN'T KEEP MY EYES OFF YOU.

BUT I CAN ONLY SEE SO MUCH WITH THIS HOLE. I'LL HAVE TO MAKE A NEW ONE SOON.

MAYBE NEAR HER BED...
DAMN, WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY HAND ?!



?!

WOOOOOOOO
OOOOOO

WEEOOOO
YYOOOOOO

THE STORM'S RAGING.
AARG ...
WEEOOOO
IT HURTS!

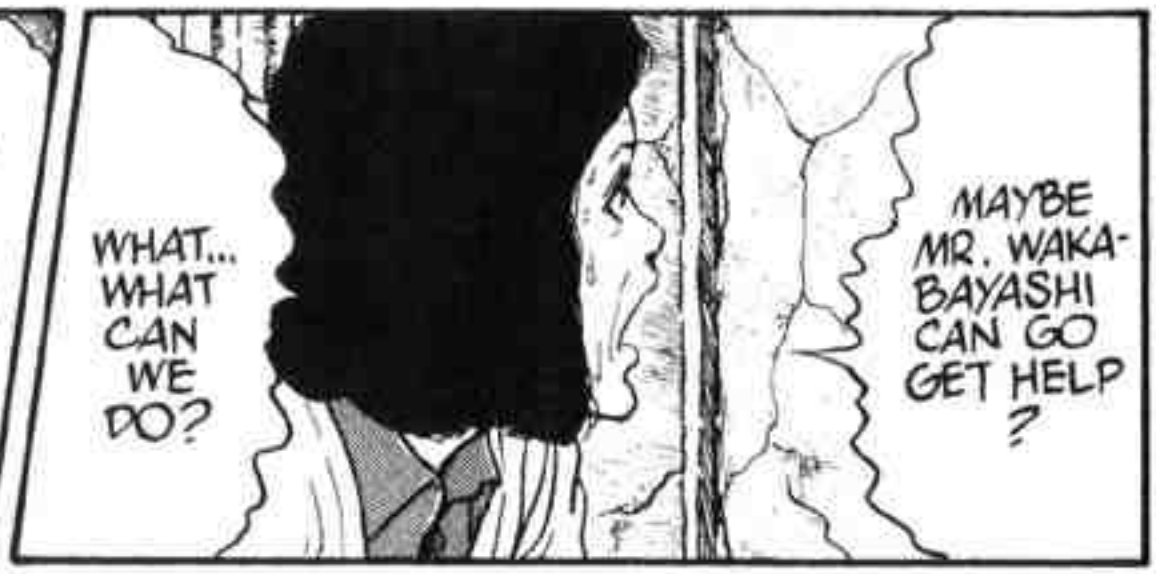
IT HURTS! IT HURTS!
W-W-WE CAN'T GO TO THE HOSPITAL, THOUGH, IN THIS STORM...
AHH! WHAT'S THIS?
THOSE THINGS ON MY FEET!
RATTRATTR
THESE... THESE...
THESE ARE THE SAME THINGS I SAW ON THAT OLD WOMAN AND HER SON!
THESE AREN'T WARTS!

THEIR SKIN DISEASE MUST HAVE SPREAD TO US!!

SO WE'RE ...
SO WE'RE INFECTED?

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?
ARE WE GOING TO DIE LIKE THE SON?

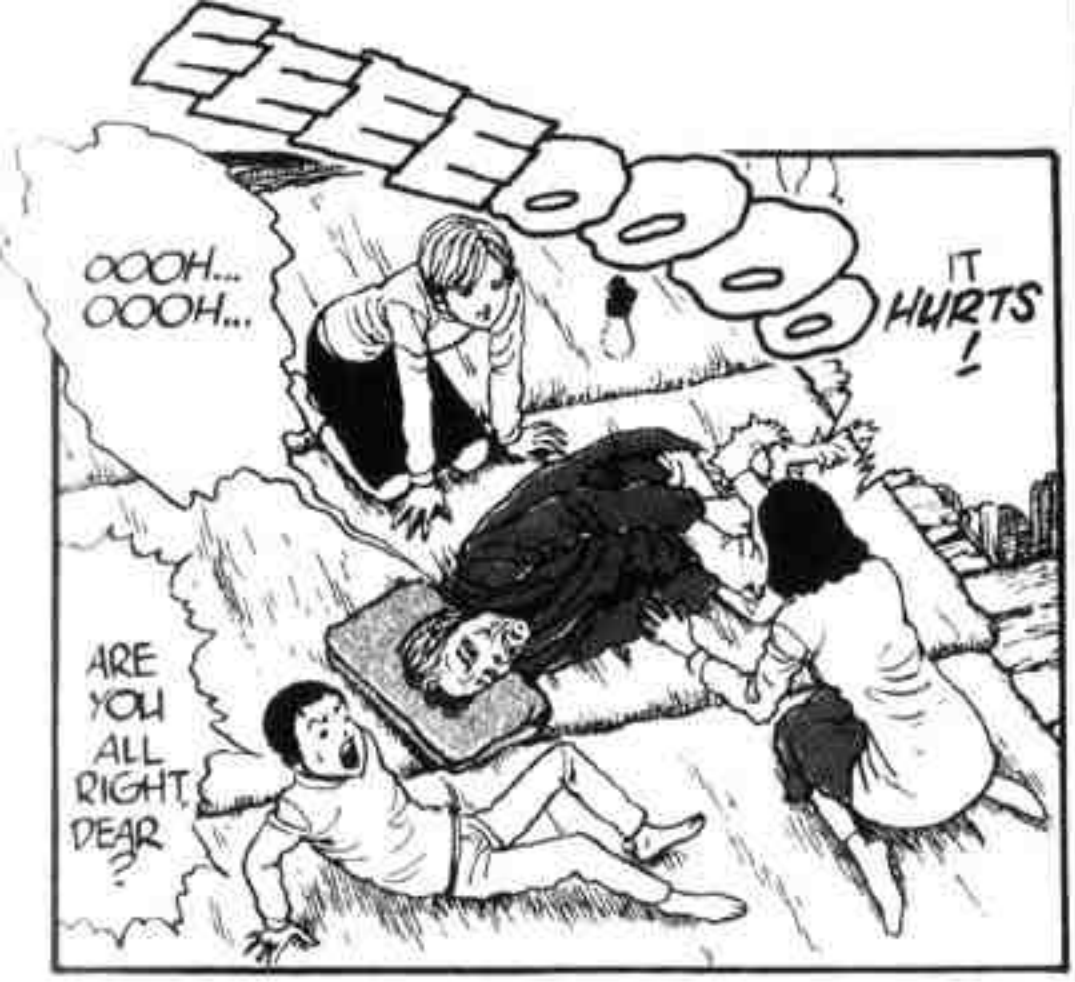
WE CAN'T CALL FOR HELP IN THIS STORM...


WHAT... WHAT CAN WE DO?
MAYBE MR. WAKABAYASHI CAN GO GET HELP?

MR. WAKABAYASHI!
CAN YOU HEAR US, MR. WAKABAYASHI!

MR. WAKABAYASHI!!

EVEN AFTER SEVERAL DAYS...
HURRICANE NO. 2 DID NOT RELENT.


EEEEEOOOO
OOOH... OOOH...
IT HURTS!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, DEAR?

WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING! HIS LIFE'S IN DANGER!

MOM ...
I THINK IT'S BECAUSE OF THIS HOUSE!

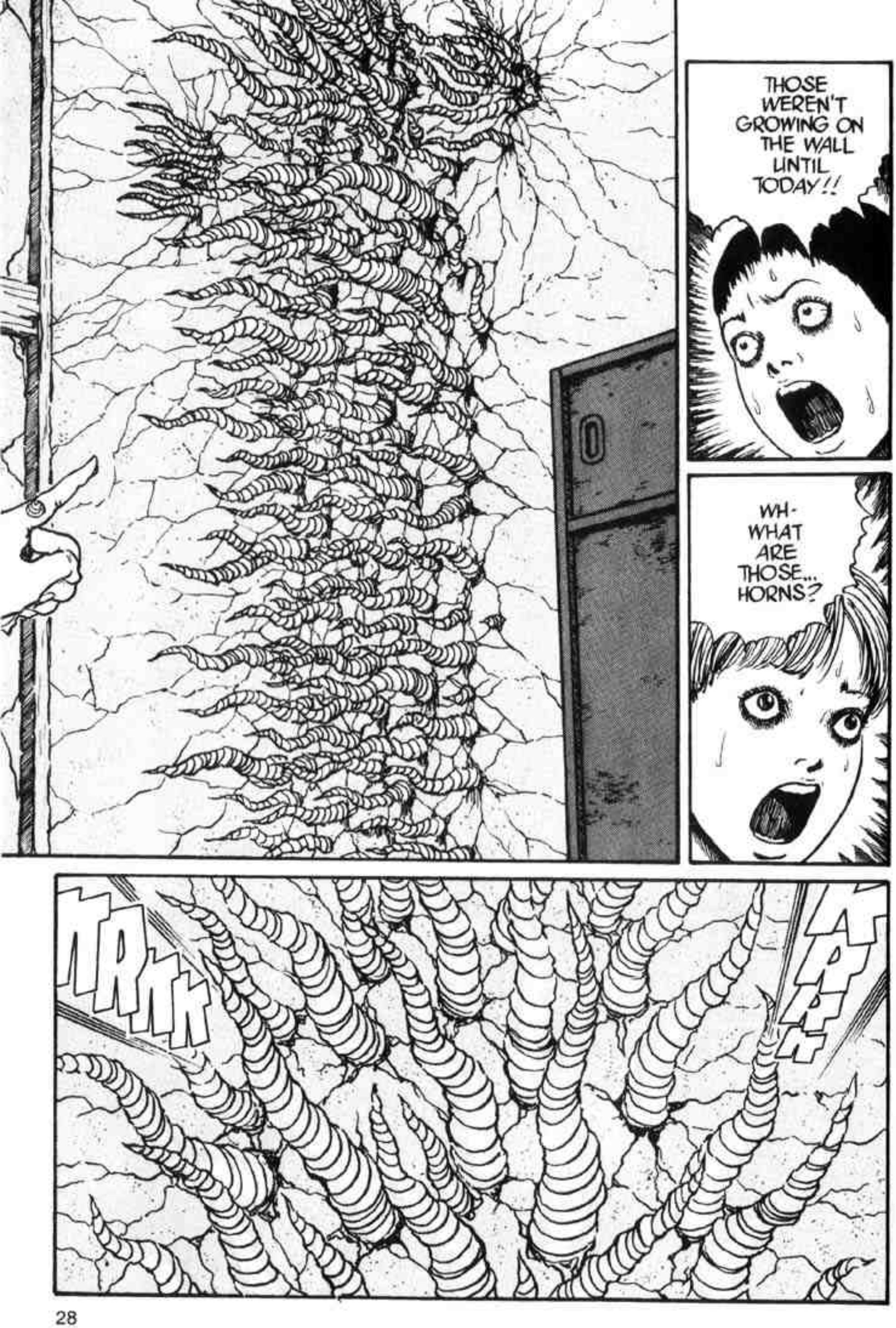
WHAT?!

THE VIRUS, OR WHATEVER IT IS, MIGHT BE ALL OVER THE FLOORS AND WALLS OF THIS ROW HOUSE.
WE HAVE TO GO, EVEN IF IT'S NOT SAFE OUTSIDE!

I... I'M GOING TO CALL FOR HELP!
S-STOP ...KIRIE!

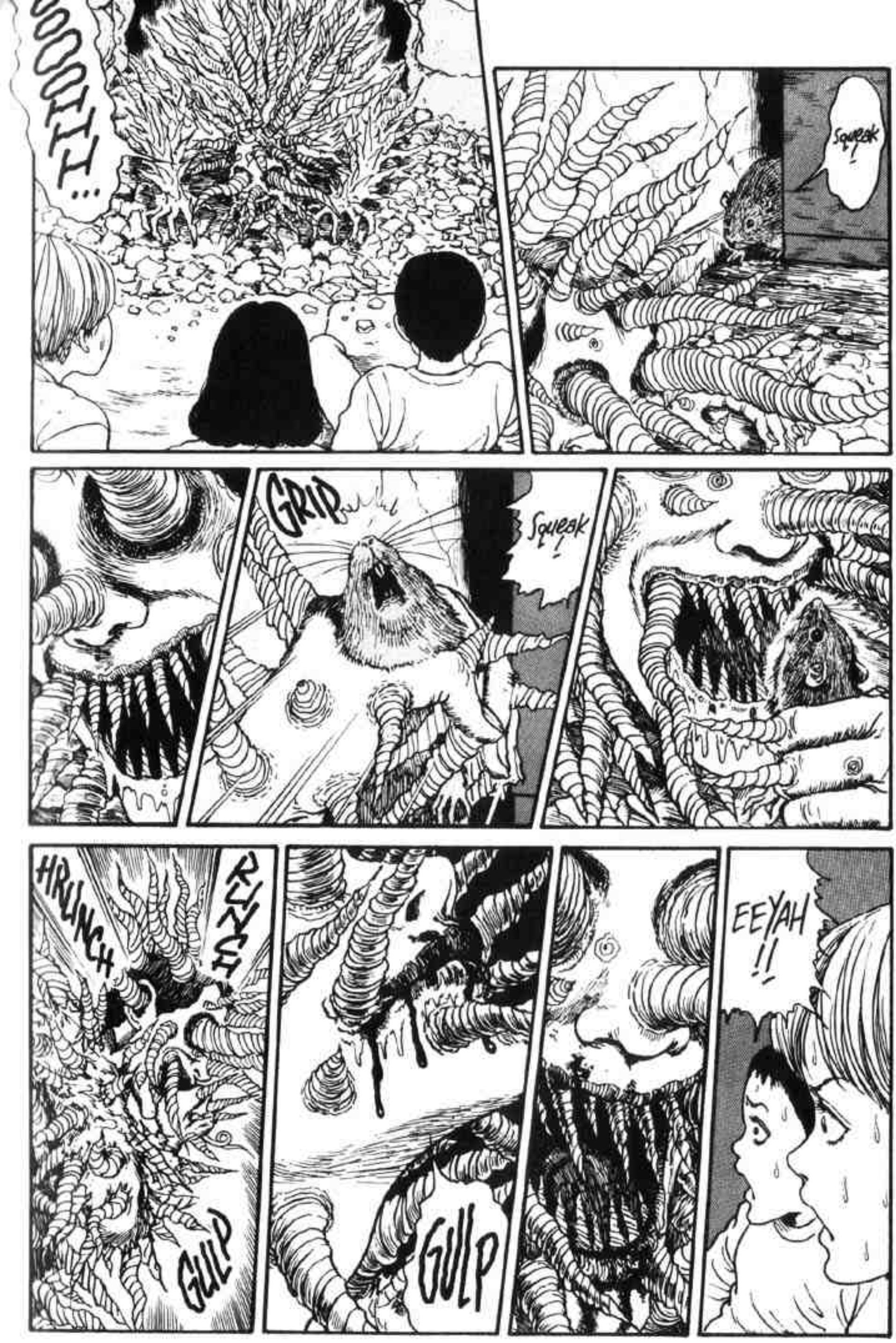
YOU WON'T MAKE IT!
THE WIND'S TOO STRONG!

LOOK!
WHAT'S THAT?

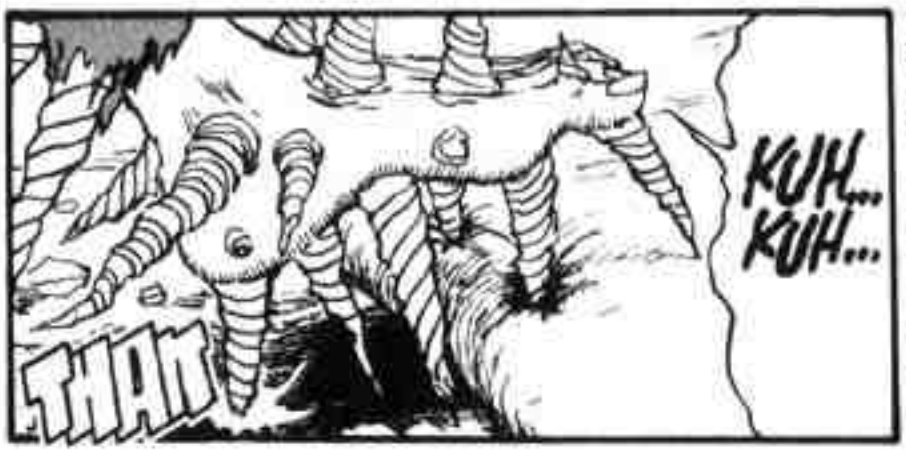

THOSE WEREN'T GROWING ON THE WALL UNTIL TODAY!!
WH-WHAT ARE THOSE... HORNS?
TRRTK
ATATATA

NAAK
BAAK
BAK
BAK
SRASHA
RRUMBLE
EEEYA!

MI-MISTER ...
...WAKA-BAYASHI?!


HHOOOOH!...
Squeak
GRIP
Squeak
HRUNCH
RUNCH
GULP
GULP
EEYAH !!

HUMOH!


KUH... KUH...
THAT

AAAH!

KUH... KIRIE...
KI... KIRIE...

KIRIE... GET OUT!
GET OUT! RUN!

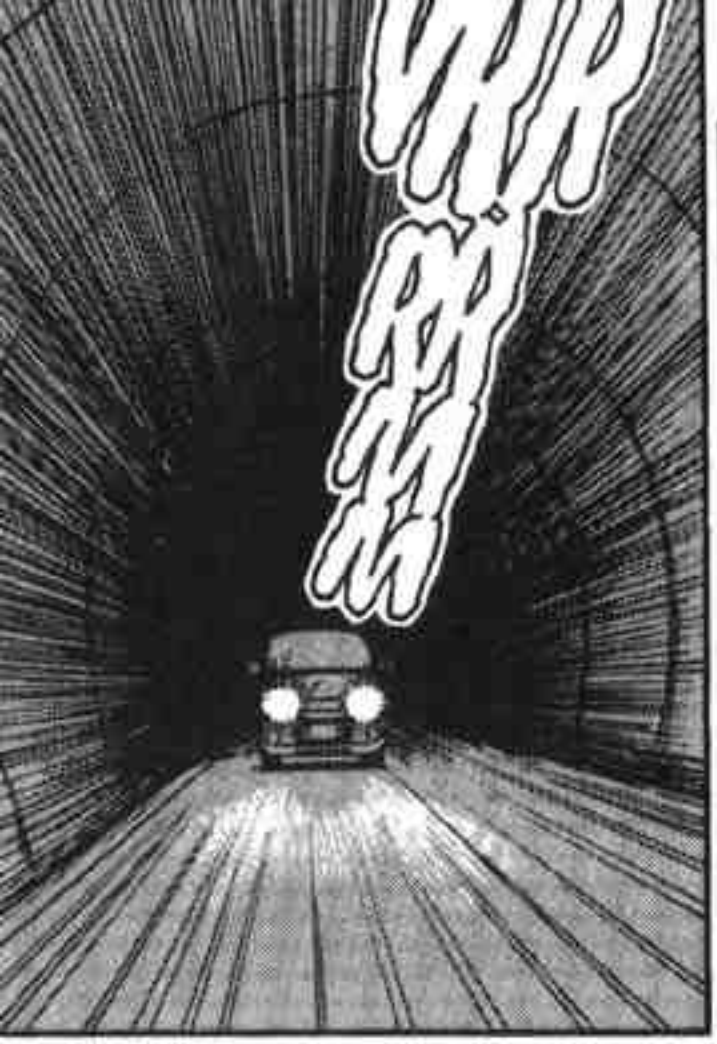
SHF

AIEE!

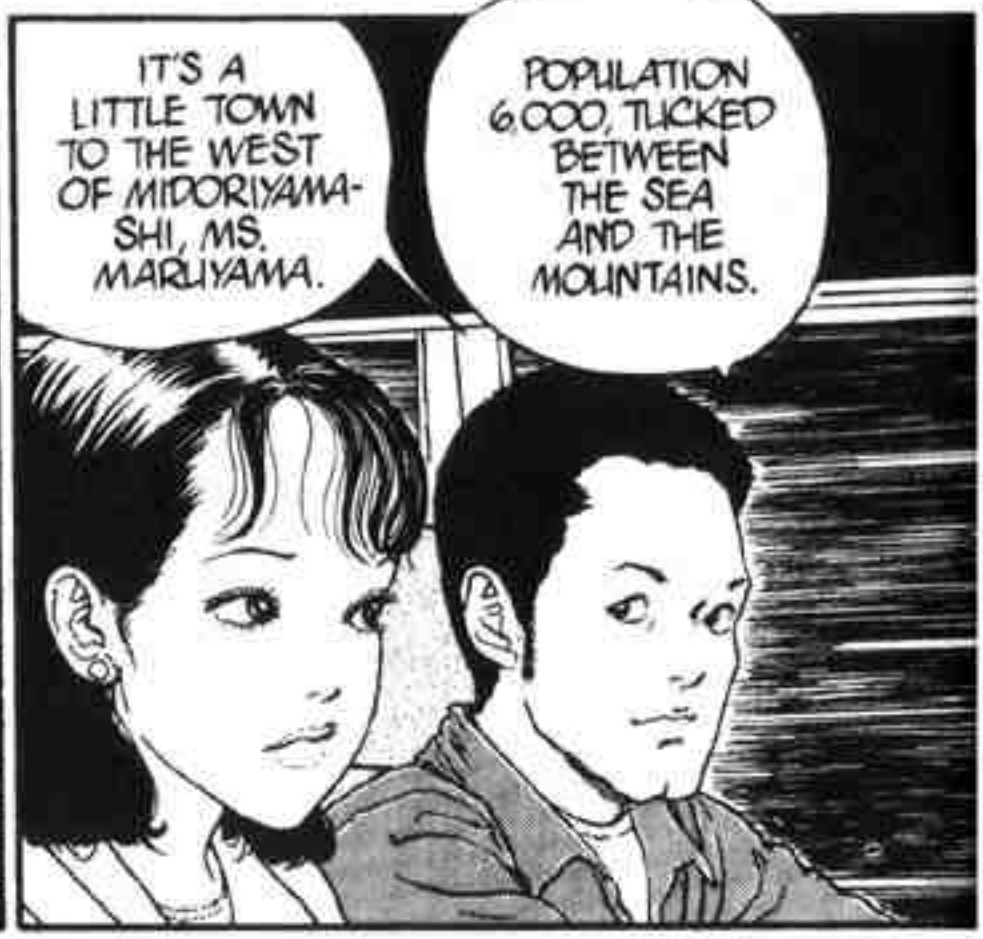
EEYAA!
FWOOM
SH
SLIP
UKK...
TUP
NOT LONG AFTER, HURRICANE NO.2 AND ITS ROAR WERE SUCKED INTO DRAGONFLY POND.
WE CRAWLED OUR WAY OUT OF THE ROW HOUSE, AND OUR SKIN DISEASE SOON WENT AWAY.

CHAPTER 14

BUTTERFLIES


VRR!

SO WHAT KIND OF PLACE IS THIS KURÔZU-CHO, ANYWAY?


IT'S A LITTLE TOWN TO THE WEST OF MIDORIYAMA-SHI, MS. MARUYAMA.
POPULATION 6,000, TUCKED BETWEEN THE SEA AND THE MOUNTAINS.

I WISH THERE WAS MORE I COULD TELL YOU.
AFTER HURRICANE NO. 1 AND NO. 2 THERE WERE REPORTS ON THE DAMAGE...

BUT WITH THE ONSLAUGHT OF HURRICANES 3,4,5 AND 6, WE'VE LOST ALL CONTACT WITH THE INSIDE.
THERE COULD BE ANYTHING GOING ON IN THERE.

WE CAN'T BE THE FIRST REPORTERS TO GO IN. I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OTHERS?
WELL, THAT'S WHAT THEY SENT US TO FIND OUT.

THERE IT IS.
AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL.

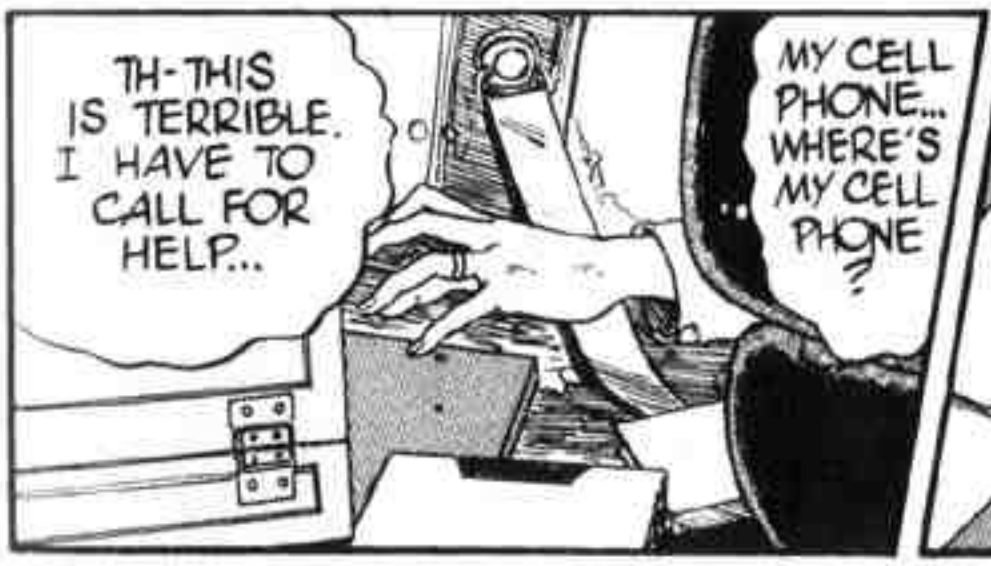
VRRR

VRRR
RRRRRR
WHAM
WOOO

Urrgh...

Urr...

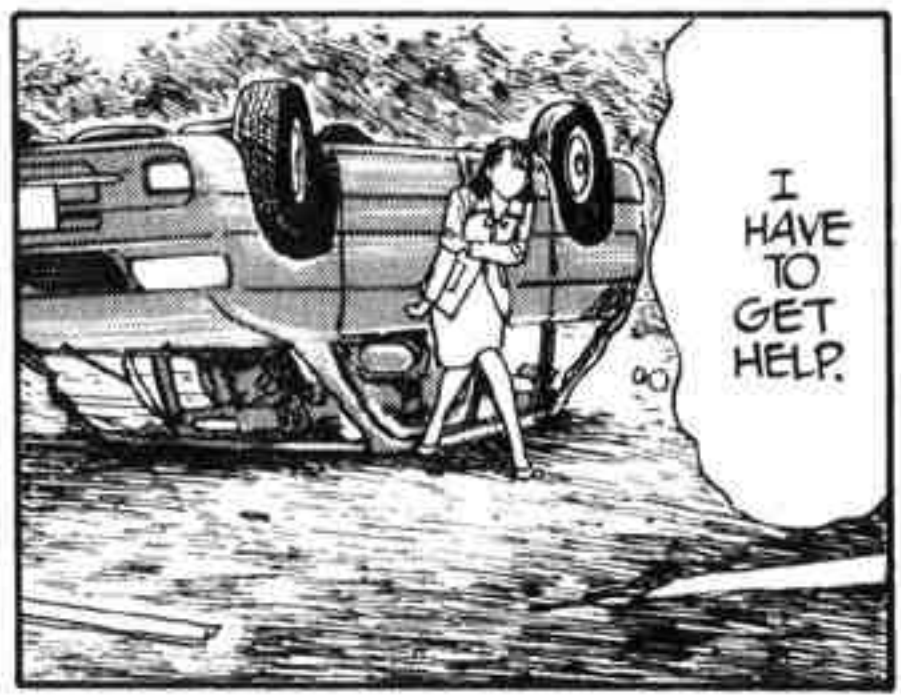
MR. ENDO!
MR. SAKA-GAMI!


TH-THIS IS TERRIBLE. I HAVE TO CALL FOR HELP...
MY CELL PHONE... WHERE'S MY CELL PHONE?

beep beep

...

THAT'S WEIRD, NO SIGNAL.
WHAT DO I DO NOW?


I HAVE TO GET HELP.

huff
huff

IT'S STRANGE ...
huf
THE AIR FEELS HEAVY...

OR IS IT JUST ME?
huf
IT'S NOT THAT COLD, BUT I CAN SEE MY BREATH ...

Oh! MORE OVER-TURNED CARS!

BUT WHY IS IT SO QUIET?

I SHOULD BE NEAR THE TOWN...

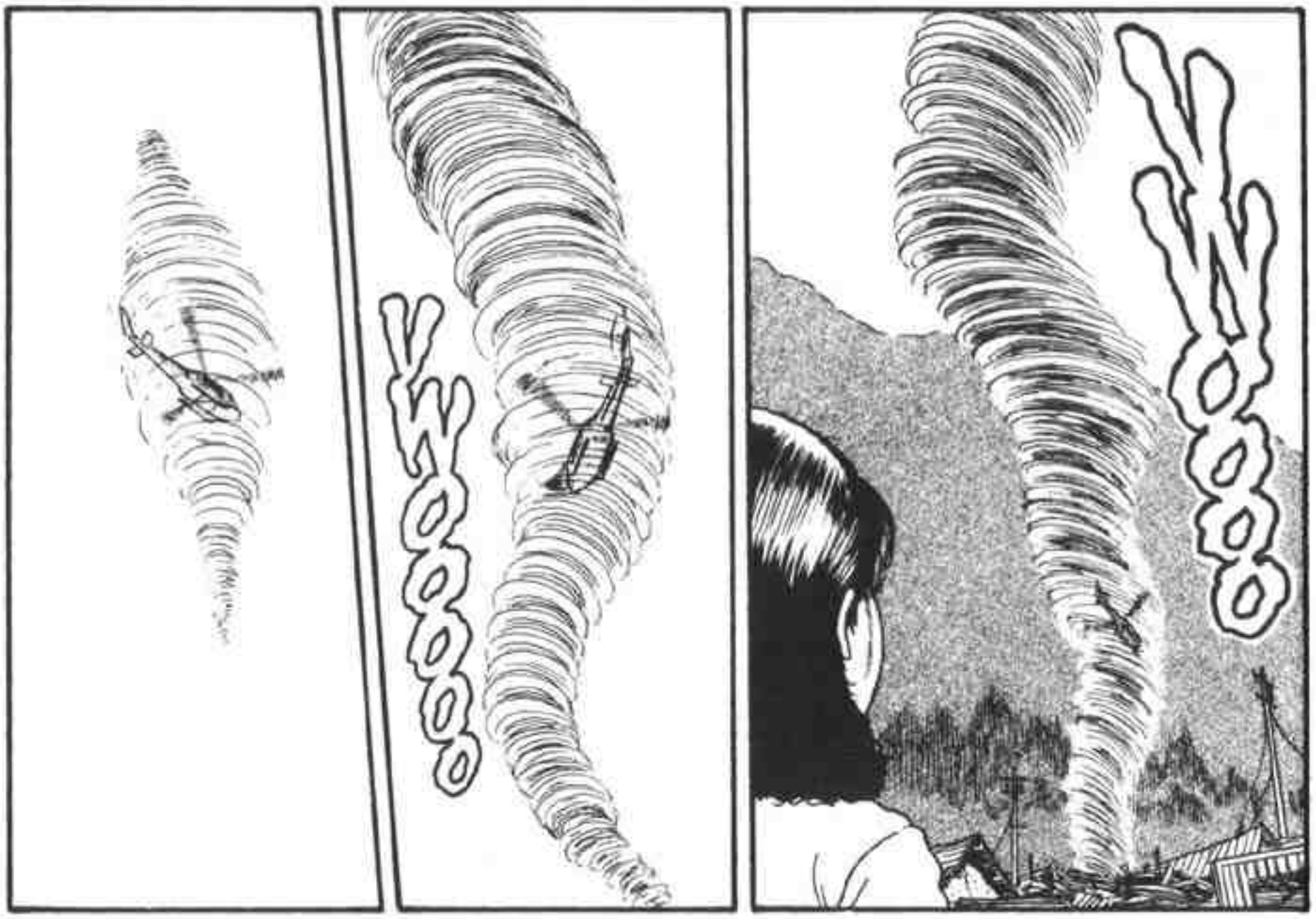
WHAT?!

THERE'S NOTHING BUT RUBBLE.
DID THE HURRI-CANES DO THIS?

WUPWUPWUPWUP

PUPUPUPUP
IT'S A TV HELICOPTER.

Ah!

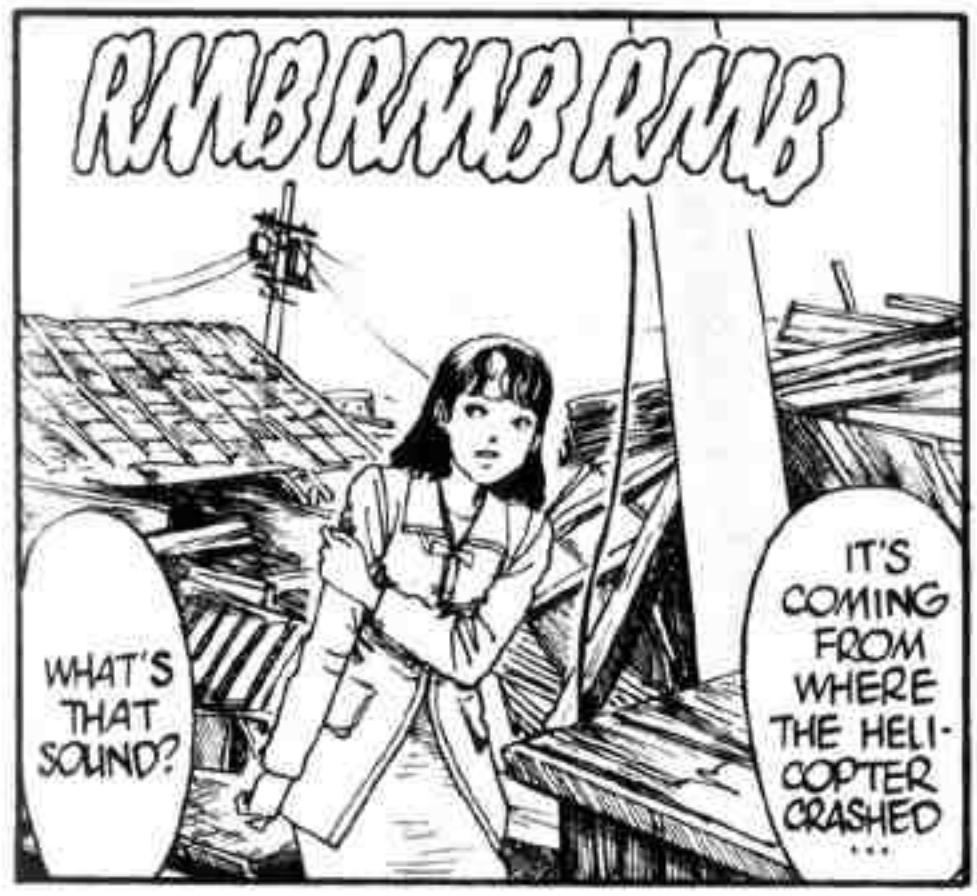

WOOOOO
WOOOOO

SHPASHHH
IT CRASHED!
THAT WAS WATER SPLASHING UP...
IT MUST HAVE FALLEN INTO A LAKE.
AWFUL, AWFUL...
I HAVE TO FIND HELP...
I HAVE TO FIND HELP...

AHH!

BLLLL

WHEN I GET CLOSER, I CAN SEE THE RUINS ARE FULL OF CORPSES...
IS ANYONE LEFT ALIVE?

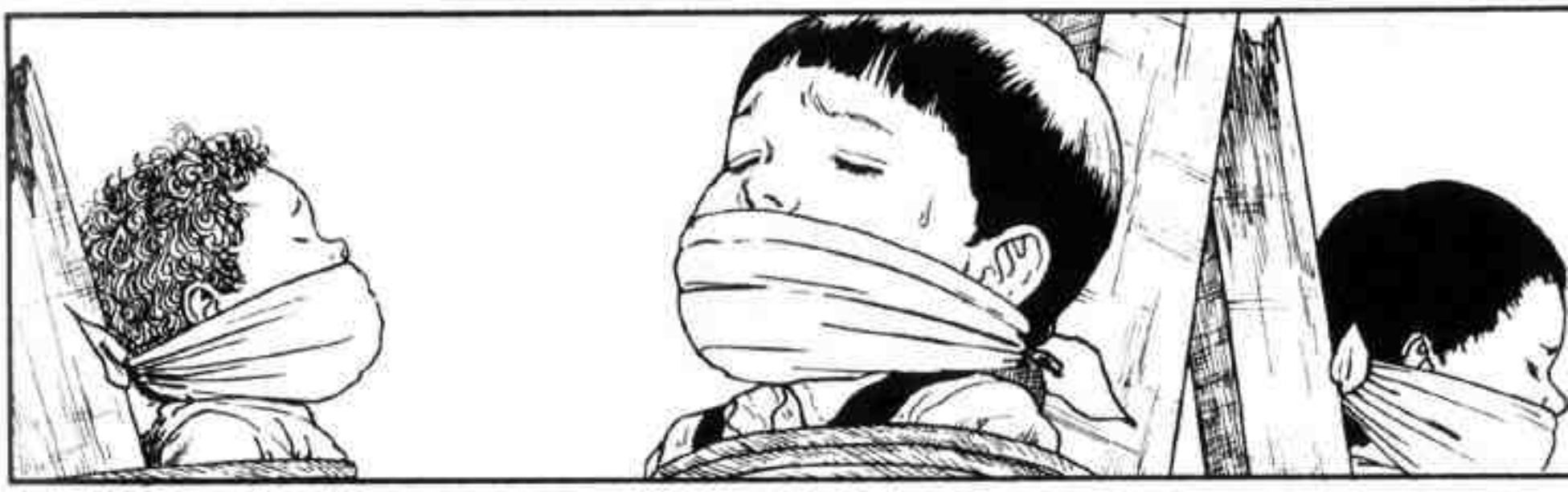

RMB RMB RMB
WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
IT'S COMING FROM WHERE THE HELI-COPTER CRASHED ...

RMBRR
STD

RMB

WH-WHAT IS THIS LAKE?

RMB RMB RMB RMB



KLP KLP
OH MY GOD!
WHY ARE YOU KIDS TIED UP?

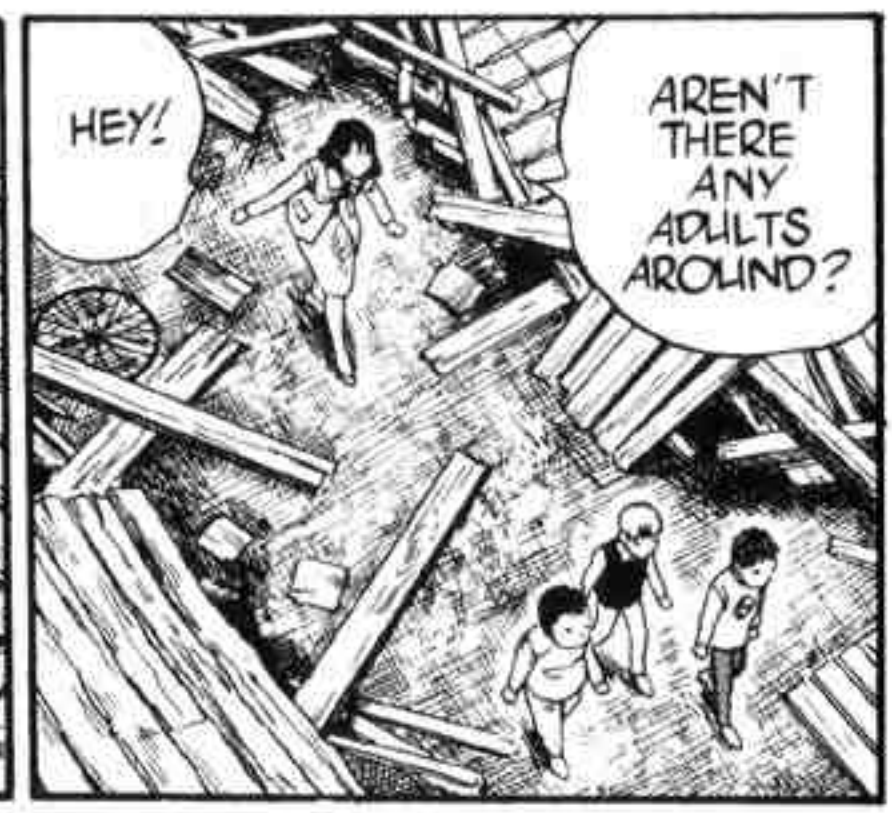
I'LL SET YOU FREE.
RMB RMB

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN TIED UP?
WHO DID THIS TO YOU?

...

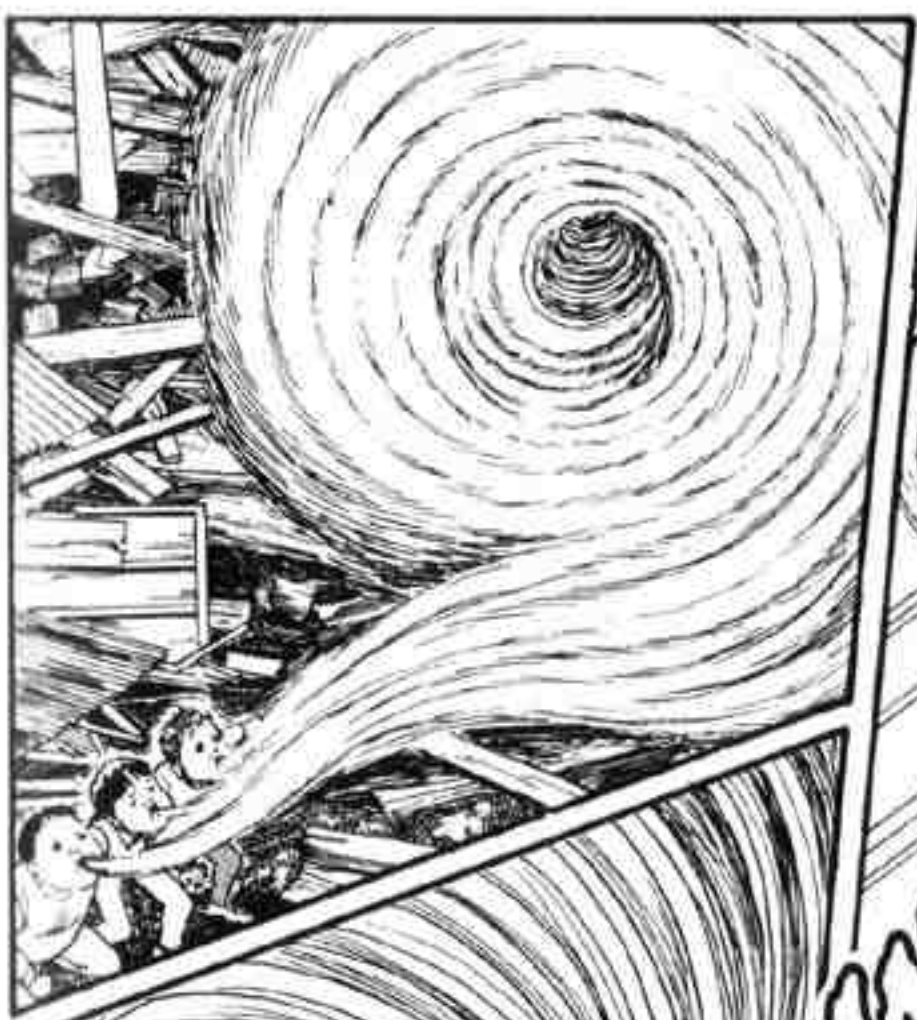
WAIT!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?


HEY!
AREN'T THERE ANY ADULTS AROUND?

WAIT A MINUTE!

Heh Heh Heh Heh

FWOOOOOOOO



WHOOOOO

WHIRRRRRRR
RRRR

WHIRRRRRRR
FRAUTH
KYA HAHA!
KAKRUNCH
YAHA HAHA!
SA
KA
CRASH

WHOOOOO

WHAT IN THE WORLD...?

HEY, IT'S THAT WOMAN FROM BEFORE.
Ah, SHE SUCKS.

LET'S GET RID OF HER.
YEAH!

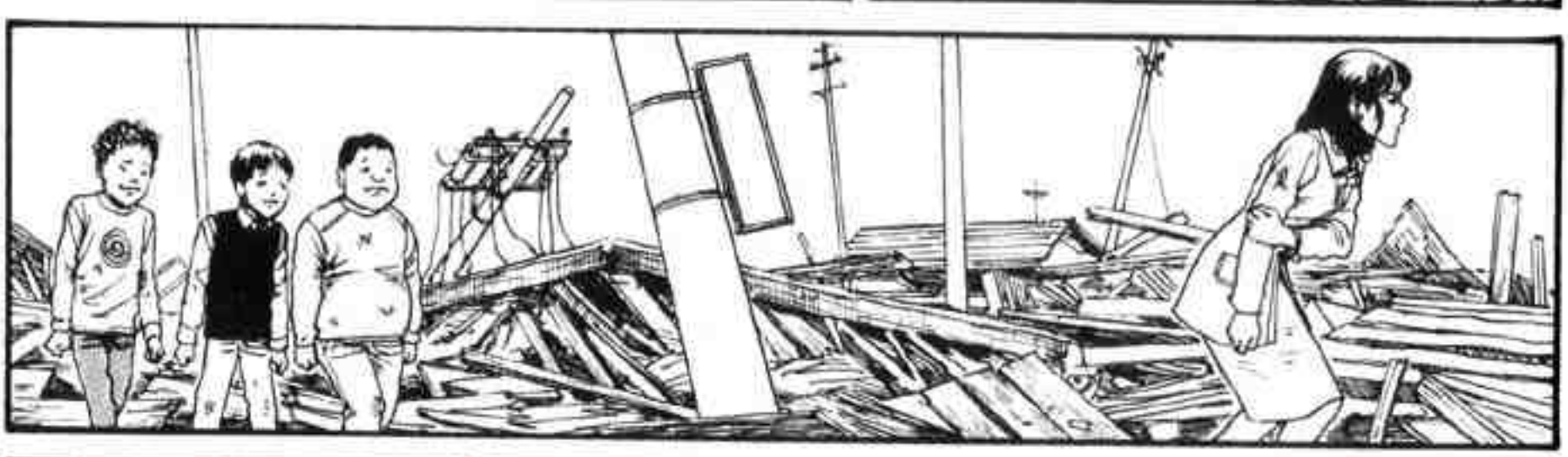
THIS'LL DO IT.

WH

WOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
HM?!

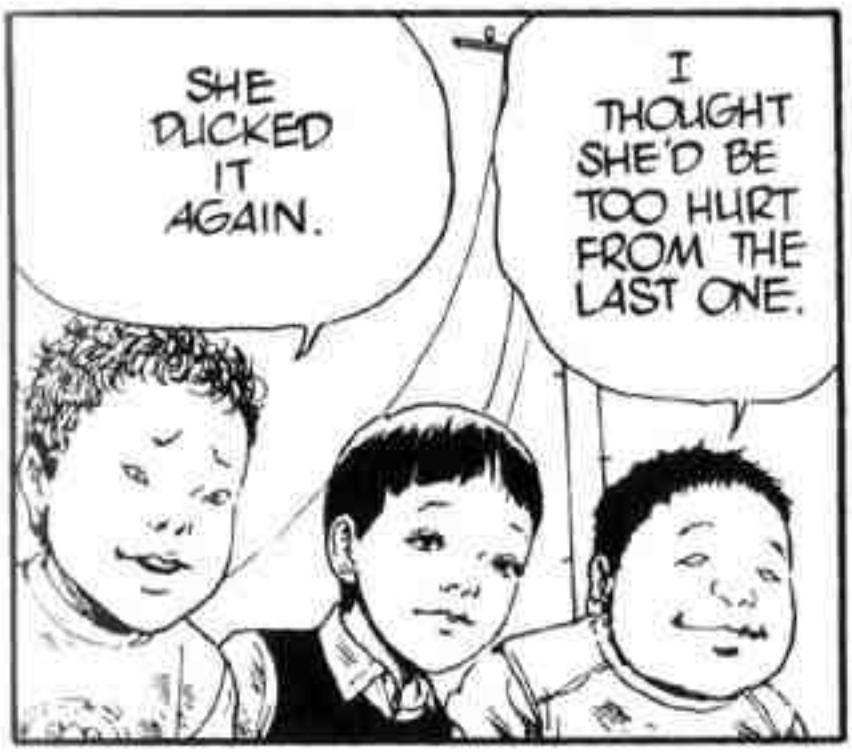
SHE'S GETTING AWAY.
FOLLOW HER. FOLLOW HER SLOWLY...

DON'T RUN OR IT'LL MAKE A TWISTER BEHIND US AND...
YEAH, YEAH.



WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THEM?

FUUUUU


SHE DUCKED IT AGAIN.
I THOUGHT SHE'D BE TOO HURT FROM THE LAST ONE.

WH-WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO?!
GET AWAY FROM ME!

NOW WE'LL FINISH HER OFF!

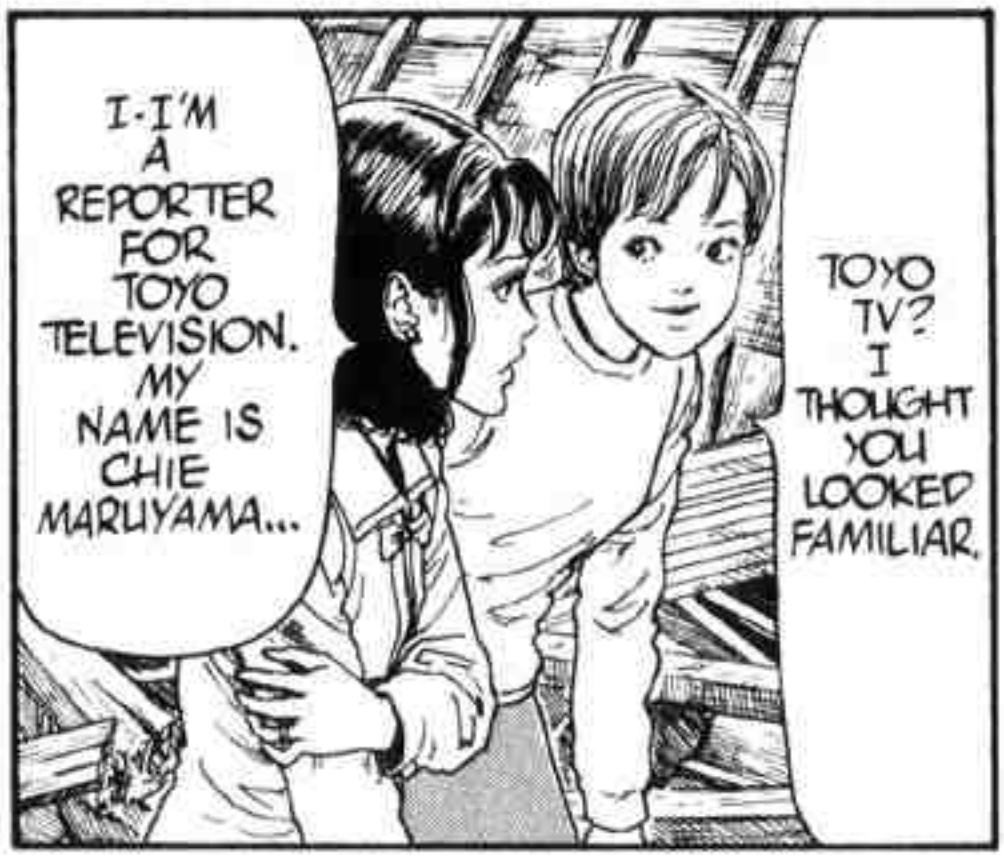
NO!

WHIRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

...

EYAA!

YOU LOOK HURT...CAN YOU WALK?
MITSUO, SLOW DOWN!


I-I'M A REPORTER FOR TOYO TELEVISION. MY NAME IS CHIE MARUYAMA...
TOYO TV? I THOUGHT YOU LOOKED FAMILIAR.

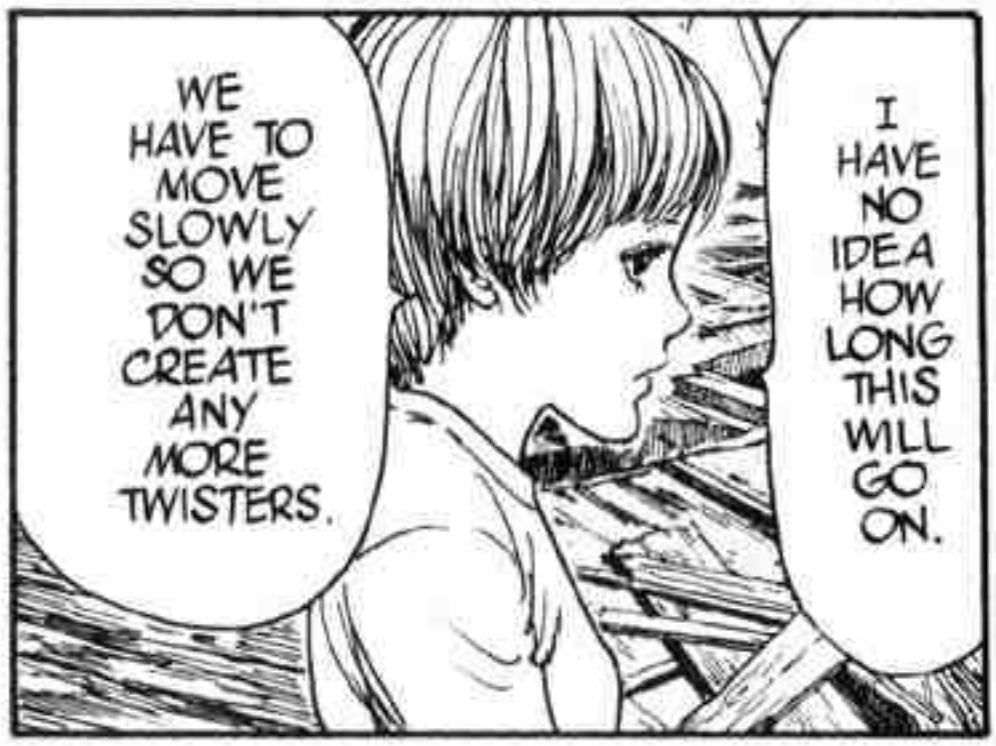
I'M KIRIE GOSHIMA.
THIS IS MY BROTHER MITSUO. RIGHT NOW WE'RE LOOKING FOR FOOD.

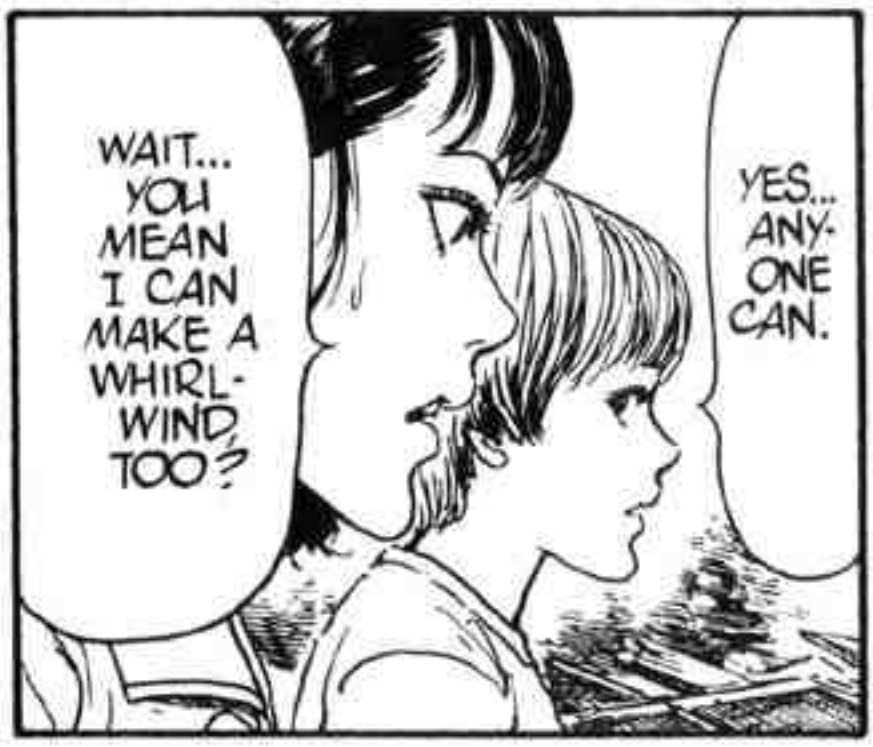
I'M REALLY CONFUSED.
WHAT... WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE?
SSHHH! YOU'RE MORE WINDED THAN YOU THINK...

EVEN THE SLIGHTEST SUDDEN MOTION OR LOUD NOISE HERE CREATES AN IMMENSE WHIRLWIND.

THEY SAY IT'S BECAUSE OF THE FORCE, THE AIR PRESSURE, FROM THE HURRICANES SUCKED IN BY DRAGONFLY POND.

THAT LAKE SUCKED IN ALL THE HURRICANES. IT SWALLOWED ALL SIX OF THEM.
NOW IT'S A WHIRLPOOL THAT NEVER STOPS.


WE HAVE TO MOVE SLOWLY SO WE DON'T CREATE ANY MORE TWISTERS.
I HAVE NO IDEA HOW LONG THIS WILL GO ON.


WAIT... YOU MEAN I CAN MAKE A WHIRL-WIND TOO?
YES... ANY-ONE CAN.

SO PLEASE KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN.
EVEN YOUR BREATH CAN CREATE ONE.

IM-POSSIBLE ...THEN I WAS RES-PONSIBLE ...
FOR BLOWING THOSE KIDS AWAY?

HOW HORRIBLE... I DID SOMETHING HORRIBLE...THOSE KIDS ARE PROBABLY...
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

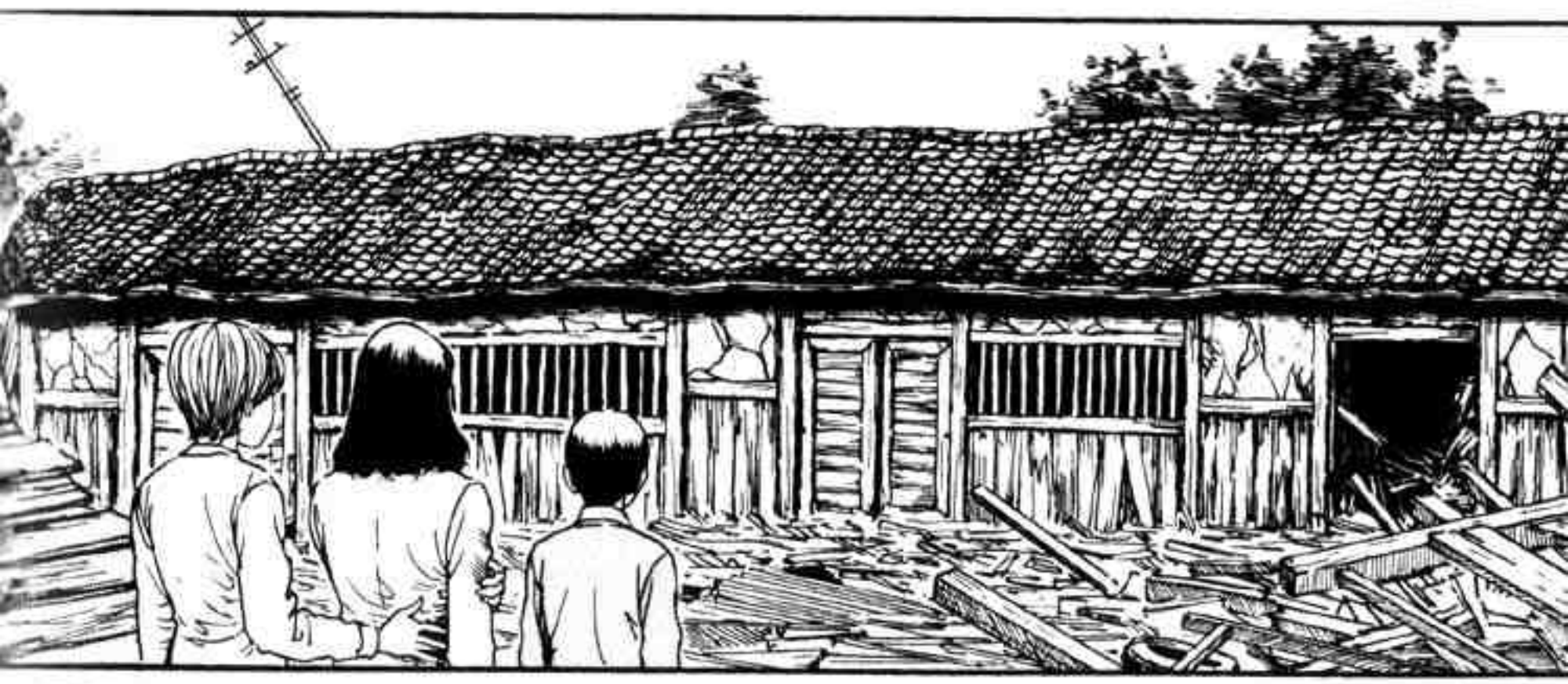
WHAT'S WRONG ?
THOSE KIDS... AND MY CREW... AND THAT HELICOPTER...

PLEASE DON'T CRY. WE'LL TAKE YOU TO OUR PLACE.
IT'S TOO DANGER-OUS TO BE OUTSIDE.

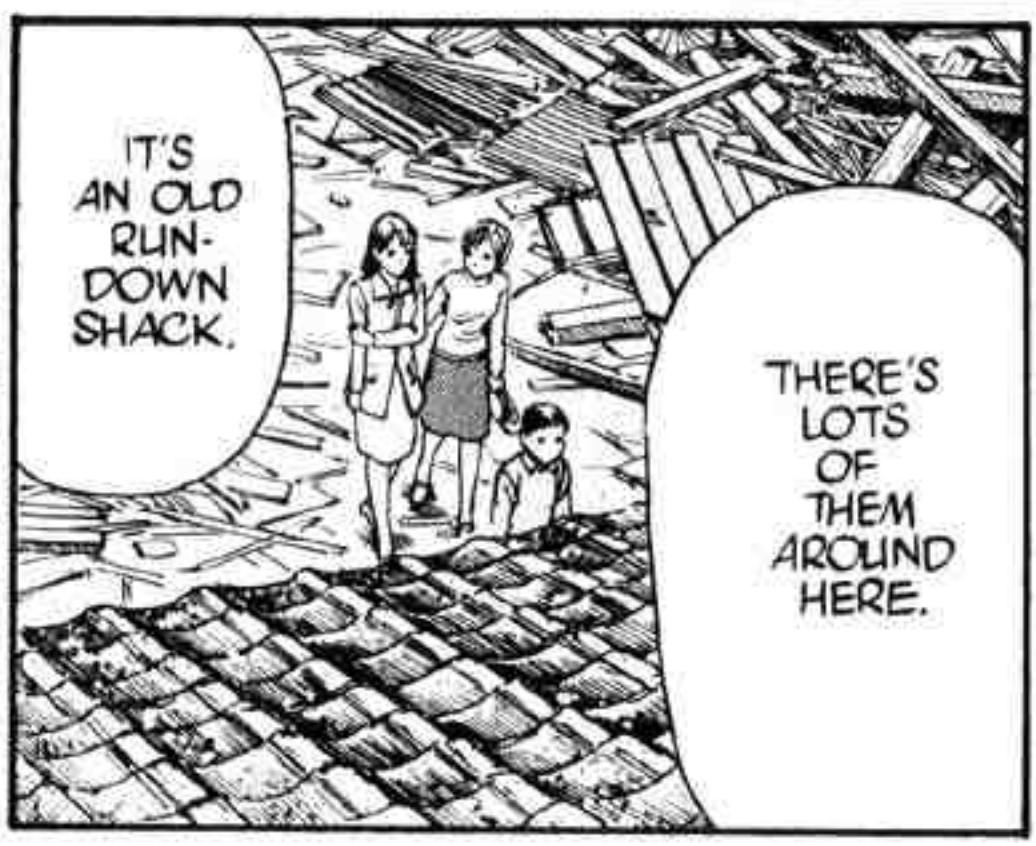
WE'RE ALMOST THERE.

THIS IS LIKE THE "BUTTERFLY EFFECT"...
Hm?

"A BUTTERFLY FLAPPING ITS WINGS CAN CAUSE A HURRICANE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD."
THAT'S WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THIS TOWN.



THIS IS THE PLACE WHERE WE LIVE.
YOU'D BETTER COME IN.


IT'S AN OLD RUN-DOWN SHACK.
THERE'S LOTS OF THEM AROUND HERE.

FOR WHATEVER REASON, THOUGH, THIS BUILDING DIDN'T SUFFER ANY DAMAGE.
CREEK
THE OTHER ROW HOUSES ARE FINE, TOO. IT'S STRANGE BECAUSE THEY WERE IN TERRIBLE SHAPE TO BEGIN WITH.

WE'RE HOME.

COME ON IN.
YOU'LL BE SAFE HERE. UNLIKE OUR OLD PLACE, IT'S NOT INFECTED.
Infected?

KIRIE... DID YOU BRING OVER A GUEST?

IT'S PRETTY CROWDED HERE BECAUSE LOTS OF PEOPLE LOST THEIR HOMES.

E-EXCUSE ME. I'M CHIE MARUYAMA OF TOYO TELEVISION ...
MY CREW WAS INJURED IN A CAR ACCIDENT OVER BY THE ROAD OUT OF TOWN.

CAN ANYONE COME WITH ME TO HELP THEM? PLEASE! ANYONE! PLEASE!

...

THAT'S AWFUL... I'LL GO WITH YOU.
SO WILL I.

IT'S USE-LESS.
THAT'S RIGHT. FORGET IT.

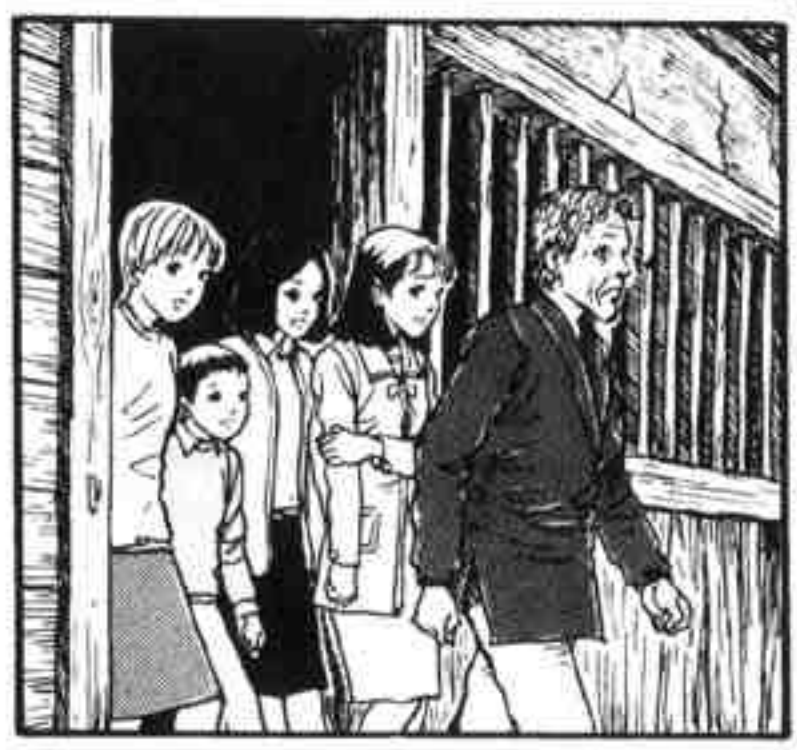
EVEN IF YOU CAME FROM OUTSIDE YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO LEAVE THIS TOWN.

OF ALL THE REPORTERS, RESCUE TEAMS, AND VOLUNTEERS WHO CAME TO HELP IN THE LAST HURRICANE...
NO ONE GOT OUT, AND PLENTY TRIED.

...
NO ONE GOT OUT?

THERE'S A TERRIFYING POWER IN THIS TOWN. IT'S SUCKING US INTO ITS SPIRAL.
EVEN THE SIGNAL FROM A CELL PHONE CAN'T GET OUT OF KURÔZU-CHO.

DON'T LISTEN TO THEM. LET'S GO.



Ah!

YOU'RE...

SO YOU'RE OKAY. WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER BOY?

HE'S DEAD.

YOU KILLED HIM!

I-I'M SO SORRY.
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING.

FWOO!

GET BACK INTO THE ROW HOUSE!

QUICK, INSIDE!

SLAM

Hah.

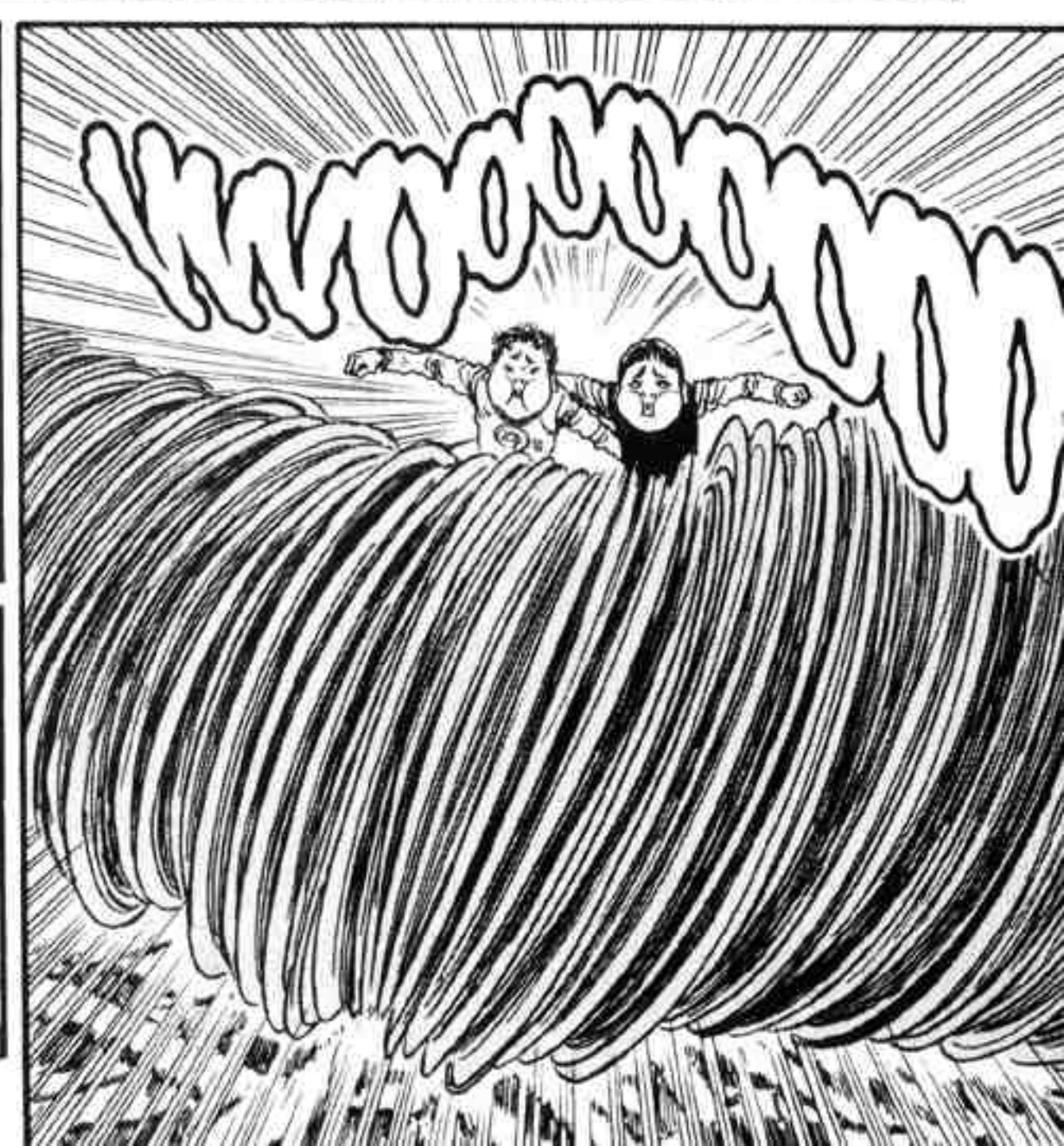
DAMN BRATS! I THOUGHT WE TIED THEM UP!
THEY MUST HAVE GOTTEN FREE SOME-HOW!

WE CAN'T LIFT A FINGER AGAINST THEM!
EVER SINCE THEY WERE ORPHANED BY THE HURRICANE ...

THEY'VE BEEN ROAMING THE STREETS, BLOWING DOWN ALL THE HOUSES THEY SEE.
KIDS LIKE THEM HAVE DESTROYED HALF THIS TOWN!

WE CAN BRING THIS DUMP DOWN IN A SECOND.
YEAH.

FWOO!


WOOOOOOOOO

AAH!

THAT'S WEIRD... IT WON'T FALL APART.
EVEN THOUGH IT'S ALL RUINED?

GOD DAMN HOUSE!
THEN TAKE THIS!!

HERE WE GO!!

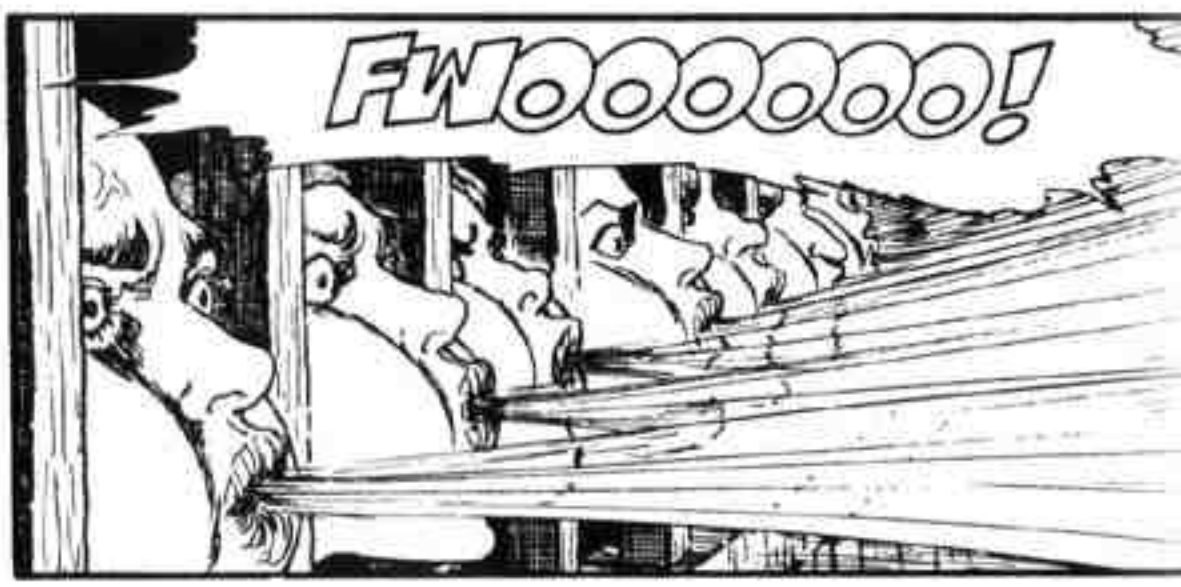
WEBOOOOOOO

WHEEEOOOOOOO

WHEEO
IT'S STILL STANDING.
I DON'T GET IT.

DAMN IT, WE CAN'T LET THEM DO THIS!
WE HAVE TO FIGHT BACK.

ALL RIGHT, THEN, BREATHE DEEP!
READY, SET--!


FWOOOOOOO!

WHEEOOOOOO

HA HA HA! LOOK AT THEM GO FLYING!

THEY DESERVED IT!

AHAHAHAHA

MAD...

MAD...

MAD...

THIS TOWN'S GOING MAD...

A MAD SPIRAL ...

SHUICHI ...

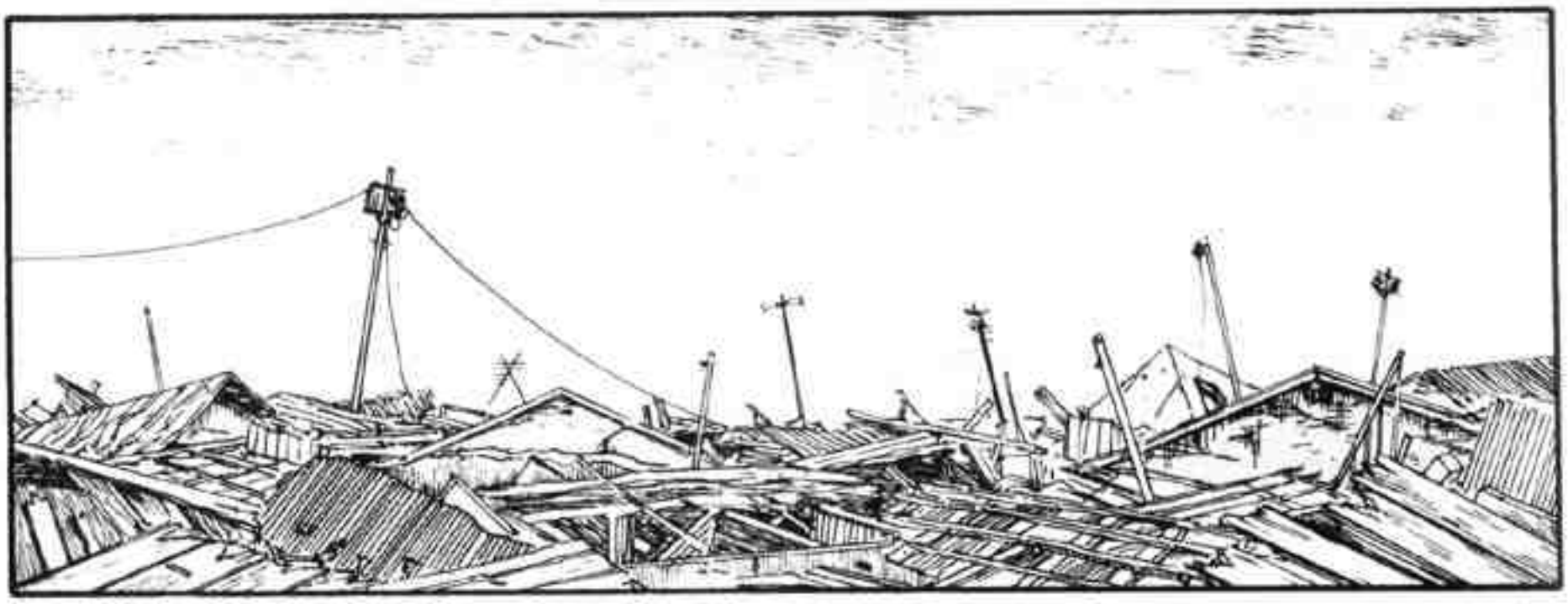
THIS TOWN WILL BE DESTROYED.

IT'S TRYING TO TURN INTO A SPIRAL...

THAT'S IT... IT'S GOING TO BECOME A SPIRAL...

ARRGH! NO WAY!
HOW DID THEY LEARN TO DO THAT?
LOOK AT THAT!
THEY'RE WHEELING AROUND LIKE BUTTERFLIES!
KYA HA HA HA HA!
KURÔZU-CHO... WAS GOING MAD.

CHAPTER
15
CHAOS



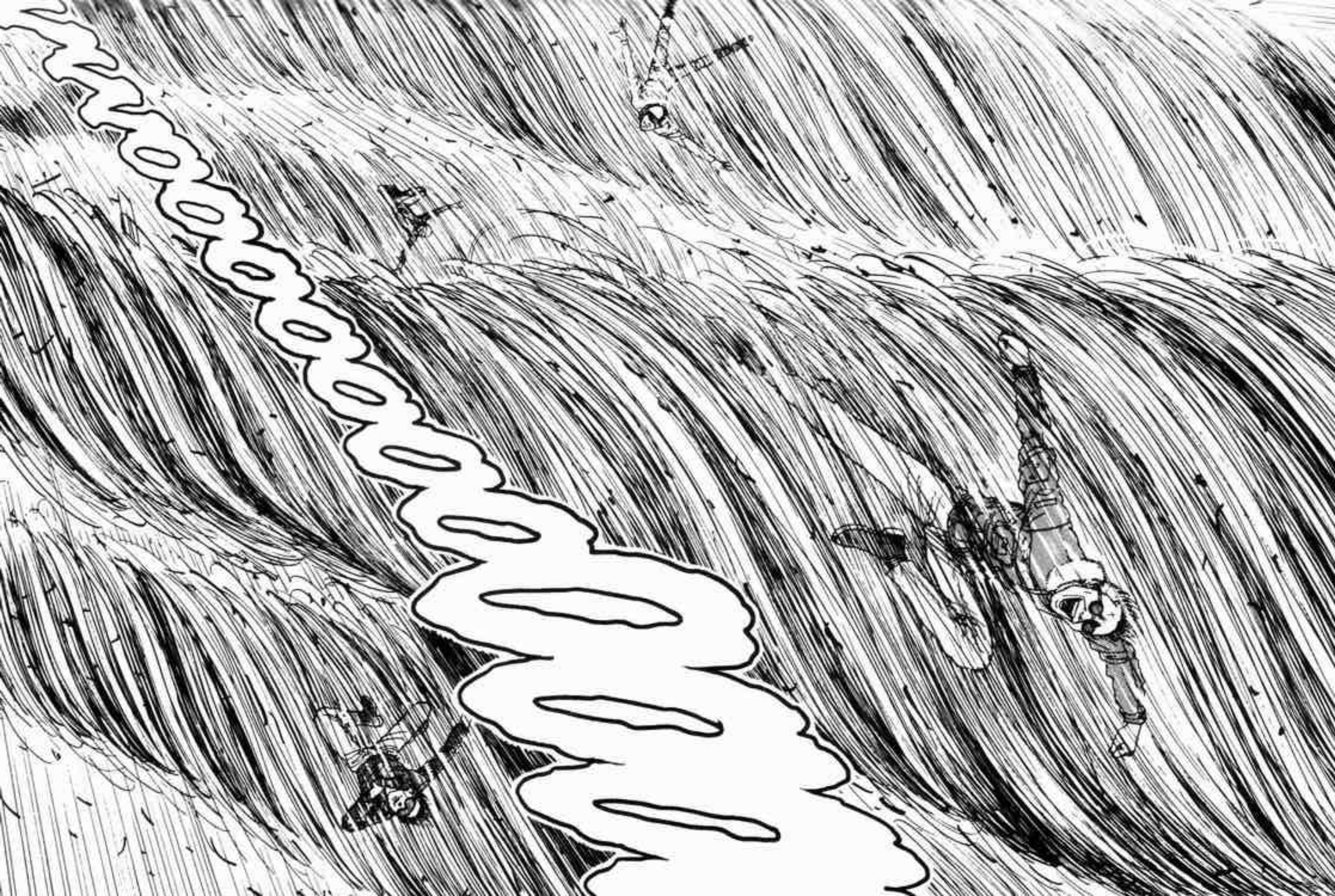
WHOOOOOO

WHOOOOO

WHOOOOOOOOO

WHOOOOOOO

WHOOOOOOOO



YEEAHHH!

Transference

KURÔZU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, DEAD AHEAD!

PREPARE FOR ATTACK!

ROGER WILCO!

UNITE AND ATTACK!

URHK
URHK

THOSE GANGS ARE OUT OF CONTROL.

A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE JOINED THEM.
THEY'RE WRECKING ALL THE CONCRETE BUILDINGS.

IT LOOKS FUN.
MAYBE I'LL JOIN, TOO.

DON'T BE STUPID MITSUO!
YOU CAN'T DO THAT!

LOTS OF PEOPLE HAVE DIED TRYING THAT.
YOU HAVE TO BE REALLY SKILLED TO RIDE A TWISTER.

ARRGH, I'M HUNGRY!

IT'S GETTING HARDER TO FIND FOOD.
HOW DO THEY GET THE ENERGY TO DO THAT?

APPARENTLY THEY STEAL FOOD SHIPMENTS FROM RELIEF AGENCIES AND RESCUE TEAMS.
THEY'RE STILL COMING, AREN'T THEY? NO ONE OUTSIDE REALIZES YOU CAN'T GET OUT...

I WISH I WAS IN THEIR GANG!
AT LEAST THEN WE'D HAVE SOMETHING TO EAT!

I TOLD YOU, DON'T BE STUPID.

BUT WE'RE *STARVING!* WHILE WE'RE SNEAKING AROUND LIKE SNAILS, TRYING NOT TO MAKE ANY WHIRL-WINDS...
THEY'RE DOING WHATEVER THEY WANT!

SHUT UP, MITSUO!
KEEP QUIET OR YOU'LL MAKE A TORNADO!

EEYAAAAH!
CHIE...?!

CHIE, I KNOW YOU HAVEN'T BEEN HERE LONG...
BUT YOU'VE GOT TO BE QUIET... YOU'VE GOT TO...
I-I'M SORRY... BUT...

LOOK OVER THERE!

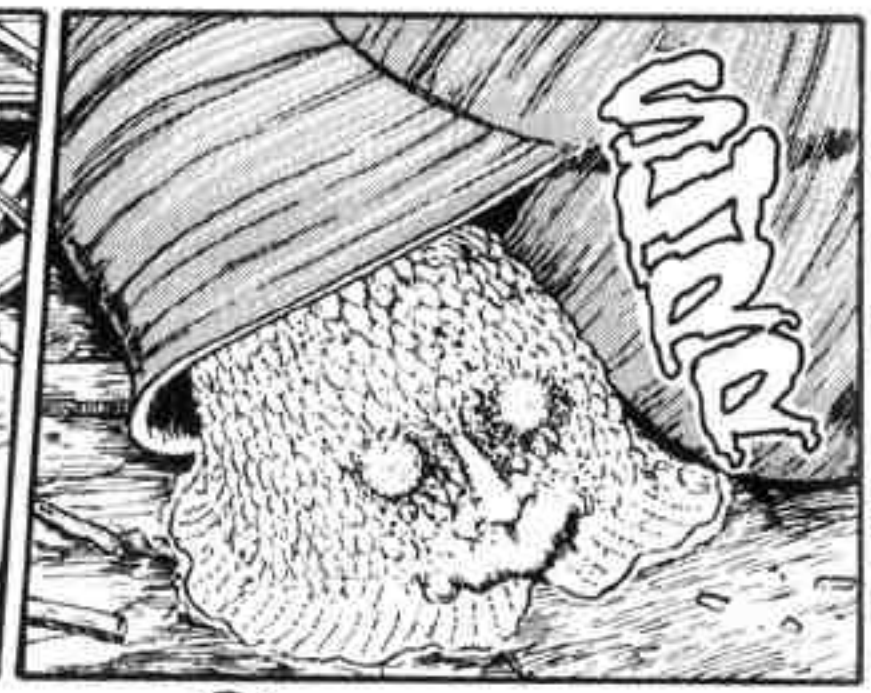
Oh, MY...
THAT'S ...

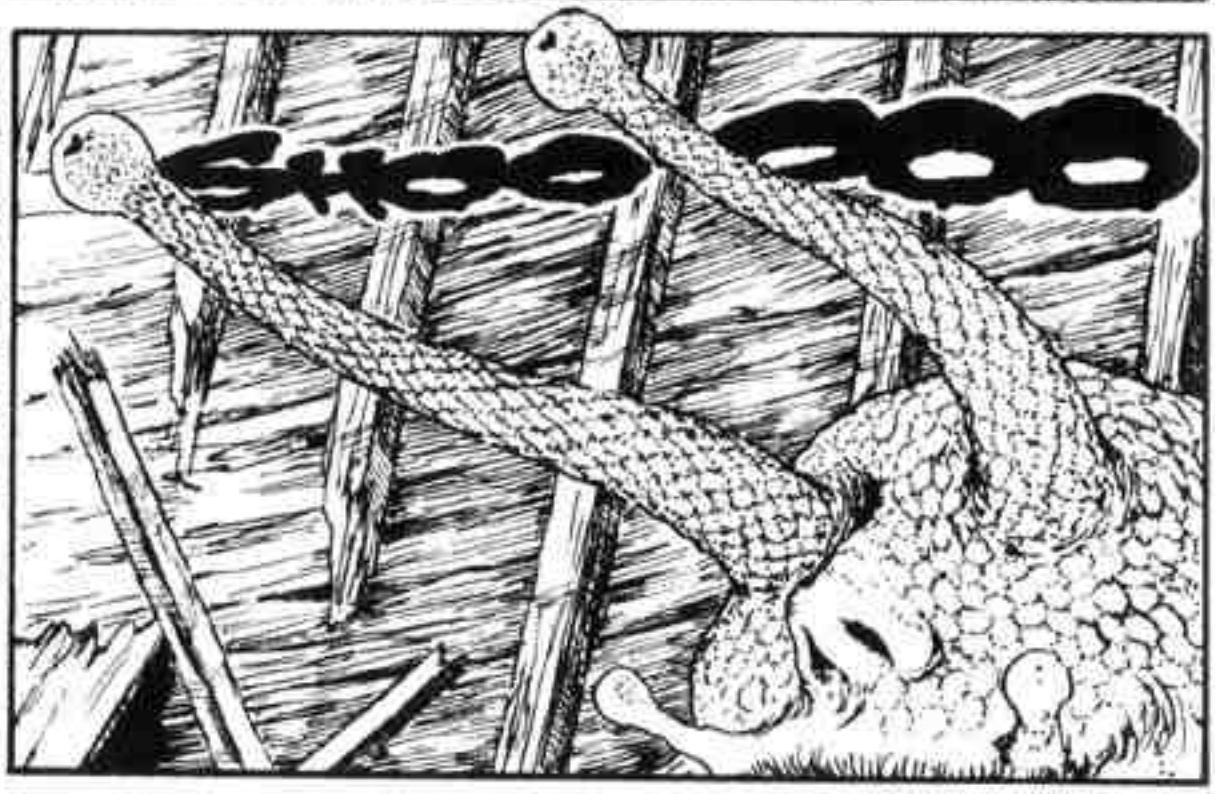
WHAT ARE THEY?
I SWEAR I SAW THEM MOV-ING...

THEY'RE SNAIL PEOPLE...

SHRARR

Oh, MY GOD!

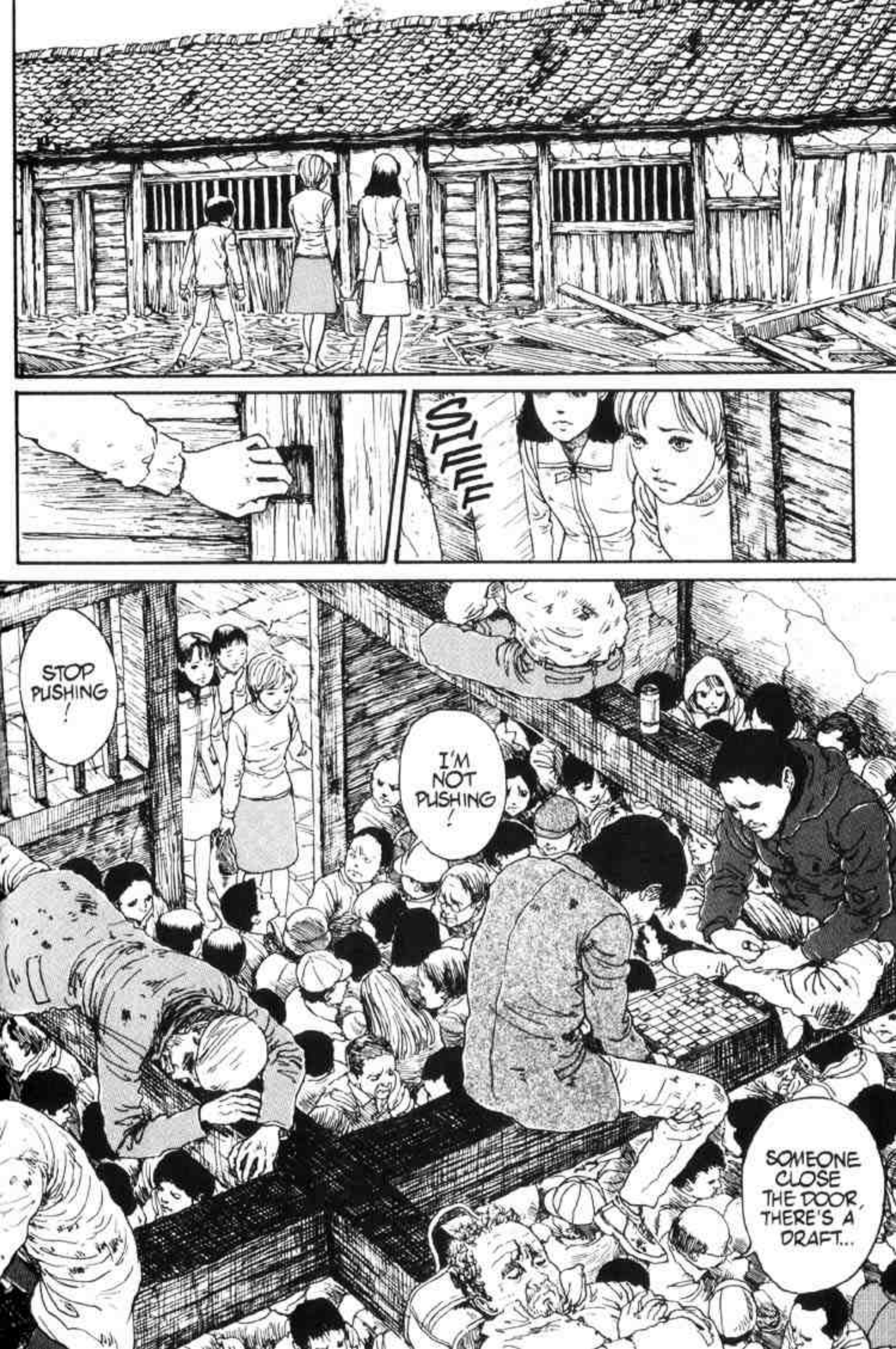

SHRR


SHOOOOOO

THEY USED TO BE HUMAN.
THE THINGS THAT HAPPEN IN THIS TOWN TURN SOME PEOPLE INTO SNAILS.

WHAT?

BUT... IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE SEEN THEM.
I WONDER WHAT BROUGHT THEM OUT.


STIFF
STOP PUSHING!
I'M NOT PUSHING!
SOMEONE CLOSE THE DOOR, THERE'S A DRAFT...

GET OUT OF HERE! THERE'S NO ROOM!

BUT WE WERE LIVING HERE BEFORE YOU PEOPLE EVEN CAME!

KIRIE... KIRIE! COME OVER HERE!
MOM!

GOD, IT'S GETTING CROWDED...

THESE OLD SHACKS ARE THE ONLY BUILDINGS THE WHIRL-WINDS CAN'T DESTROY.
AND WE CAN MOVE AND TALK NORMALLY WITHOUT BRINGING THE PLACE DOWN ON OUR HEADS.

BUT HOW MANY PEOPLE CAN IT HOLD?
IF THIS GOES ON WE'LL BE PACKED LIKE SARDINES.

IT MUST BE THE SAME IN THE OTHER ROW HOUSES.
WHAT'S THIS...?

GRIP
CRACK

LOOK WHAT I FOUND IN THE WALL!
IT WAS SEALED IN THE PLASTER!

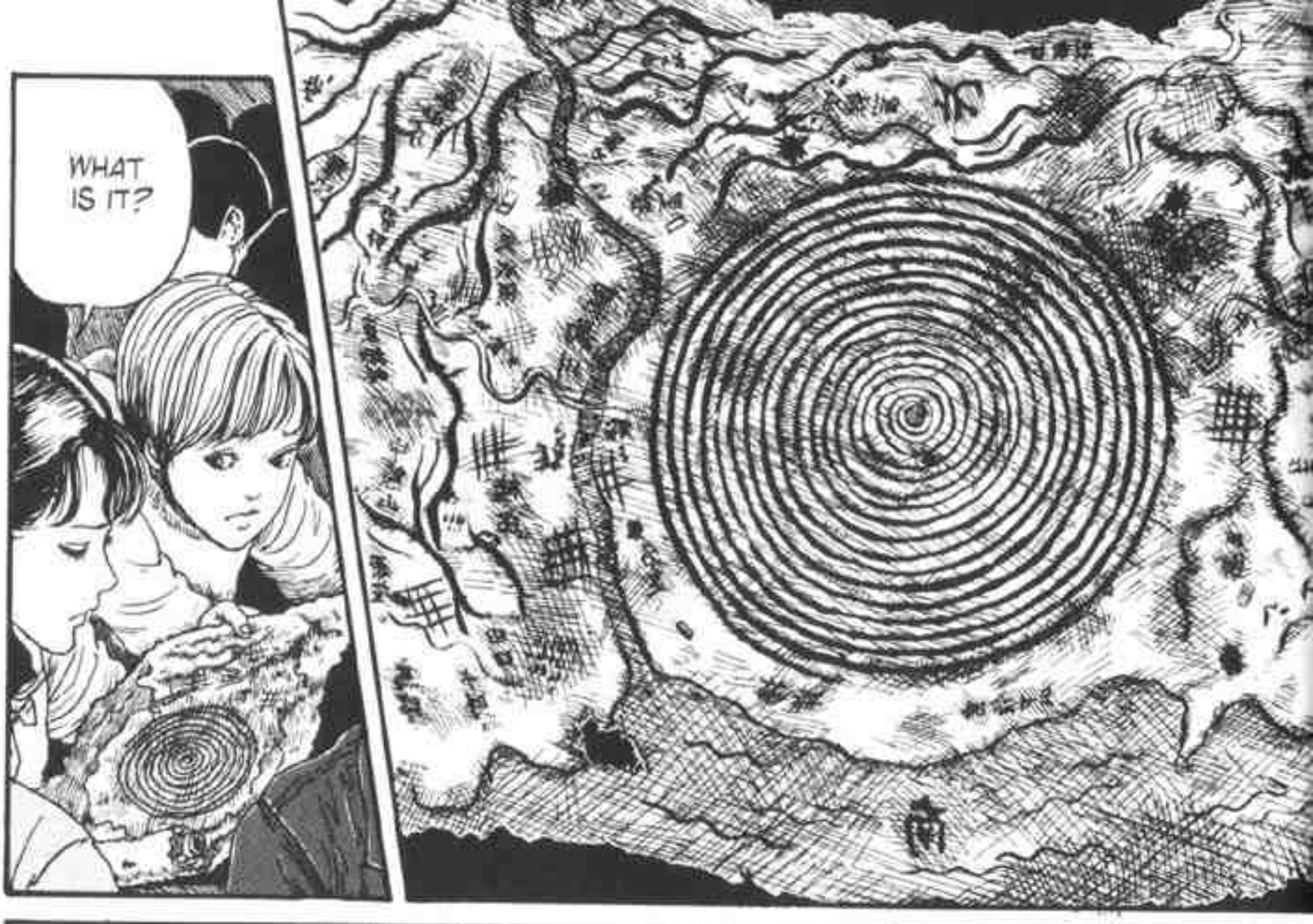
LOOKS LIKE A SCROLL!
IT MUST BE OLD. DO YOU HAVE IT?
YEAH.

Oh!

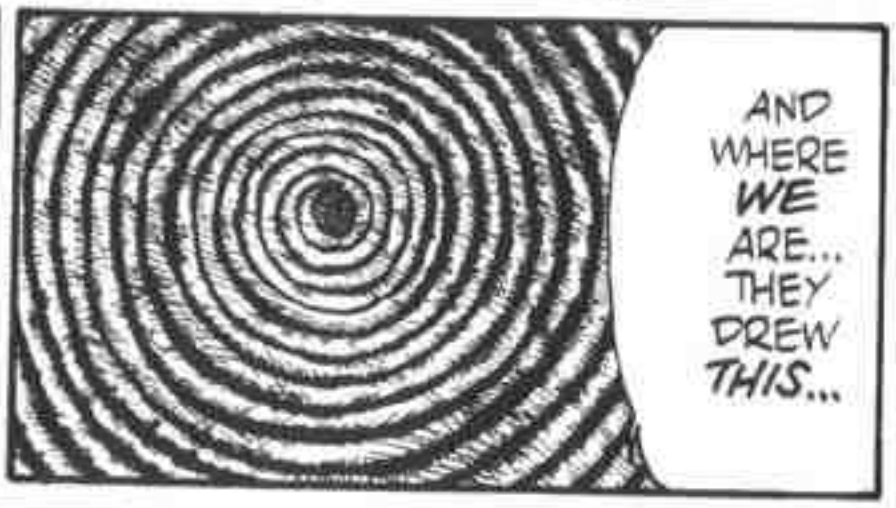
TUMP
AGH!

THAT HURT. YOU PRICK! GET DOWN FROM THERE!
YEAH? WHY DON'T YOU MAKE ME?

YOU SON OF A BITCH! I'LL KILL YOU!
YOU CAN'T TOUCH ME! SHUT UP!


WHAT IS IT?

IT LOOKS LIKE A MAP OF KURÔZU-CHO.
THAT'S MIDORIYAMA-SHI UP IN THE CORNER ...BUT THE REST'S TOO BLURRY TO READ...


AND WHERE WE ARE... THEY DREW THIS...

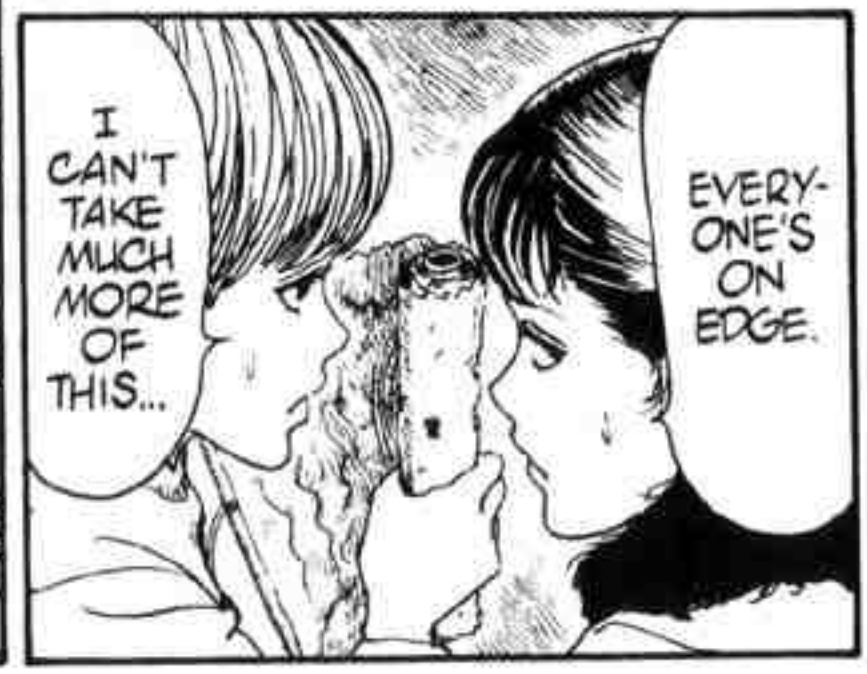
DAD... TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!

MM ...
Ahmm...

MOM... I'M WORRIED ABOUT DAD.
I KNOW.

HEY! THROW THAT UP HERE!
I'M THE ONE WHO FOUND IT, YOU THIEVES!

...


I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE OF THIS...
EVERY-ONE'S ON EDGE.

I'M HUNGRY! YOU'RE FROM THAT RED CROSS TEAM, DON'T YOU HAVE ANY MORE FOOD?
I'M SORRY, WE RAN OUT YESTERDAY.

THEN WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHY DON'T YOU JUST GET THE HELL OUT?
TH-THAT'S TOTALLY UNCALLED FOR!
Please stop...

MAD... MAD...
THIS TOWN'S GOING MAD...

YOU! ALL YOU DO IS MUMBLE TO YOURSELF! WELL IT'S MAKING ME FUCKING DEPRESSED!
DO YOU HEAR ME?

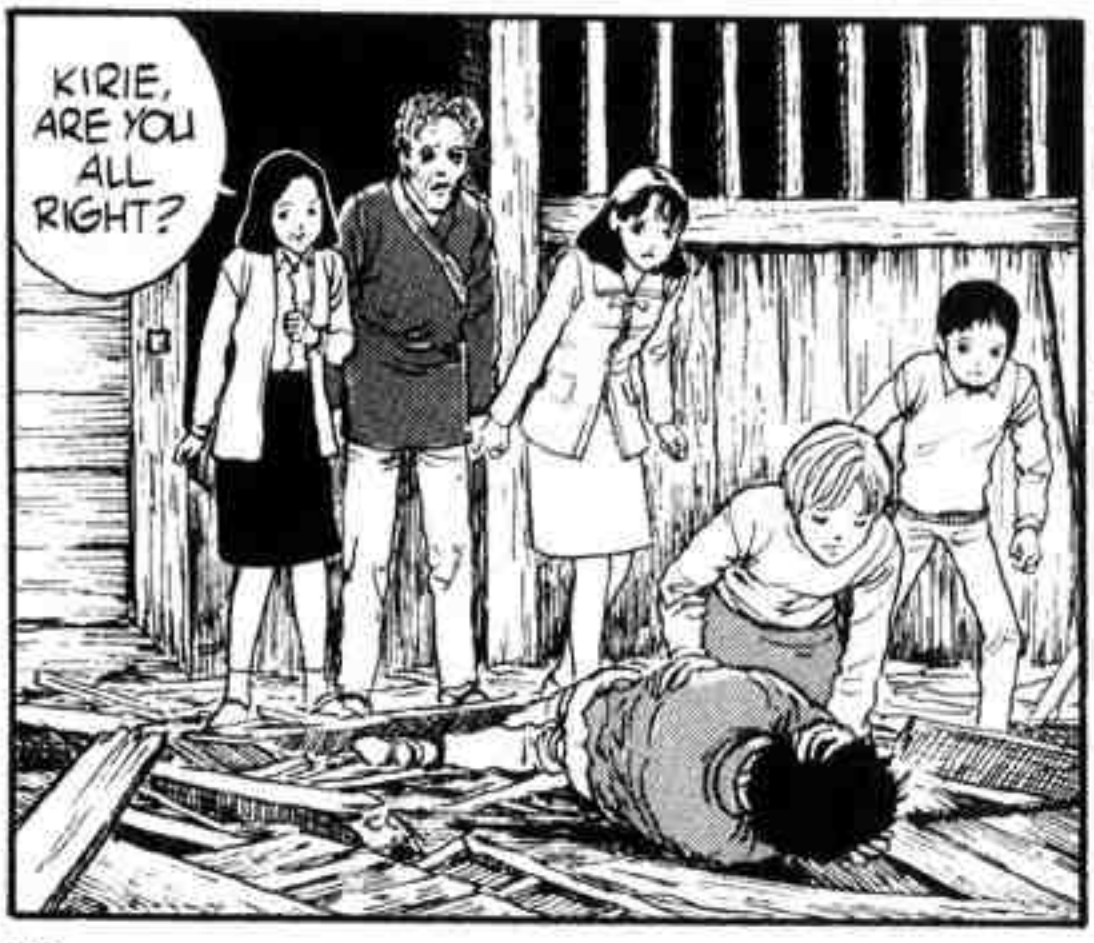
MAD ...
MAD ...

WHAT ?!

GET OUT!
BAPF

SHUICHI !!

SHUICHI, ARE YOU OKAY?


KIRIE, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

SLAM

DON'T LET THEM IN ANY MORE.
NOW WE GOT SOME EXTRA SPACE.

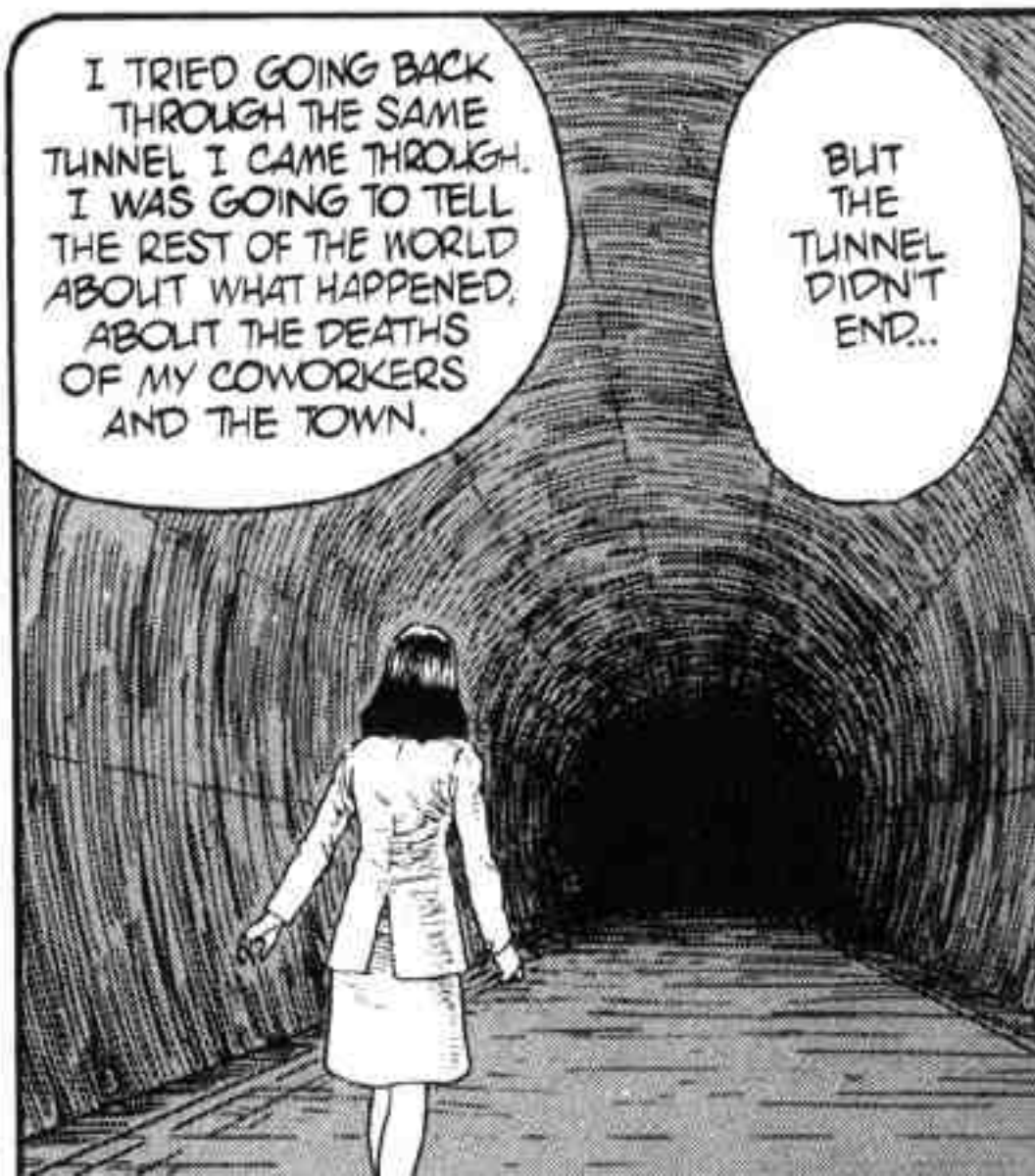
ARRGH!
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO NOW?

WE'LL FIND ANOTHER ROW HOUSE ...SOME OTHER SPACE...
BUT IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE CROWDED EVERY-WHERE!

WE CAN'T STAY HERE ANY LONGER.
WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF THIS TOWN.

BUT EVERYONE SAYS IT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
YOU TRIED IT ALREADY, DIDN'T YOU?

YES...
...JUST ONCE.


I TRIED GOING BACK THROUGH THE SAME TUNNEL I CAME THROUGH. I WAS GOING TO TELL THE REST OF THE WORLD ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED, ABOUT THE DEATHS OF MY COWORKERS AND THE TOWN.
BUT THE TUNNEL DIDN'T END...

THE SPIRAL WON'T LET US GO. IT'S JUST LIKE SHUICHI SAID ALL ALONG.

BUT THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO ESCAPE!

IT'S OKAY.

I'M NOT LEAV-ING.

I WANT TO MAKE CERAMICS IN THIS TOWN.

I WANT TO REBUILD MY FURNACE AND WORK ON MY ART... THE ART OF THE SPIRAL.

FOR THAT, I NEED THE MUD FROM THE BOTTOM OF DRAGONFLY POND.

THE MUD FROM DRAGONFLY POND? BUT DEAR... DRAGONFLY POND'S JUST A WHIRLPOOL. YOU CAN'T DIG UP MUD THERE ANYMORE.

WHAT'S THAT SMELL?
snif
snif

IT SMELLS GOOD.
IT'S ROASTING MEAT! IT MUST BE NEARBY.

MITSUO!
OVER THERE...

HROOARRR

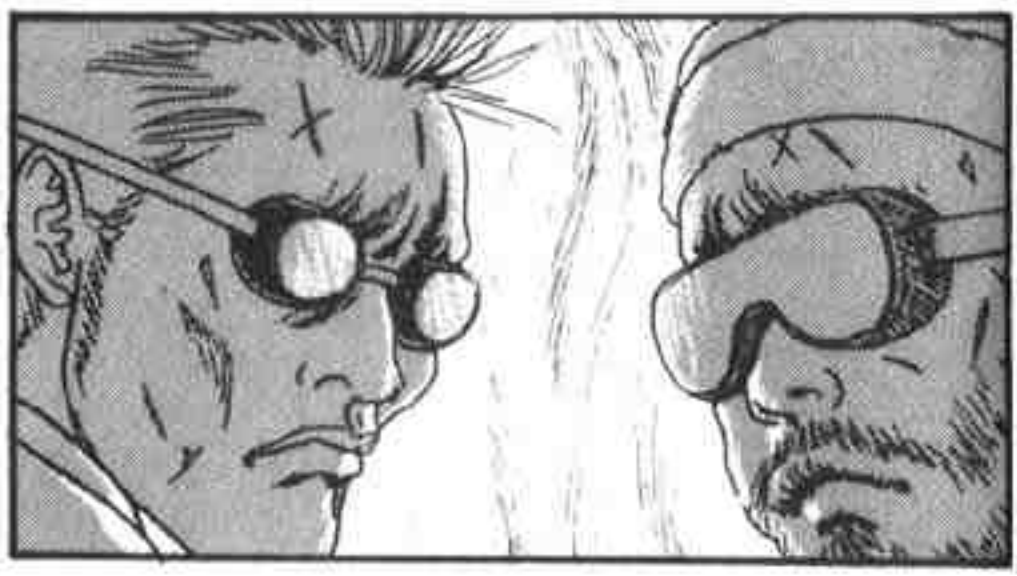
I TOLD YOU!
THEY'RE COOKING SOME-THING!

MAYBE THEY'LL SHARE SOME.
STOP!
DON'T GO NEAR THEM!
IT'S THOSE CREEPS WHO WERE RIDING THE WHIRL-WINDS!
LEAVE ME ALONE!

MITSUO...!

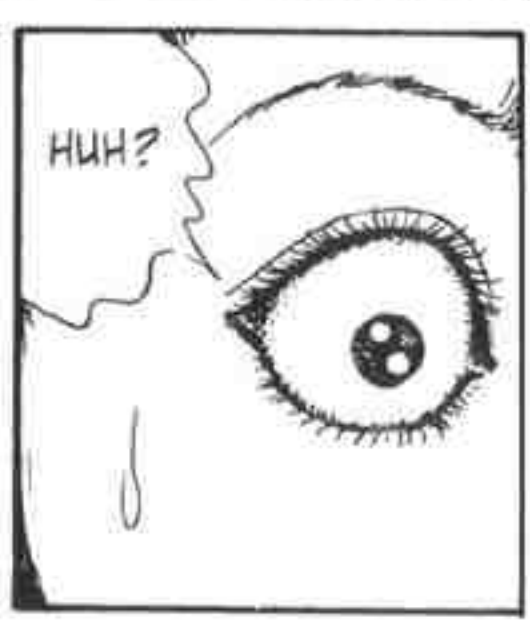
CRACKLE
CRACKLE

EXCUSE ME... CAN WE HAVE SOME, TOO?



...

CRACKLE
CRACKLE

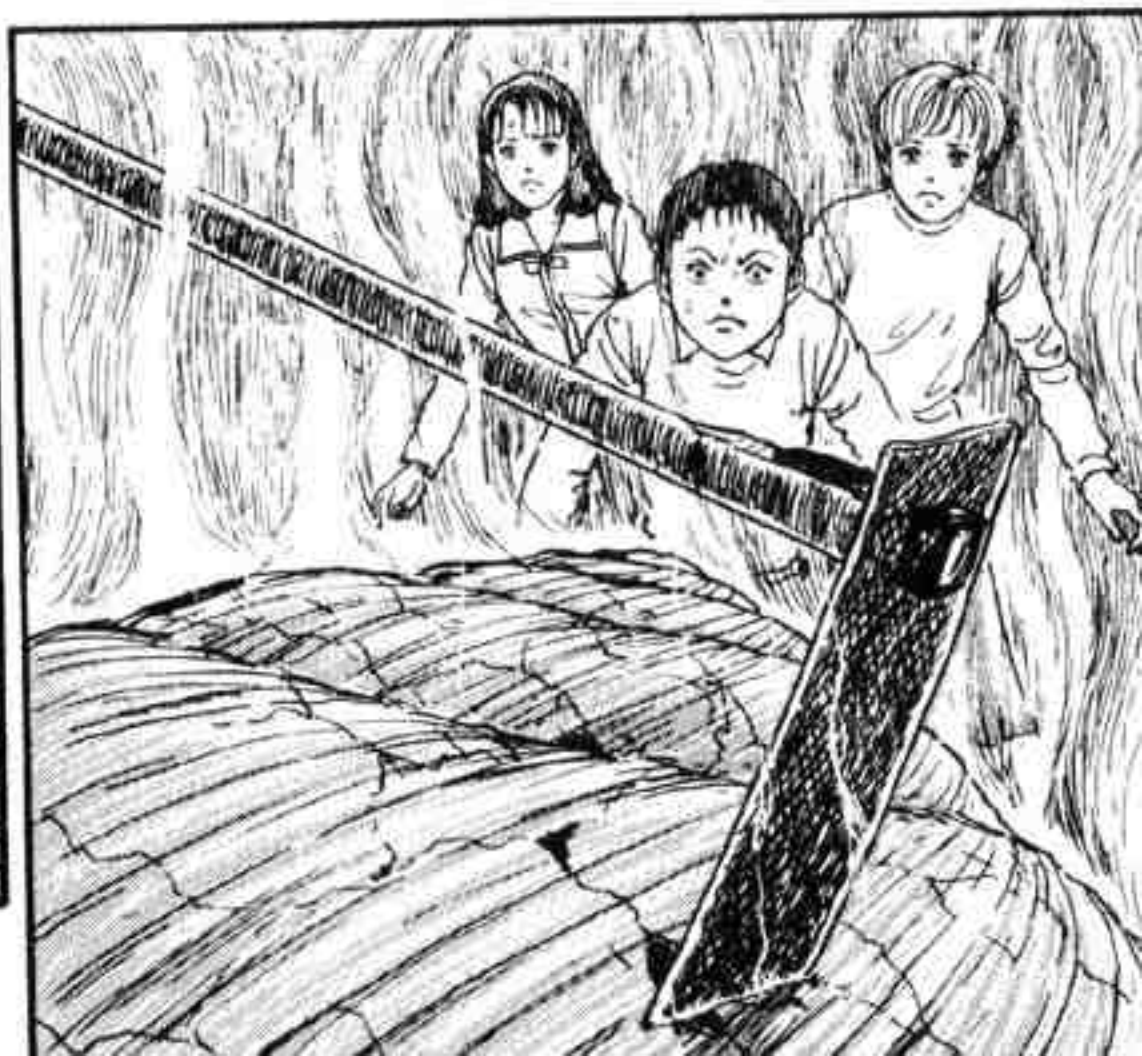

HUH?

SHATTLE
SHATTLE

I THINK THEY'RE DONE.
YEAH.

NIGH

FWUD



TOK
TOK

TOK

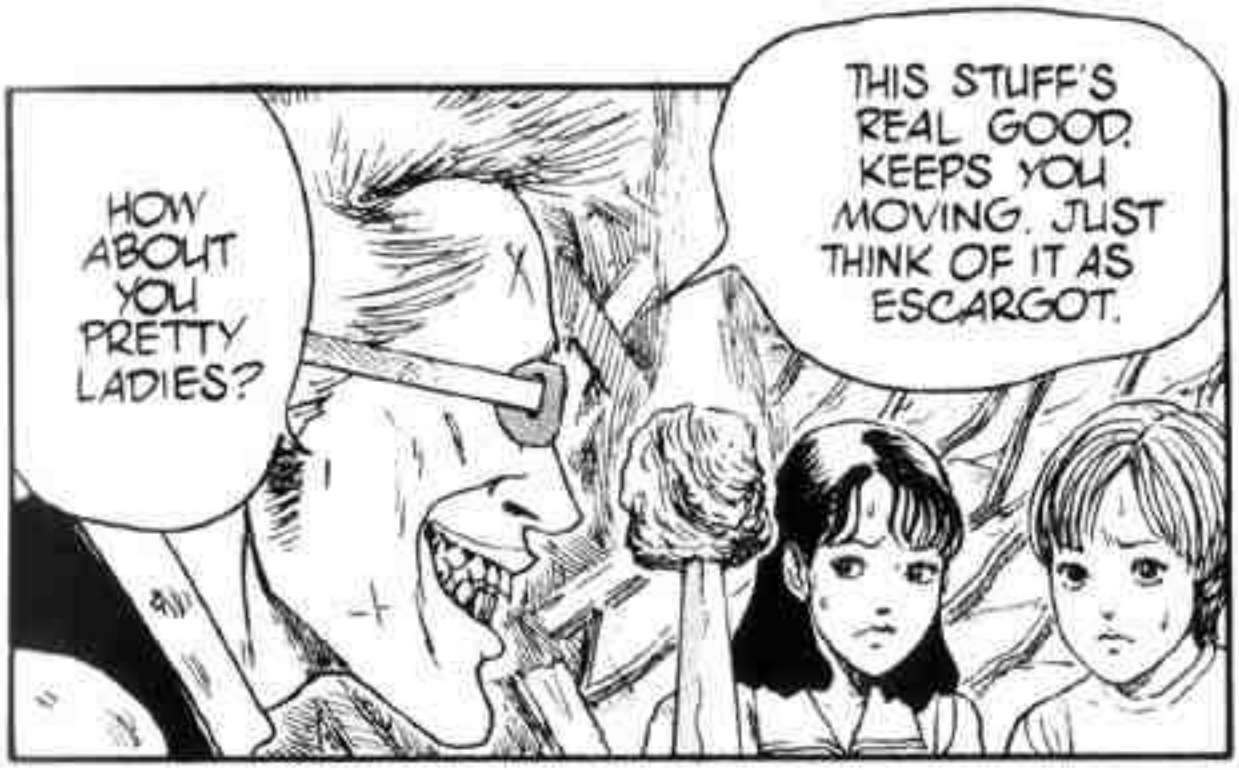
LET'S EAT.
YEAH, THAT'S PERFECT.

GLP

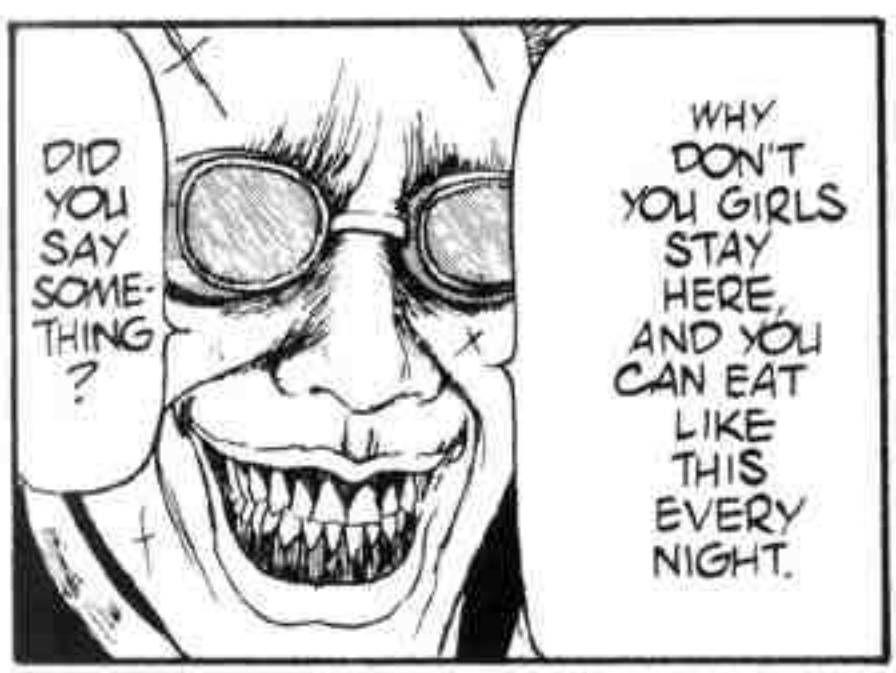
KIRIE ...
THEY'RE EATING THE SNAILS ...

MNCH
MNCH

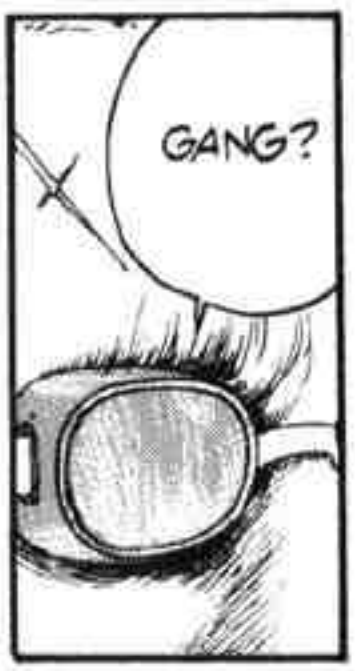
YOU CAN HAVE A BITE, KID.
THEY'RE DELICIOUS.


HOW ABOUT YOU PRETTY LADIES?
THIS STUFF'S REAL GOOD. KEEPS YOU MOVING. JUST THINK OF IT AS ESCARGOT.

BUT THAT'S NOT ESCARGOT ...THEY'RE HUMAN...


DID YOU SAY SOME-THING ?
WHY DON'T YOU GIRLS STAY HERE, AND YOU CAN EAT LIKE THIS EVERY NIGHT.

WE'RE NOT JOINING YOUR GANG.

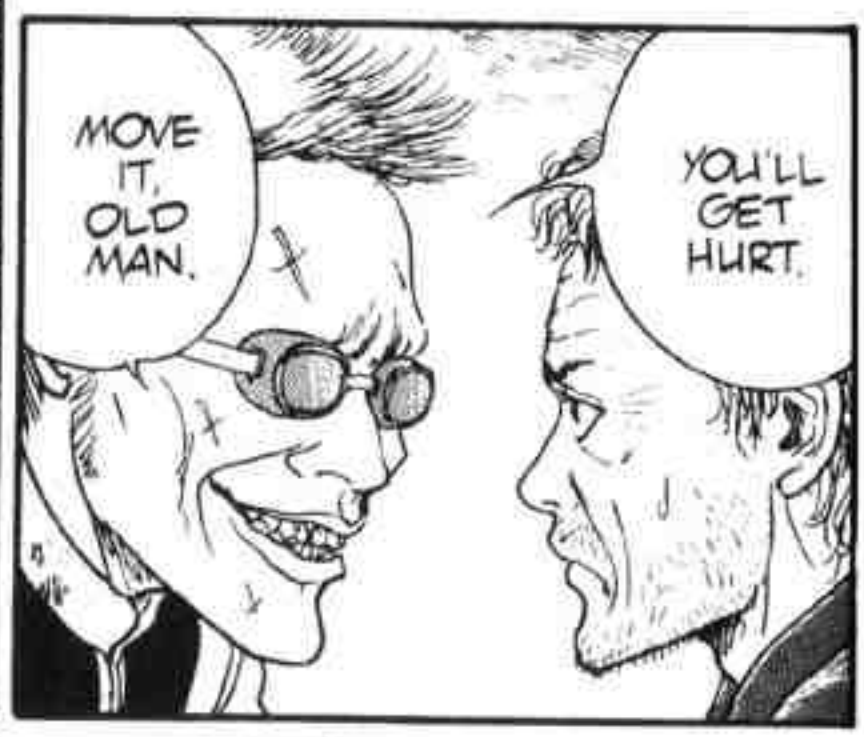

GANG?

COME ON. WE'LL TEACH YOU TO FLY. REMEMBER THOSE LITTLE KIDS WHO DID IT FIRST?
"THEY'RE FLYING AROUND LIKE BUTTERFLIES!" HA HA! WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?

WE'RE MORE LIKE DRAGON-FLIES.
DRAGON-FLIES EAT MEAT.

WE'LL TEACH YOU THINGS ...

STOP IT. LEAVE US ALONE!

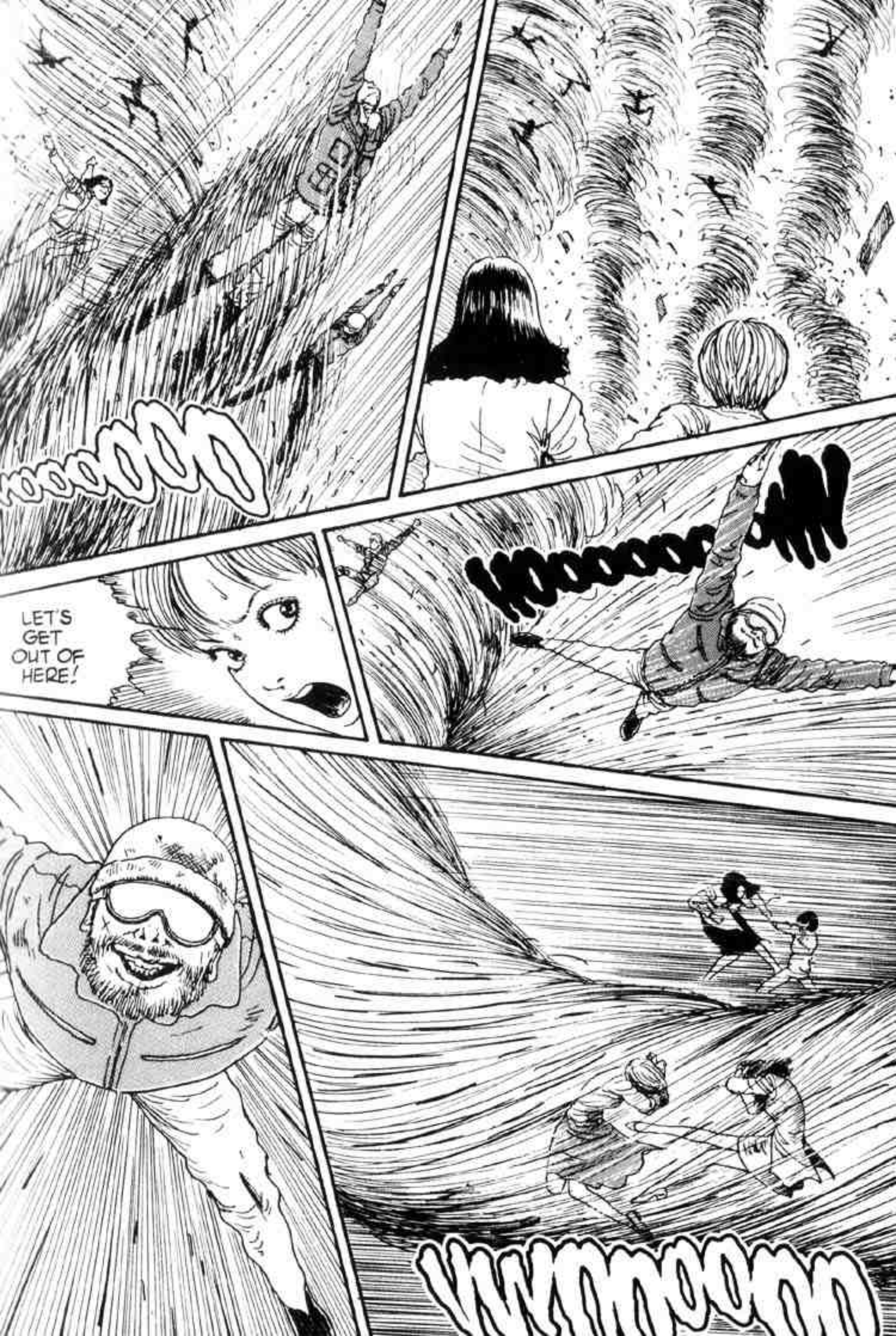

MOVE IT, OLD MAN.
YOU'LL GET HURT.

I TOLD YOU TO GET AWAY!

AWAHH!

DAD!
DEAR!
H-HOW COULD YOU?
WE DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT.
WE COULD BE FRIENDS ...
BIFF

HA HAHA! THEY'RE AIRBORNE!
PREPARE FOR TAKE-OFF.


LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

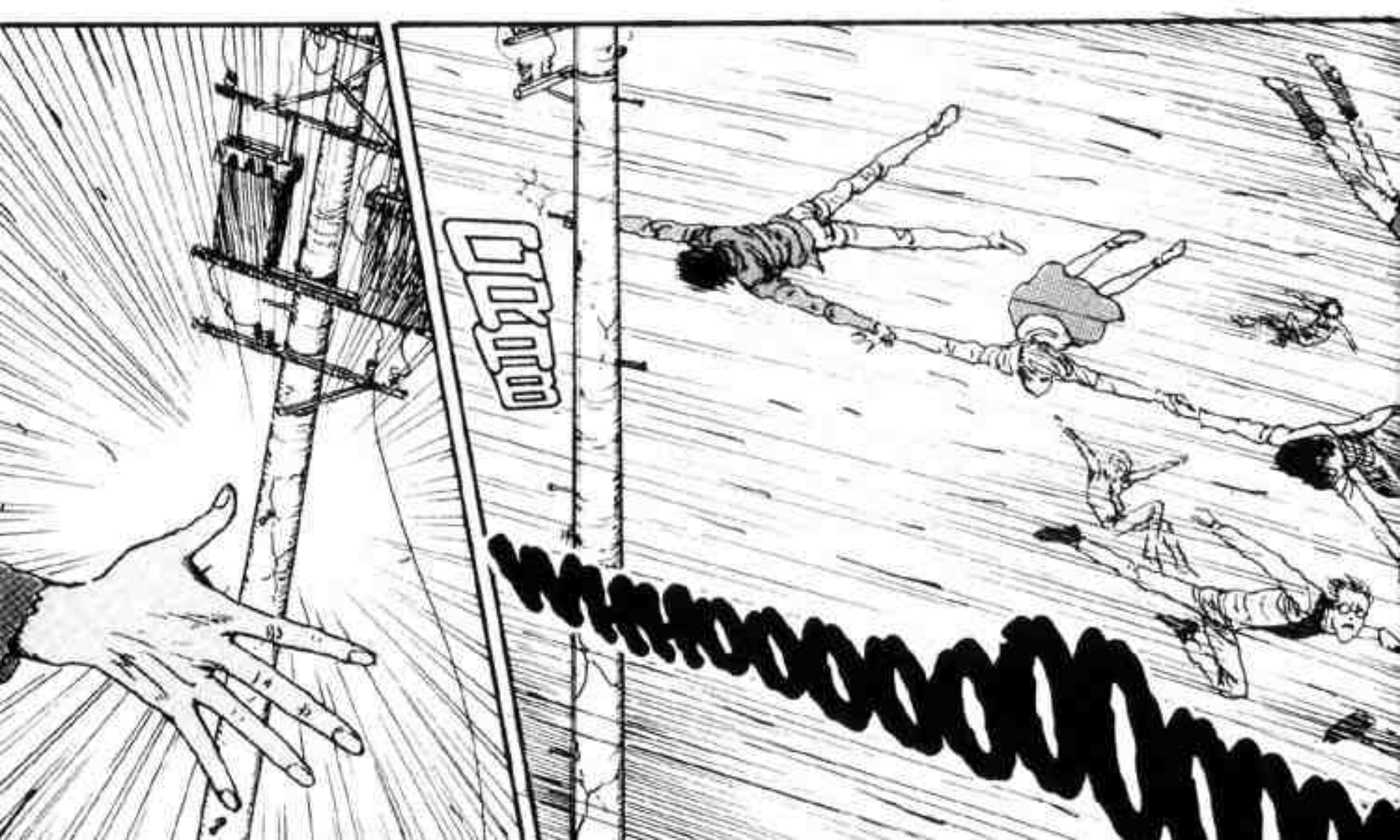
TAKE MY HAND!
CHIE!
OUR PREY IS ESCAPING AT TWELVE O'CLOCK!
UNITE AND PURSUE!
ROGER WILCO!

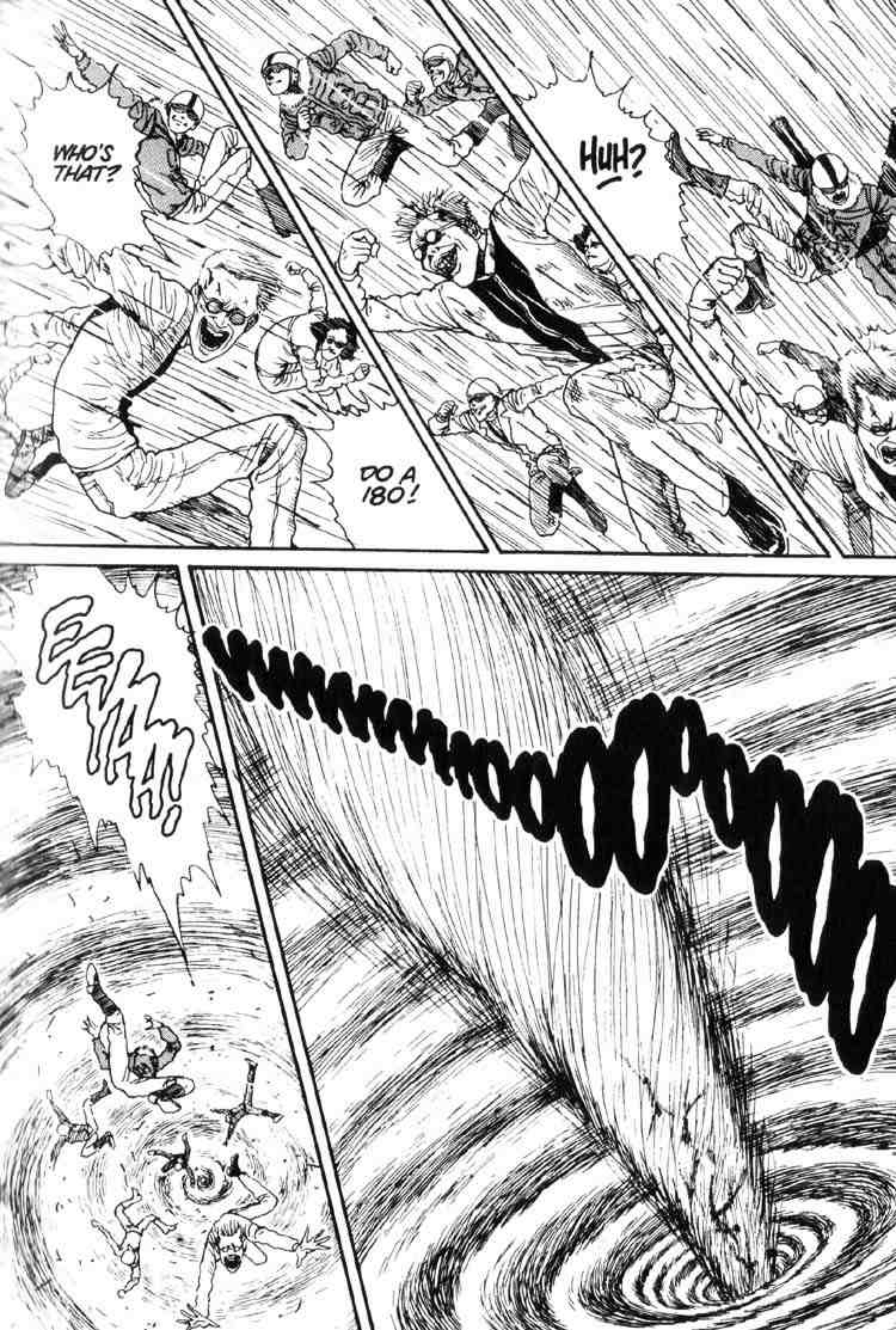
YAH HAH HAH
KIRIE!
CHIE!
LOOK OVER THERE!
IT'S DRAGONFLY POND!
WE'RE GETTING CLOSER!
WE'RE BEING BLOWN IN!

WE'LL BE SUCKED INTO DRAGONFLY POND!

WHOOSH!

Hm?
GRAB


GRAB


WHO'S THAT?
DO A 180!
HUH?
EEIIIII!

WHO

SH...
SHUICHI ...?

...
MAD ...

DDDDDDDDDDD

CHAPTER
16
ERASER

FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD, PEOPLE STILL POURED INTO KURŌZU-CHO...

SLOWLY...

ONLY TO FIND THEMSELVES TRAPPED IN THE RUINS.

WALK SLOWLY.

THE NUMBER OF WHIRLWINDS INCREASED RAPIDLY, MAKING THE TOWN ALL THE MORE DANGEROUS.

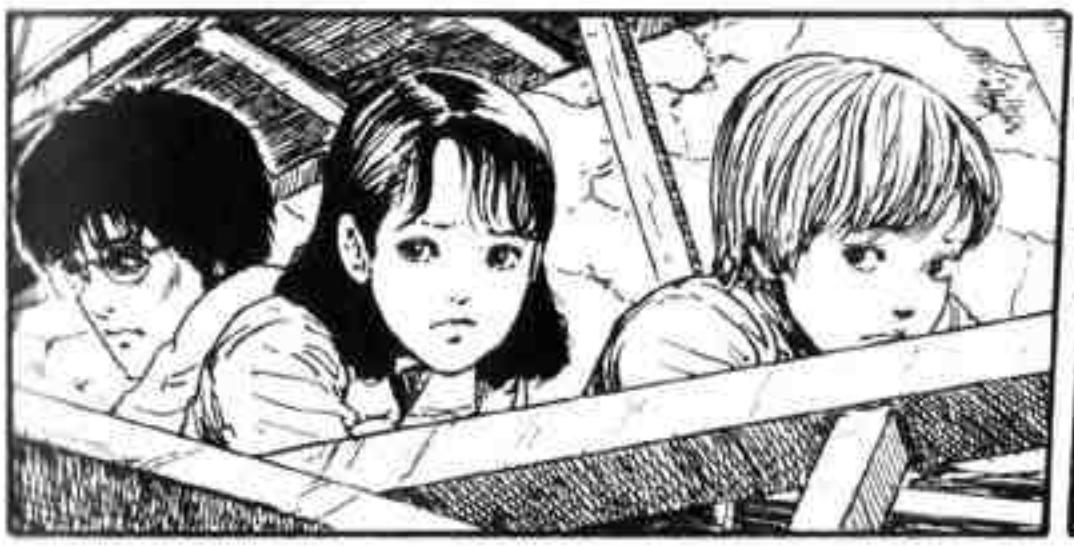
IT'S COMING. GET DOWN!

AARGH

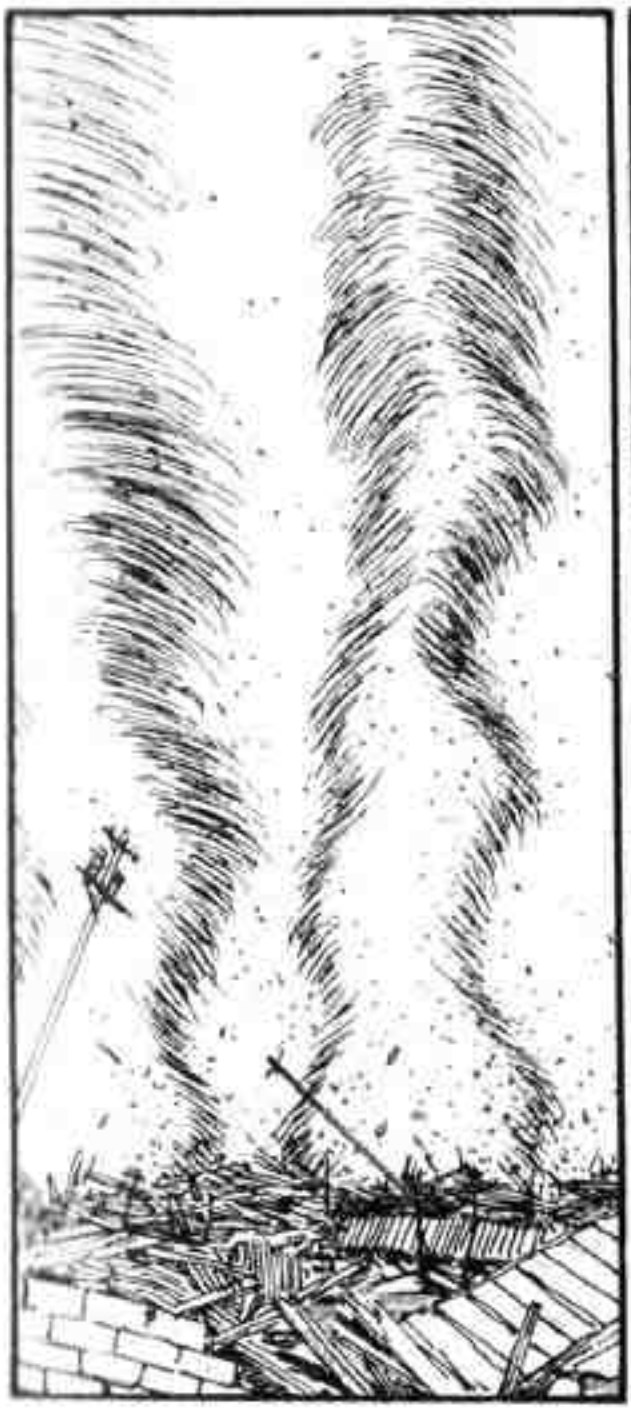
GGGGGGOOOOOOOOO

WE LOST SOMEONE AGAIN...
THE WIND'S STILL STIRRED UP FROM THOSE TWISTER GANGS.

HEY, YOU!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?



YES... WE'RE OKAY.

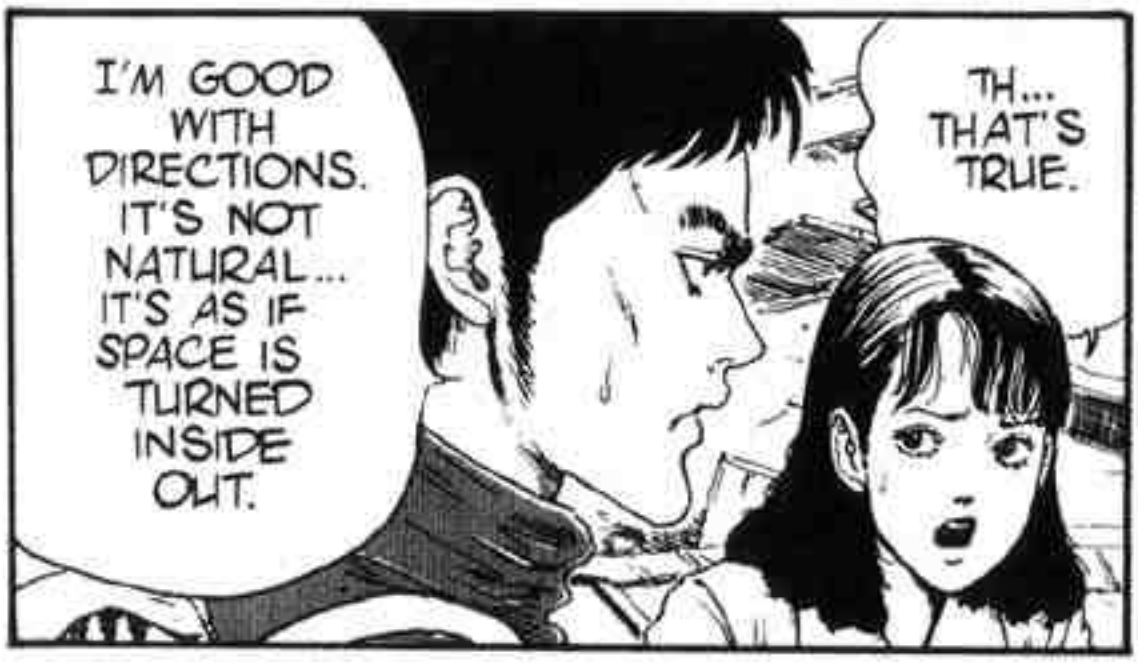


I WALKED HERE FROM MIDORIYAMA-SHI FIVE DAYS AGO.
I HEARD THERE WAS A DISASTER IN KURŌZU-CHO SO I CAME AS A VOLUNTEER.

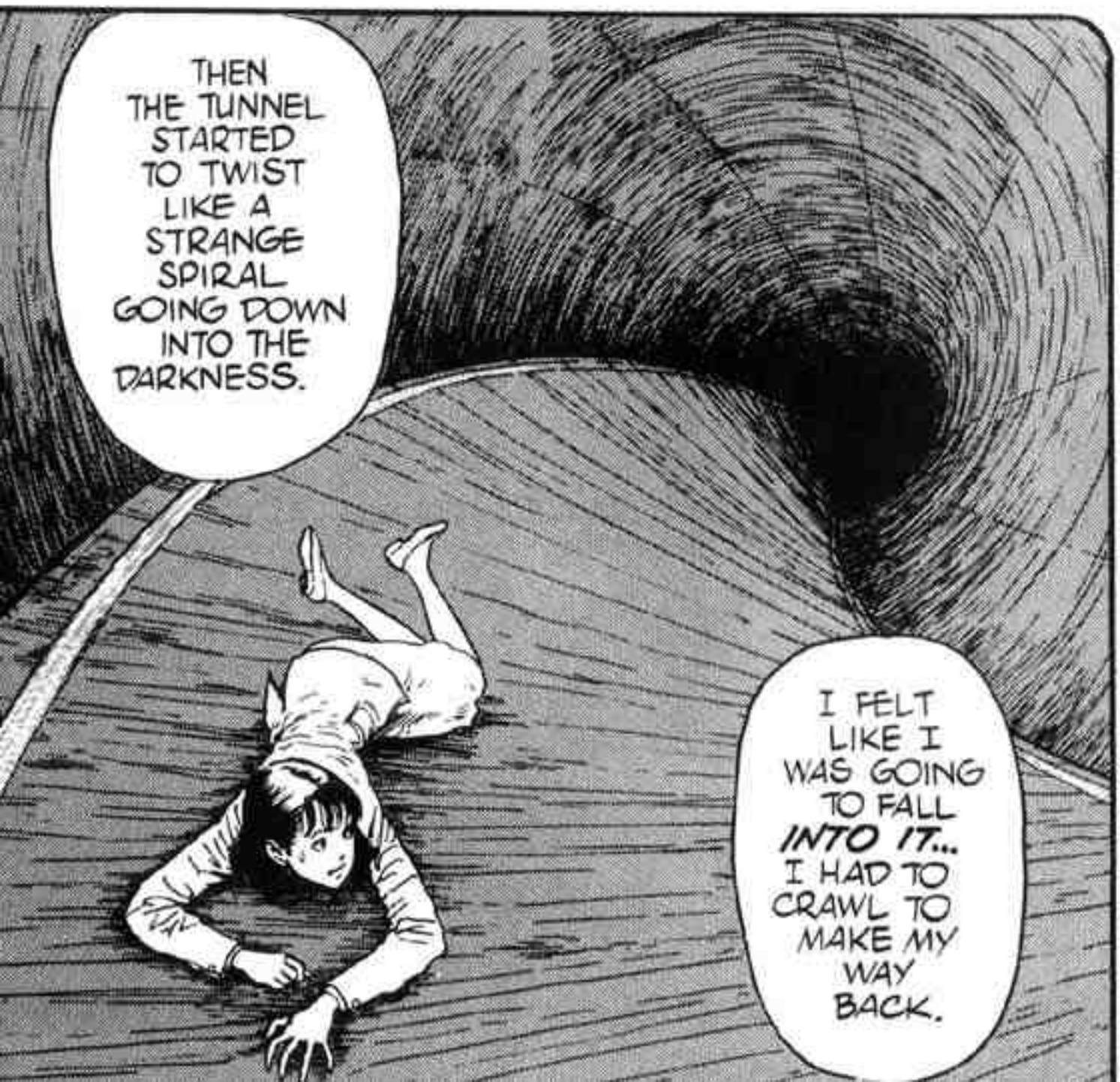
I HAVE RELATIVES HERE. I CAME FOUR DAYS AGO LOOKING FOR THEM...
BUT NOW I'M DOING MY BEST JUST TO SURVIVE.

I'VE TRIED OVER AND OVER TO ESCAPE ...TO JUST TURN AROUND AND WALK IN A STRAIGHT LINE...
BUT NOTHING WORKS...

THAT'S RIGHT.
NO MATTER WHICH ROAD YOU TAKE, YOU END UP BACK HERE.


I'M GOOD WITH DIRECTIONS. IT'S NOT NATURAL... IT'S AS IF SPACE IS TURNED INSIDE OUT.
TH... THAT'S TRUE.

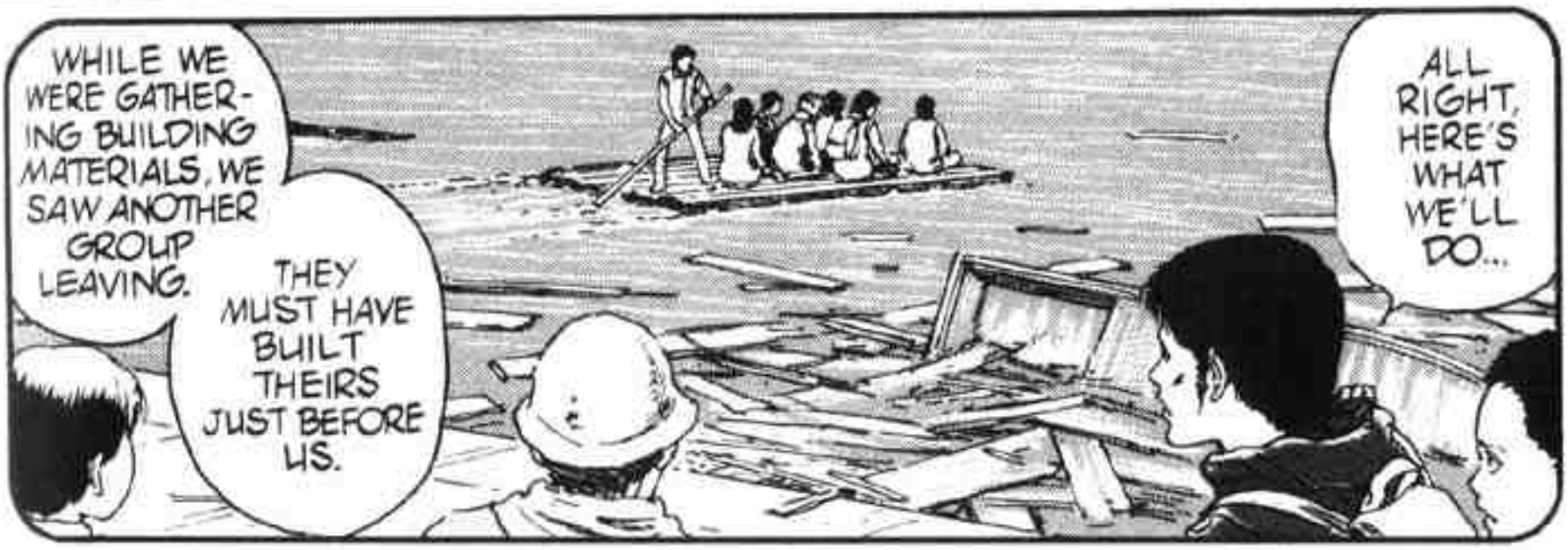
I TRIED GOING THROUGH THE TUNNEL.
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN SOMETHING WAS WRONG BECAUSE I COULDN'T SEE THE LIGHT AT THE END.


THEN THE TUNNEL STARTED TO TWIST LIKE A STRANGE SPIRAL GOING DOWN INTO THE DARKNESS.
I FELT LIKE I WAS GOING TO FALL *INTO IT...* I HAD TO CRAWL TO MAKE MY WAY BACK.

I'D BEEN TELLING MYSELF THAT IT WAS JUST ME... THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE.

I ALSO TRIED TO ESCAPE BY SEA.

ALL THE FISHING BOATS IN THE HARBOR WERE WRECKED. THEY MUST HAVE BEEN THE FIRST TO GO IN THE STORM.
A COUPLE OF US DECIDED TO BUILD A RAFT.


WHILE WE WERE GATHERING BUILDING MATERIALS, WE SAW ANOTHER GROUP LEAVING.
THEY MUST HAVE BUILT THEIRS JUST BEFORE US.
ALL RIGHT, HERE'S WHAT WE'LL DO...

BUT THEN...
LOOK!

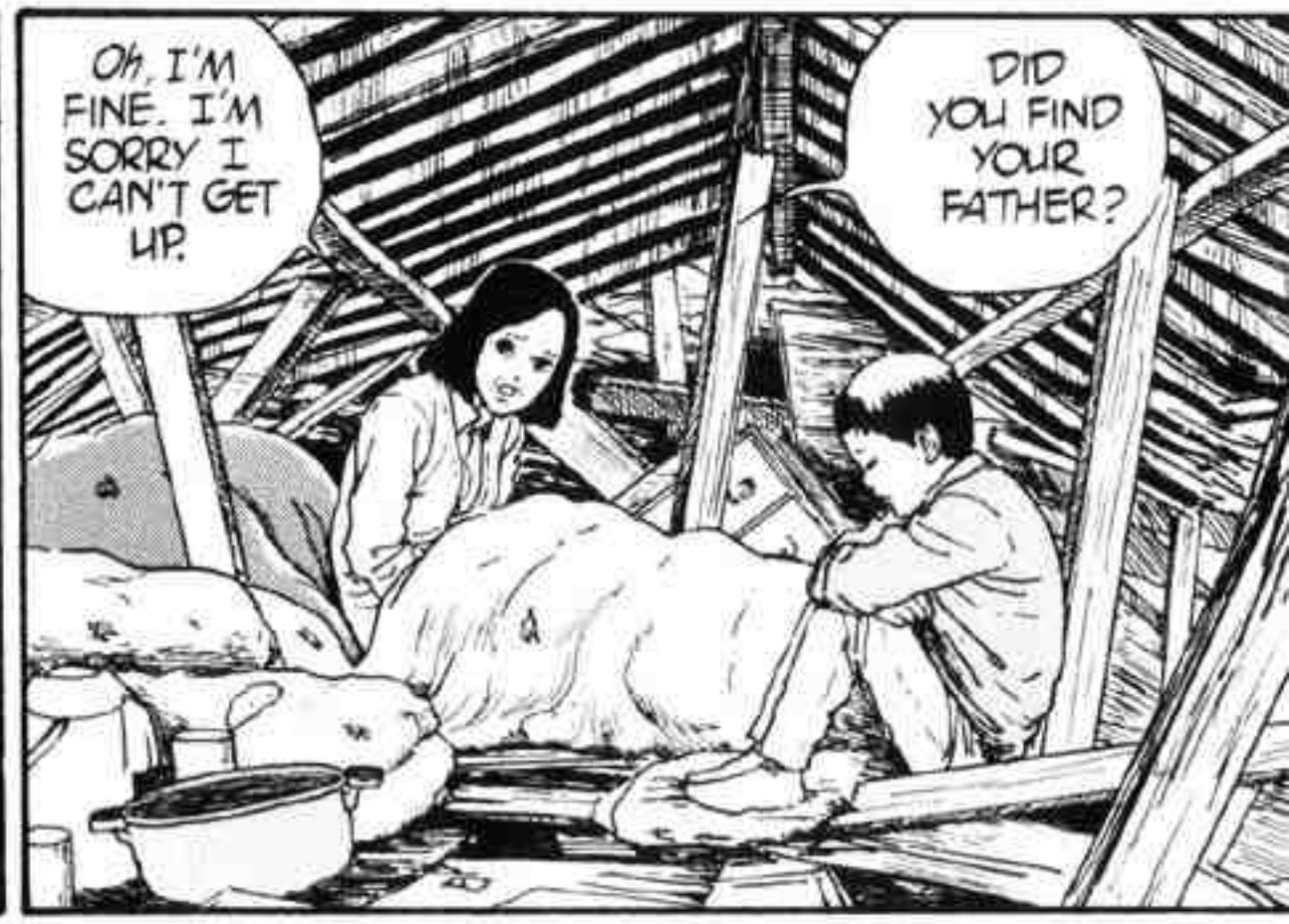
SHHPAPAPAPAP

AHHH
SSSSLLLRR

THE SEA HAD TURNED INTO A GIGANTIC WHIRLPOOL, SWALLOWING THE RAFT RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES.

MY MOTHER WAS HIT BY A WHIRLWIND AND CAN'T MOVE.

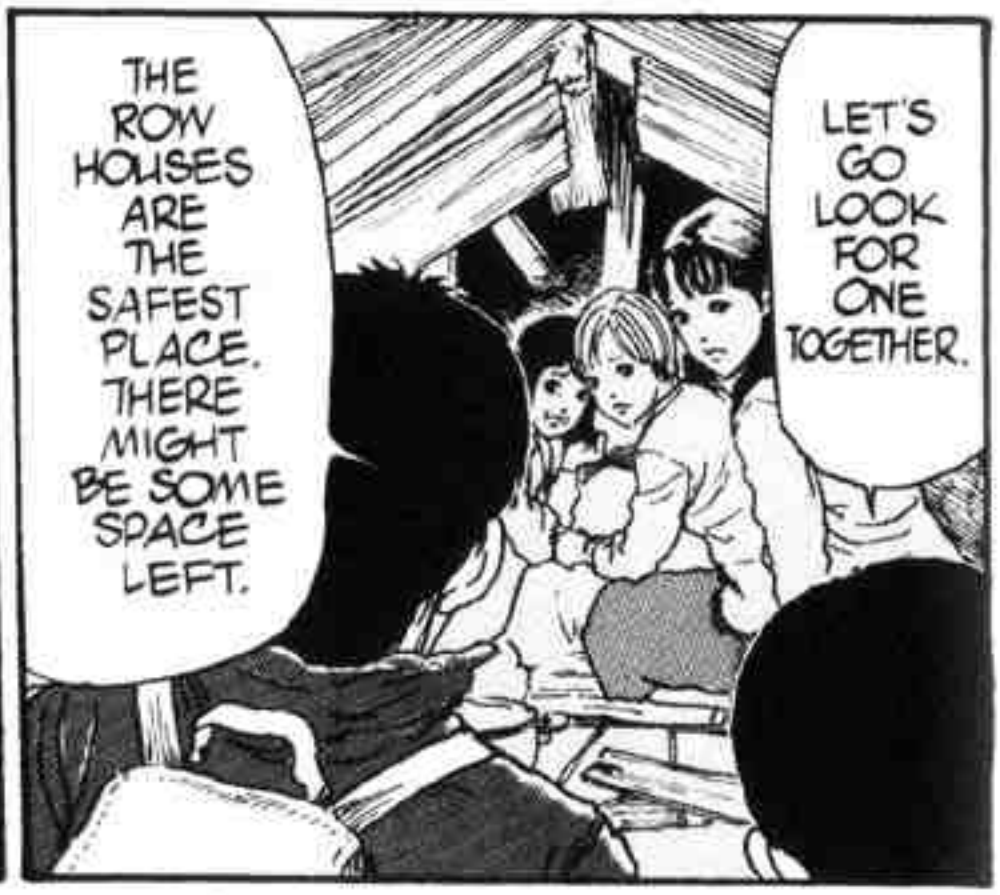
MOM, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? DOES IT HURT AGAIN?

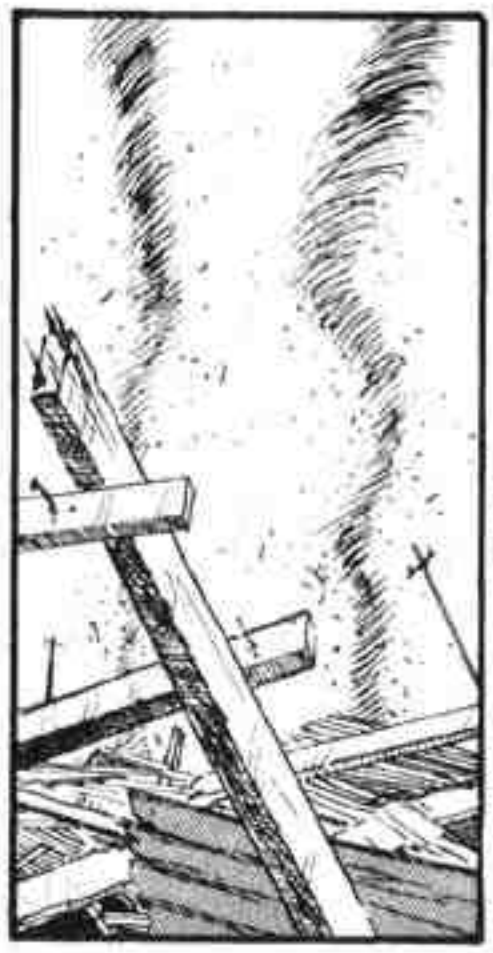

OH, I'M FINE. I'M SORRY I CAN'T GET UP.
DID YOU FIND YOUR FATHER?

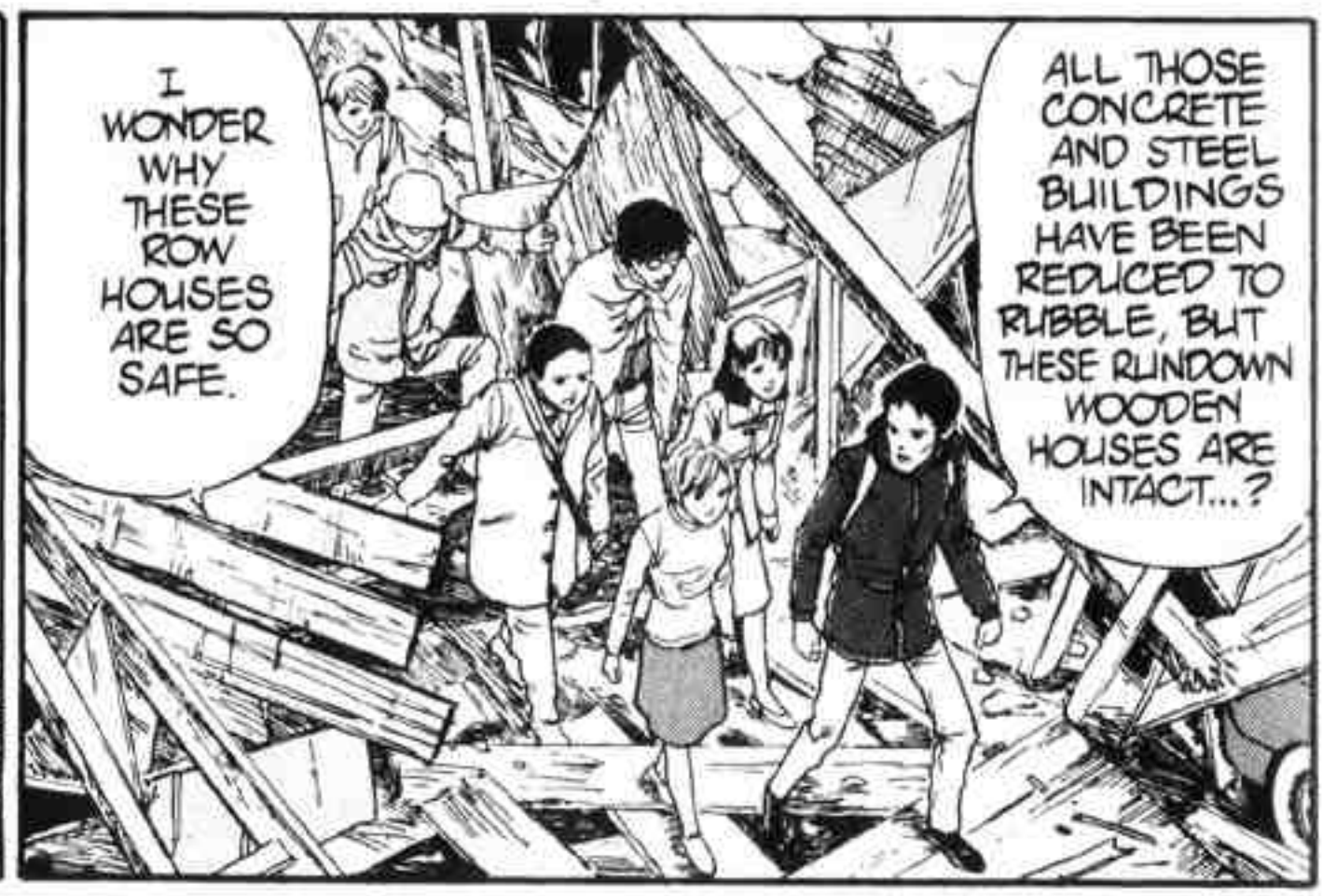
NO. WE'VE LOOKED EVERY-WHERE...
BUT I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM...

I KNEW IT! THAT WHIRLWIND JUST PICKED HIM UP! IT JUST SWALLOWED HIM!
MOM! MOM! I'M SURE HE'S FINE!

SO YOU ACTUALLY LIVE HERE?
THIS IS VERY STRUCTURALLY UNSTABLE. A WHIRL-WIND COULD CRUSH IT EASILY.


THE ROW HOUSES ARE THE SAFEST PLACE. THERE MIGHT BE SOME SPACE LEFT.
LET'S GO LOOK FOR ONE TOGETHER.




I WONDER WHY THESE ROW HOUSES ARE SO SAFE.
ALL THOSE CONCRETE AND STEEL BUILDINGS HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO RUBBLE, BUT THESE RUNDOWN WOODEN HOUSES ARE INTACT...?

YES, AND THEY WERE BUILT A LONG TIME AGO.
HOW MANY ARE THERE, ANYWAY?

I'VE NEVER COUNTED. THERE'S SOME IN THE MIDDLE OF TOWN THAT WERE RENTED OUT, BUT THE ONES ON THE OUTSKIRTS ARE MORE RUINED.
MAYBE SOME OF THE OUTLYING HOUSES AREN'T FULL YET... I GUESS THAT'S WHERE WE SHOULD GO.

GOOD, BUT AT THE RATE WE'RE MOVING, WE WON'T GET THERE BEFORE NIGHT FALLS.
HA HA!

OH, I FORGOT TO INTRODUCE MYSELF. I'M TANIZAKI.
I'M TAKEMOTO.
KIRIE.

WE'VE ALL MET ONE ANOTHER IN THE LAST FEW DAYS, WALKING AROUND.
WE'RE ALL LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO REST OUR FEET.

SLUMP

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, OKAMOTO? ARE YOU SICK?

NO... MY BACK FEELS FUNNY...
CAN YOU TAKE A LOOK?

YOUR BACK?

SHF

Ahh!

HE'S STARTED CHANGING.
HE'LL BECOME A SNAIL PERSON SOON.

WHY IS IT HAPPENING TO SO MANY PEOPLE, SHUICHI?
I DON'T KNOW. BECAUSE THEY'RE MOVING SO SLOW.

THEY MOVE SO SLOW, THE SPIRAL CAN CATCH THEM.
WE MIGHT BE NEXT.

WHAT...?

HEY... LOOK AT MY BACK FOR ME...
M-ME TOO!

IT'S FINE.
Whew.

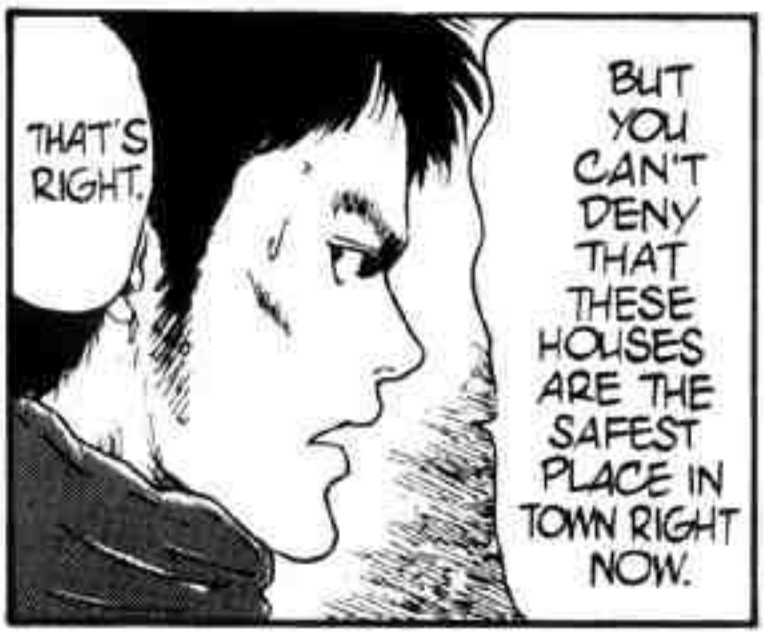
HOW ABOUT MINE?

TOGAWA... YOU'VE GOT A SPIRAL...
WHAT?! YOU'RE KIDDING !!
Oh GOD! THAT'S A LIE!

SO I'M GOING TO TURN INTO A SNAIL, TOO? TELL ME THAT'S NOT TRUE! YOU'RE LYING! PLEASE!
QUIET! QUIET! YOU'LL CAUSE A WHIRLWIND!

IN ANY CASE, WE HAVE TO FIND A ROW HOUSE WITH SPACE TO SLEEP.

THERE WE WON'T HAVE TO MOVE SO SLOWLY.



WE SHOULD SEE ONE SOON.

HERE IT IS.

LOOKS LIKE IT'S FULL.

PLEASE LET US IN!
NO! IT'S FULL! GO SOMEWHERE ELSE!

THEY'RE ALL FULL! IF WE STAY OUTSIDE WE MIGHT TURN INTO THOSE THINGS! YOU HAVE TO HELP US!
WHO CARES? GO AWAY!

PLEASE ...PLEASE ...
TOGAWA ...

PLEASE LET ME IN.

I'M TURNING INTO A SNAIL!

NO! GO AWAY!
WHAT DO I CARE IF YOU BECOME A SNAIL OR NOT?

WHAT ...?
YOU--

I'M GOING INSIDE WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT!

OPEN UP!
OPEN UP, YOU BASTARDS!

Y-YES...
WE'RE WITH YOU, TOO!

PULL!
HERE IT COMES...

STOP IT!!
GET OUT OF HERE!
GOOD, IT'S OPEN-ING!
PULL!
?!
SHI
WH-WHAT ARE YOU KIDS DOING?
FWOO!
YAAA!

BASTARDS! HOW COULD YOU?

YOU'RE INHUMAN!

KEEP ON COMPLAINING AND WE'LL BLOW YOU AWAY!

THAT'S IT!

GET THEM!

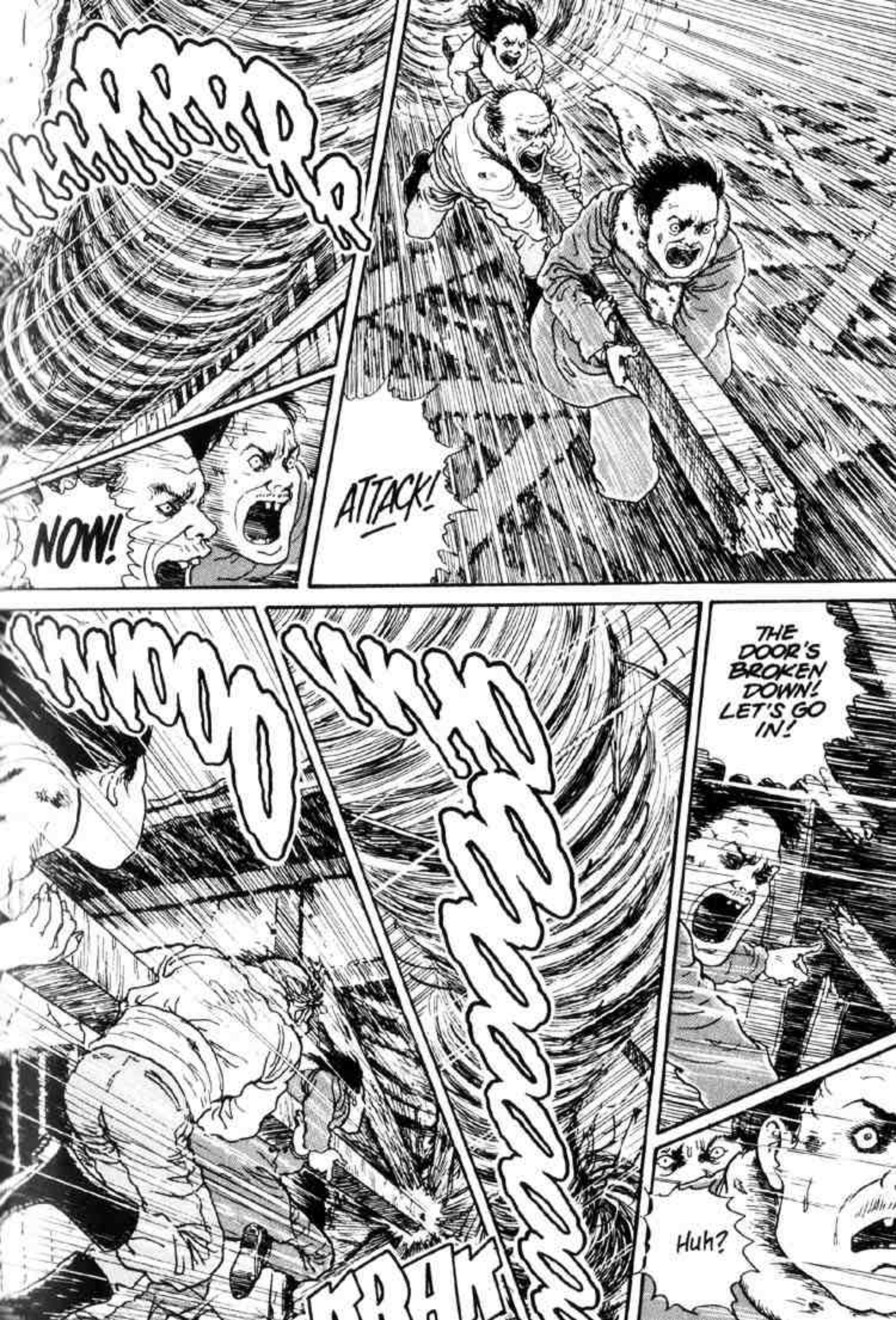
YEAH!

FWOO!

TAKE THIS!

FWOO!

WAAGH!


NOW!
ATTACK!
THE DOOR'S BROKEN DOWN! LET'S GO IN!
Huh?

WH-
WHAT'S
GOING
ON?

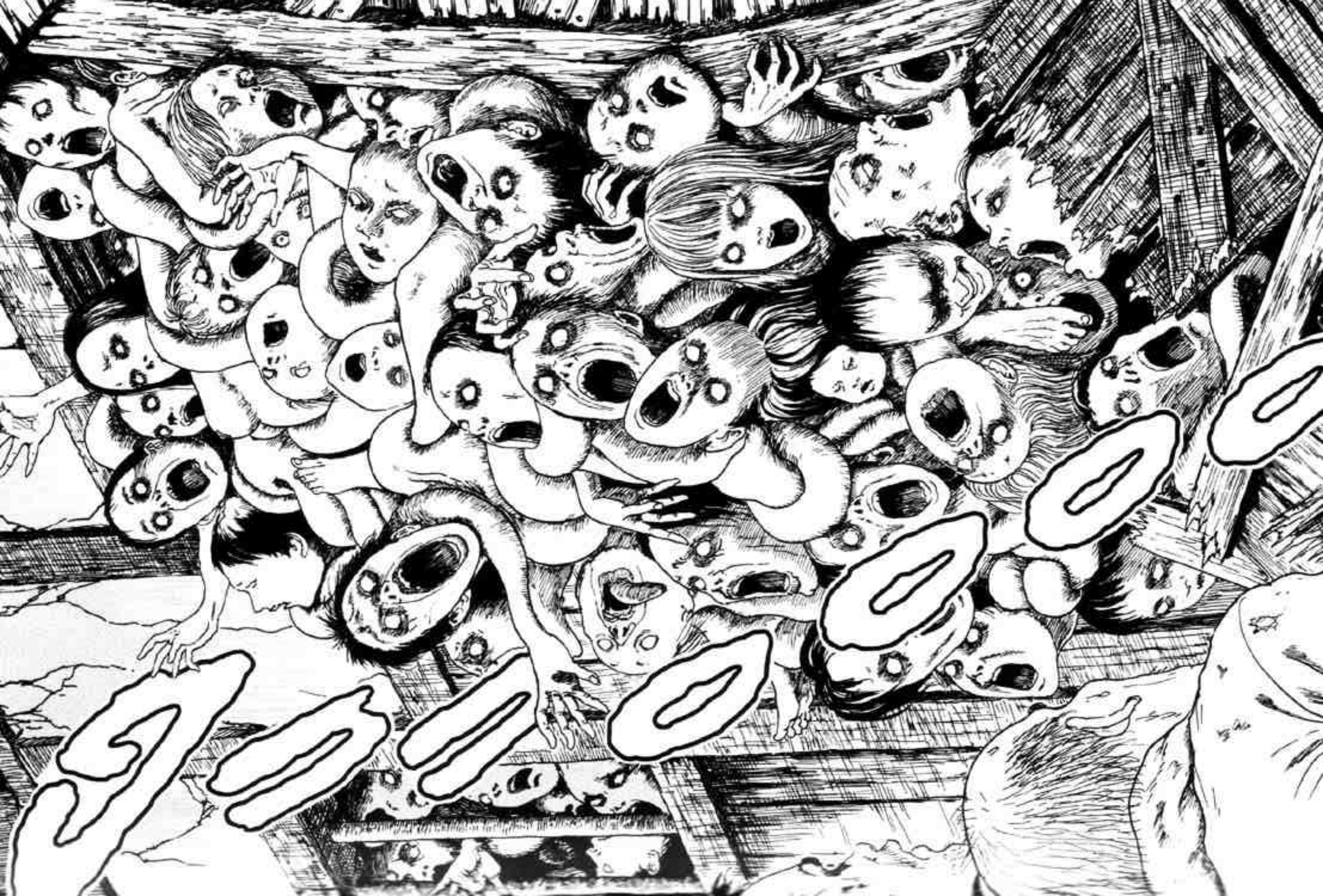
I
TOLD
YOU IT
WAS
FULL.

NO
MATTER
HOW HARD
WE TRIED
TO KEEP
PEOPLE
OUT, THEY
MANAGED TO
SNEAK IN
LATE AT
NIGHT.

AND
THIS
IS THE
RESULT...

OUR
BODIES
PRESSED
TOGETHER,
AND WE'VE
BECOME
TIED IN
KNOTS...

AND
NOW
WE
CAN'T
BE SEP-
ARATED...



CRAKK CRAKK
CRAKK CRAKK
EWWW
FWAM

WOOOO
OOOOOO
WHOO
GH

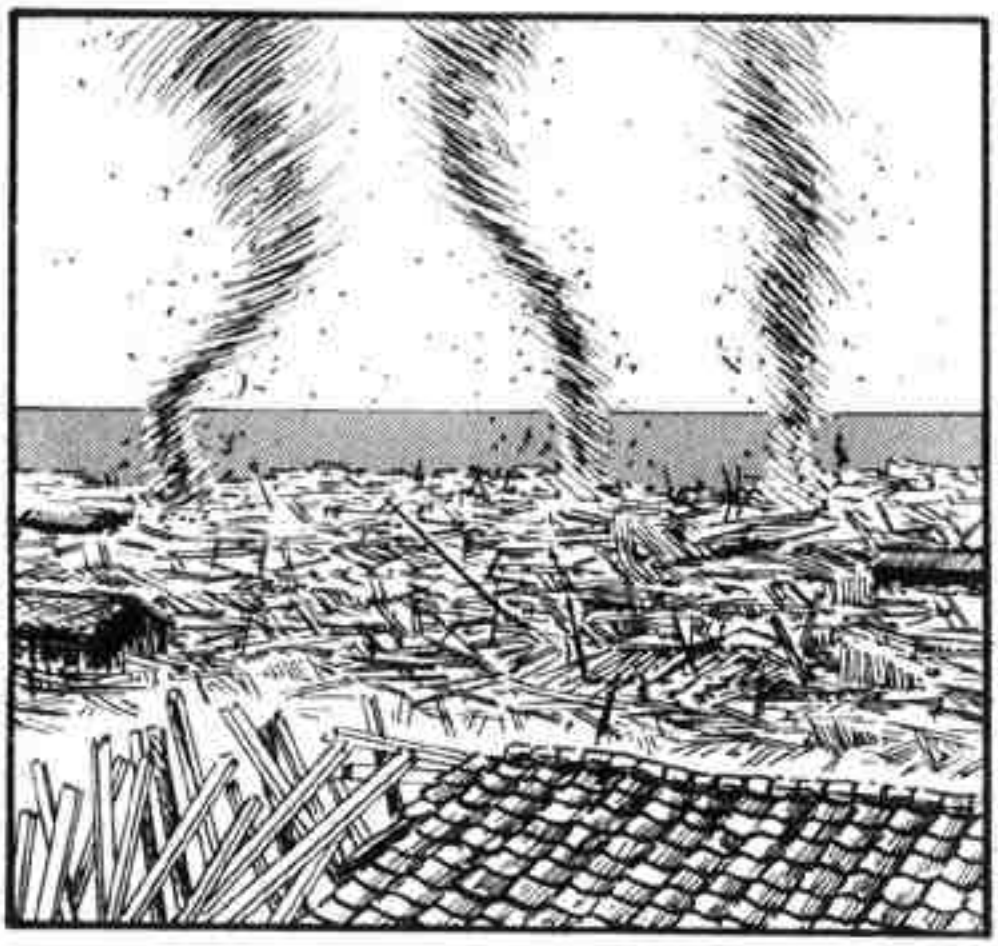
WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

THEY'RE TRYING TO COVER THEIR EXPOSED BODIES WITH THE SCRAP WOOD.

THE FOODS

THEY'RE TRYING TO ADD ONTO THE HOUSE.

I SEE...
SO THERE'S THAT OPTION ...



S-SO...
DID THIS HAPPEN IN ALL THE ROW HOUSES?

HEY, I'VE BEEN THINKING ...

WHAT IF WE FIND A ROW HOUSE AND EXTEND IT?
THEY'RE OLD BUT THEY CAN TAKE THE WHIRLWINDS. IF WE EXPAND THEM HORIZONTALLY WE COULD MAKE ENOUGH ROOM FOR OURSELVES.

HEY, WAIT. YOU DON'T PLAN ON STAYING HERE FOR GOOD, DO YOU?
THAT'S RIGHT. EXPAND A ROW HOUSE? WE SHOULD COME UP WITH A WAY TO ESCAPE.

AND EVEN IF WE WERE TO GET INSIDE A ROW HOUSE, WE WOULD TURN INTO ONE OF THOSE MONSTERS...
WHICH WOULD BE LIVING HELL.

HUH?

GET DOWN!

ARGH

THAT'S RIGHT! IT'S HELL EITHER WAY!
SO WHICH IS IT? TO DIE IN A WHIRLWIND, OR LIVE IN A ROW HOUSE?

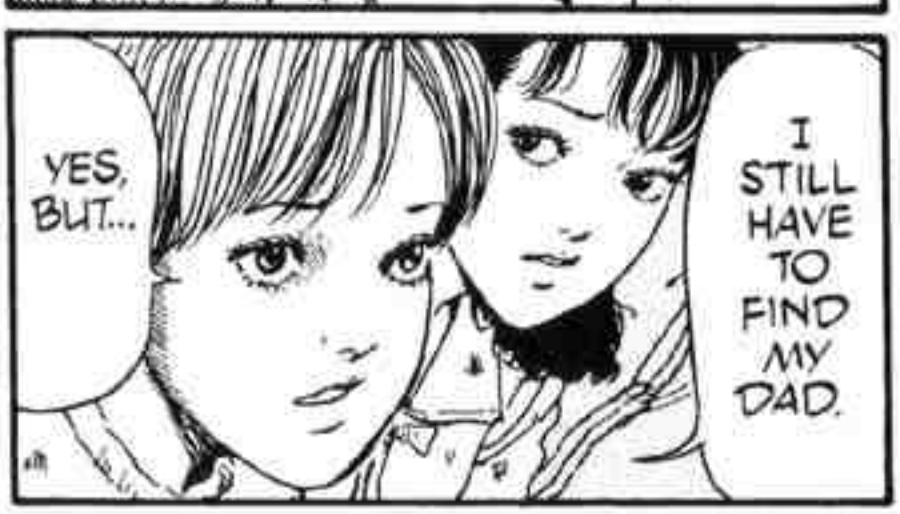
I WANT TO GET OUT!
THAT'S RIGHT! THERE MUST BE SOME WAY OUT OF HERE!

LOOK OVER THERE!

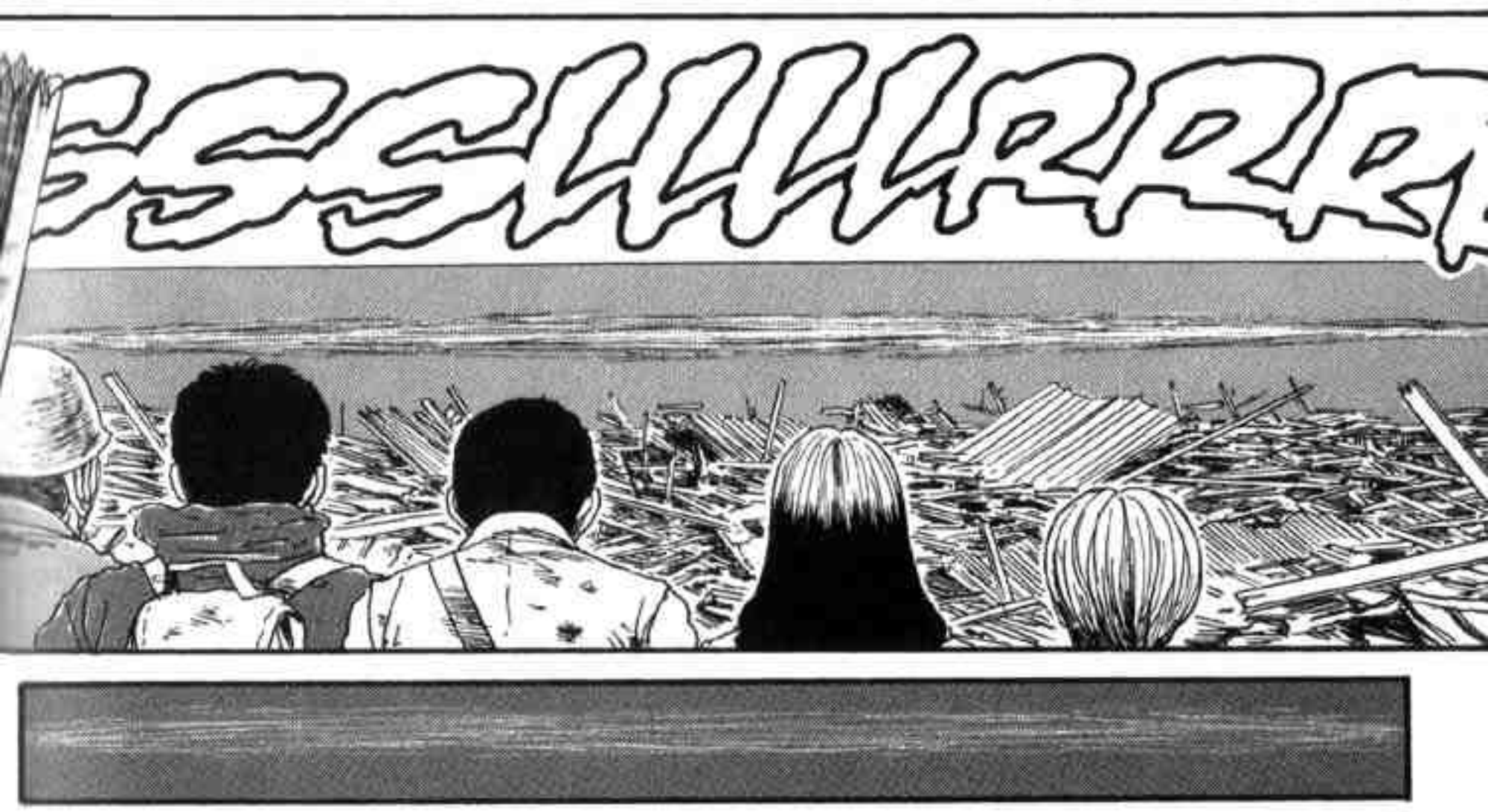
WHAT IS IT?
THE SEA! A SHIP, A SHIP'S COMING!

RESCUE SHIPS!

THEY'RE HERE TO SAVE US!!



THAT...
THAT CAN'T BE...



IT'S DARK NOW...

RMGRMG

IS THIS ALL WE HAVE LEFT?

THIS ISN'T ENOUGH TO SUSTAIN US.
RMBB
ISN'T THERE ANYTHING IN TOWN? SOME CANNED FOOD?

HEY, EVERY-ONE!
I FOUND SOME MEAT!

WHAT?! REALLY?!

SOMEONE COOKED ONE OF THOSE SNAIL PEO-- SNAILS.
PROBABLY LEFT HERE BY A GANG.

S-SO THIS WAS WHAT YOU MEANT BY MEAT?
gulp.
...

BUT...
WE DON'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE.
WE HAVE TO...
MNCH MNCH
MNCH MNCH
KIRIE... IT DOESN'T TASTE BAD.
YOU SHOULD HAVE SOME, TOO...
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO BE DIGNI-FIED.
BESIDES, THIS ISN'T A HUMAN ANYMORE.
IF I'D KNOWN IT TASTED THIS GOOD I WOULD'VE EATEN ONE SOONER.
YEAH.
I GUESS OKAMOTO'S NOT EATING. POOR GUY. IT'S GETTING SO WE HAVE TO LEAD HIM AROUND BY THE HAND.
WE'D BETTER MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T WANDER OFF BY HIMSELF...
...YOU KNOW?
...

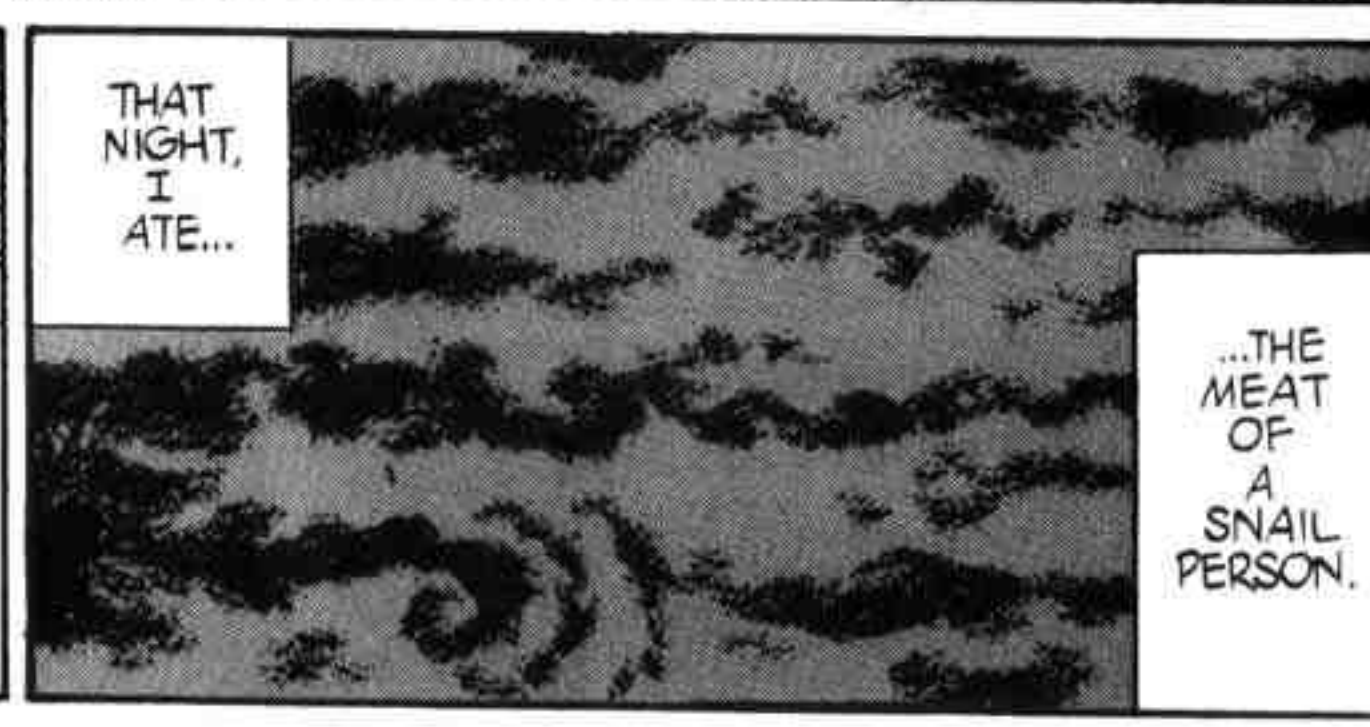
NOW, YOU SHOULD HAVE SOME, TOO.
YOU WON'T SURVIVE IF YOU DON'T EAT, HERE!

EAT!

MNCH MNCH

MNCH MNCH

SHUICHI...


THAT NIGHT, I ATE...
...THE MEAT OF A SNAIL PERSON.

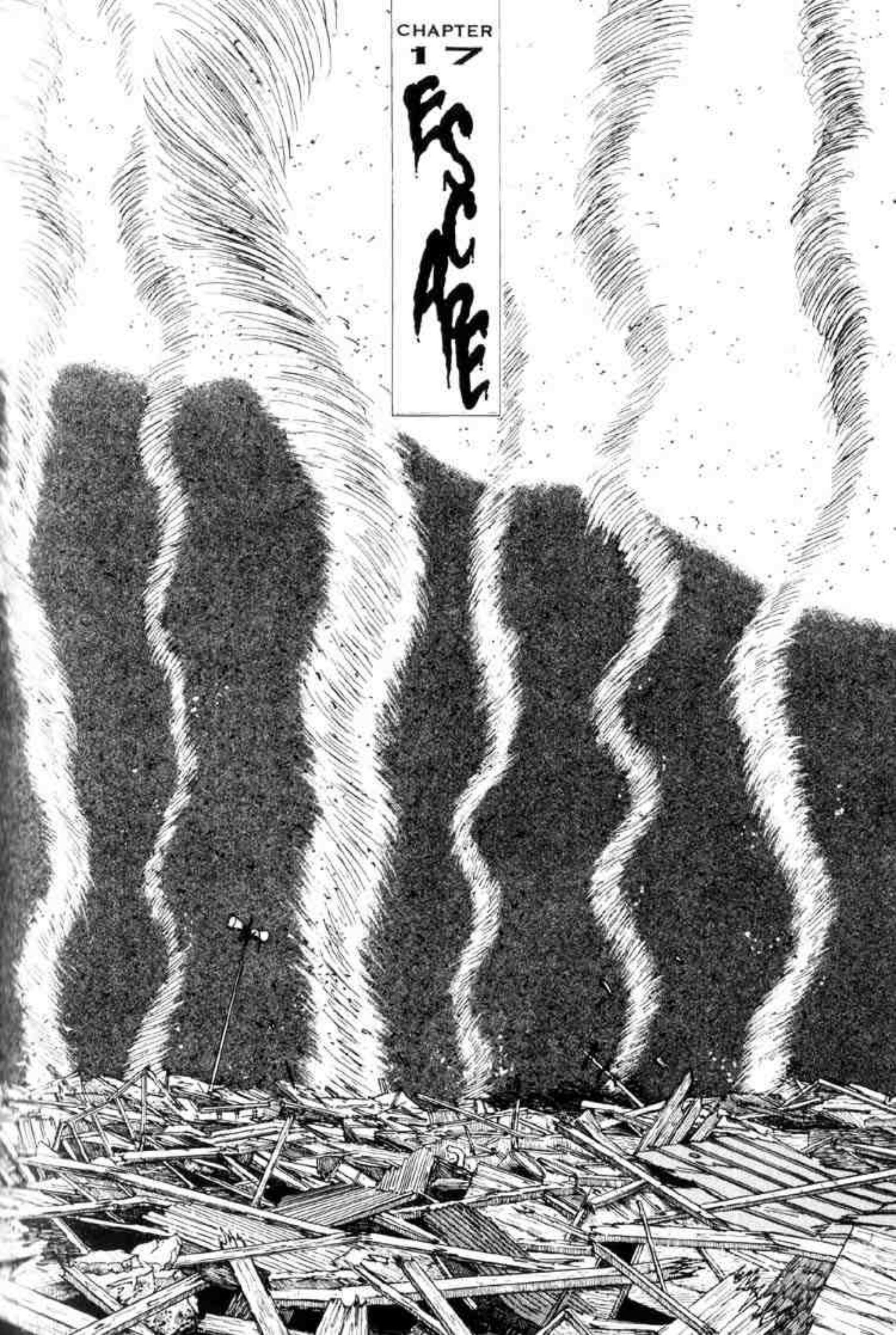
MOM!
MITSUO, WHERE'S MOM?

SH-SHE GOT BLOWN AWAY!

WHAT DID YOU SAY?

Oh, GOD...
HIS BACK...

AT THAT MO-MENT...
I KNEW I HAD TO ESCAPE.


CHAPTER
17
ESCAPE

WE'RE GOING.
I'VE GOT TO GET MITSUO OUT OF HERE...

...BEFORE HE TURNS COMPLETELY INTO A SNAIL.

HE'LL GO BACK TO NORMAL ONCE WE'RE OUTSIDE KUROZU-CHO.

AFTER THAT I'LL KNOW THE WAY OUT...
AND SO I'LL COME BACK FOR MY PARENTS.

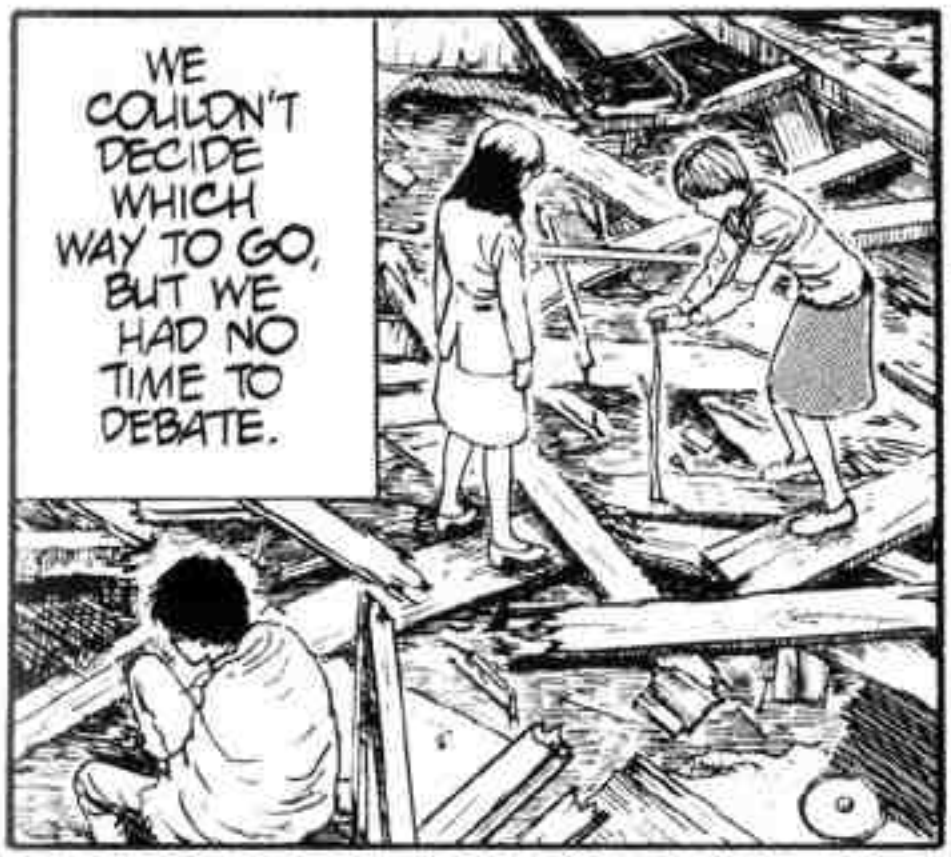
BUT HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO GET OUT?
WE CAN'T GO BY THE ROAD OR BY SEA...

WHAT ABOUT THE HILLS?

THE HILLS? BUT IF IT WERE THAT EASY, SOMEONE WOULD HAVE GOTTEN OUT BY NOW.

MAYBE THERE'S A TRAIL NO ONE'S TRIED.

IT'S NO USE.
THE SPIRAL'S ALL AROUND US.


WE COULDN'T DECIDE WHICH WAY TO GO, BUT WE HAD NO TIME TO DEBATE.

HERE.

TOK
FWOO

SHWOOO

SO WE END UP WITH THE STEEP HILL.
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO TRY IT. NORTH IT IS.
IT'S NO USE...

KIRIE, MY BACK ITCHES...
CAN YOU SCRATCH IT?

WE'LL BE OUT OF HERE IN A FEW HOURS.
JUST HANG ON. YOU'LL BE FINE.
Skritch
Skritch

UP HERE WE CAN SEE HOW EVERYTHING'S BEEN DESTROYED BUT THE ROW HOUSES.

HEY DID YOU NOTICE ...

ALL THE ROW HOUSES ARE FACING DRAGONFLY POND.

WHAT?

FACING DRAGON-FLY POND?

LOOK OVER THERE!

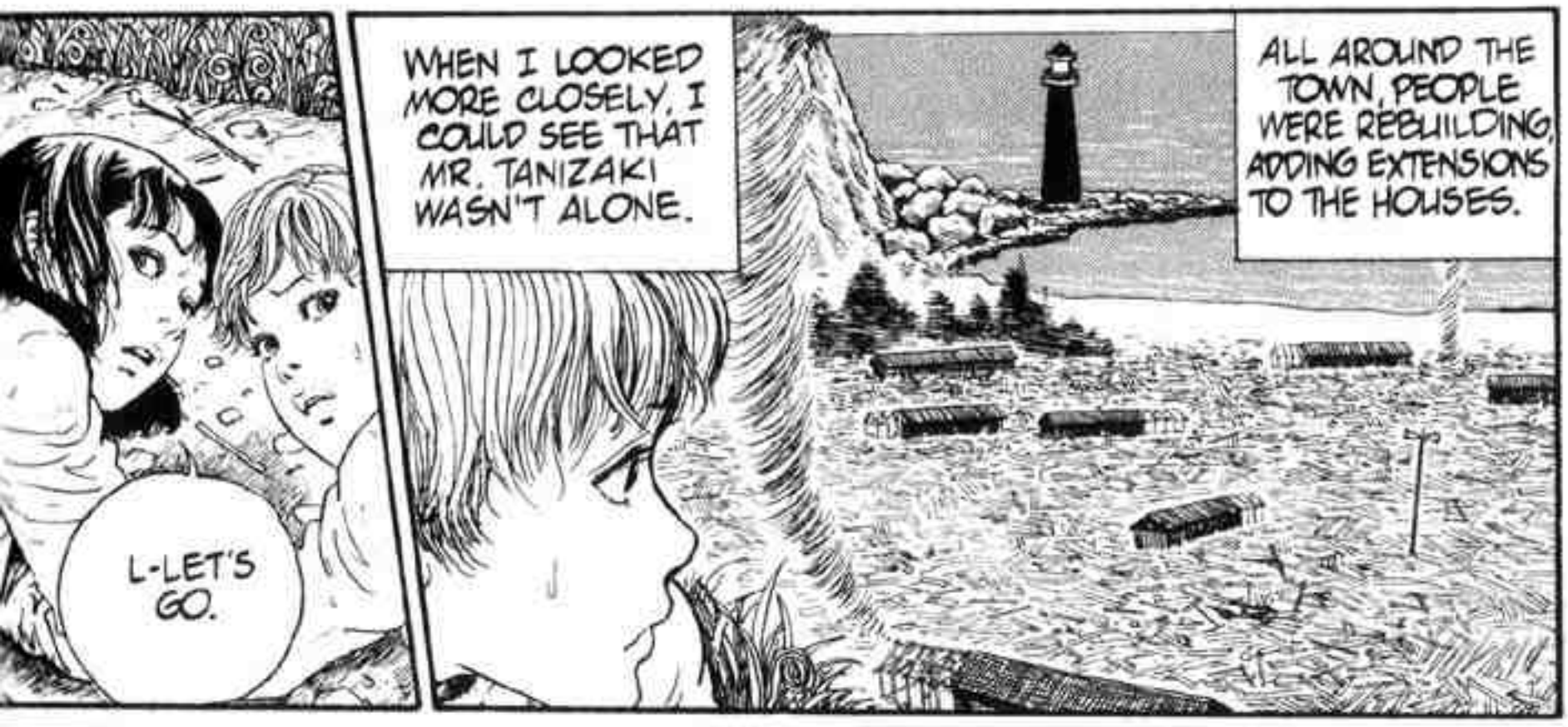
BAMMMM

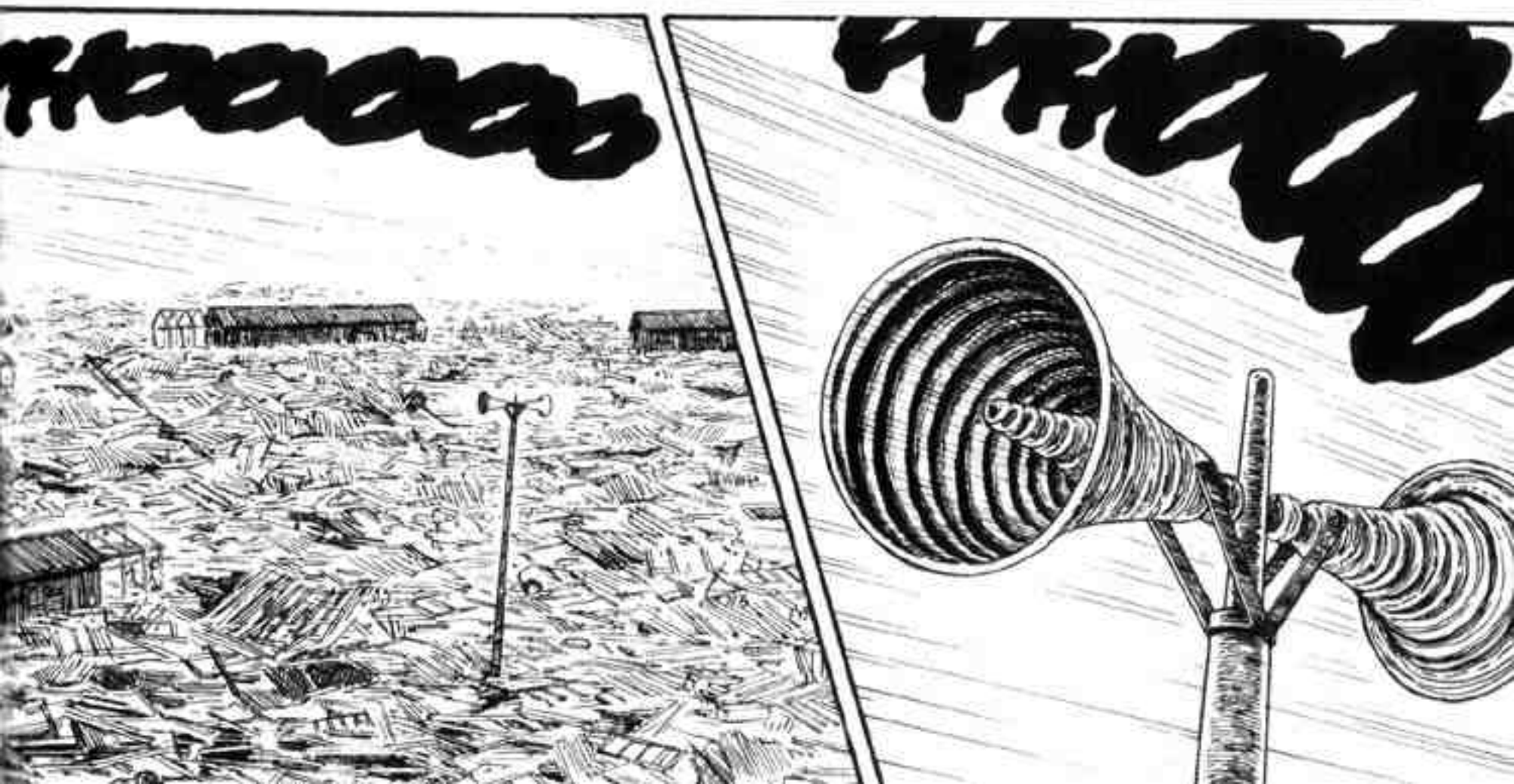
BAMMMM

BAMMMM

THE WIND'S COMING FROM THAT MAN ON THE ROW HOUSE! HE'S NAILING NEW PLANKS TO THE ROOF!

Noooooooo


L-LET'S GO.
WHEN I LOOKED MORE CLOSELY, I COULD SEE THAT MR. TANIZAKI WASN'T ALONE.
ALL AROUND THE TOWN, PEOPLE WERE REBUILDING, ADDING EXTENSIONS TO THE HOUSES.



I CAN'T STAND THAT SOUND!

IT JUST PIERCES THROUGH MY EARS!

AARG! COME ON!

THE POWER HAD BEEN OFF SINCE THE STORM, BUT THE SIREN STILL BLARED.

IT MADE ITS NOISE AT IRREGULAR INTERVALS, AS IF SIGNALING THE ESCAPE OF PRISONERS.

THE PATTERN'S HERE, TOO.
IT'S DOWN TO THE LEVEL OF GROWING CELLS.

WE'VE BEEN WALKING FOR A WHILE... HOW LONG DOES THIS TRAIL GO ON?
NOT MUCH LONGER... IT SHOULD LEAD TO A PAVED ROAD SOON.

HFF
BUT IT'S LONGER THAN I REMEMBER.
UFF
KIRIE, MY BACK HURTS... WE'RE WALKING TOO FAST...
HFF

TMP
TMP

LOOKS LIKE MORE VISITORS TO KURÔZU-CHO.

Ah!

MR. TAKEMOTO?
WHY ARE YOU GOING THIS WAY?
WHAT?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WE'RE TRYING TO GET OUT OF KURÔZU-CHO.
THERE'S A MOUNTAIN ROAD THIS WAY THAT'S SUPPOSED TO LEAD TO THE NEXT TOWN.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THE ROAD'S THIS WAY.
WE JUST LEFT TOWN, TOO.

WHICH TRAIL DID YOU TAKE?
WE TOOK THE TRAIL RIGHT BY KURÔZU HIGH SCHOOL.

WE TOOK THE SAME ONE, BECAUSE WE SAW YOU AHEAD.
SO WE WERE JUST FOLLOWING YOU.

IT SEEMS YOU CAME BACK HERE WITHOUT REALIZING IT.

WHAT DO WE DO NOW? IF WE KEEP GOING, WE'LL PROBABLY END UP BACK HERE, TOO, huh?
LOOKS LIKE IT.

DAMN IT! IT HAP-PENED AGAIN!
NONE OF THESE PATHS WORK! THEY ALL LEAD BACK!

WE'LL NEVER GET OUT!
CALM DOWN! IT'S TOO EARLY TO GIVE UP!

IN ANY CASE, LET'S MOVE ON.

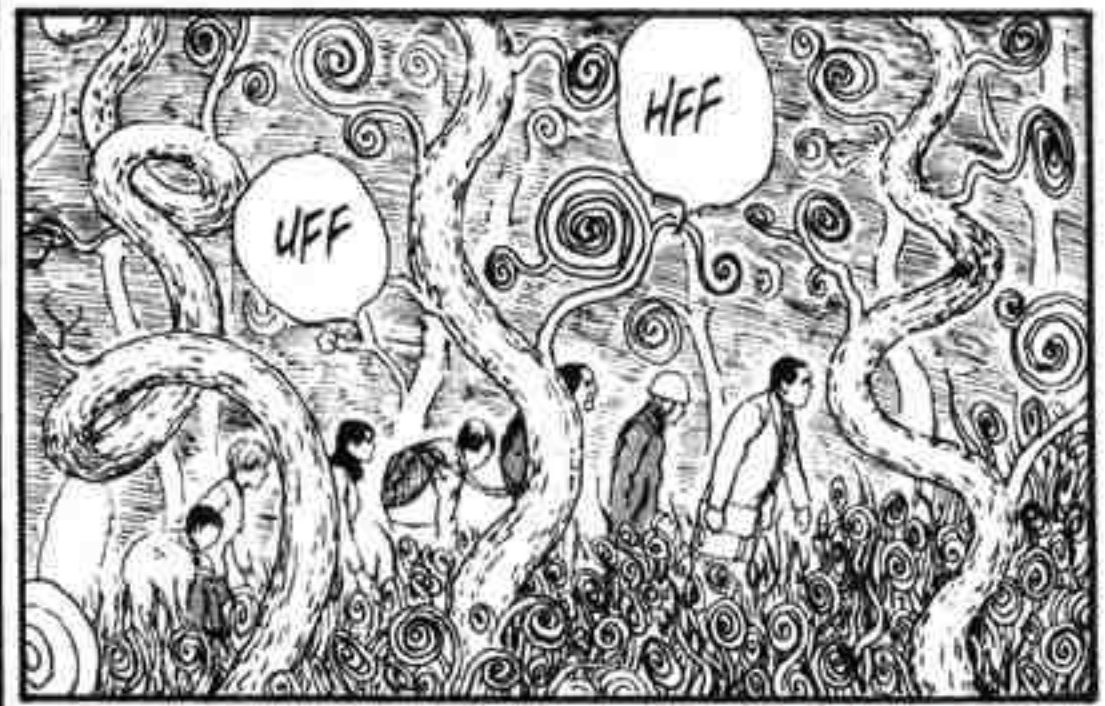
WHY DO YOU HAVE HIM TIED UP?
Huh?

Oh, YOU MEAN OKAMOTO?

IT'S TO MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T RUN OFF.
HE'S THE MOST IMPORTANT MEMBER OF OUR PARTY.

LOOK AT THAT SHELL. AND IT'S FULL OF MEAT!

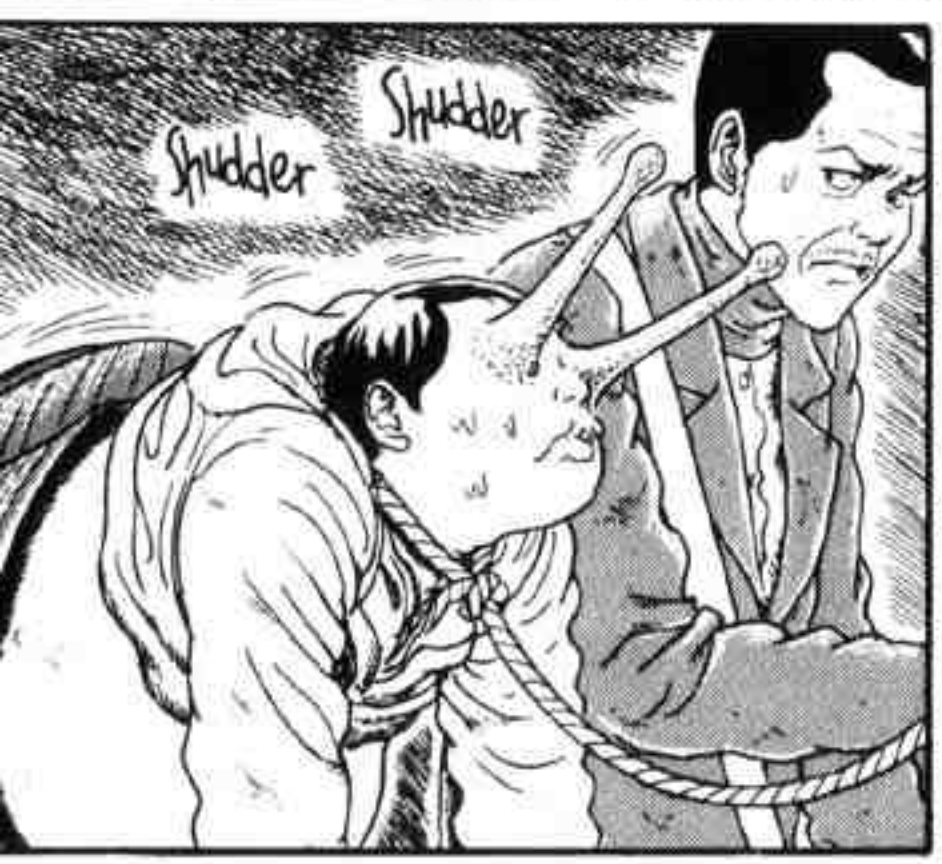
HE'S OUR EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLY. WE DIDN'T KNOW HOW LONG WE'D BE OUT HERE. SOON HE'LL TURN INTO A SNAIL... AND THEN WE'LL BE ABLE TO EAT HIM.

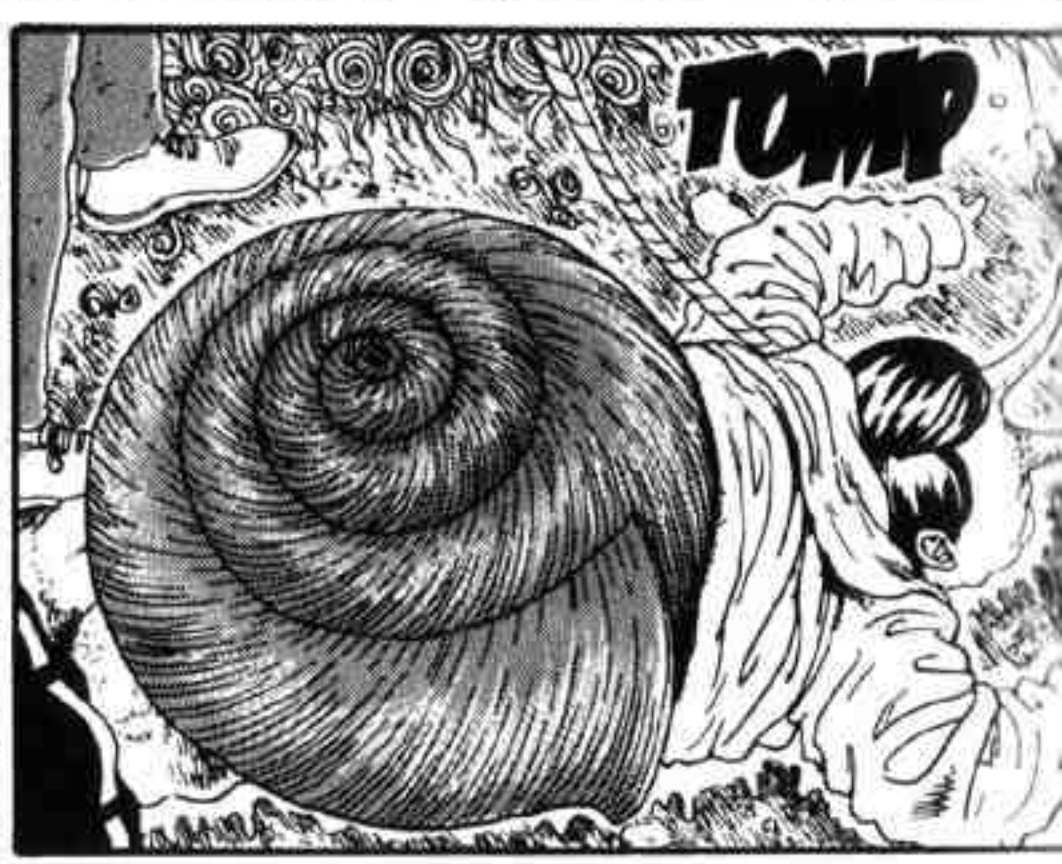

UFF
HFF

I CAN'T LOOK AT THIS.
IT'S MAKING ME DIZZY.

KIRIE, MY BACK ITCHES!
I NEED YOU TO SCRATCH IT!

SHLOOP


Shudder
Shudder

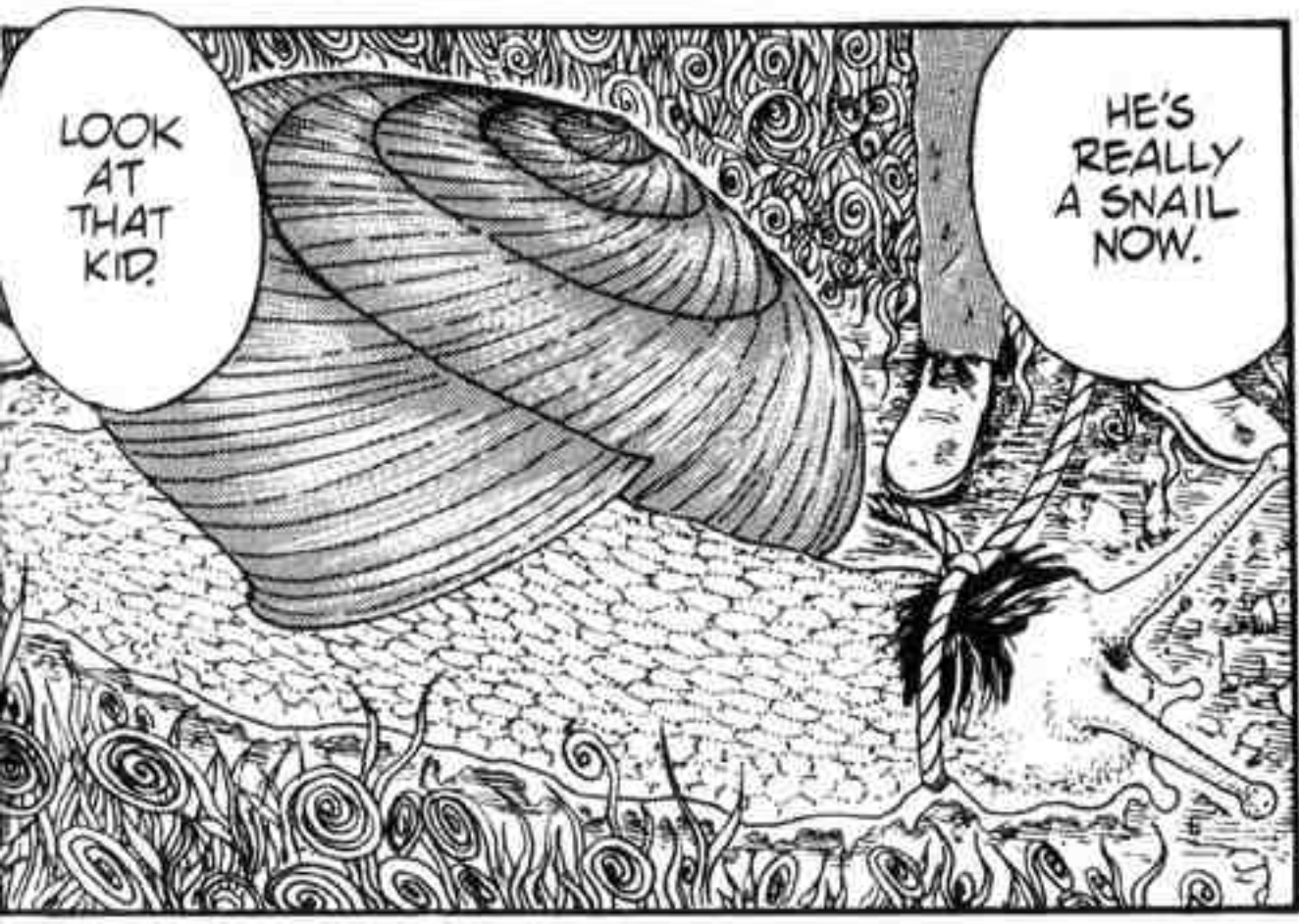

TOMP

SHLP
SHLP

WELL, WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT!
HA HA HA!

DAMN...
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GOING AROUND IN CIRCLES.

URR...
GRRR
I'M STARVING!


LOOK AT THAT KID.
HE'S REALLY A SNAIL NOW.

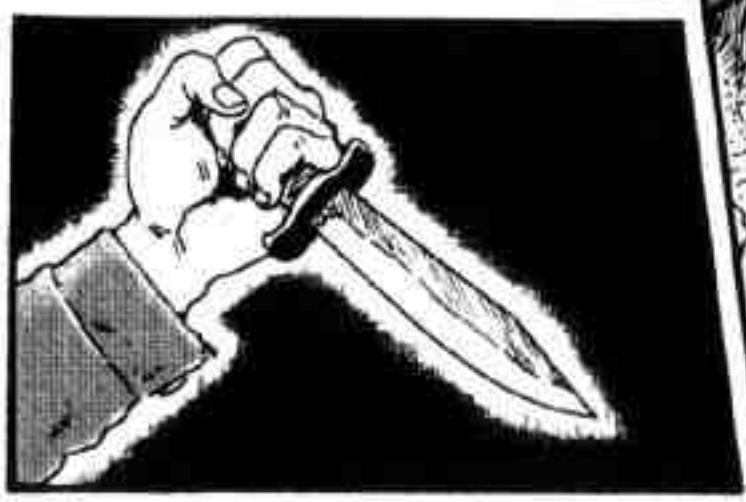
GULP

I THINK IT'S TIME. YOU WANT TO COOK HIM?
NO...

I-I'D LIKE TO TRY ONE RAW.
RAW?

YEAH, THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.

RFL
RFL



HEY!
HE'S HIDING FROM US!

SCREW IT, LET'S JUST CRACK HIM OPEN.
STOP THAT. YOU'LL MAKE A WHIRLWIND IF YOU THROW THAT.

WE DON'T NEED THAT.
I'LL SHOW YOU THE BEST WAY TO EAT HIM!

DID YOU KNOW THAT SOME INSECTS EAT SNAILS THIS WAY?

SLLLCH

MNCH MNCH MNCH

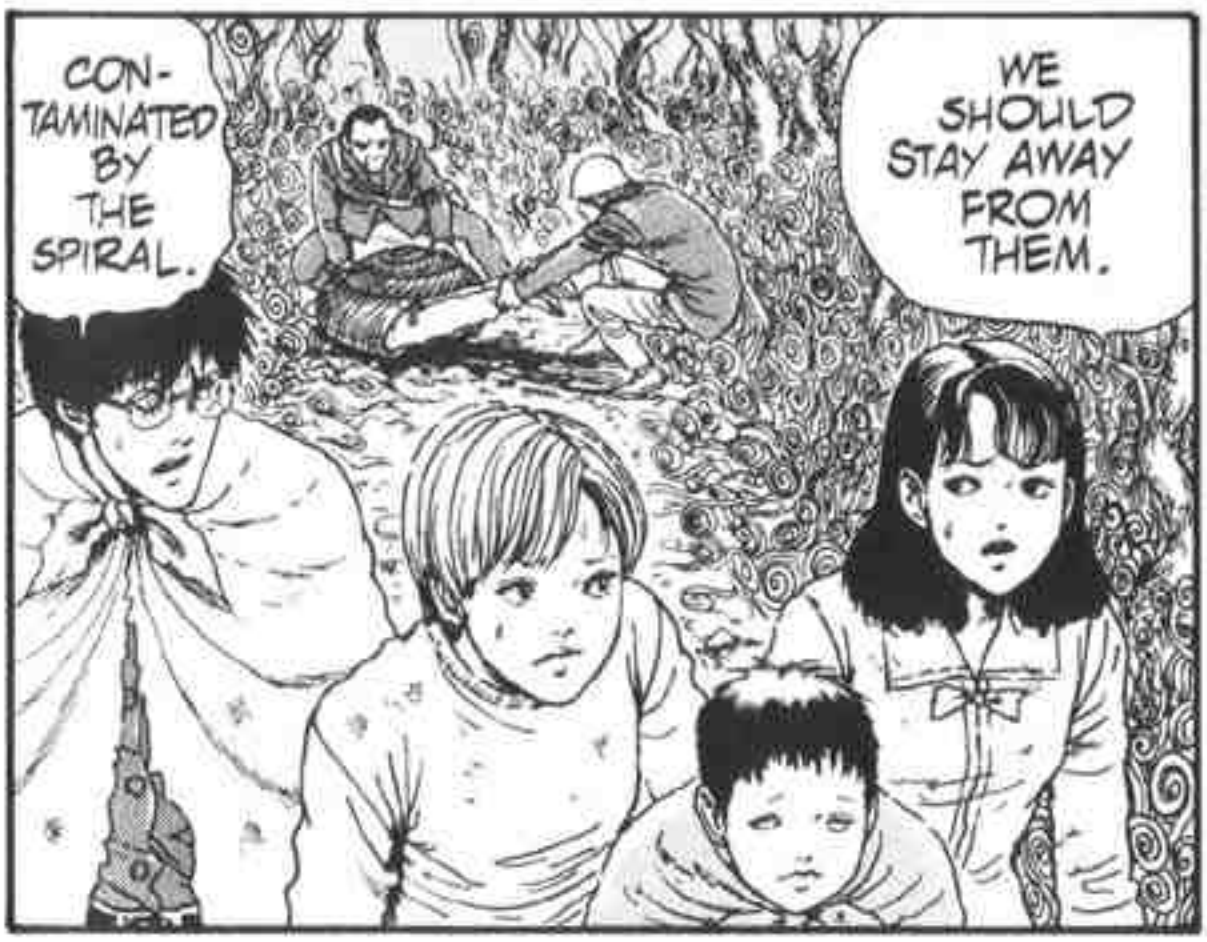
SLRR SLRR

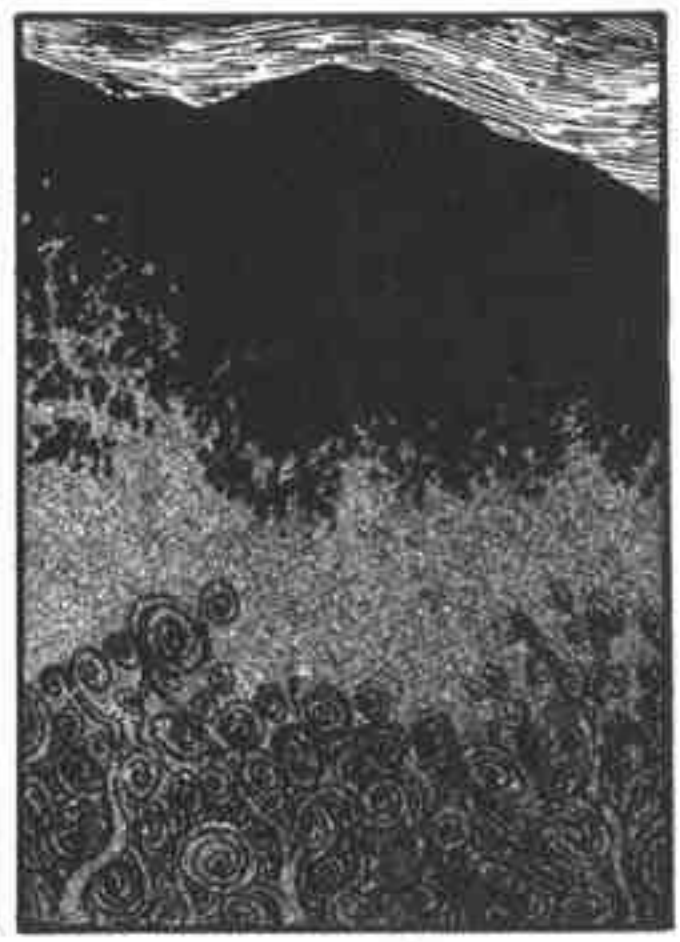
ROLLLLLLL

MMMM

KIRIE... LET'S GO NOW... WHILE THEY'RE BUSY.
OKAY...

MIT-SUO!
COME ON!


CON-TAMINATED BY THE SPIRAL.
WE SHOULD STAY AWAY FROM THEM.



I WONDER WHERE WE ARE...
I'VE LOST ALL SENSE OF DIREC-TION.

I TOLD YOU IT WAS USELESS...
IT'S ALL AROUND US... IN US AND AROUND US...

THAT'S RIGHT!
YOU CAN TELL NORTH BY LOOKING AT A TREE STUMP.
SHUICHI...
COME JOIN ME...
D-D-DAD! DAD! IT'S MY DAD!
WHAT'S WRONG, SHUICHI?
IT'S HIM! IT'S HIM!
CALM DOWN. YOU'RE JUST IMAGINING IT!
UWAAA!

SO SLOW ...

WE'RE WALKING SO SLOW...
HFF
HFF
IT FEELS LIKE TIME IS MOVING FASTER, LEAVING US BEHIND.

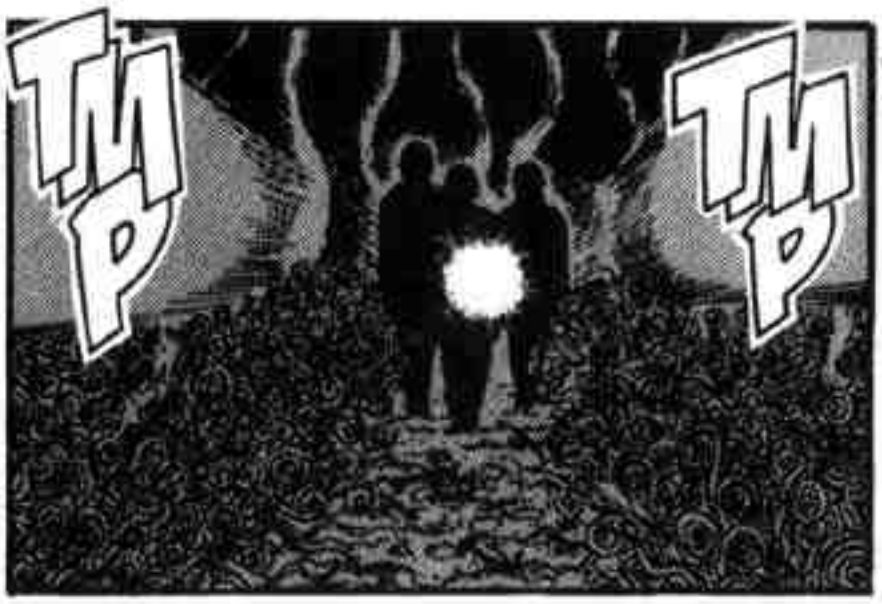
WHAT TIME IS IT, ANY-WAY?

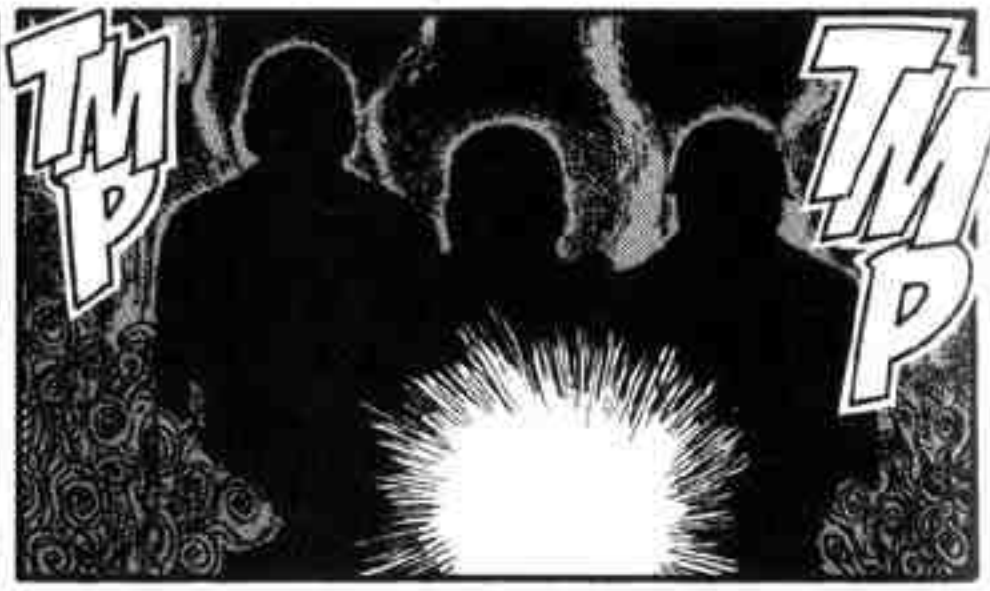
Tik
Tok

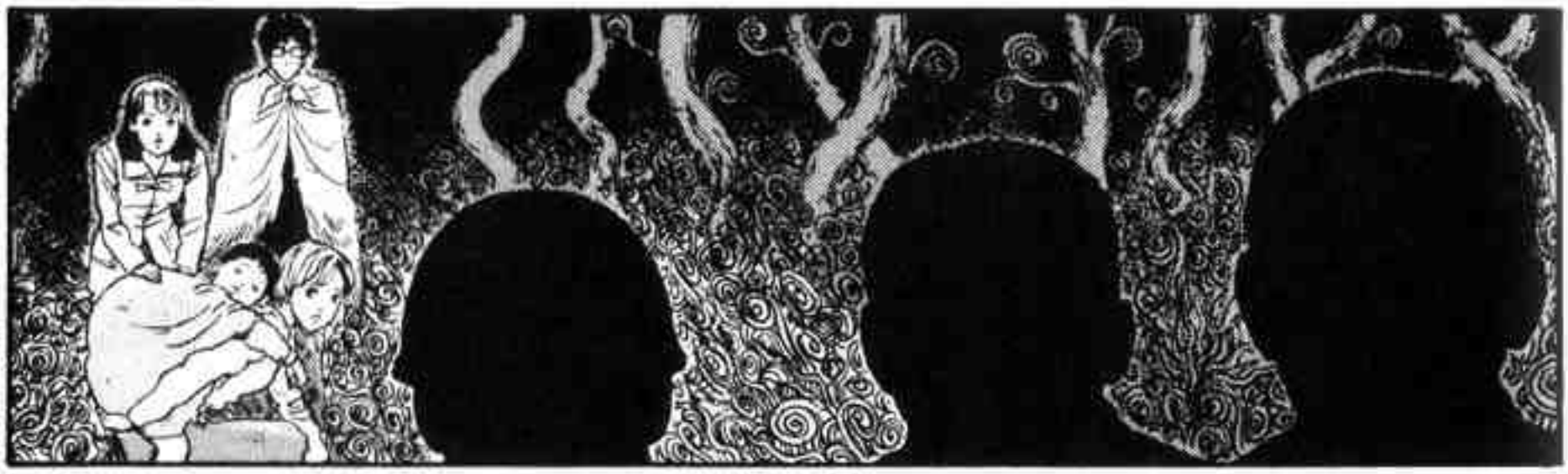
MMGH
MMGH

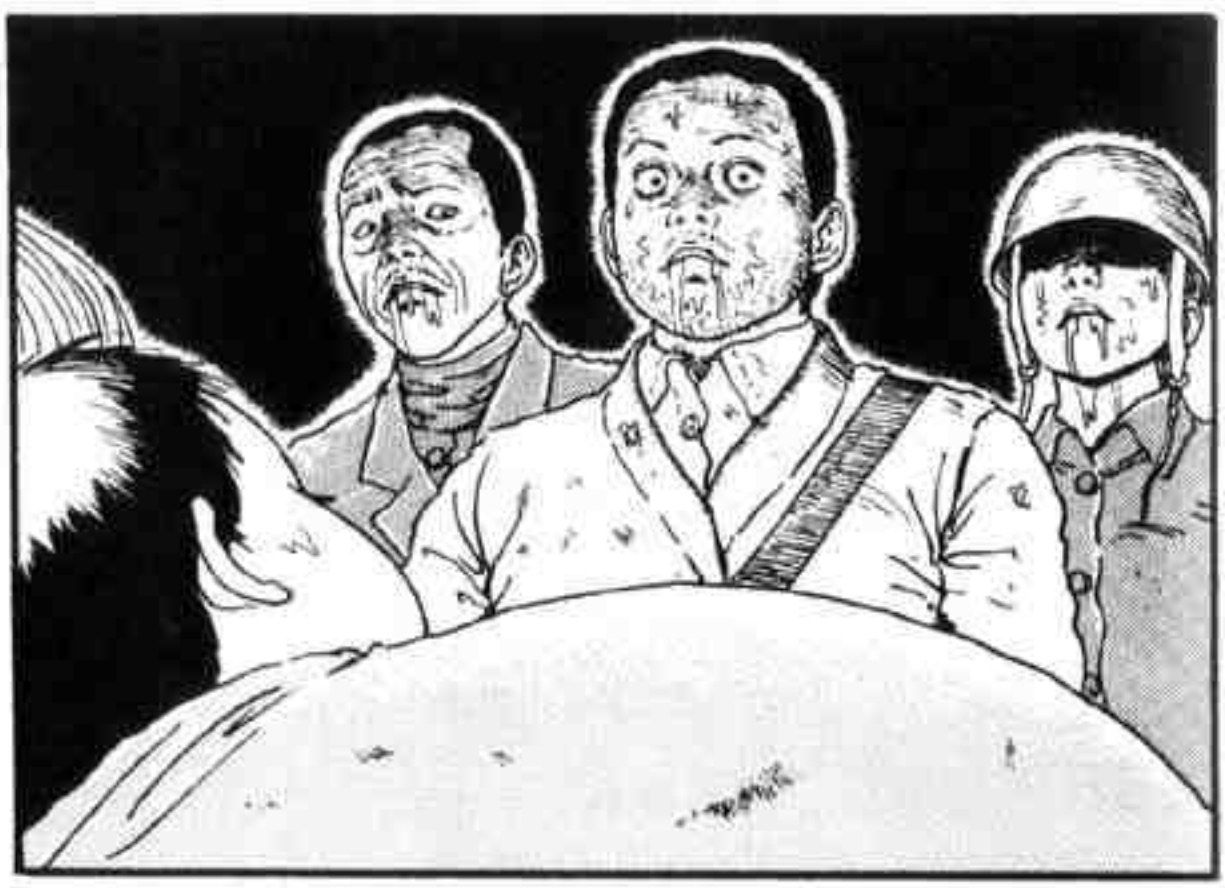
MITSUO, THOSE LEAVES AREN'T GOOD FOR YOU!
I'LL CARRY YOU IF YOU'RE TIRED.

TMP
TMP


TMP
TMP


TMP
TMP





WE MEET AGAIN.
WHY DID YOU LEAVE US?

Oh...
WE DIDN'T MEAN TO...WE JUST GOT LOST.

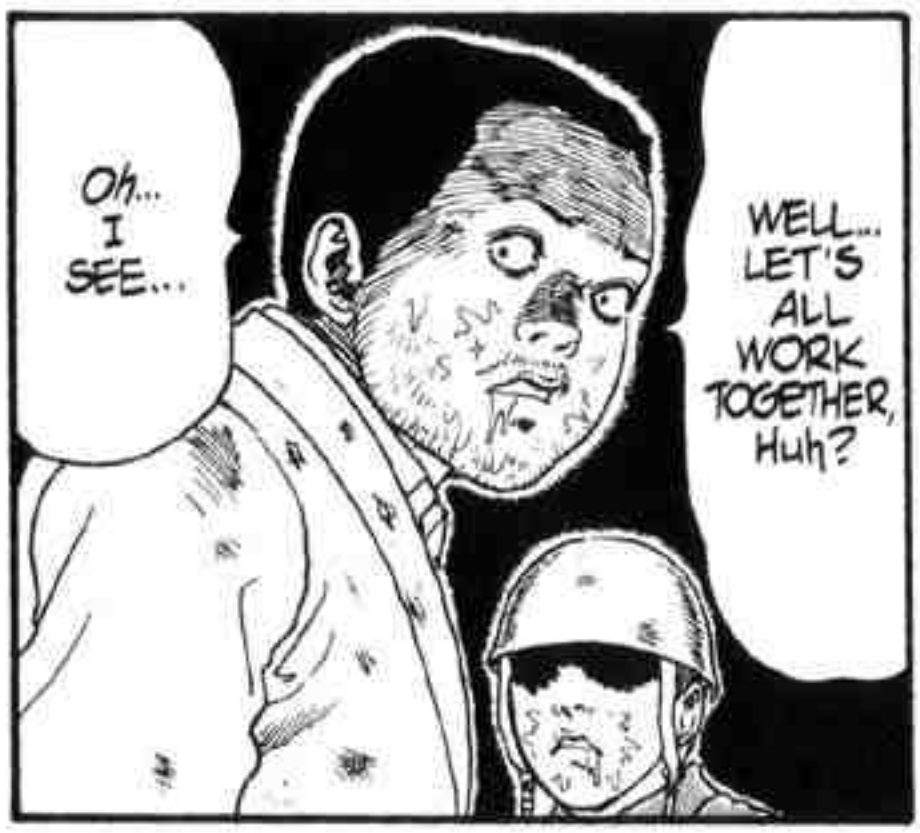
AWW... THE KID'S NODDING OFF ON HIS SISTER'S BACK, eh? HOW SWEET.
HE MUST BE TIRED POOR KID...

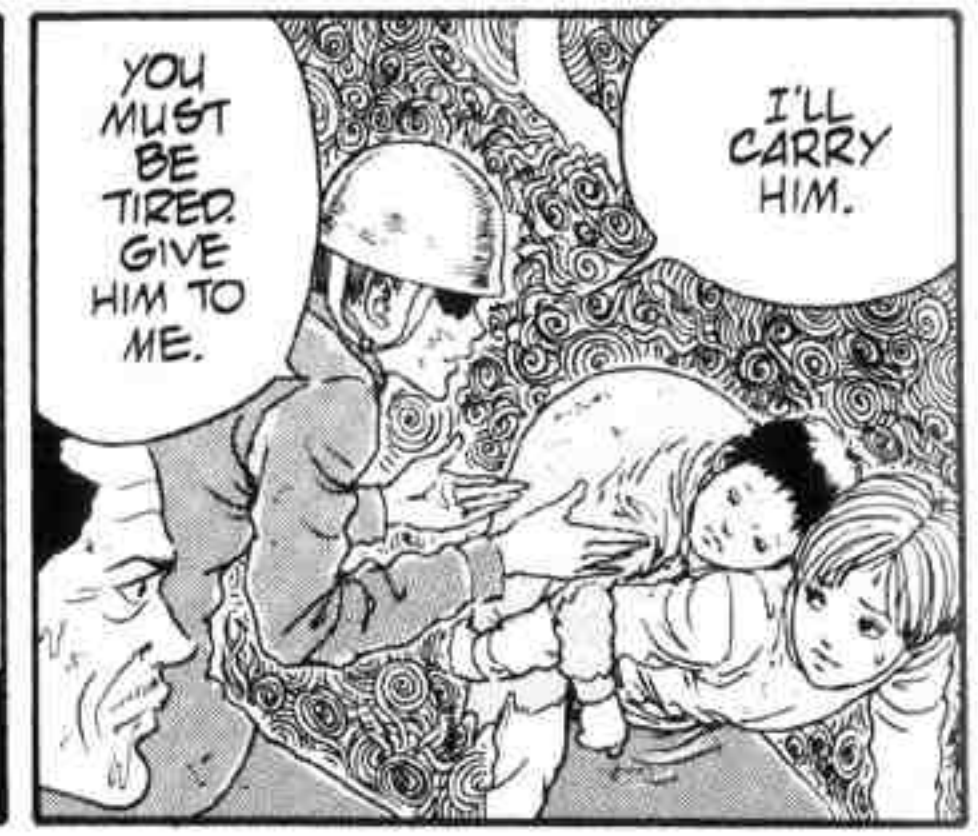
HEY ...
...

IS SOME-THING WRONG WITH HIS BACK?
IT LOOKS SO SWOLLEN...

WHAT?

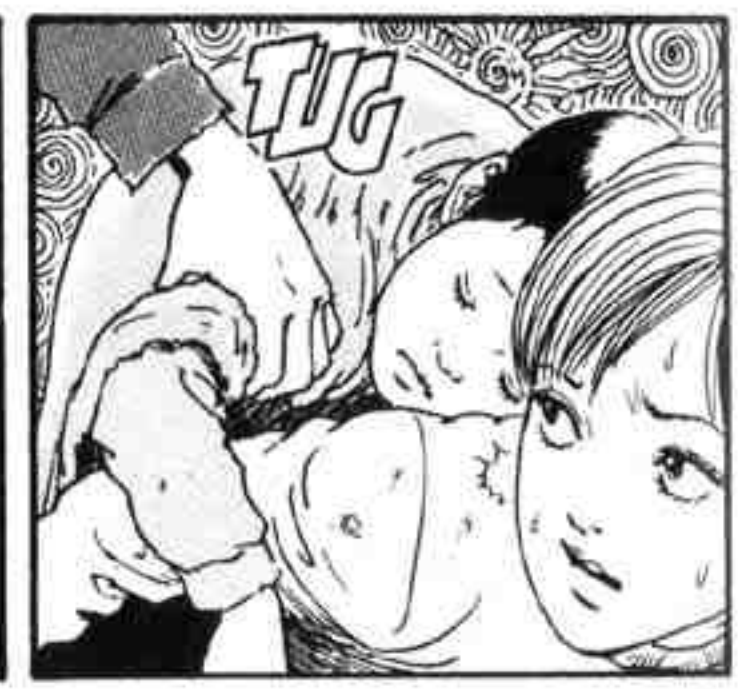
Oh, uh... THAT'S BECAUSE HE'S CARRYING A BACKPACK.


Oh... I SEE...
WELL... LET'S ALL WORK TOGETHER, Huh?


YOU MUST BE TIRED. GIVE HIM TO ME.
I'LL CARRY HIM.

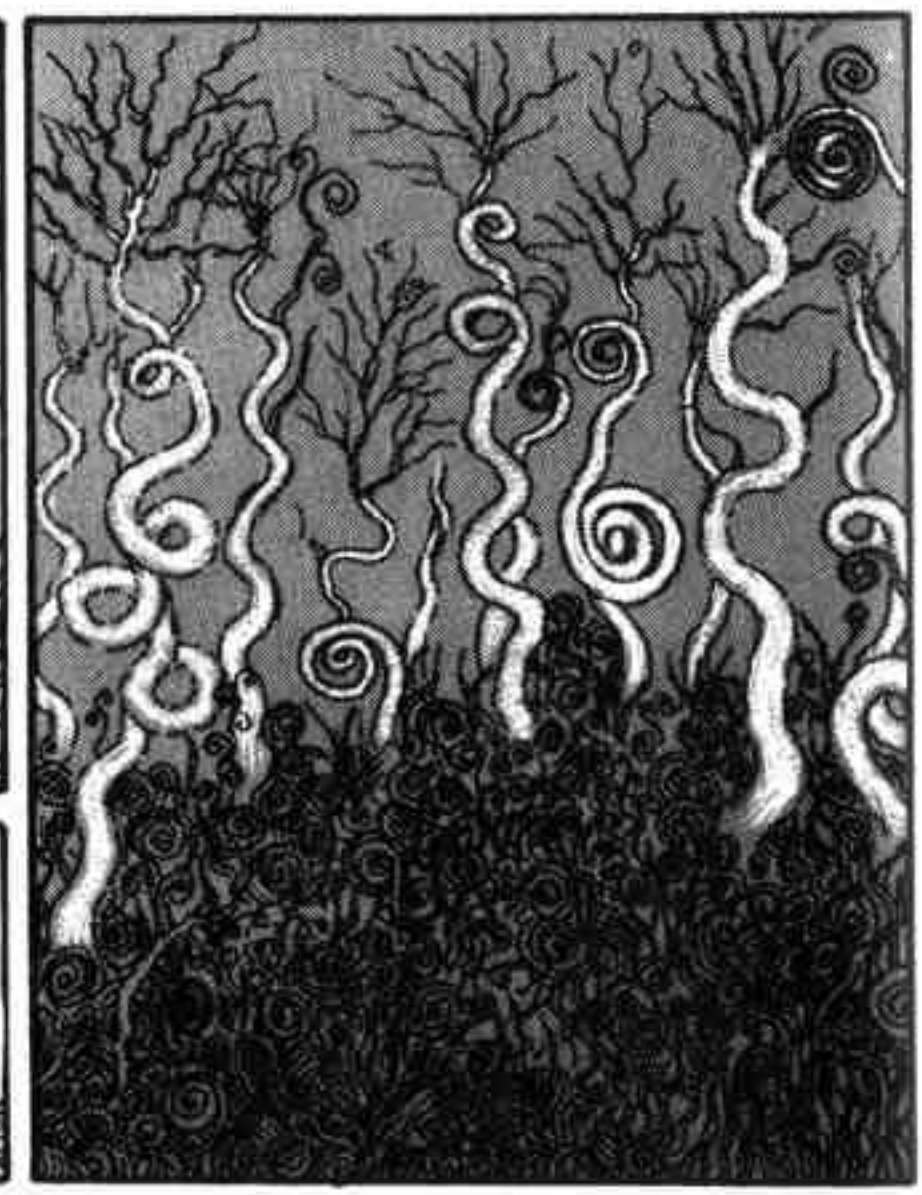
Oh, NO. I'M FINE.

NO YOU'RE NOT.
WE HAVE A WAYS TO GO. COME ON!

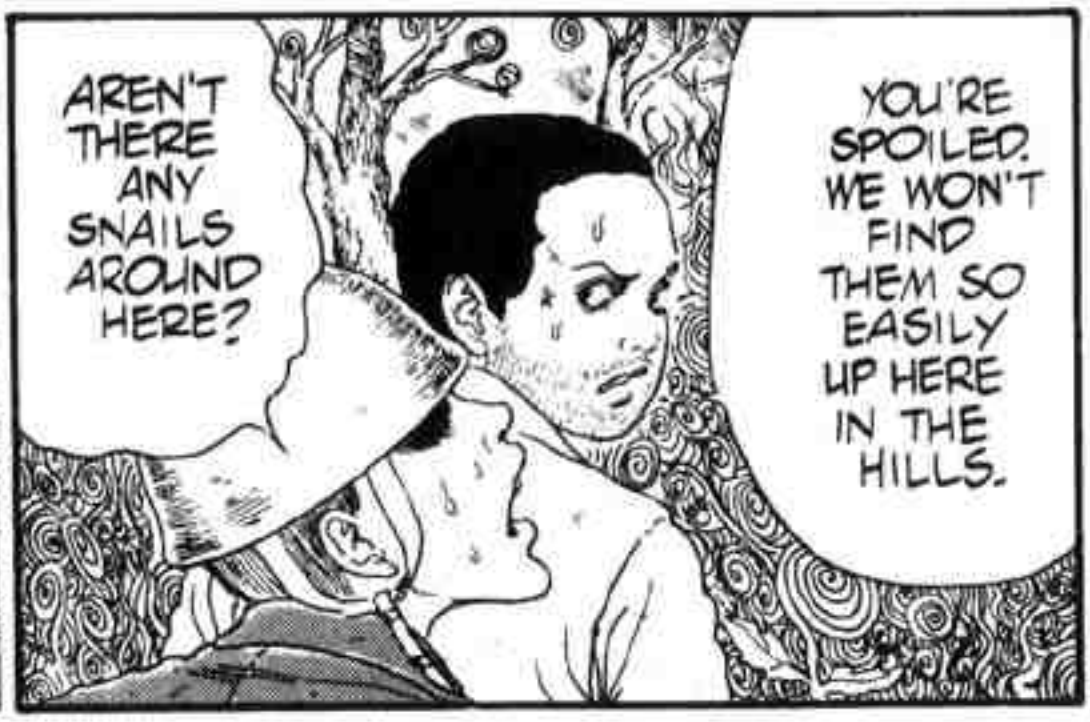

TUG

I'LL TAKE HIM.

O. OKAY.



AARG... I'M GETTING HUNGRY AGAIN.


AREN'T THERE ANY SNAILS AROUND HERE?
YOU'RE SPOILED. WE WON'T FIND THEM SO EASILY UP HERE IN THE HILLS.

ISN'T THERE SOME FOOD IN YOUR BROTHER'S BACKPACK?

N-NO... JUST SOME CLOTHES.

OH, WELL.
THAT'S TOO BAD.

!

BUT ANYWAY, I WAS THINKING ...

WHAT'S WRONG?
NOTH-ING'S WRONG.

PLOP
PLOP

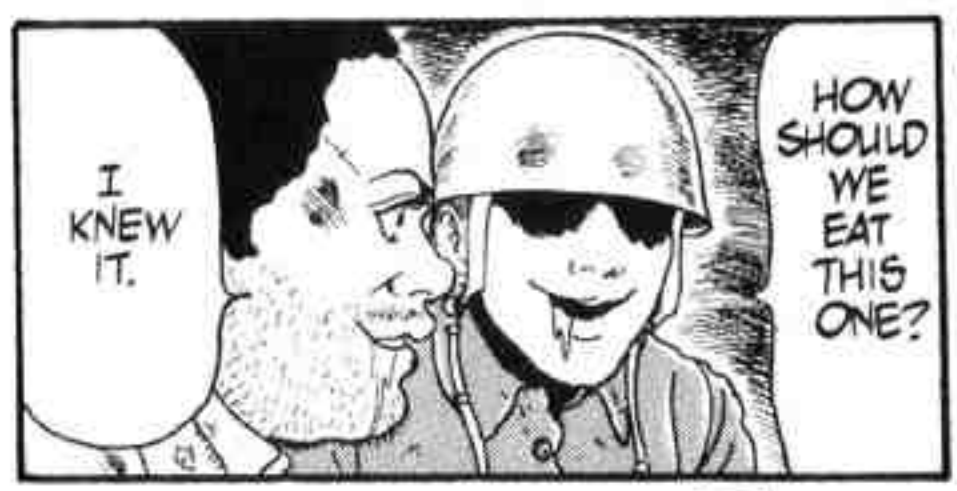
PLOP
PLOP

AAHH!

?!
SHUUU

S-STOP IT, MITSUO!
DON'T SQUIRM AROUND ON MY BACK!

YAAHH!


I KNEW IT.
HOW SHOULD WE EAT THIS ONE?

RUN FOR IT!

STOP!
TMP
TMP

TMP
TMP

DON'T RUN. SLOW AND STEADY DOES IT.

HFF
TMP TMP TMP
HFF

SHAAAA

HOW DID WE GET TO THE SEA CLIFF?
WE WERE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN!

THERE THEY ARE.

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
WE HAVE TO LET MITSUO ESCAPE BEFORE THEY GET HERE.

ESCAPE?
BUT HOW?

SCHAAAAAA

CAN YOU CRAWL DOWN THIS CLIFF?
MITSUO ...

YOU CAN?
THEN GO! GET AWAY!

YOU HAVE TO HURRY!
GO NOW!

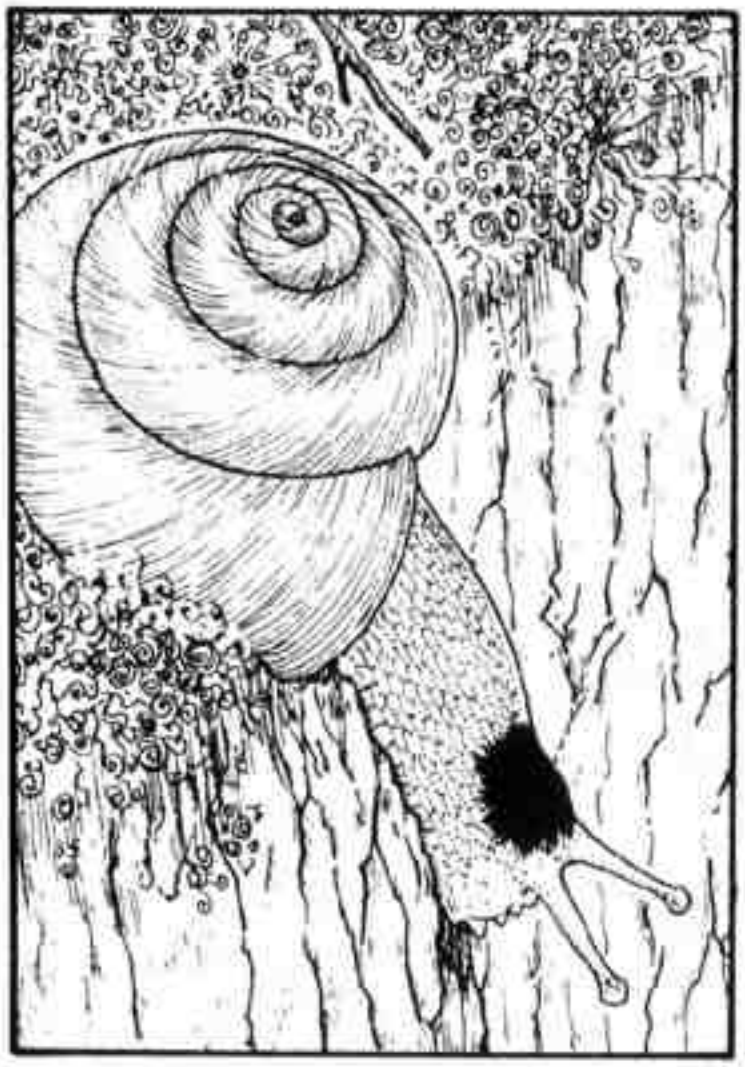
SCHAA

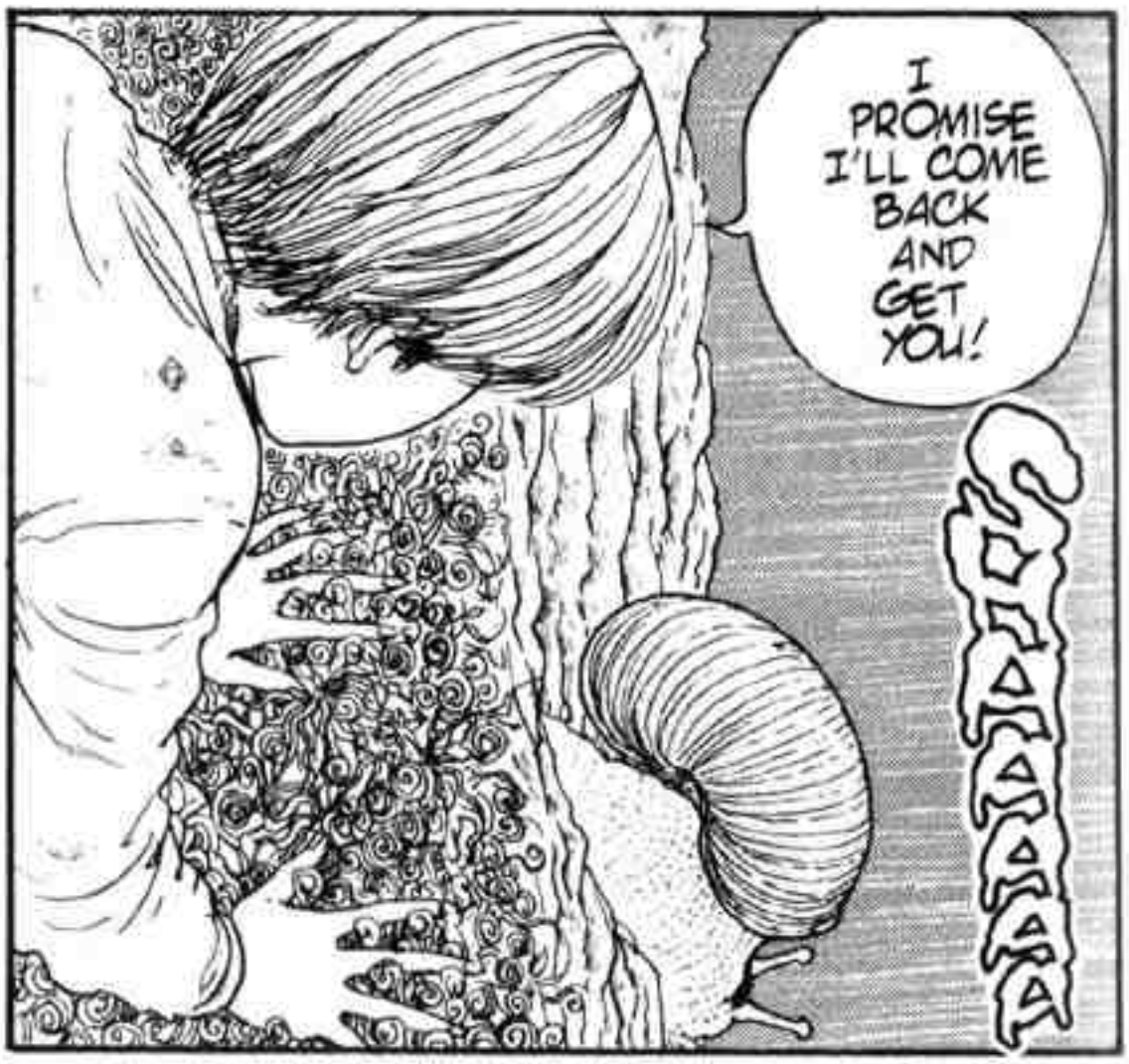
NO, MITSUO! GO NOW!

I'LL HIT YOU IF YOU DON'T!

GO, MITSUO!
POKE

GO!
POKE




I PROMISE I'LL COME BACK AND GET YOU!
SQUAAAA

ACT LIKE WE'RE STILL CARRYING MITSUO.

Hmm, STILL TRYING TO ESCAPE?
HAND OVER THAT SNAIL TO US!

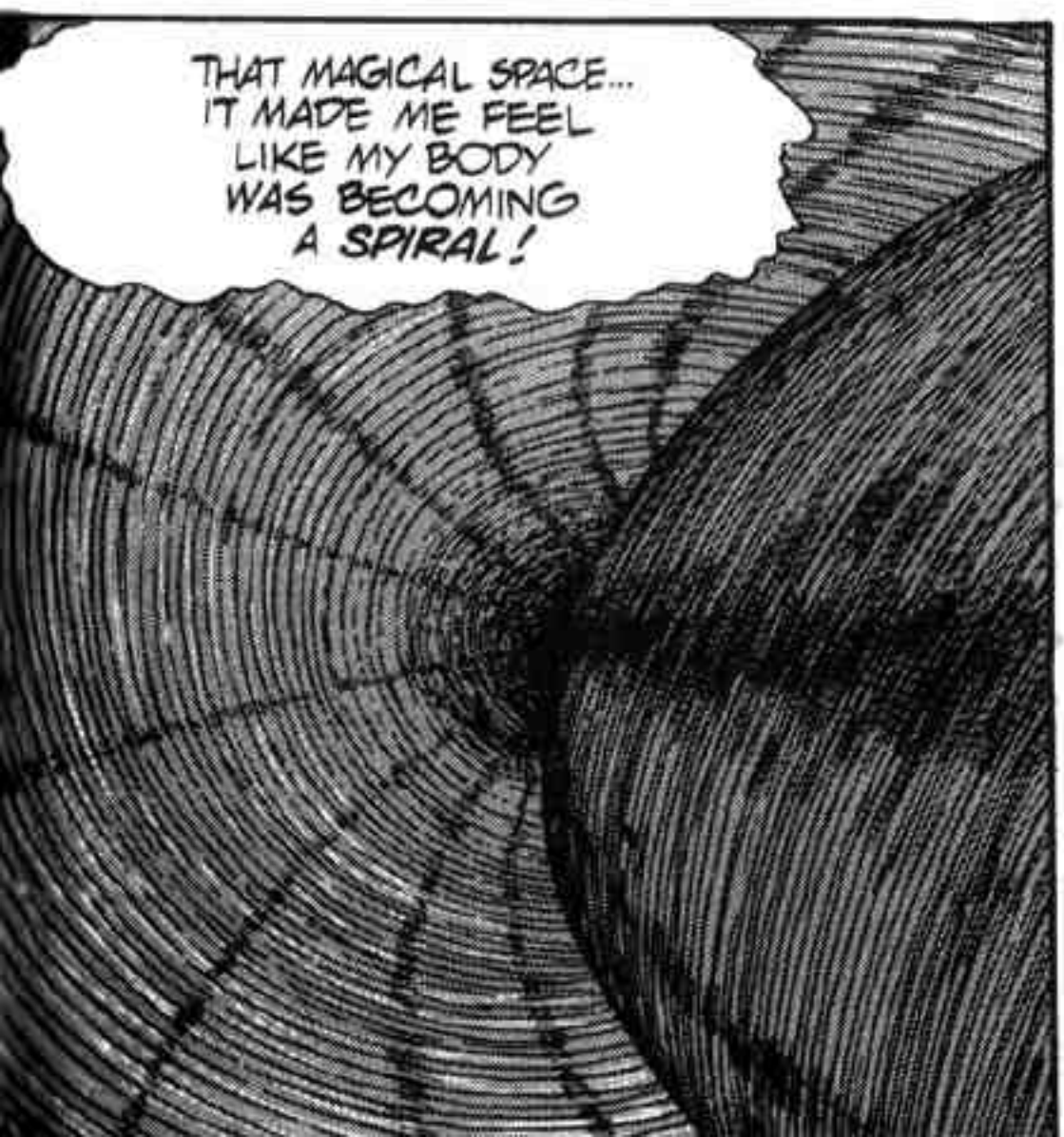
HEY, KURŌZU-CHO'S THAT WAY!
ARE YOU GOING TO GO BACK? HAHAHA...

WE HAVE NO CHOICE. LET'S KEEP GOING..
WE'LL FIND MITSUO LATER.

HEY, ARE WE GOING TO EAT IT RAW?
OF COURSE WE ARE.

REMEMBER WHAT OKAMOTO TASTED LIKE?

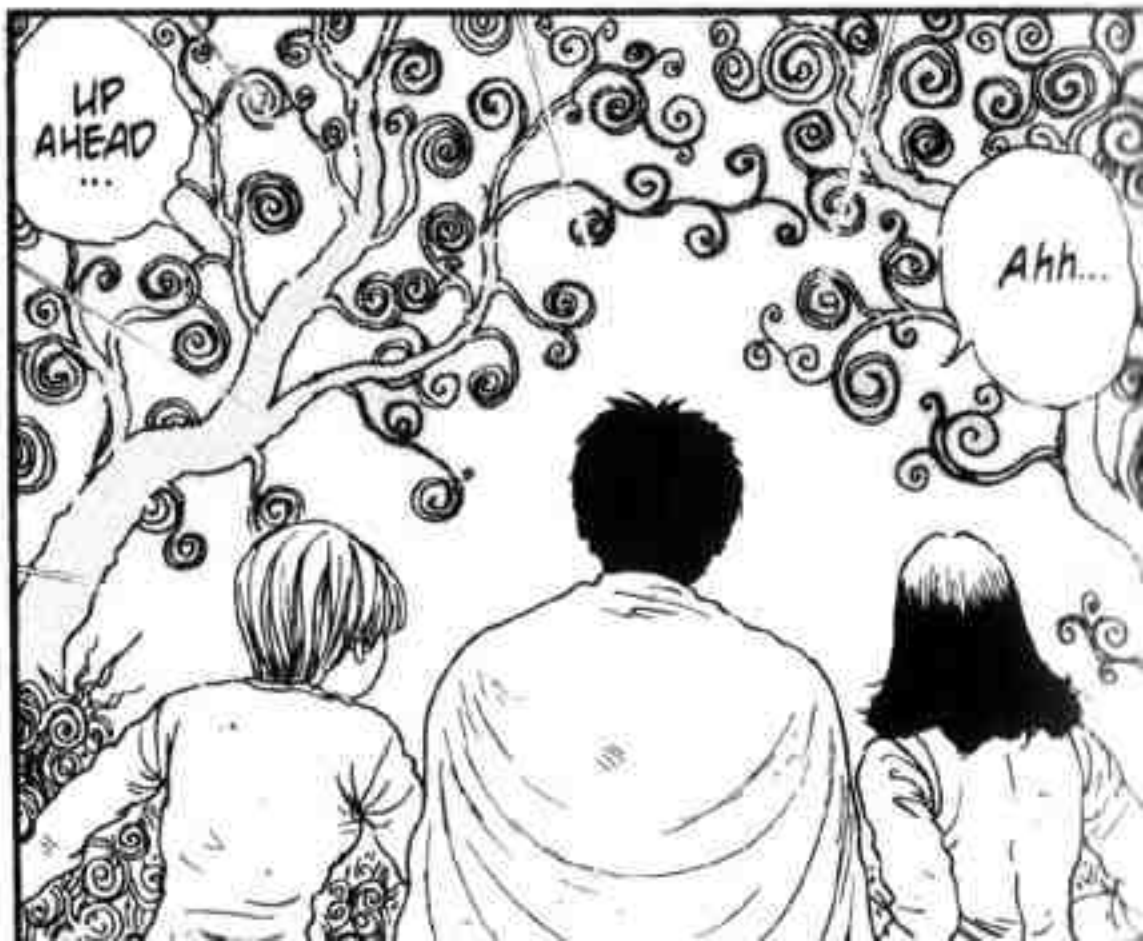
THAT SENSATION OF BEING INSIDE HIS SHELL, CHEWING ON THE SOFT PARTS OF HIS FACE...
FITTING YOUR WHOLE BODY INTO THOSE WET, WONDERFUL CURVES...


THAT MAGICAL SPACE... IT MADE ME FEEL LIKE MY BODY WAS BECOMING A SPIRAL!

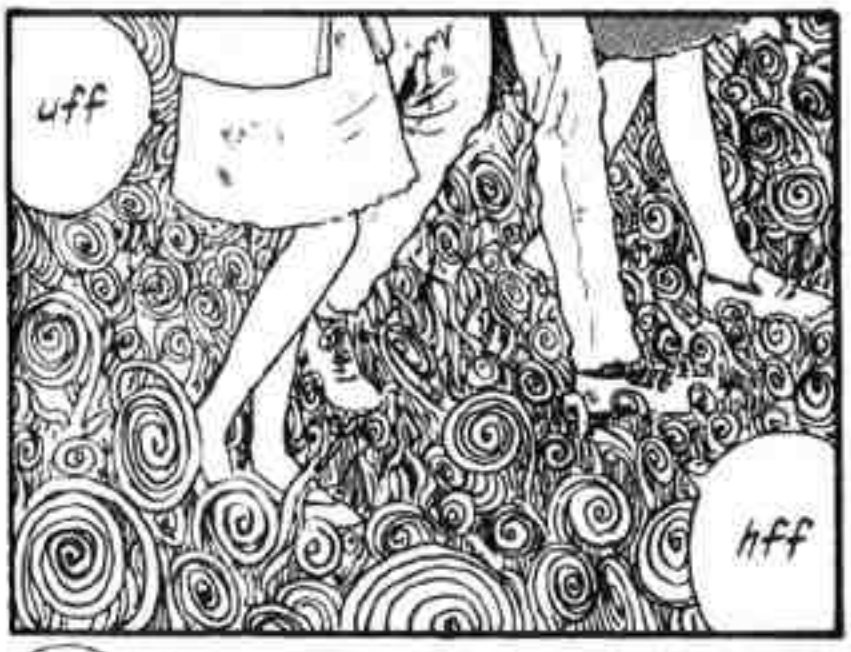
JUST THINKING ABOUT IT MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I'M GOING TO...

UUOOHH!
UUOOHH!

IT'S IN US AND AROUND US...
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!


UP AHEAD ...
Ahh...

twch
twch


uff
hff

hff
SHF
uff

uff
WE SHOULD BE NEAR THE TOWN BY NOW.

..
WHAT...?!

CHAPTER
18
THE
LABYRINTH

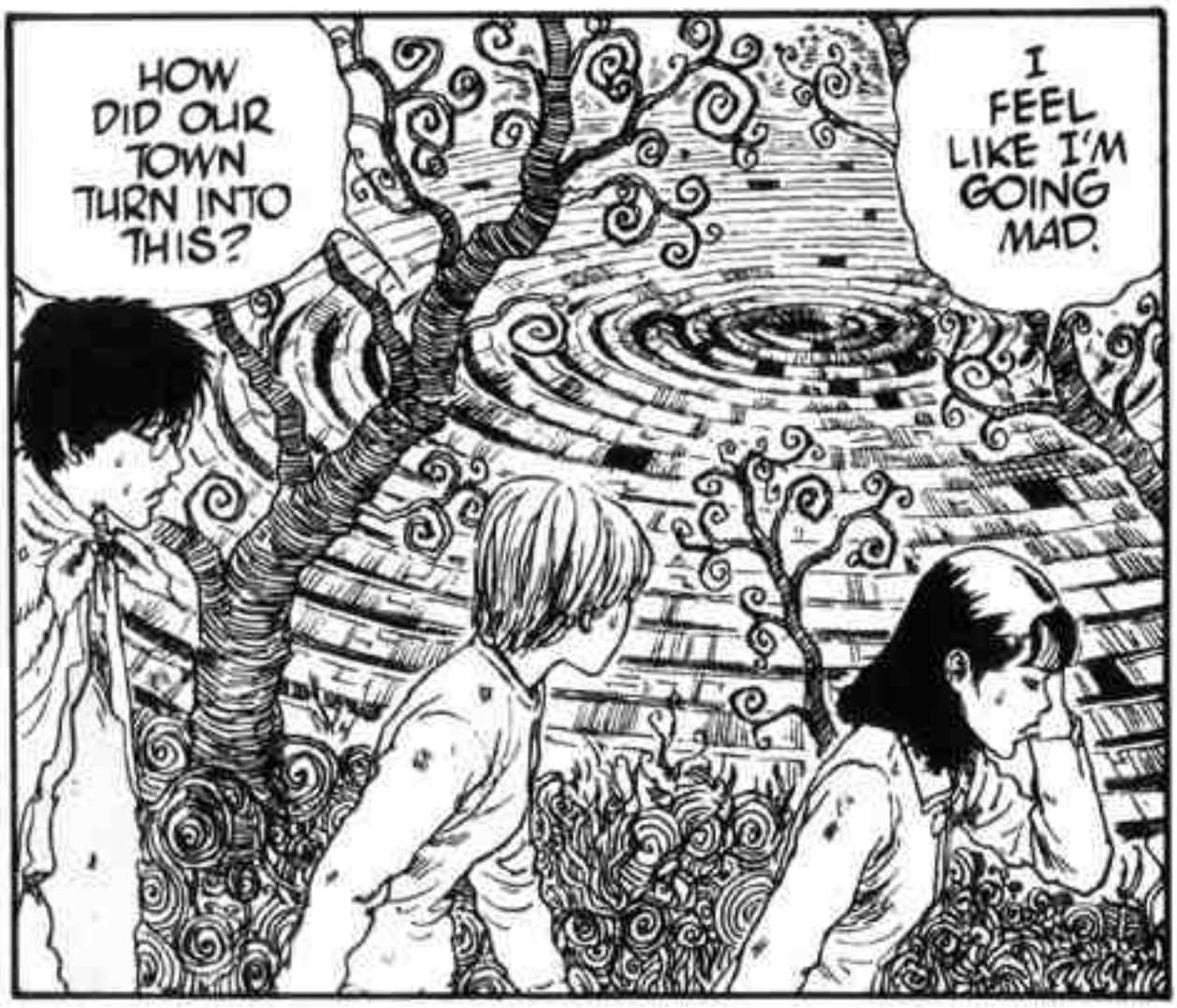
WHERE ARE WE?
THIS ISN'T KURÔZU-CHO.
SHUF
WE ENDED UP SOMEWHERE STRANGE AGAIN.
...
NO, THIS IS KURÔZU-CHO. LOOK OVER THERE.
DOESN'T THAT BUILDING LOOK FAMILIAR?
WHAT?

THAT'S THE ROW HOUSE!?
THAT'S ALL THE ROW HOUSES. LOOK HOW FAR IT'S EXTENDED.

B-BUT HOW?

LET'S... LET'S GO DOWN AND SEE.

uff
hff
SHF SHF


HOW DID OUR TOWN TURN INTO THIS?
I FEEL LIKE I'M GOING MAD.

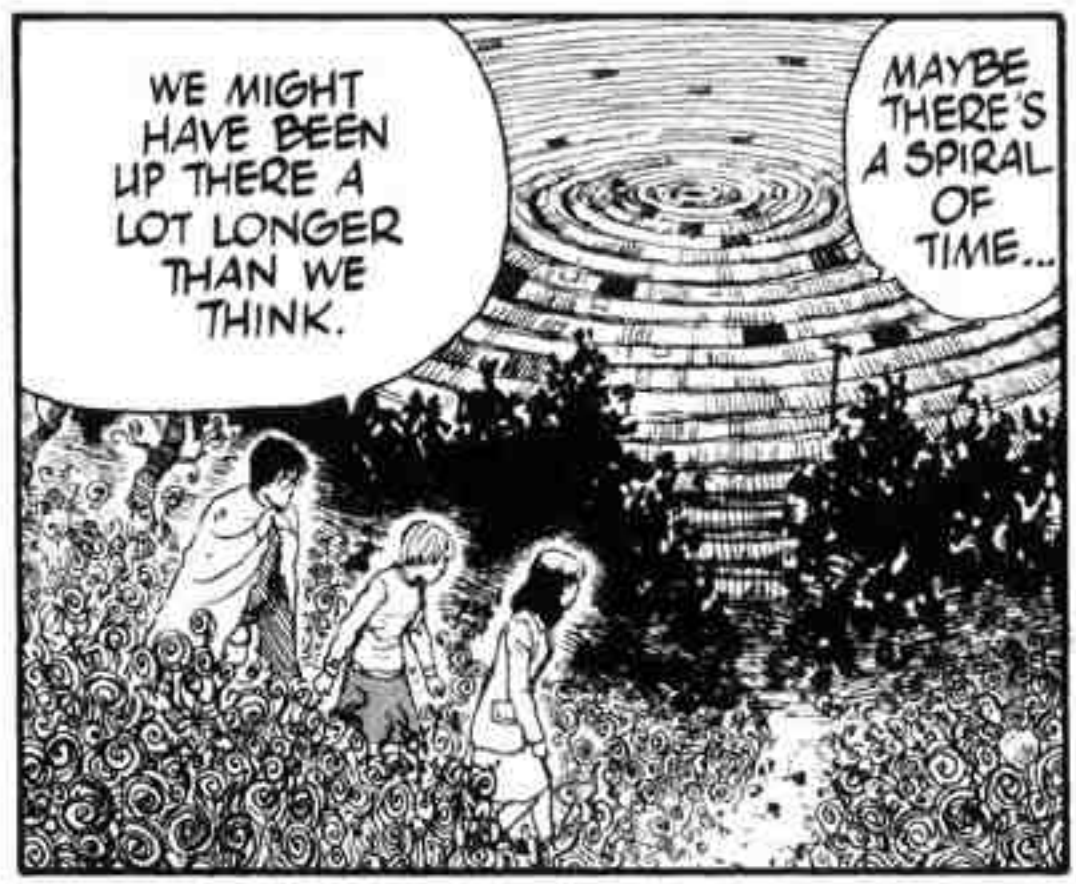
THEY BUILT THEM.
THE SURVIVORS MADE THE TOWN LIKE THIS.
WHAT?!

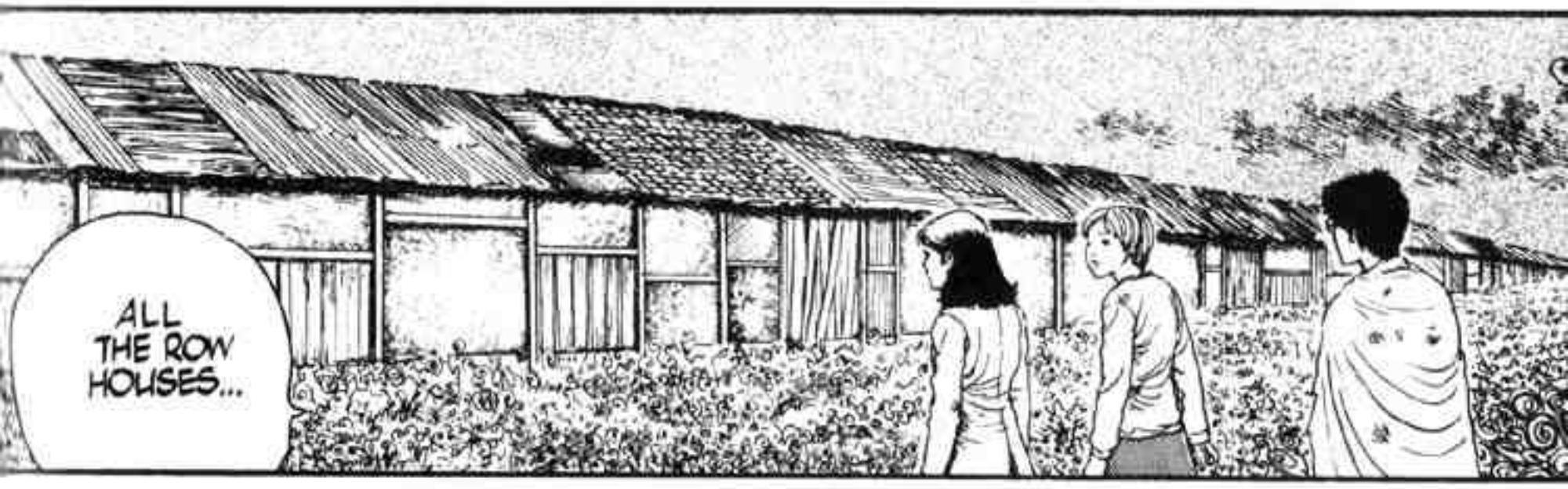
YOU REMEMBER HOW PEOPLE ALL OVER TOWN WERE EXPANDING THE ROW HOUSES?
WITH ALL THOSE ROW HOUSES EXTENDED ON BOTH SIDES, THEY FINALLY ENDED UP CONNECTING LIKE THAT.

B-BUT THAT'S CRAZY ...
THEY ONLY JUST STARTED CONSTRUCTION WHEN WE LEFT TOWN.

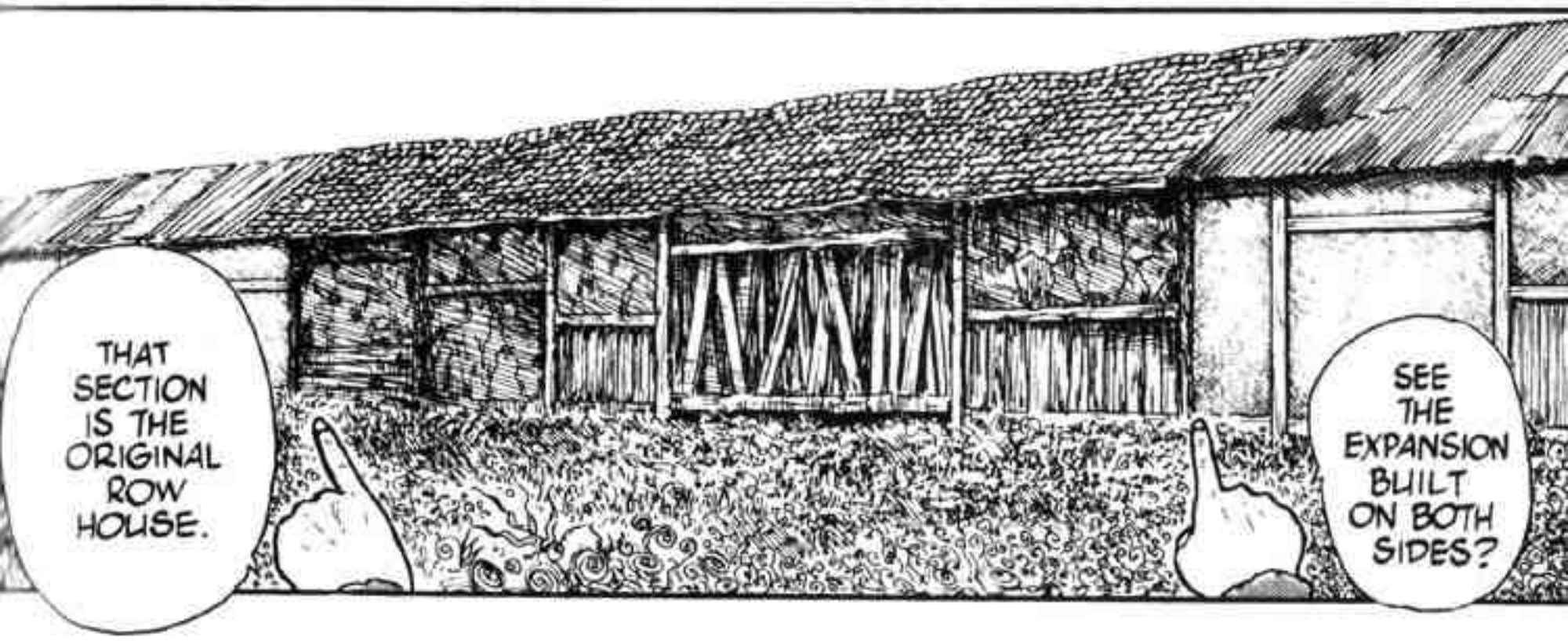
IT WOULD TAKE MORE THAN A FEW DAYS TO BUILD SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
WE WERE ONLY IN THE MOUNTAINS FOR...

WAIT... HOW LONG WERE WE THERE?
I CAN'T REMEM-BER... I COULDN'T TELL...


WE MIGHT HAVE BEEN UP THERE A LOT LONGER THAN WE THINK.
MAYBE THERE'S A SPIRAL OF TIME...


ALL THE ROW HOUSES...

YES. I WAS RIGHT.
LOOK!


THAT SECTION IS THE ORIGINAL ROW HOUSE.
SEE THE EXPANSION BUILT ON BOTH SIDES?

BUT IT'S WEIRD... THEY WEREN'T WORKING TOGETHER ...

...SO HOW DID THEY MANAGE TO MAKE THEM FIT SO PERFECTLY?

AS IF THEY'D PLANNED ON THIS MASSIVE SPIRAL STRUCTURE ...

OR MAYBE IT WASN'T CONSCIOUS...

MAYBE THESE ABANDONED ROW HOUSES FORMED A SPIRAL A LONG TIME AGO.

Huh?

MAYBE THIS WHOLE TOWN WAS A SPIRAL.

BUT IT GRADUALLY FELL APART OVER THE YEARS, LEAVING BEHIND THESE SCATTERED RUINS.

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING AT NOW...

...MIGHT ONLY BE A RECONSTRUCTION OF THE WAY KURŌZU-CHO USED TO BE.

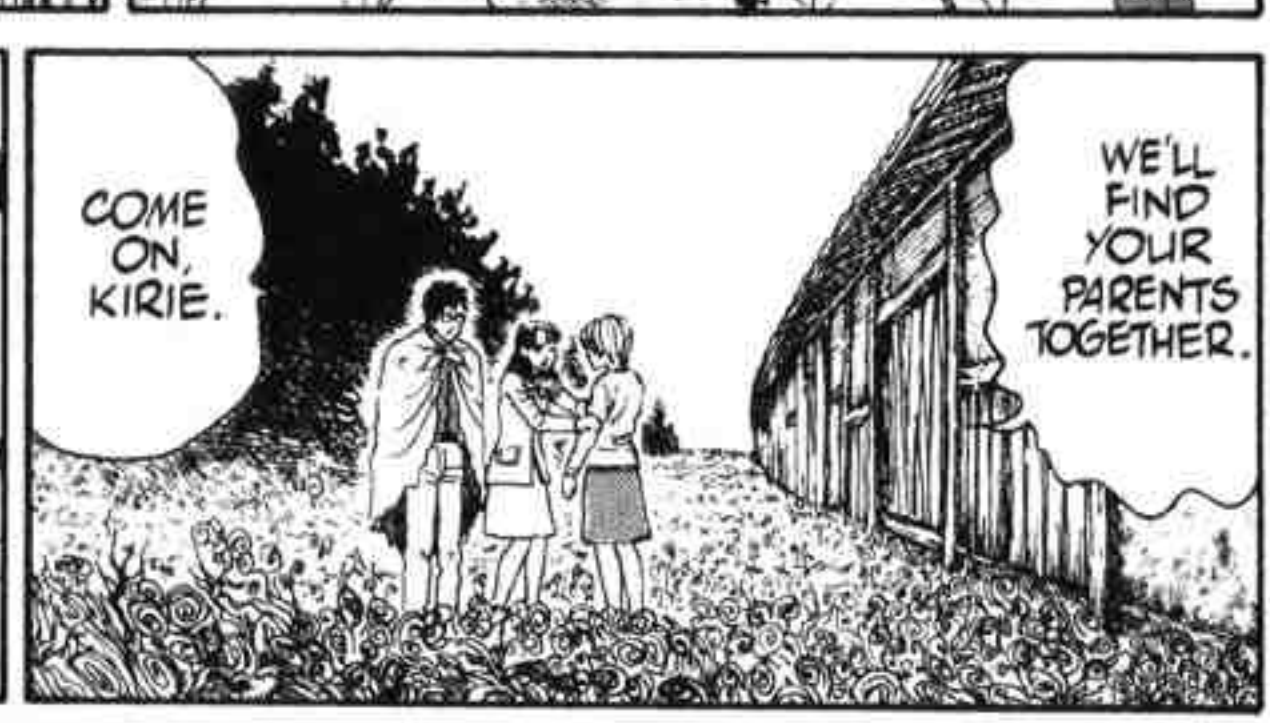
...

WHAT IS-- WHAT IS-- WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO THINK ABOUT THIS?

WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO NOW?

I'M GOING IN THERE...
I HAVE TO FIND MY MOTHER AND FATHER.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME WITH ME. YOU SHOULD TRY TO GET OUT OF HERE.
I'LL COME BACK AND WE'LL JOIN YOU.

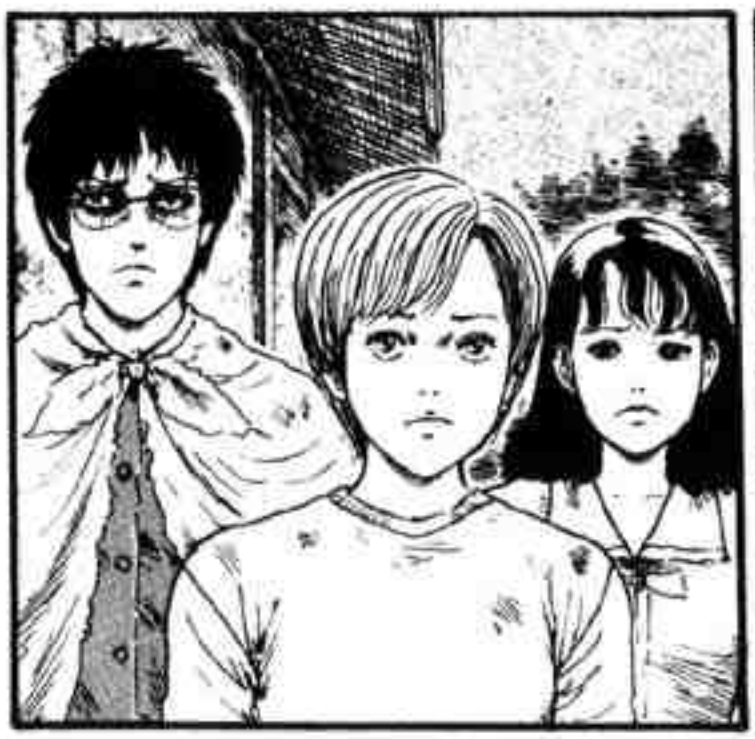

COME ON, KIRIE.
WE'LL FIND YOUR PARENTS TOGETHER.

SEALED OFF... A SOLID WALL.
THERE MUST BE AN ENTRANCE TO THE ALLEYS WHICH WE SAW WHEN WE WERE COMING INTO TOWN.

BUT THEY'RE ALSO CURVED IN A SPIRAL PARALLEL TO THE ROW HOUSES.

WE WALKED EVEN FARTHER, AND AT LAST...

WE FOUND THE WAY INTO THE ALLEY.



IT'S MAKING ME DIZZY ...
I DON'T THINK I COULD REMEMBER A STRAIGHT LINE.

THIS IS STRANGE ...

LOOK... I MOVE MY ARM...AND NO TWISTERS!
WHFF
IT'S BEEN LIKE THIS SINCE WE ENTERED THE ALLEY.

YOU'RE RIGHT.
I WONDER WHY THAT IS.

MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE WE'RE SURROUNDED BY THE ROW HOUSES.
THEN WE'RE SAFE IN HERE?

SAFE?
THAT'S HORRIBLE... THINK OF WHERE WE ARE...

CREET
CREET
HOOOO
CREET
CREET

CREEK

MURMUR MURMUR...

MMBL MMBL

MRR MRR

SO THERE ARE PEOPLE LIVING HERE...

EXCUSE ME, IS THERE ANYONE IN THERE?

I NEED TO TALK TO SOME-ONE.

I'M LOOKING FOR MY PARENTS.

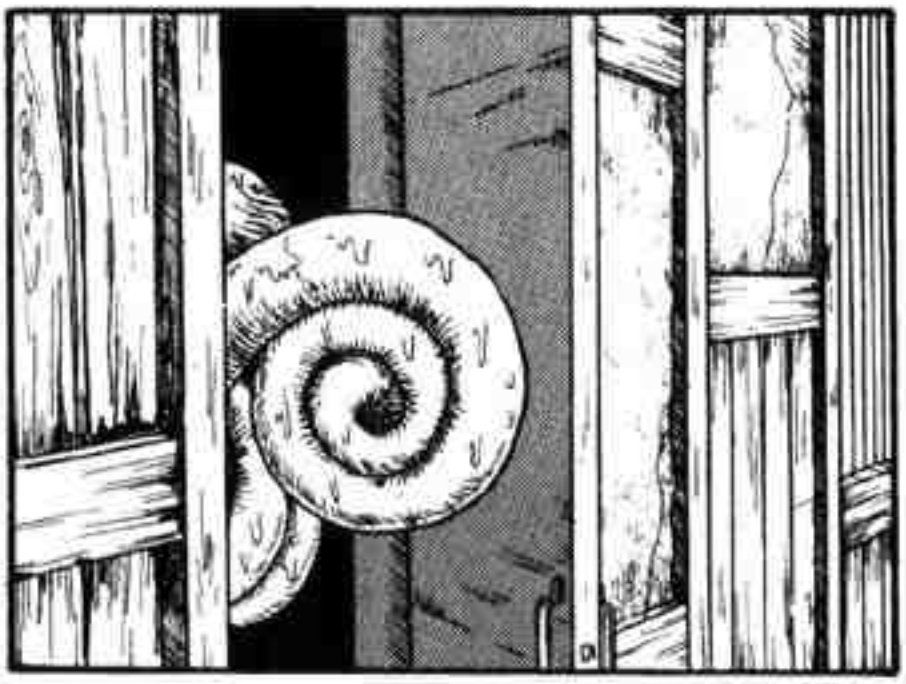
MY FATHER'S NAME IS YASUO GOSHIMA. HE'S A POTTER.

HOW WOULD I KNOW ABOUT YOUR PARENTS?
COULD YOU DO US A FAVOR, THOUGH?

WHAT?

I WANT YOU TO GET RID OF THE THINGS WE'RE ABOUT TO TOSS OUT.

SCREE



WHUD

HE DIED THIS MORNING.

IT WAS SUCH AN ORDEAL TO UNTANGLE THAT CORPSE FROM US...

PLEASE TAKE IT SOMEWHERE AND BURN IT...THE SMELL WILL BE UNBEARABLE SOON...

Ahh...

LET'S JUST GO!

MBL MBL

CREEK

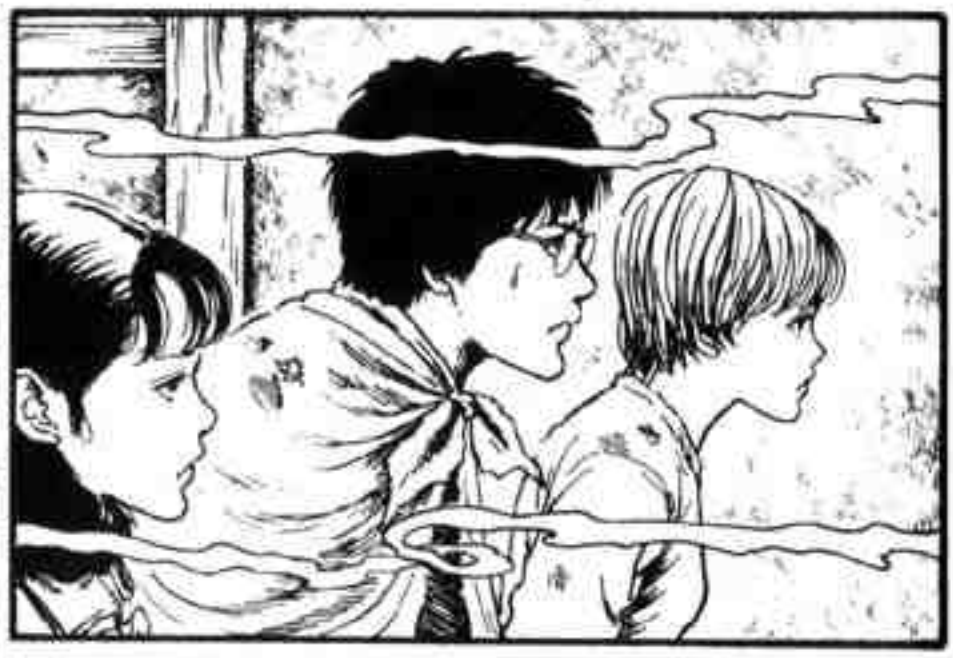
CREEK

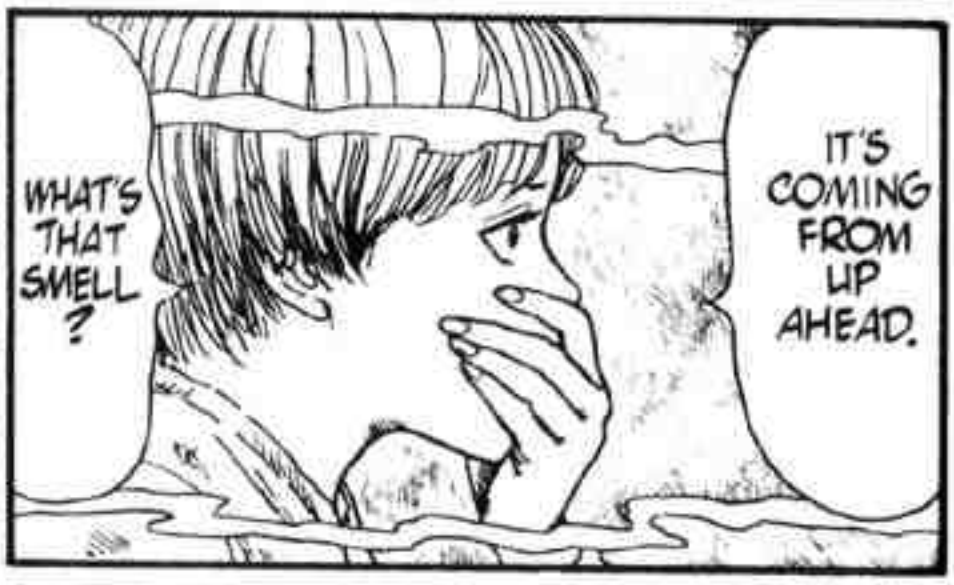
RR RR

MMBL MMBL

MURMUR

CREEK

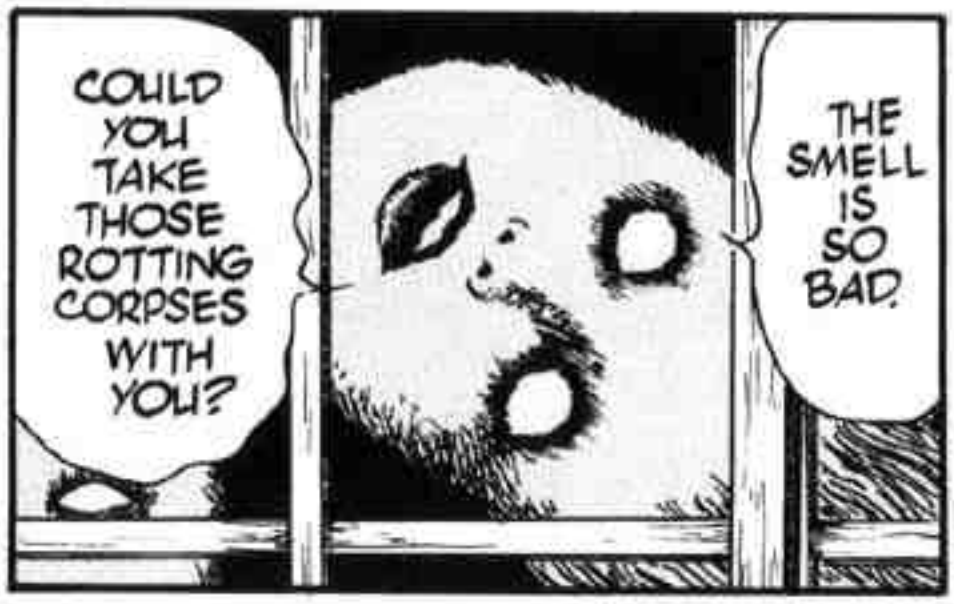




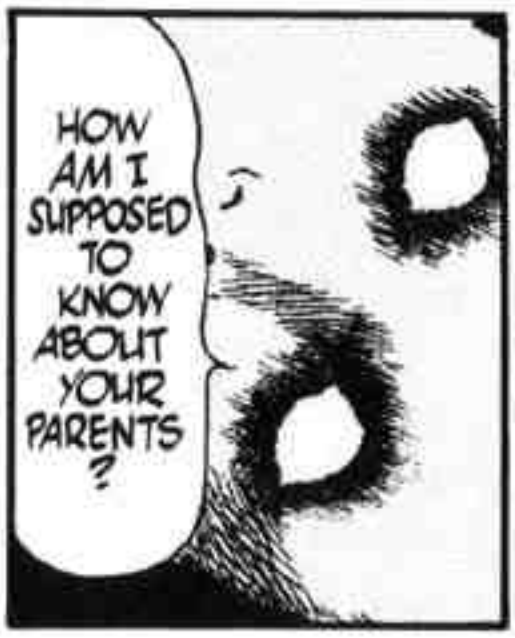
THERE'S CORPSES HERE, TOO.
THEY'VE BEEN DEAD A WHILE.

THEY'RE DEAD... THEY TURN INTO SPIRALS AND DIE...

SAY...
YOU THERE.


COULD YOU TAKE THOSE ROTTING CORPSES WITH YOU?
THE SMELL IS SO BAD.

Um... MAYBE YOU COULD HELP ME.
I'M LOOKING FOR MY PARENTS.

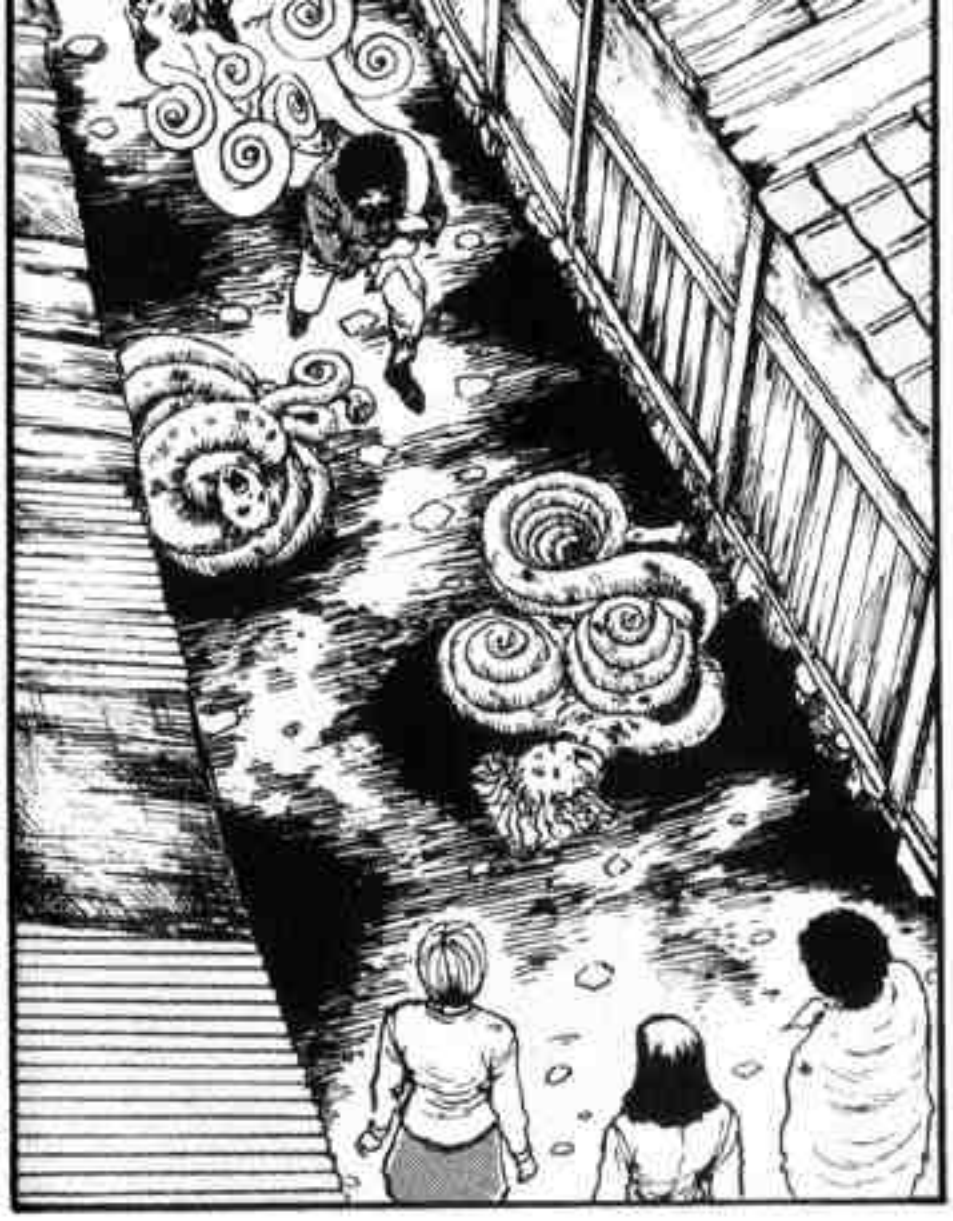

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR PARENTS?

SHLL
SHLL

SHL
SHLL

SHLL
SHLL

SHLL



Ah, ANOTHER CORPSE!
Oh, WELL... GUESS I'LL HAVE TO TAKE THIS ONE, TOO.

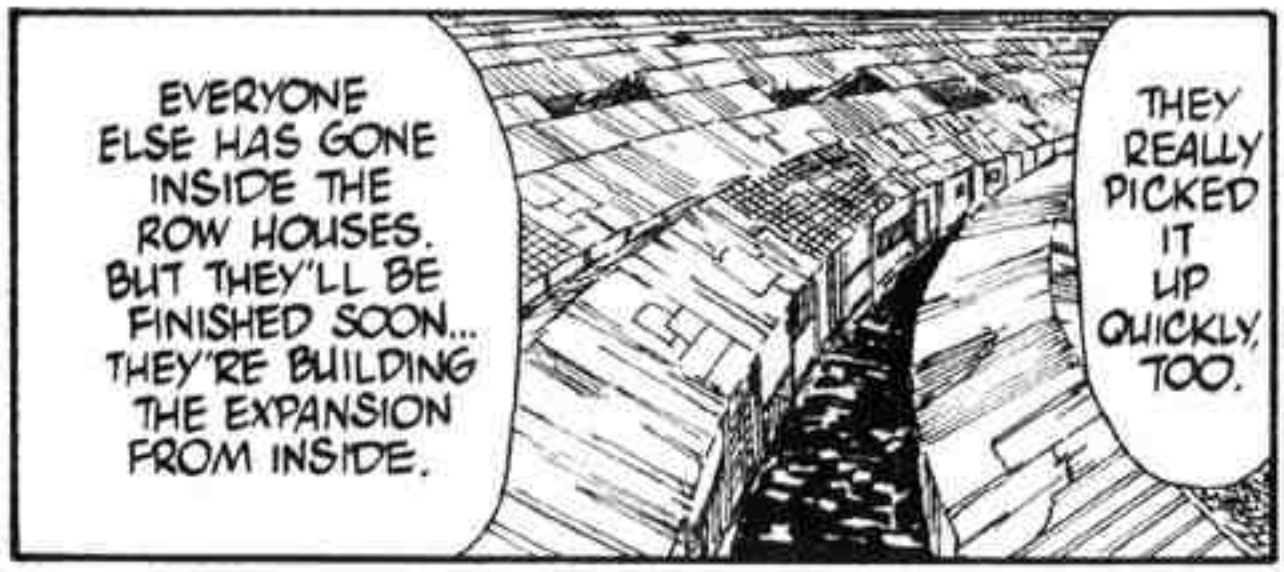
Oh...

MR. TANIZAKI!
AREN'T YOU MR. TANIZAKI?

Oh, YOU... I REMEMBER ...
HOW MANY YEARS HAS IT BEEN? YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED AT ALL.

DID YOU SAY YEARS?

YES... THE EXPANSION IS ALMOST COMPLETE, BUT THERE ARE STILL SEVERAL GAPS IN THE STRUCTURE.
THE USELESS RUBBLE AND CONCRETE IS PILED UP IN THE ALLEYS FURTHER ON. IT'S LIKE A LABYRINTH NOW.
THAT'S WHY I'M IN CHARGE OF CLEANING UP.


EVERYONE ELSE HAS GONE INSIDE THE ROW HOUSES. BUT THEY'LL BE FINISHED SOON... THEY'RE BUILDING THE EXPANSION FROM INSIDE.
THEY REALLY PICKED IT UP QUICKLY, TOO.

MR. TANI-ZAKI...

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR MY PARENTS. THEY WERE BOTH CAUGHT IN TORNADOES.
MY FATHER IS A POTTER.

A POTTER ?

Oh... CERAMICS... YOU KNOW, I HEARD ABOUT A COUPLE THAT WAS STILL MAKING POTTERY BY DRAGONFLY POND.
WHAT?!
REALLY?!
Oh, YES.
I HAVEN'T SEEN THEM MYSELF, THOUGH.
I HEARD HE SAYS, "CERAMICS IS THE ART OF THE SPIRAL."
TH-THAT'S HIM! THAT'S HIM!
THEY'RE ALIVE!
THAT'S WONDERFUL, KIRIE!
THANK YOU SO MUCH, MR. TANIZAKI! I'M GOING THERE NOW.
YOU DO THAT.
BUT IT WON'T BE EASY TO GET THERE! THERE'S LOTS OF DEADFALLS FURTHER ON.
EVEN I'VE NEVER BEEN TO DRAGONFLY POND.

AS MR. TANIZAKI HAD SAID...

THE FURTHER WE PROCEEDED, THE MORE AREAS WE SAW UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

MOST OF ALLEYS WERE BLOCKED BY HEAPS OF RUBBLE OVER WHICH WE WERE TOO EXHAUSTED TO CLIMB.

WE KEPT MAKING OUR WAY THROUGH THE LABYRINTH.

ANOTHER DEAD END.

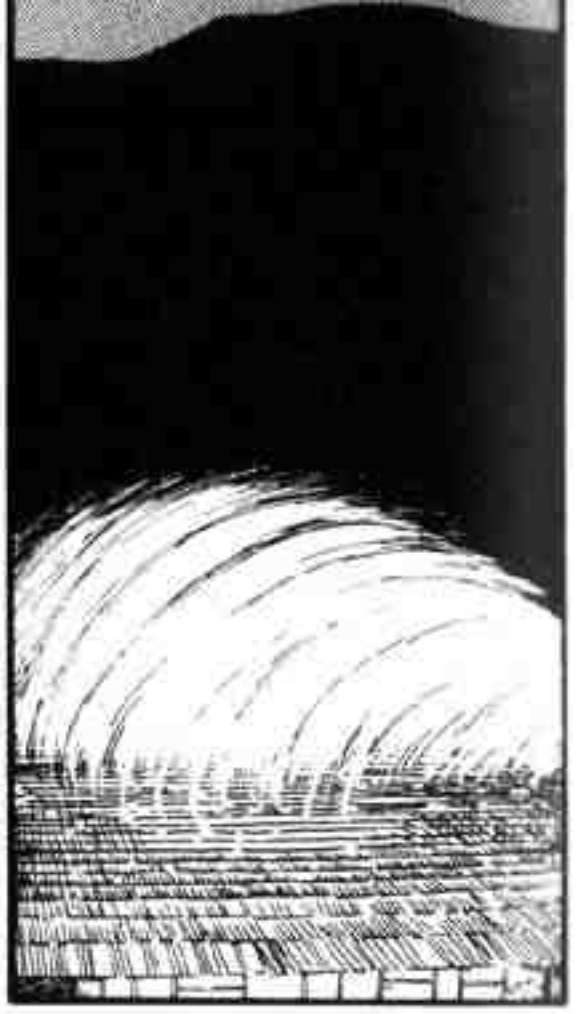
I WONDER WHERE WE ARE?

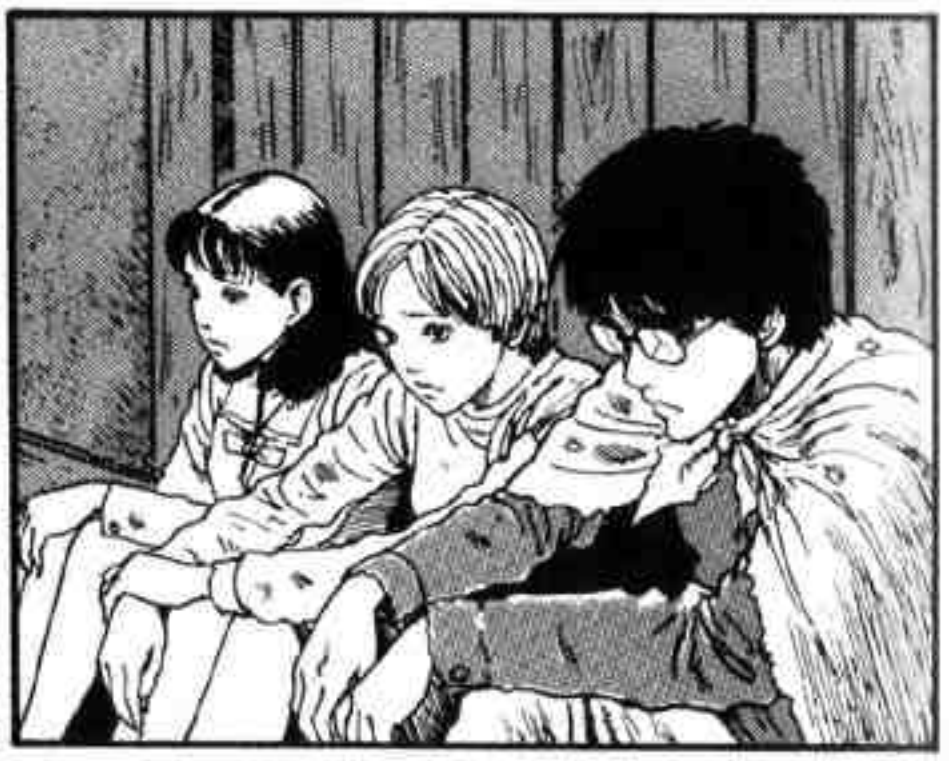
THERE'S AN OPENING THIS WAY.

TAP TAP
BAM BAM
SIZZ SIZZ

BAM TAP
CLATTER

I WONDER IF ALL THE BUILDINGS IN TOWN...
...ARE STUFFED WITH PEOPLE LIKE THAT.





BUT IF SHUICHI IS RIGHT ABOUT THIS TOWN BEING BASED ON A TOWN FROM THE PAST...
WHY WAS IT BUILT LIKE THIS IN THE FIRST PLACE?

WELL, WE DON'T EVEN HAVE ANY IDEA...
WHY THEY'RE REBUILDING IT LIKE THIS.

MAYBE...

MAYBE IT'S BEEN REPEATED OVER AND OVER SINCE ANCIENT TIMES.
WHAT?

EVERY CENTURY, OR EVERY FEW CENTURIES, THE SPIRAL COMES TO HAUNT THIS TOWN...
AND EVERY TIME IT DOES, THE INHABITANTS BUILD THEIR TOWN IN THIS SHAPE.

BUT WOULDN'T THERE HAVE BEEN RECORDS OF THIS?
OR WAS IT TOO LONG AGO?

NO...

THE OLD HOUSES ARE MADE OF WOOD SO THEY CAN'T BE THAT ANCIENT.
AND YET THE STORY WAS NEVER PASSED ON.

MAYBE ALL THE RECOLLECTIONS WERE LOST.
LOST?

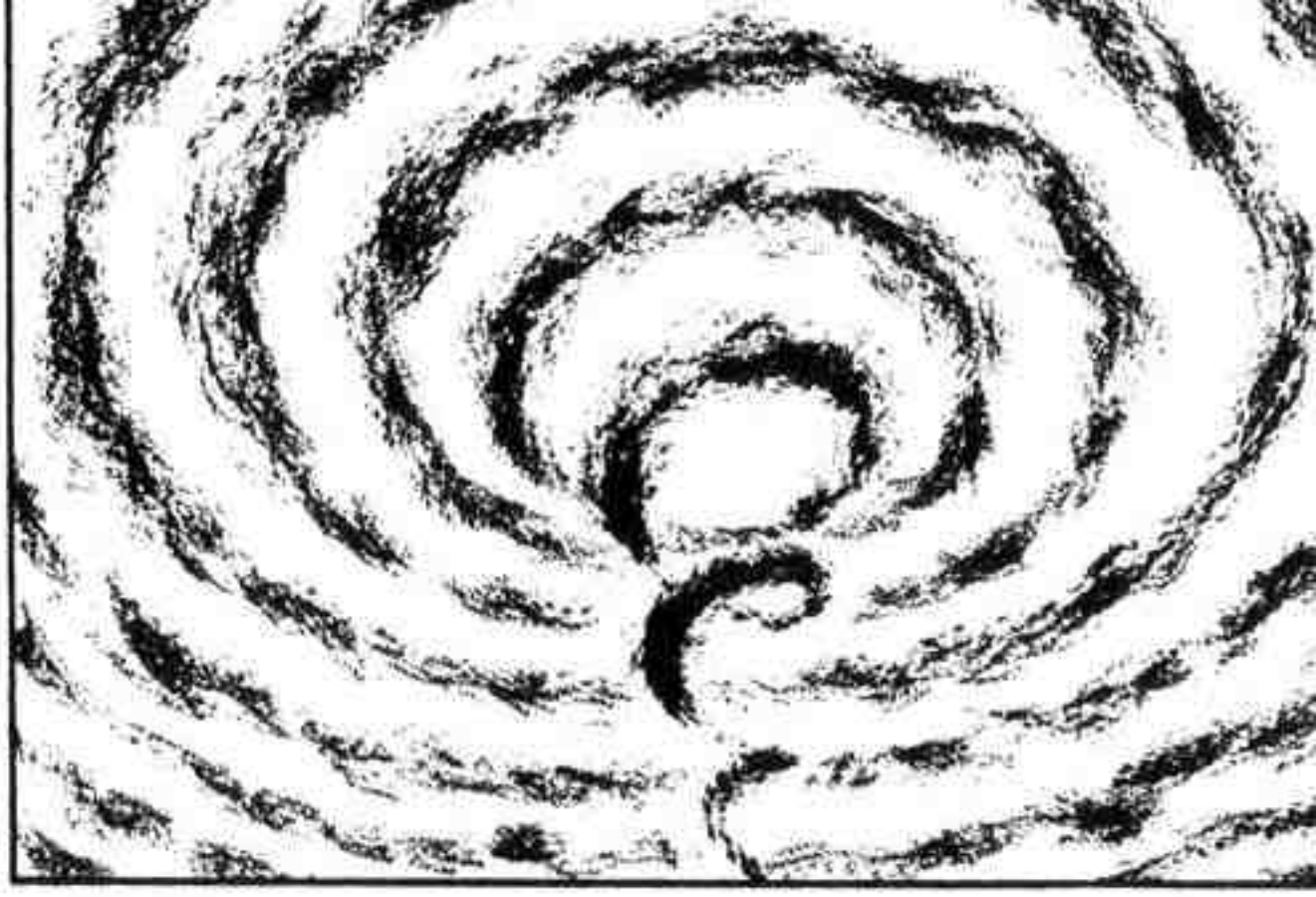
FOR EXAMPLE... MAYBE EVERY PERSON WHO COULD HAVE TOLD THE STORY VANISHED.

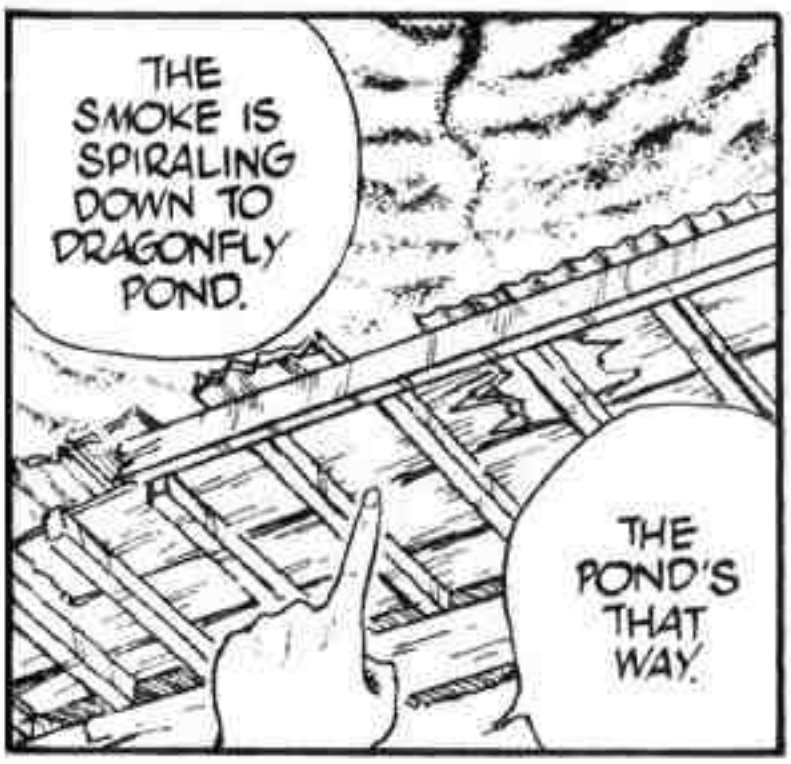
AS WE WANDERED THROUGH THE LABYRINTH, WE LOST TRACK OF WHICH WAY WE WERE GOING.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?
I CAN'T DO THIS ANYMORE ...I CAN'T WALK...

HEY.
LOOK UP THERE

SMOKE ...
THEY'RE PROBABLY CREMATING A CORPSE SOME-WHERE.




THE SMOKE IS SPIRALING DOWN TO DRAGONFLY POND.
THE POND'S THAT WAY.

THE SMOKE WILL BE OUR GUIDE.

HURRY... BEFORE IT DISAPPEARS !!

uff
hff

DAMN IT. ANOTHER DEAD END.

LOOK! THERE'S A GAP OVER THERE!

COME ON!

IF WE DON'T HURRY, THIS WAY WILL BE SEALED!

OKAY!

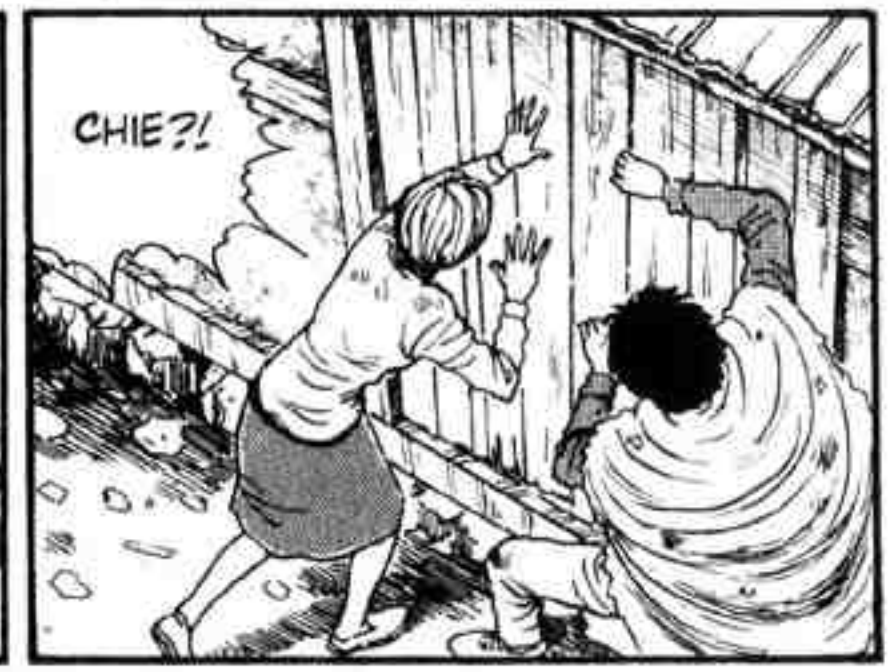
BAM BAM

CHIE!

CHIE!

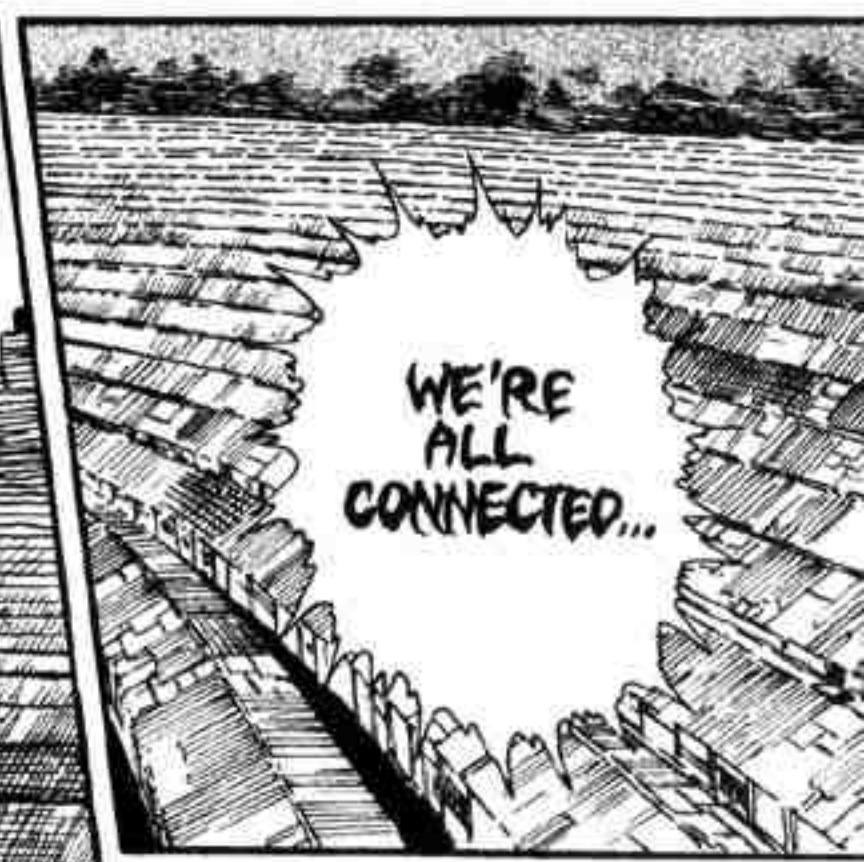
KIRIE...

BANG


CHIE?!

WE'RE CONNECTED...

WE'RE CONNECTED HERE TOO...
OVER HERE, TOO...


WE'RE ALL CONNECTED...

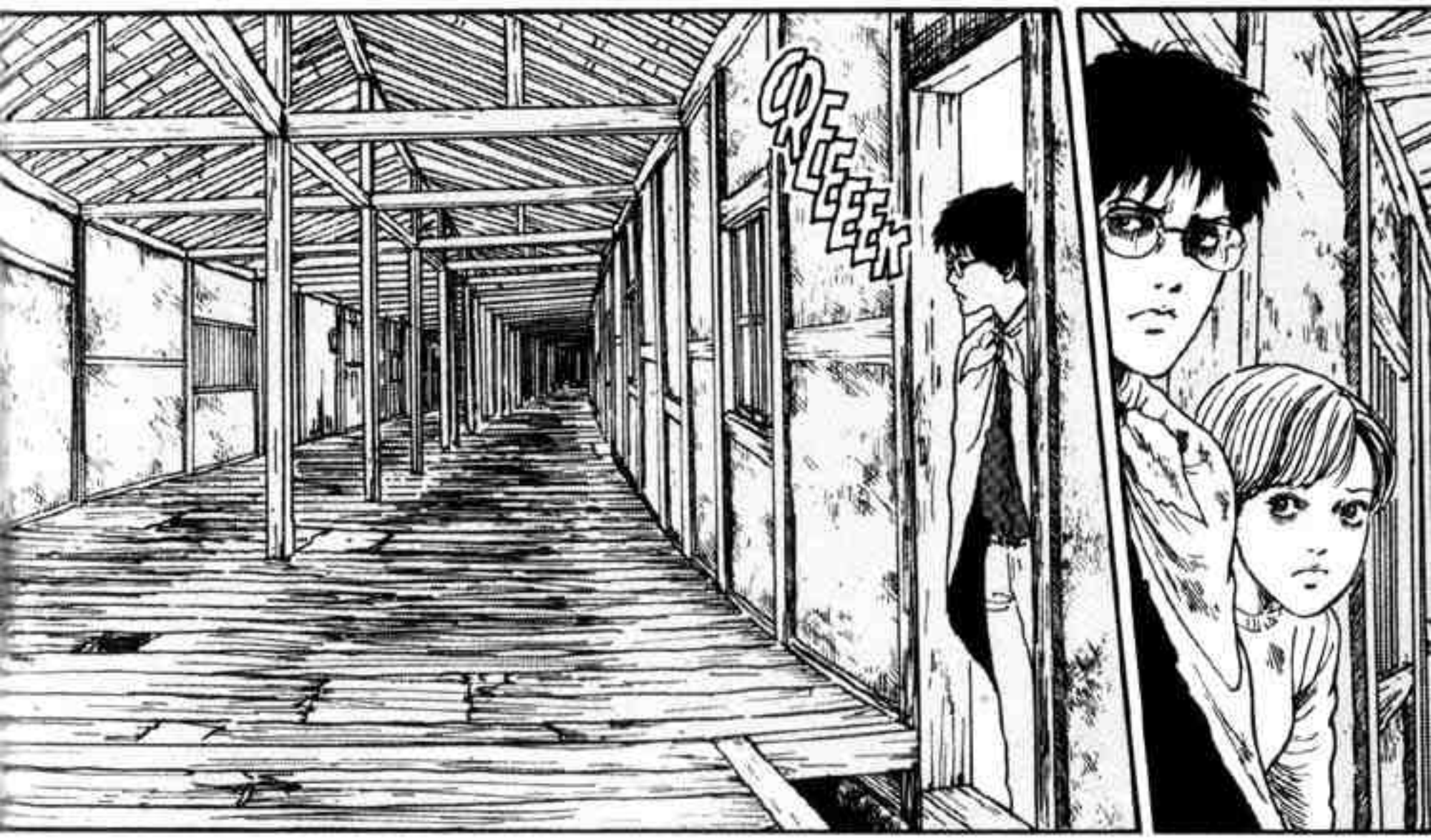
SHRR SHRR SHRRRRR

SHRRRR

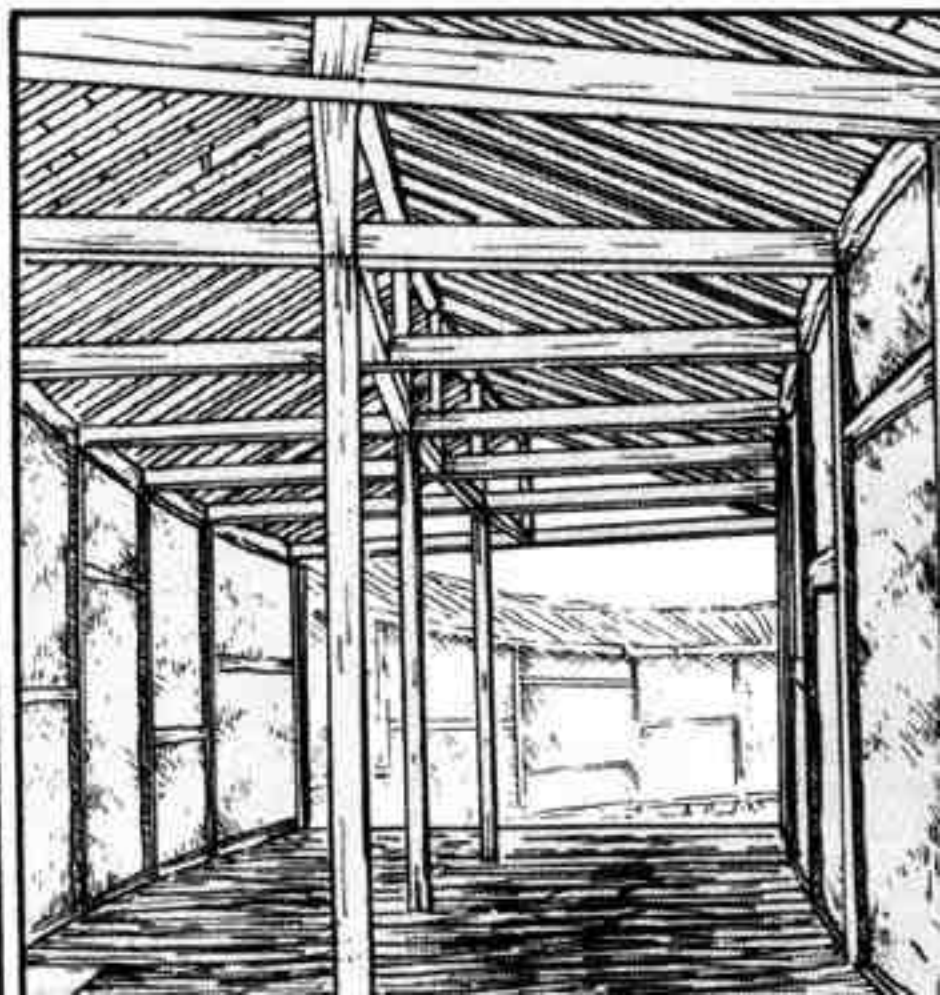
CHIE... CHIE'S INSIDE...

LET HER GO.
THE ROW HOUSES ARE PROBABLY EMPTIED OUT.

AND IF WE FOLLOW IT ON THE INSIDE...
CHIT
IT'LL LEAD US TO DRAGON-FLY POND.


QUEEEEK

WE WALKED THROUGH THE TUNNEL WHICH HAD BEEN THE ROW HOUSES, AND THE CURVES BECAME TIGHTER AND TIGHTER.


AND AT THE END...

WH-WHAT IS THIS?!

KIRIE ...
IF THEY WERE HERE ONCE, THEY'RE NOT HERE NOW.
LOOK DOWN THERE. I CAN'T BELIEVE IT WAS HERE ALL THIS TIME, THIS WELL AT THE BOTTOM OF THE POND.
SOMEONE BUILT THESE SPIRAL STAIRS. THEY LOOK LIKE ANCIENT RUINS.
THE PEOPLE IN THE ROW HOUSES ...
...MUST HAVE FALLEN DOWN THIS HOLE ALL AT ONCE.
WHEN WAS IT BUILT? WHO BUILT IT? WHY?
HOW FAR DOWN DOES IT GO?
THE CAUSE OF THE SPIRAL CURSE HAUNTING THIS TOWN MAY BE HIDDEN DOWN BELOW...

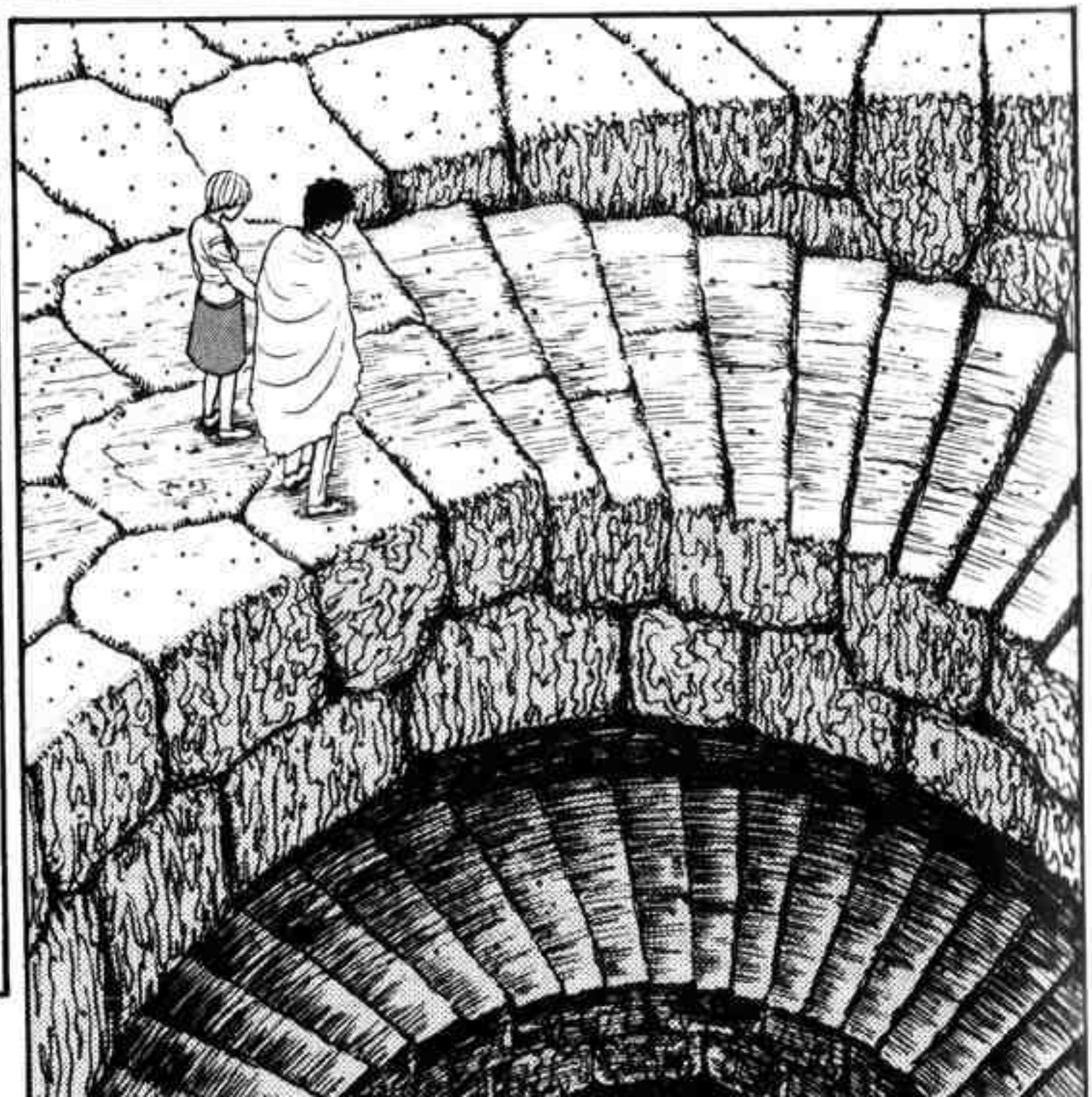
SHUICHI, I...

I'M GOING DOWN THERE.
THAT'S THE ONLY PLACE THEY COULD BE.
THAT'S THE ONLY PLACE WHERE I CAN FIND MY MOTHER AND FATHER.

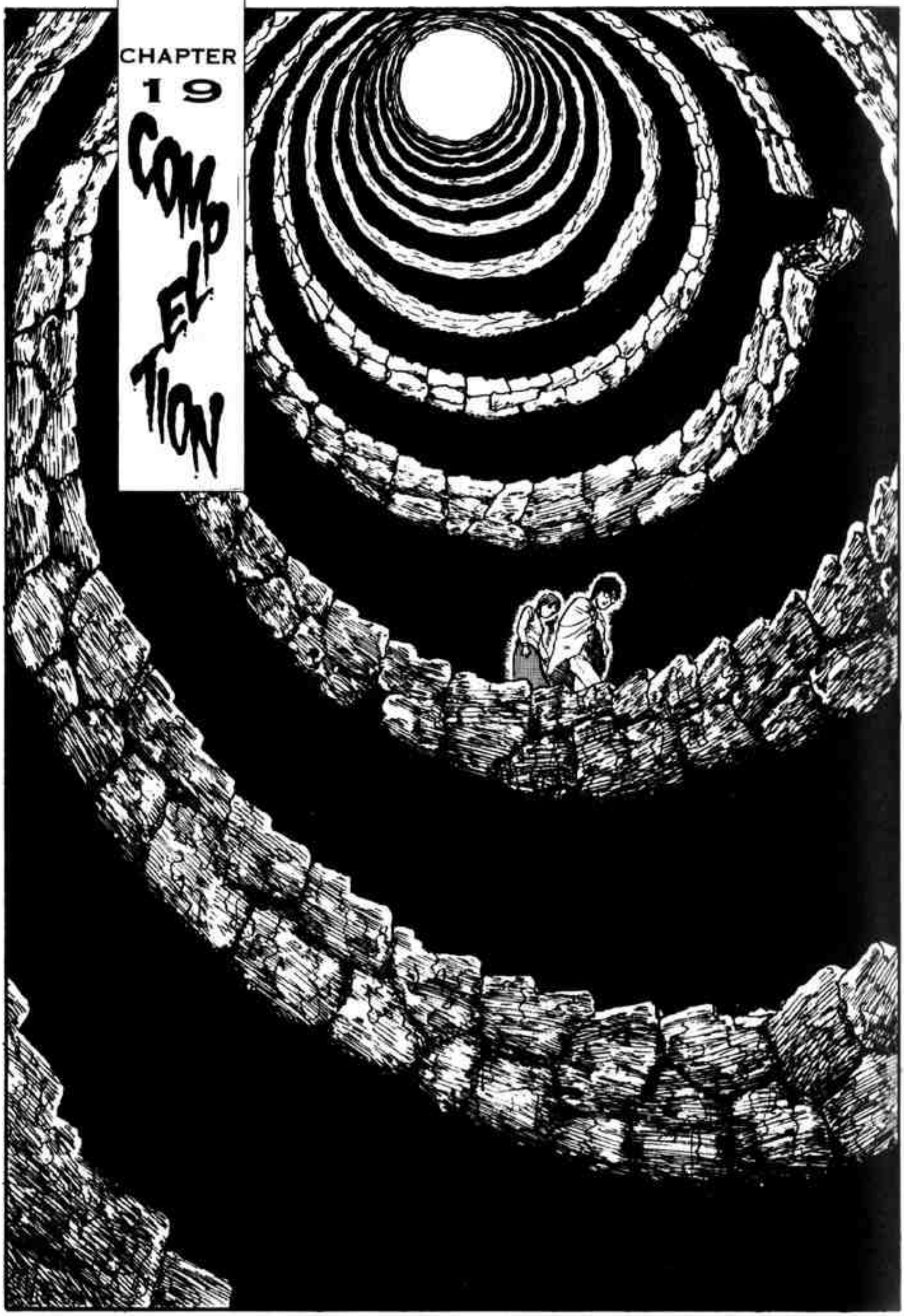
THGG

WE'LL GO TOGETHER.

YES.



LET'S GO.



CHAPTER 19

COMPELTION

I WONDER HOW FAR WE HAVE TO GO.

IT SEEMS TO GO ON AND ON... FOREVER...

SWAY

!

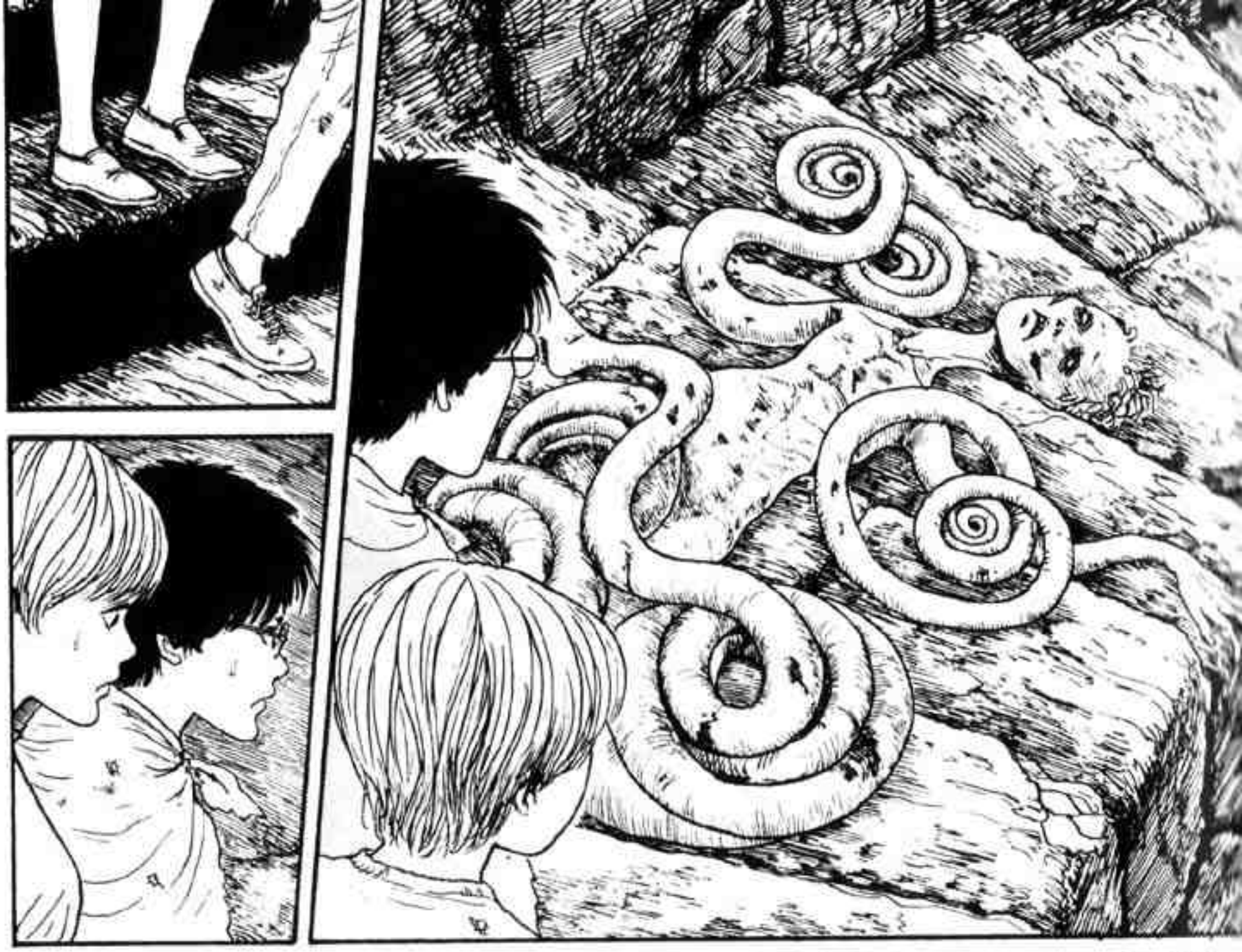
SWAY

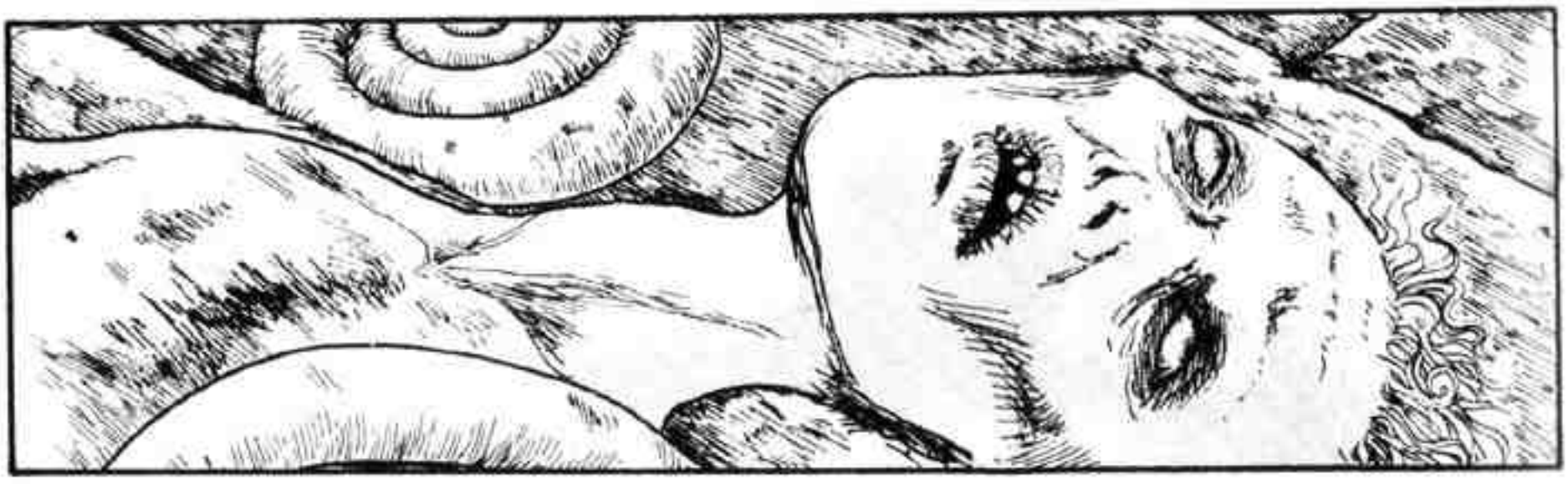
KIRIE! BE CAREFUL!

DON'T LOOK DOWN THERE!

I DON'T KNOW...

...HOW MUCH TIME PASSED.





HE MUST BE FROM THAT GROUP THAT JUST CAME IN.
I GUESS HE WAS LEFT BEHIND.

COME ON.

W-WAIT...

WAIT... TAKE ME WITH YOU...
THERE'S SUPPOSED TO BE SOMETHING WONDERFUL DOWN THERE...

WE CAN'T. WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH STRENGTH TO CARRY YOU.

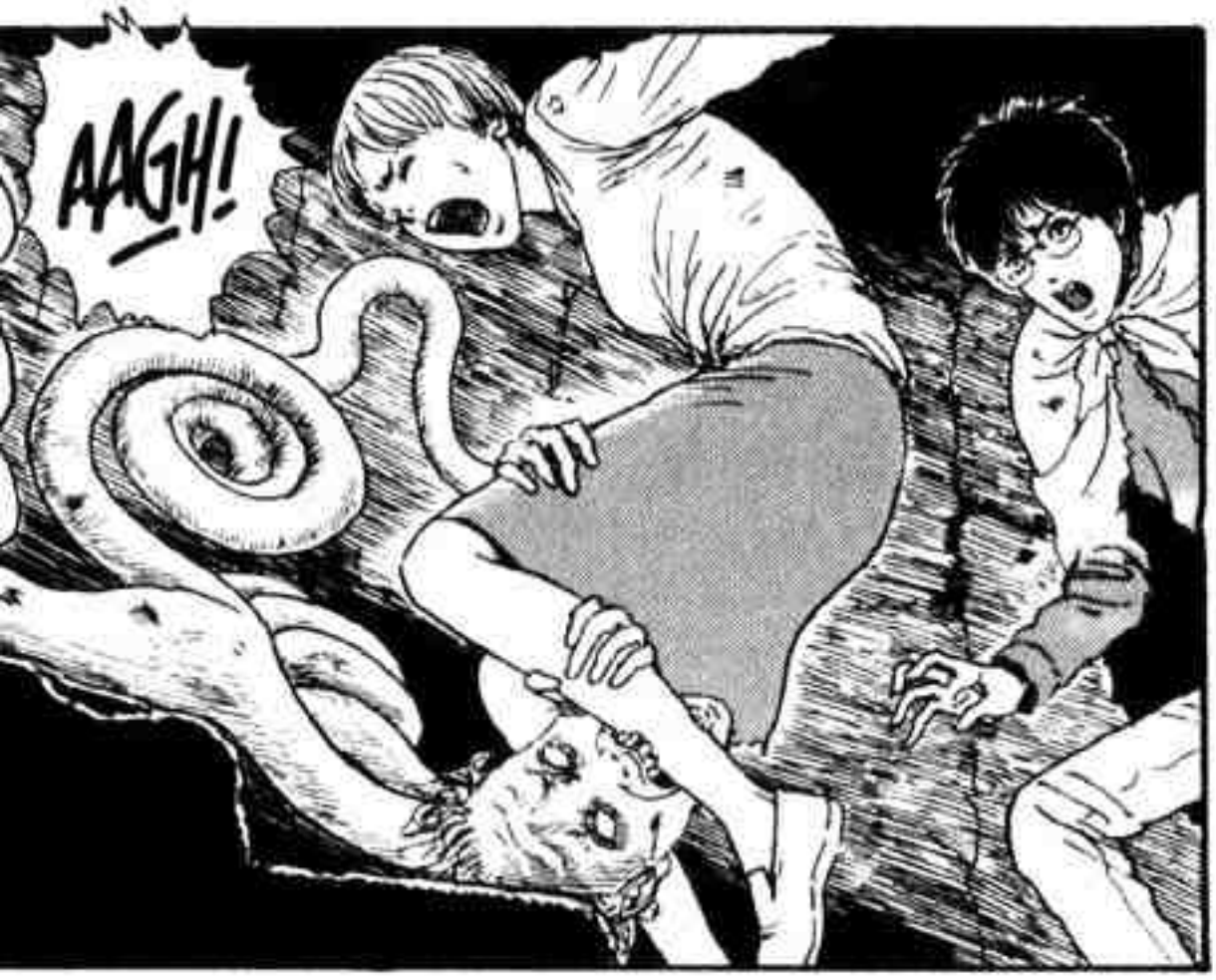
O-OKAY...
COME ON, KIRIE.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
LET GO OF ME!

TAKE ME WITH YOU!

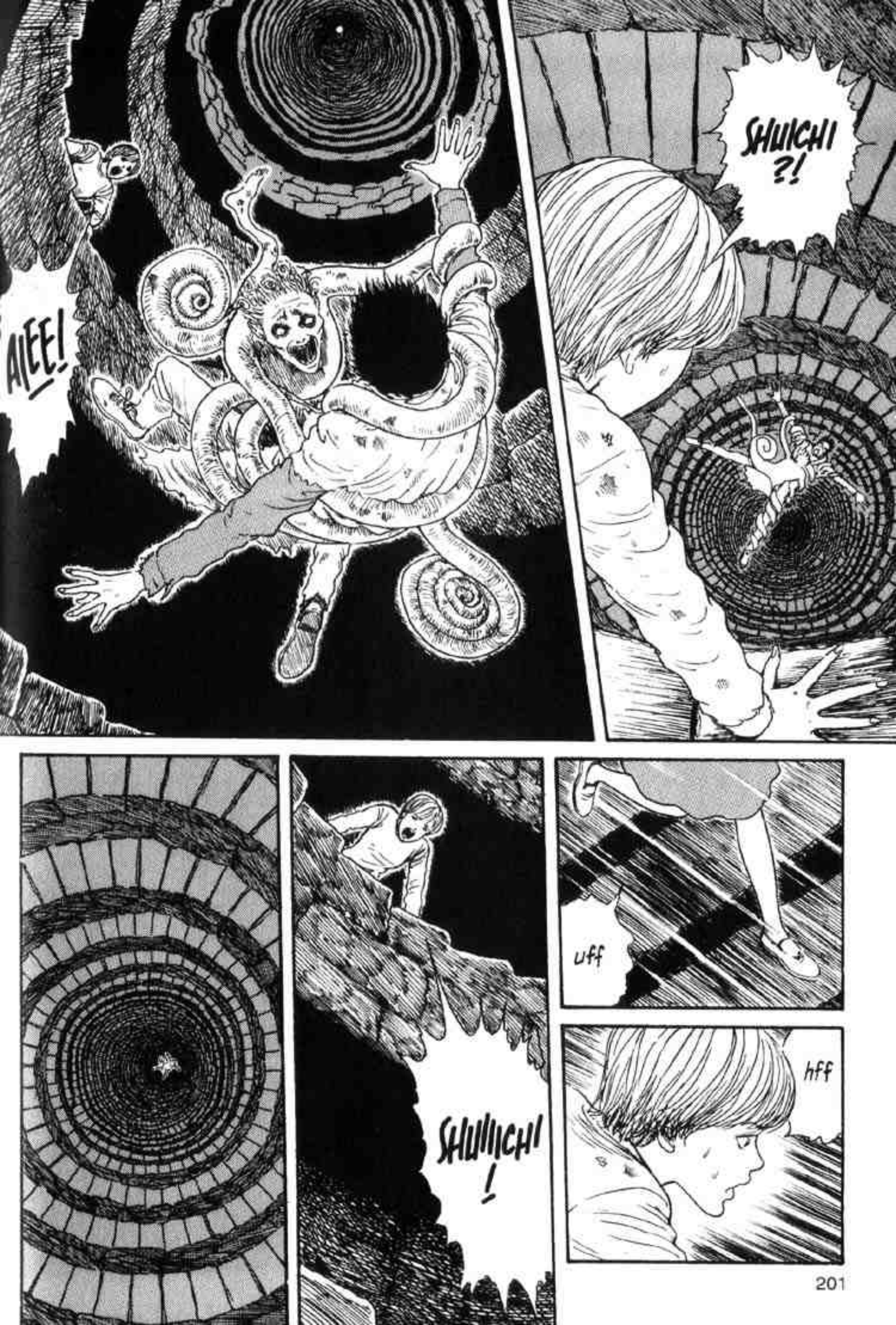
LET GO OF ME!

HOW

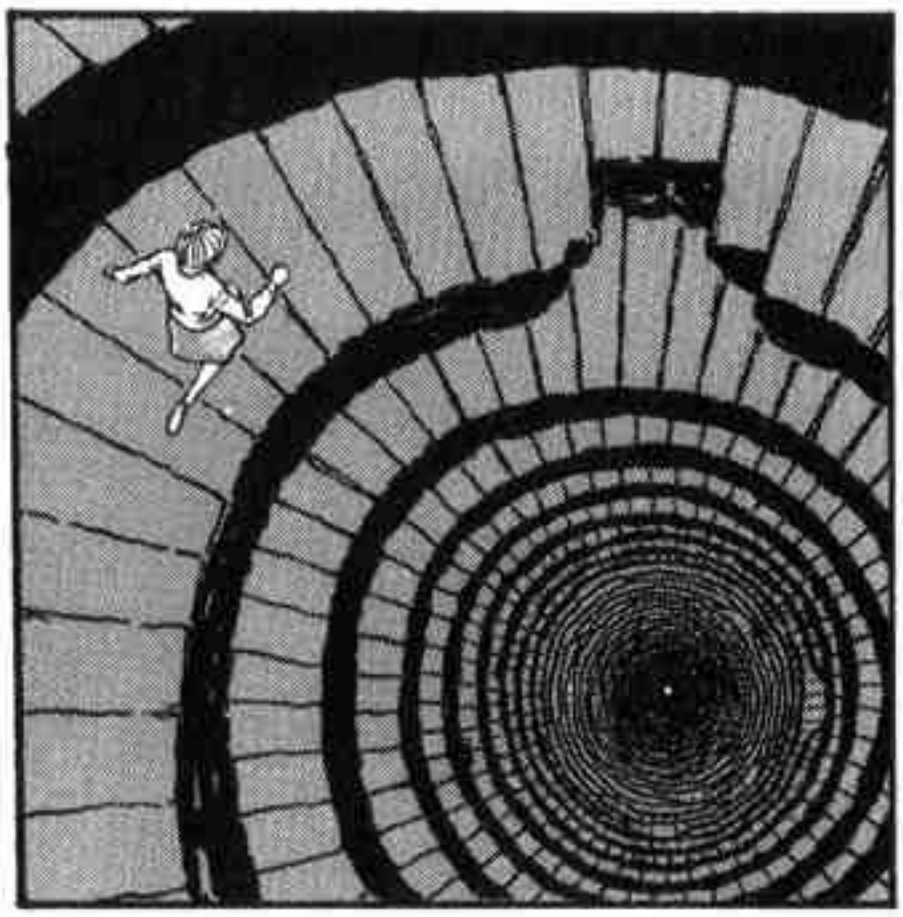

AAGH!

STOP IT! LET GO OF HER!

?!


AIEE!
SHUICHI ?!
SHUUICHI !
uff
hff

uff
hff



THERE'S A LIGHT FROM BELOW...

I WONDER WHAT IT IS?

THE LIGHT DREW MY EYES AS I WENT DOWN...

gulp.

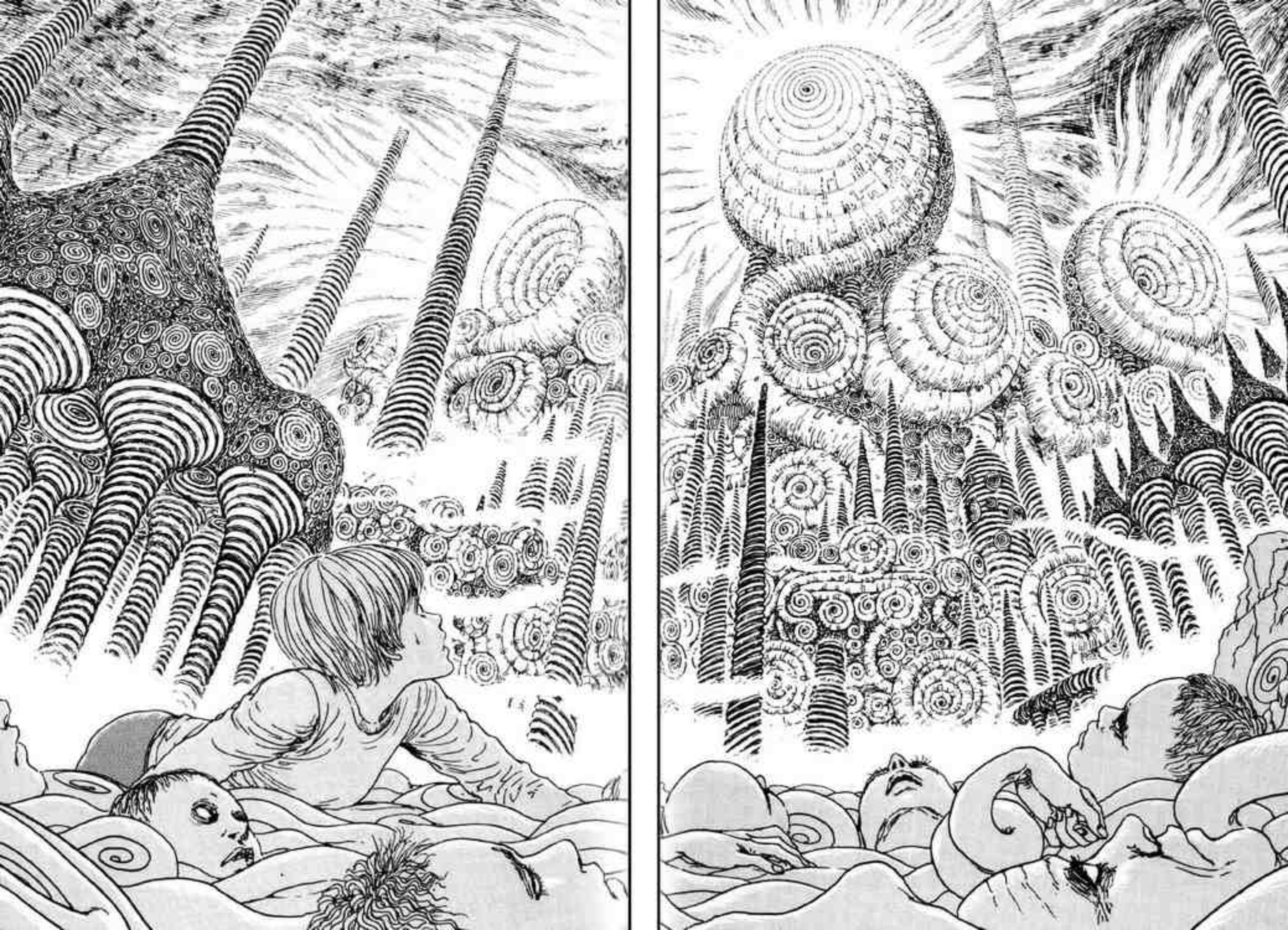
GRAB
SLIP

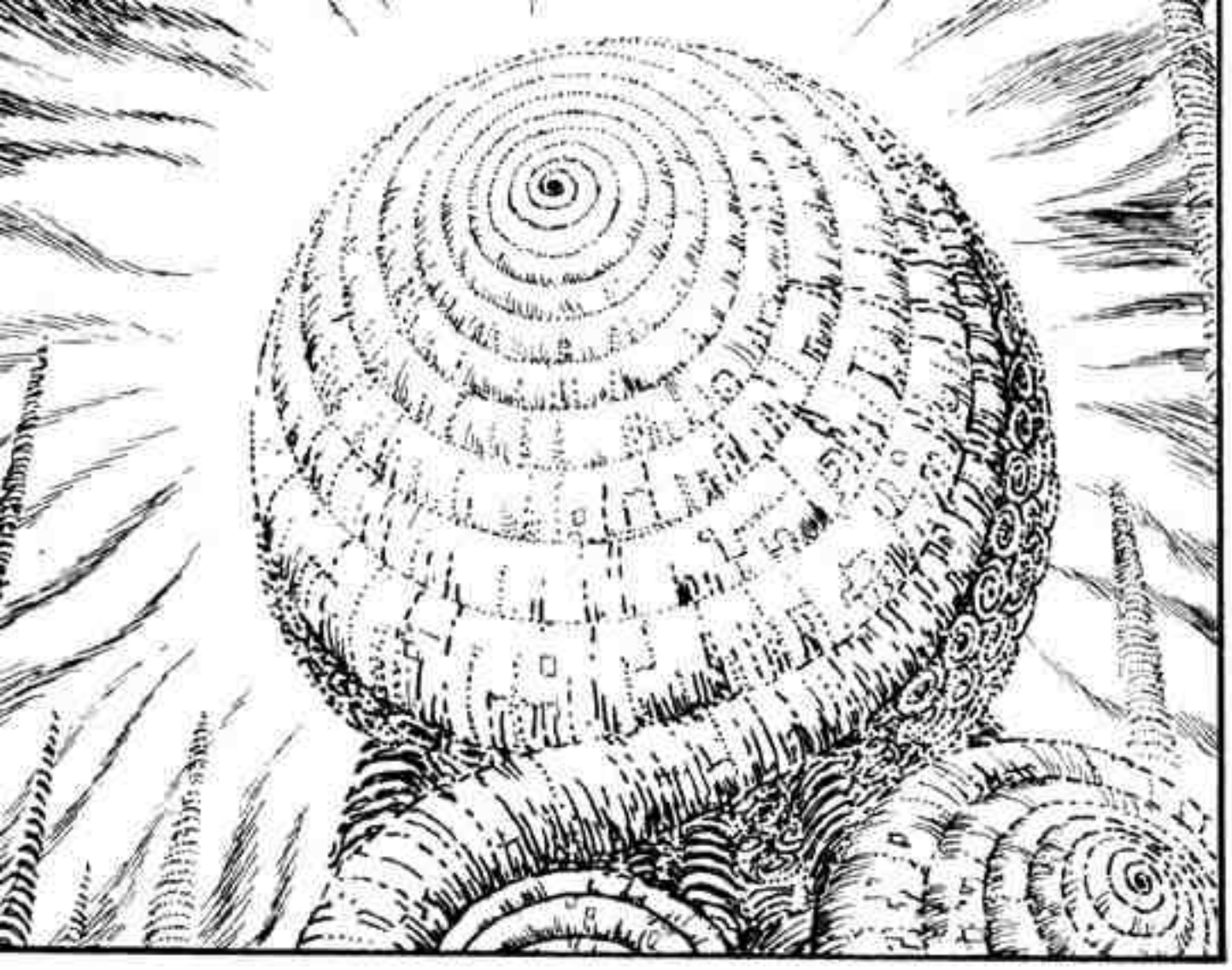
WHUD
WHFF
I CAN'T ...
HOLD ON ANY-MORE ...

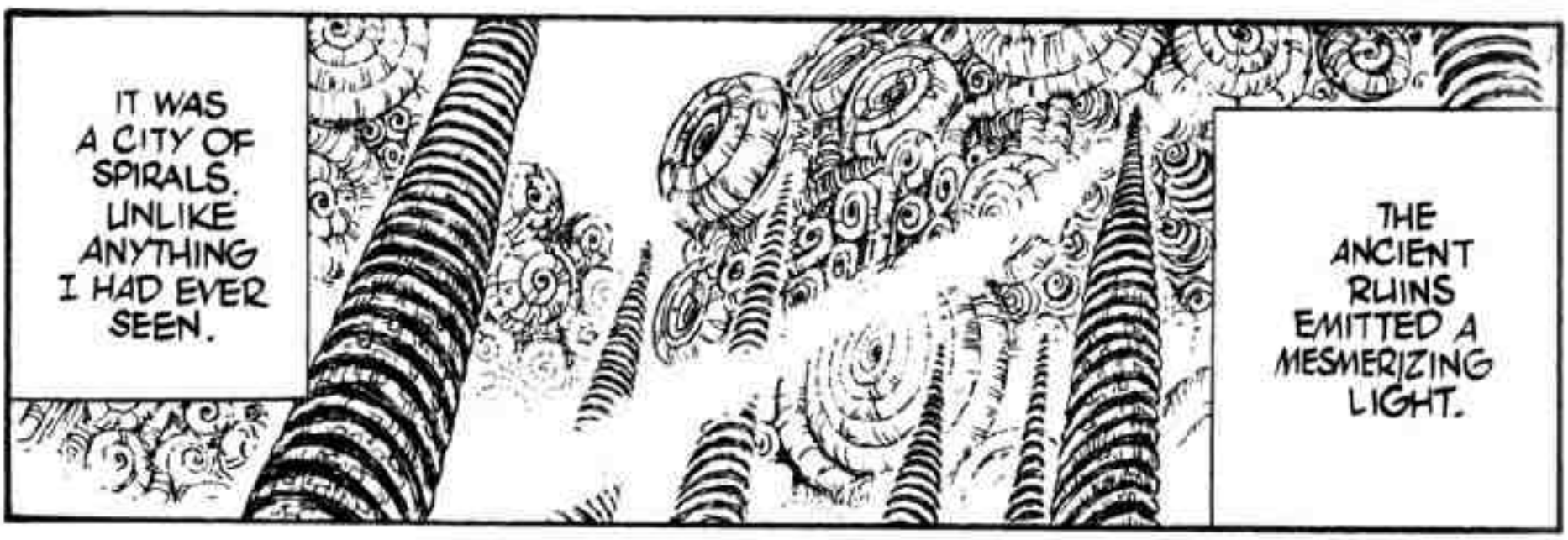
GGUAAA

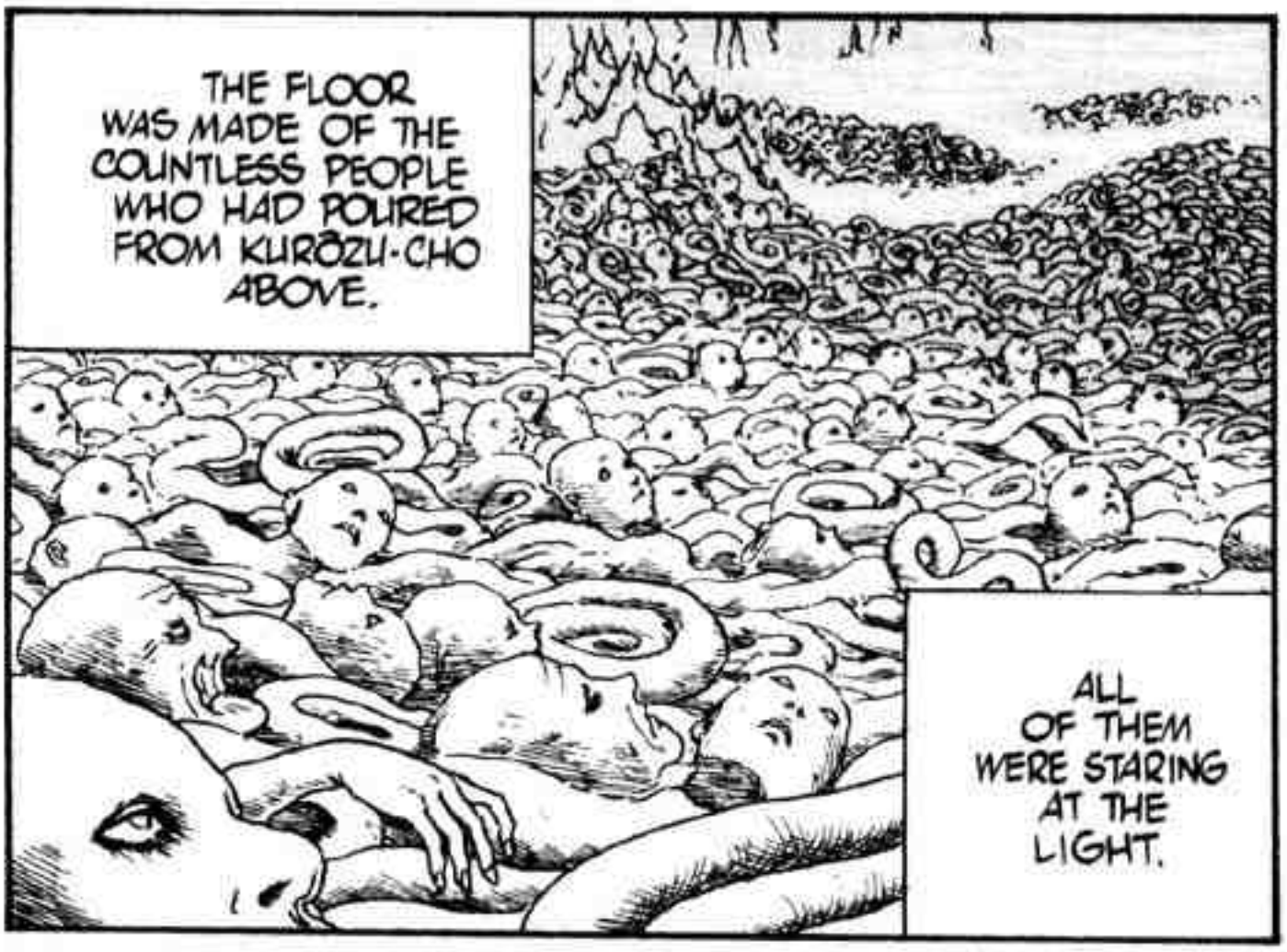
I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO DIE.
BUT FOR SOME REASON, MY BODY FELL SLOWLY, AS IF A GREAT WHIRLWIND WERE CARRYING ME DOWN.

Ah...?






IT WAS A CITY OF SPIRALS. UNLIKE ANYTHING I HAD EVER SEEN.
THE ANCIENT RUINS EMITTED A MESMERIZING LIGHT.


THE FLOOR WAS MADE OF THE COUNTLESS PEOPLE WHO HAD POURED FROM KURÔZU-CHO ABOVE.
ALL OF THEM WERE STARING AT THE LIGHT.

WHERE IS SHUICHI ?
HE SHOULD HAVE FALLEN HERE NEAR ME!

SHUICHI!
SHUICHIIII!

STRANGE... THE FARTHER I GO...
THE PEOPLE SEEM MORE LIKE STONE...

AS IF THEY WERE TURNING INTO RUINS THEM-SELVES...

Hm?!

DAD...
MOM...

SO YOU WERE HERE...

KIRIE...
KIRIE...

KIRIE...

SHUICHI!
YOU'RE ALIVE!

YES... BUT I DON'T THINK I CAN WALK ANYMORE.

KIRIE...
LOOK AT THE RUINS.

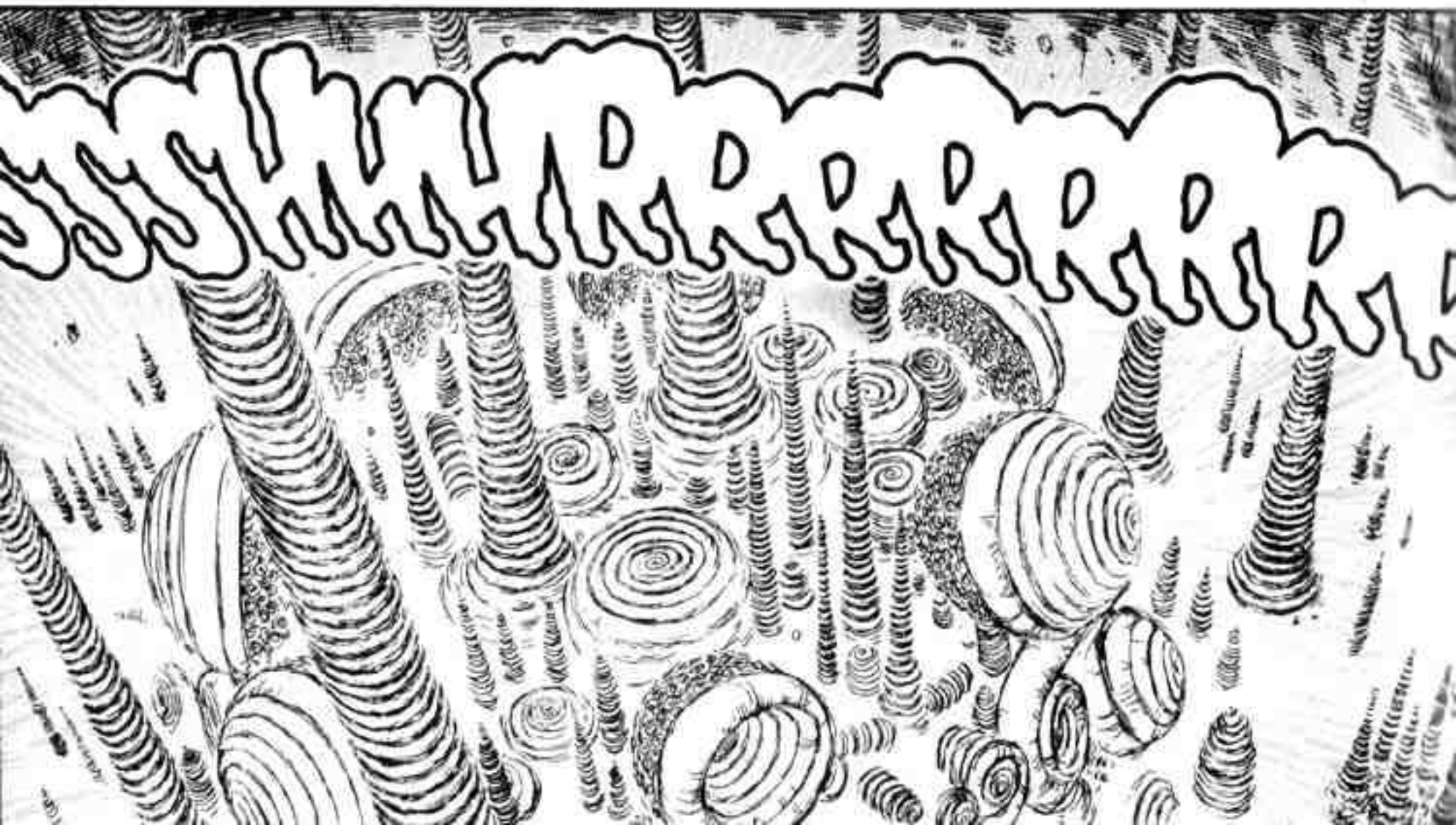
THEY'RE LIKE A LIVING THING.
IT'S LIKE IT HAS A WILL ALL OF ITS OWN.

I FEEL LIKE IT'S INVADING ME EVERY MOMENT.
IT'S LIKE IT'S CURSING US FOR BEING UNDERGROUND, HIDDEN FROM ALL THE EYES UP THERE.
SPIRALS SUCK THINGS IN... THE EYE FOLLOWS THE PATTERN TO ITS CENTER.
I DON'T KNOW WHO... OR WHAT BUILT IT HERE, OR WHY...
BUT EVERY SO OFTEN, EVERY FEW HUNDREDS, OR THOUSANDS, OR TENS OF THOUSAND YEARS, IT CAN REACH THE PEOPLE ABOVE GROUND. AND EVEN THOUGH ITS BUILDERS ARE GONE...
MAYBE IT'S STILL BUILDING ITSELF.
SHUICHI ...
WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
...
KIRIE... I CAN'T RUN AWAY ANY LONGER.
LEAVE ME HERE. YOU HAVE TO KEEP FIGHTING.
I THINK SOON THIS CURSE WILL BE OVER.

I CAN'T RUN ANYMORE, EITHER.
I'M STAYING WITH YOU.
CLASP

SHHRRRRRR

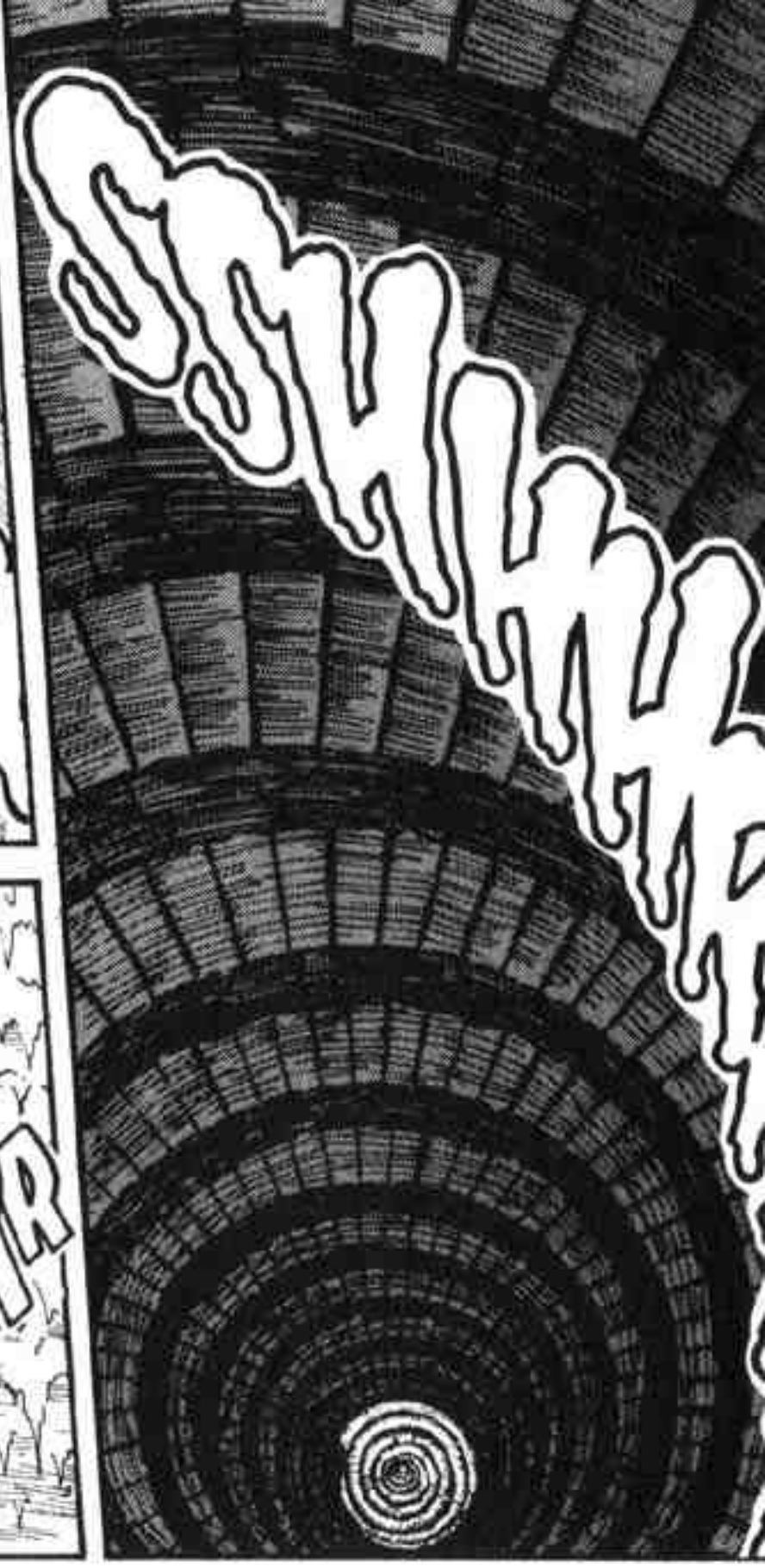
SSSHHRRRRR


SSSHHRRRRRRRRR

SHRRRR

SHRR

TRRRR


SSHHH

SHRRRR

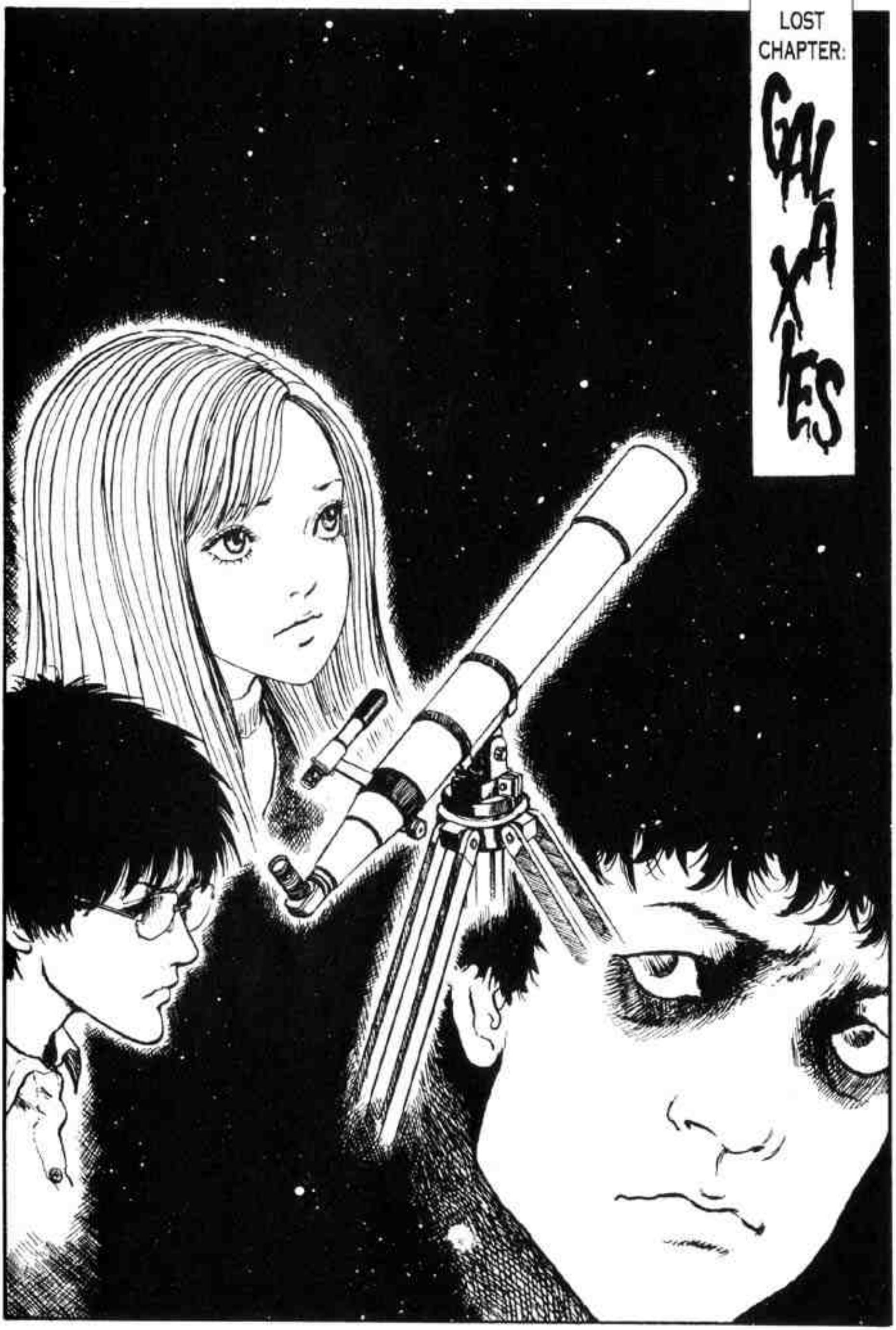
WOOOM

SO THE CURSE WAS OVER THE SAME MOMENT THAT IT BEGAN, THE ENDLESS FROZEN MOMENT THAT I SPENT IN SHUICHI'S ARMS.

AND IT WILL BE THE SAME MOMENT WHEN IT ENDS AGAIN... WHEN THE NEXT KURÔZU-CHO IS BUILT WHERE THE RUINS OF THE OLD ONCE LAY.

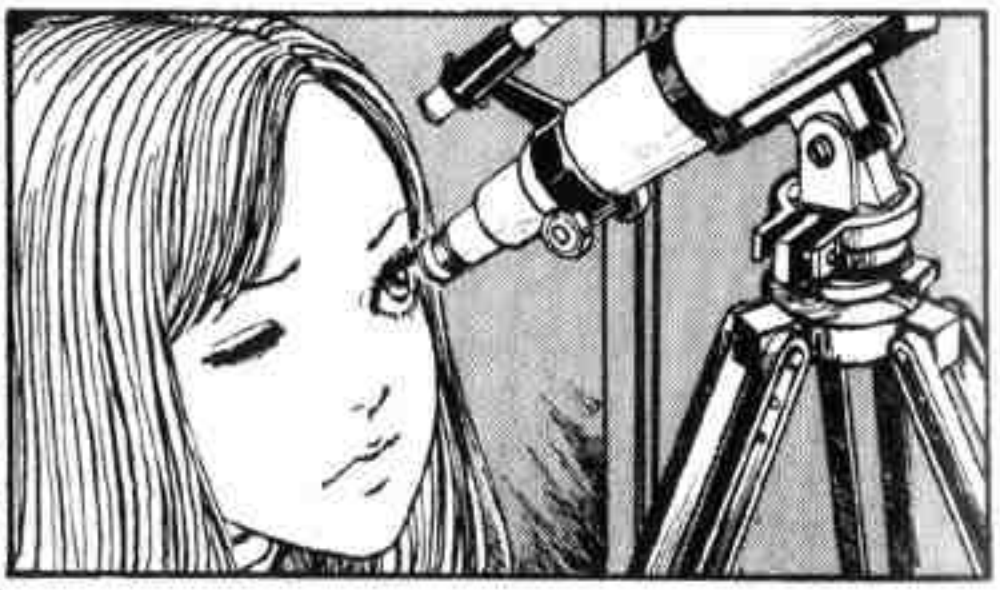
WHEN THE ETERNAL SPIRAL AWAKES ONCE MORE.

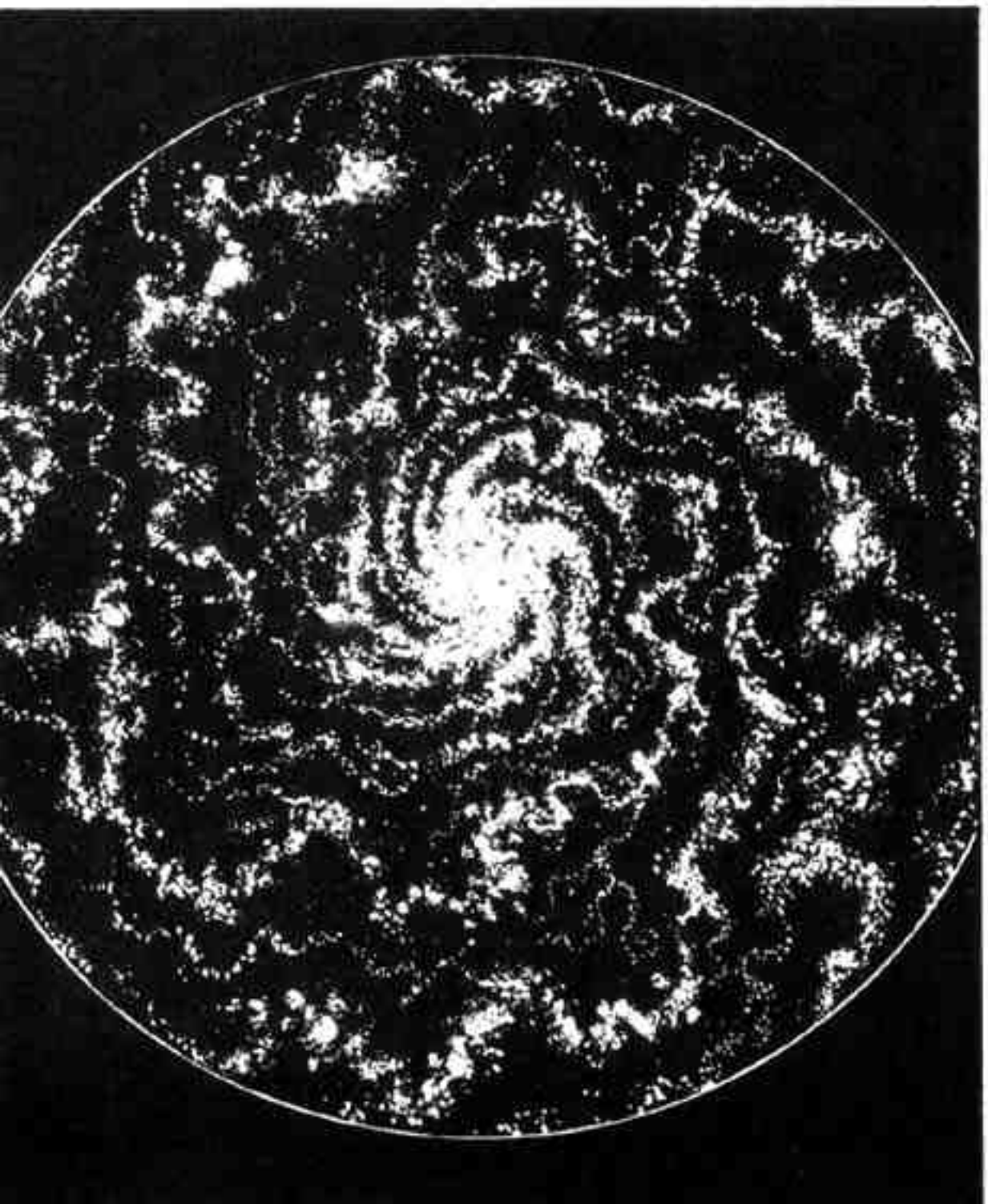
The End


LOST
CHAPTER:
GALAXIES

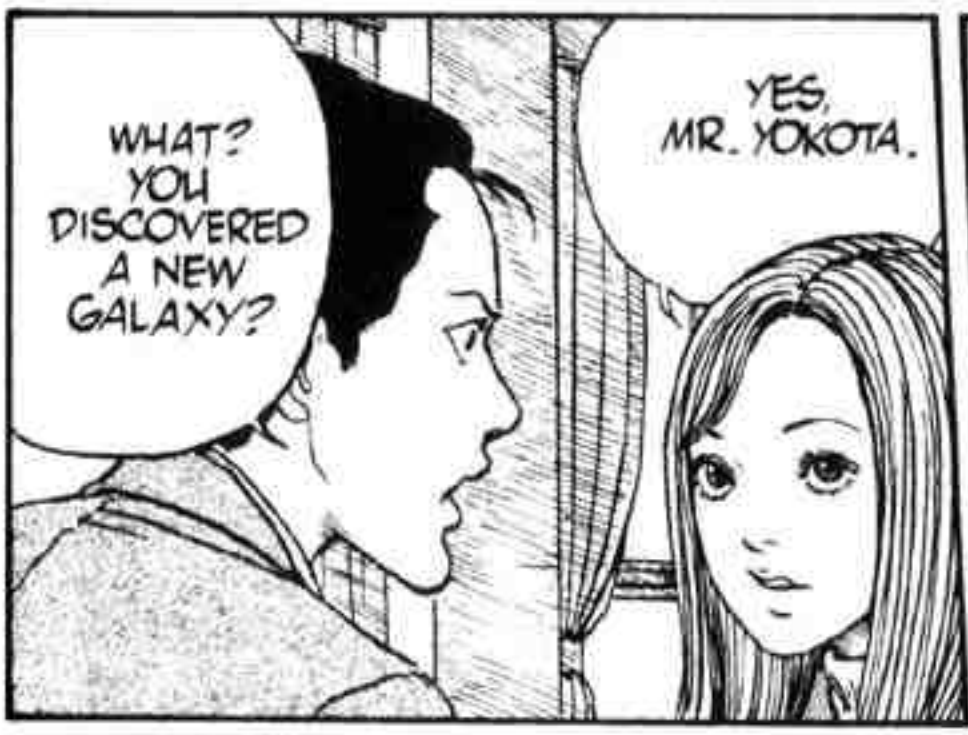
LOOK AT THAT, KIRIE.

CAN YOU SEE IT?





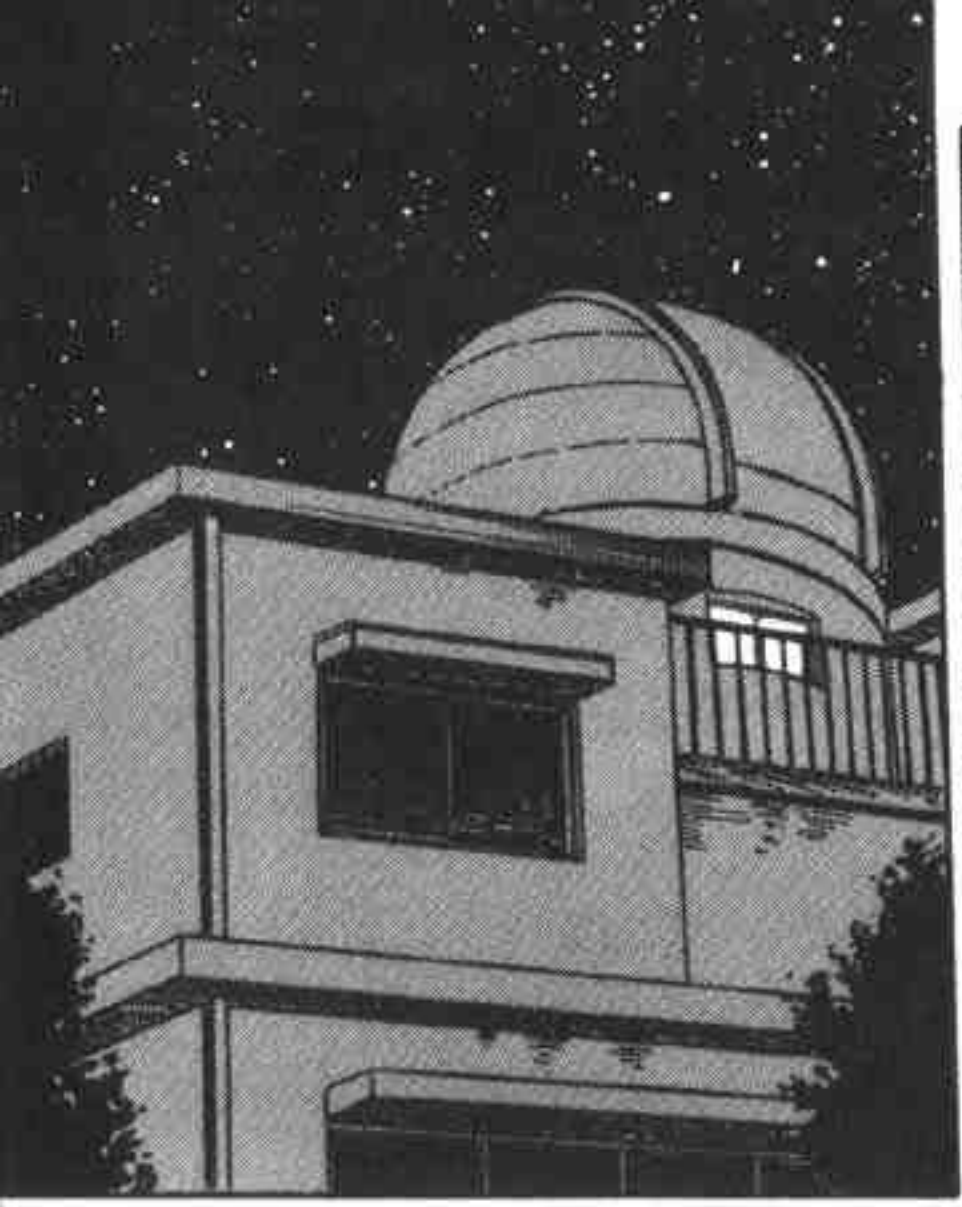
THE NEXT DAY...

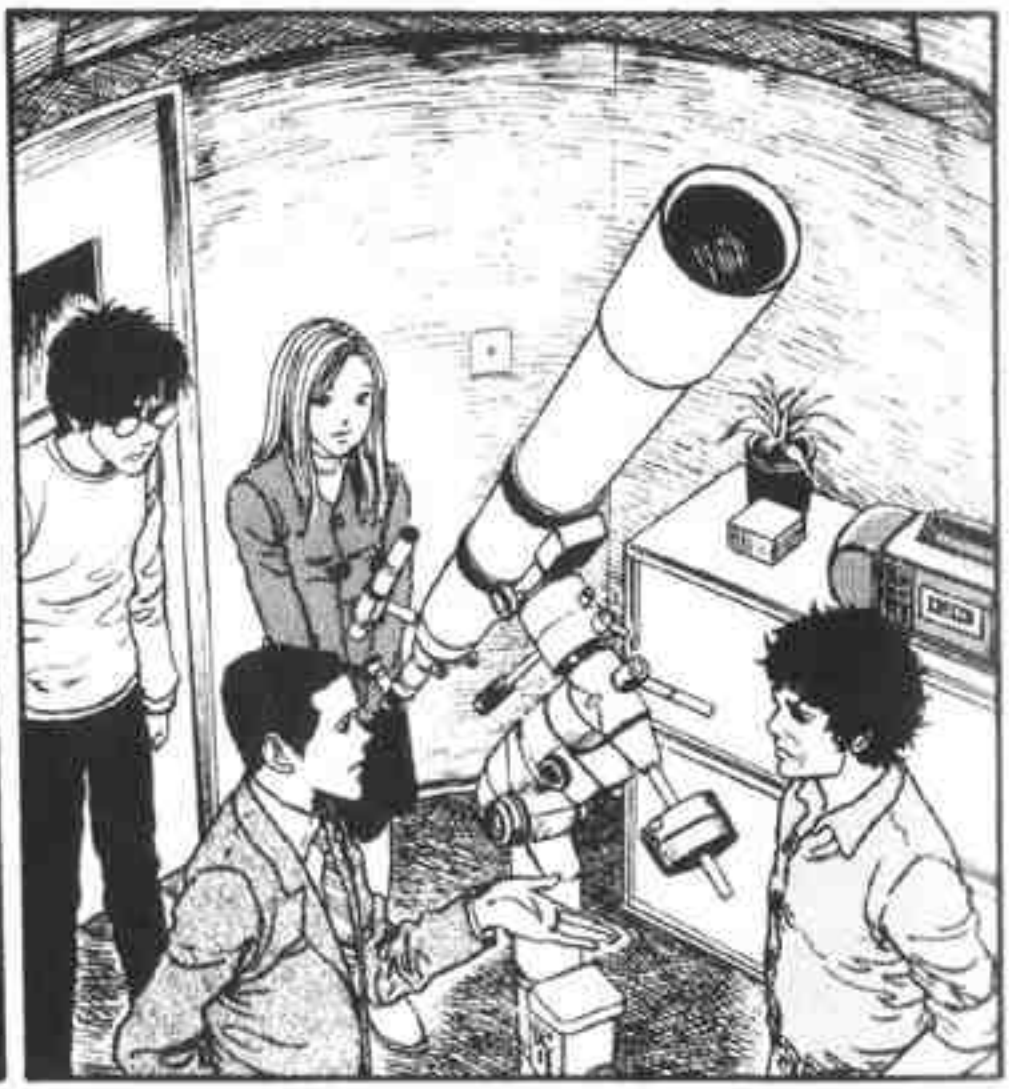

WHAT? YOU DISCOVERED A NEW GALAXY?
YES, MR. YOKOTA.

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE ...NOW A COMET, MAYBE...
BUT AN ENTIRE GALAXY? YOUR TELESCOPE WOULD HAVE TO BE PRETTY STRONG.

BUT SHUICHI'S REALLY GOOD AT ASTRONOMY. I'M SURE HE HASN'T MADE A MISTAKE.
PLEASE COME AND TAKE A LOOK!
Hmm...

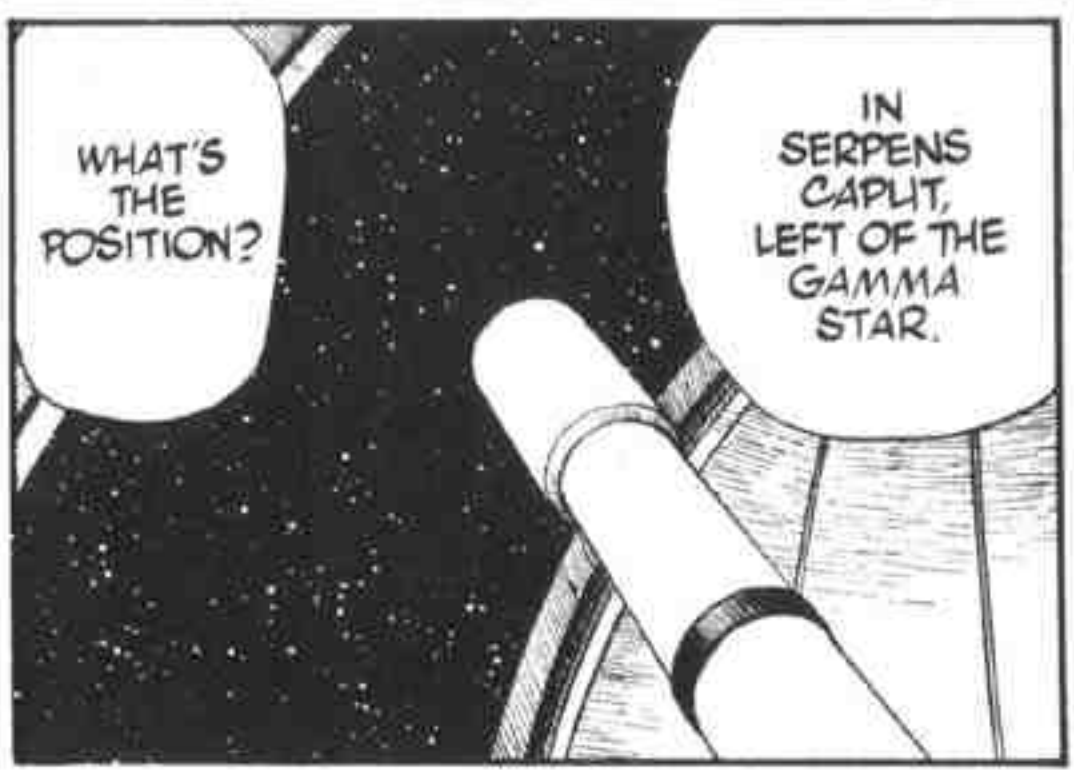
ALL RIGHT. I HAVE A FRIEND WHO'S AN ARMCHAIR ASTRONOMER. I'LL ASK HIM.
HE'S SUCH A MANIAC HE ACTUALLY BUILT AN OBSERVATORY IN HIS HOUSE.





SO ANYWAY, TORINO ...
...WE WERE WONDERING IF YOU COULD CHECK THIS OUT.

I SEE... YOU'RE SHUICHI, RIGHT?
WHY DON'T WE TAKE A LOOK THROUGH MY TELE-SCOPE?


WHAT'S THE POSITION?
IN SERPENS CAPUT, LEFT OF THE GAMMA STAR.

...

WHAT?!

YOU'RE RIGHT!
I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS SPIRAL GALAXY BEFORE!

REALLY? THEN IT'S TRUE?!

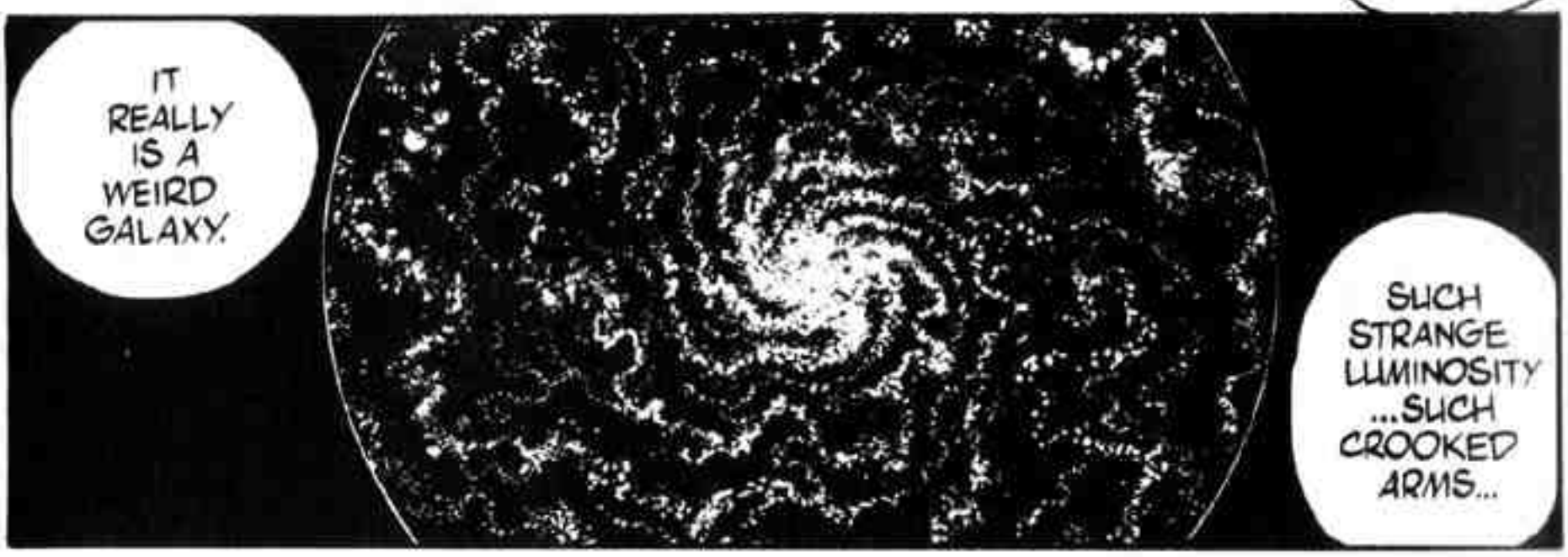
HOLD ON... WE SHOULDN'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS.
WE'LL HAVE TO CHECK WITH THE NATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY TO MAKE SURE IT ISN'T REGISTERED ALREADY.

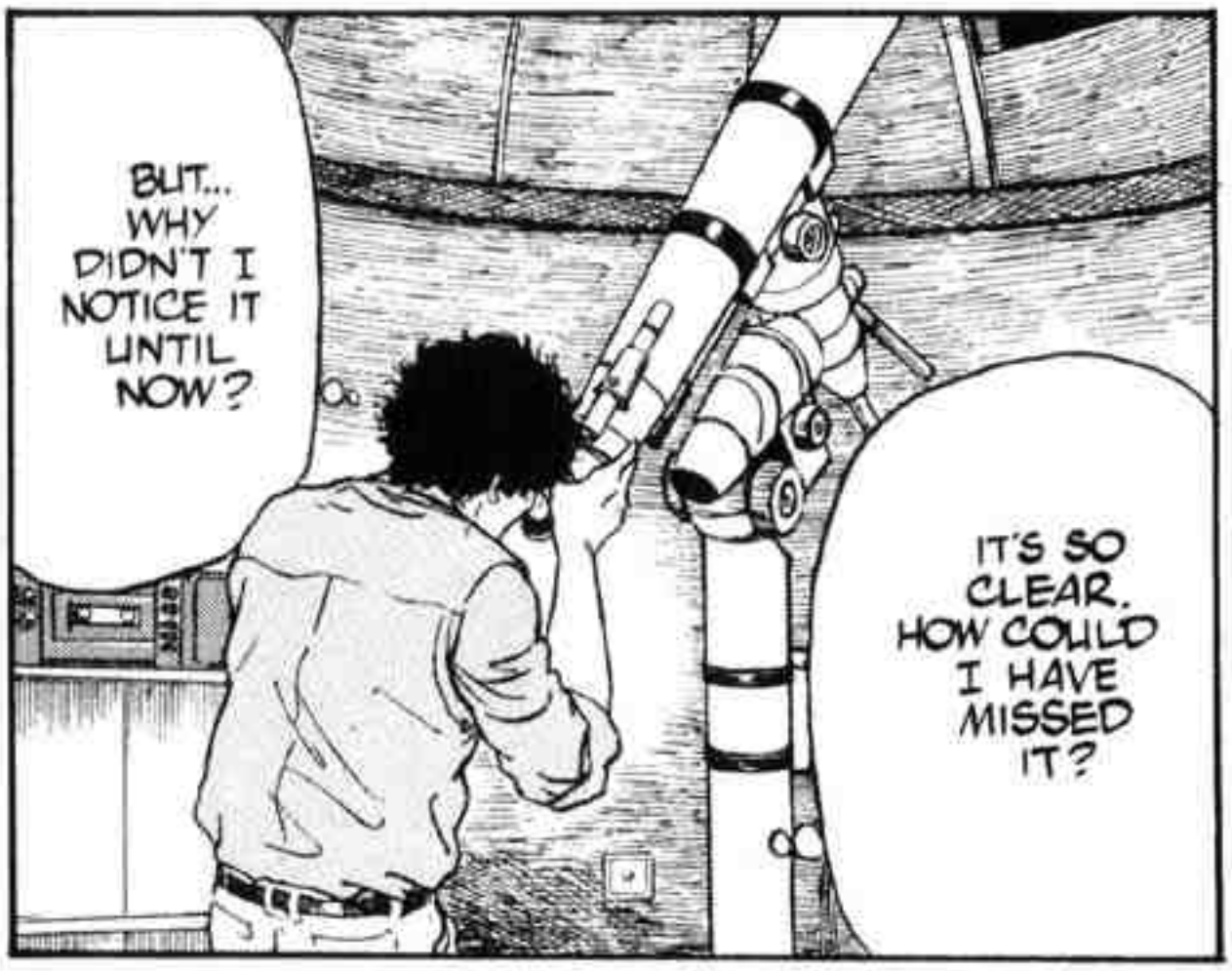
BUT... IF IT'S TRUE, THEN THIS IS A REAL FIND.
THAT'S RIGHT.
IT MIGHT ACTUALLY BE NAMED AFTER YOU. THE SHUICHI GALAXY!

ARE YOU KIDDING? I DON'T WANT MY NAME ASSOCIATED WITH THAT!
THAT THING...

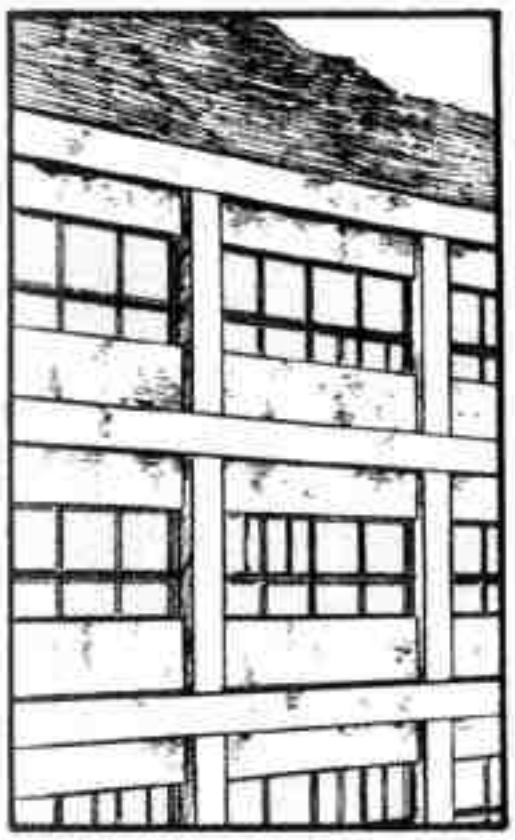
...

GOOD WORK! THIS IS ABSOLUTELY INCREDIBLE!
TORINO WILL REPORT IT TO THE NATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY. WE JUST NEED TO WAIT FOR THE RESULTS. I HAVE HIGH HOPES, THOUGH.


IT REALLY IS A WEIRD GALAXY.
SUCH STRANGE LUMINOSITY ...SUCH CROOKED ARMS...

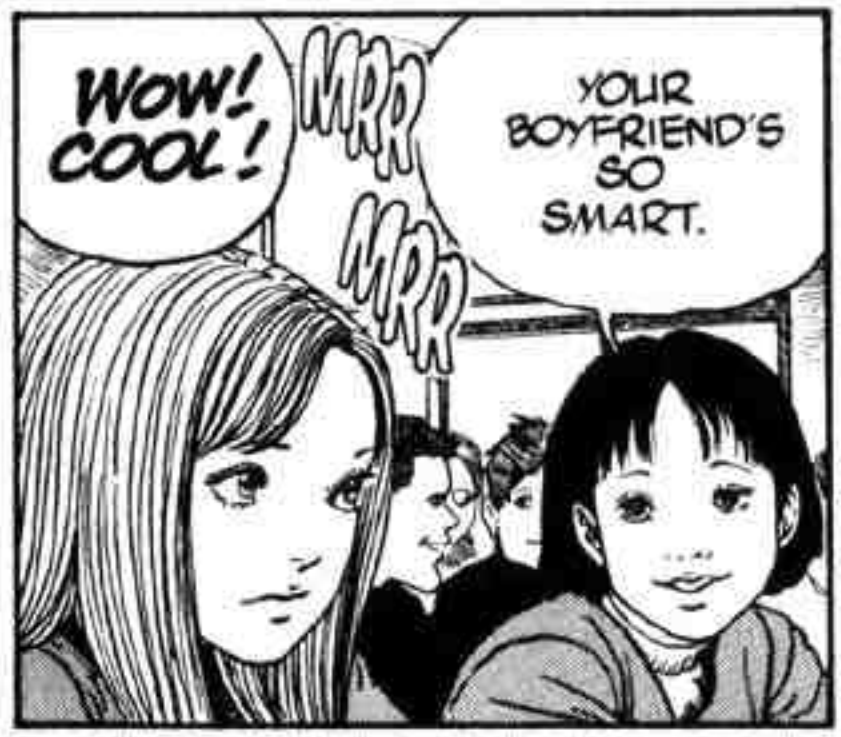

BUT... WHY DIDN'T I NOTICE IT UNTIL NOW?
IT'S SO CLEAR. HOW COULD I HAVE MISSED IT?

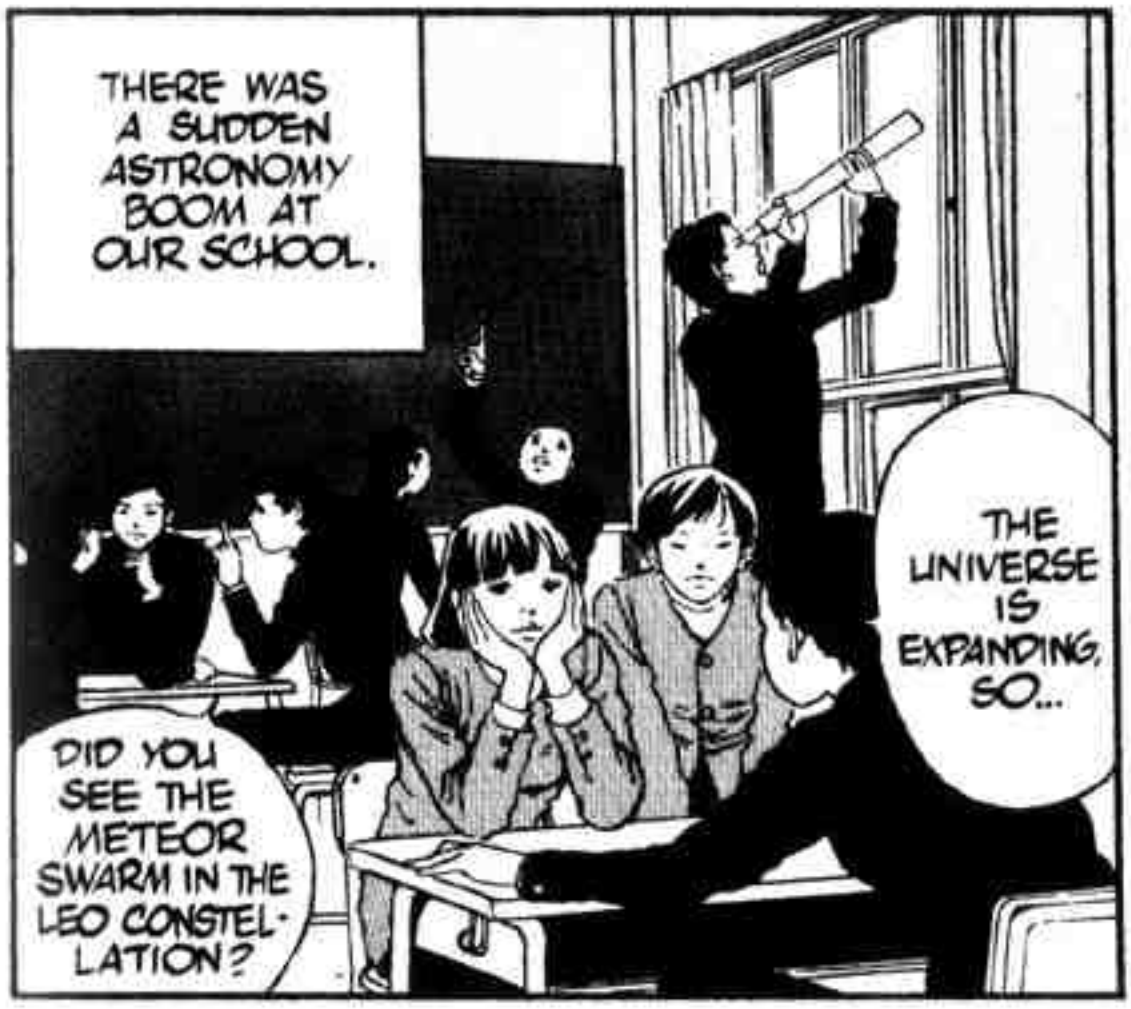
IF THIS IS A NEW DISCOVERY ...
THEN IT'S ABSOLUTELY AMAZING!

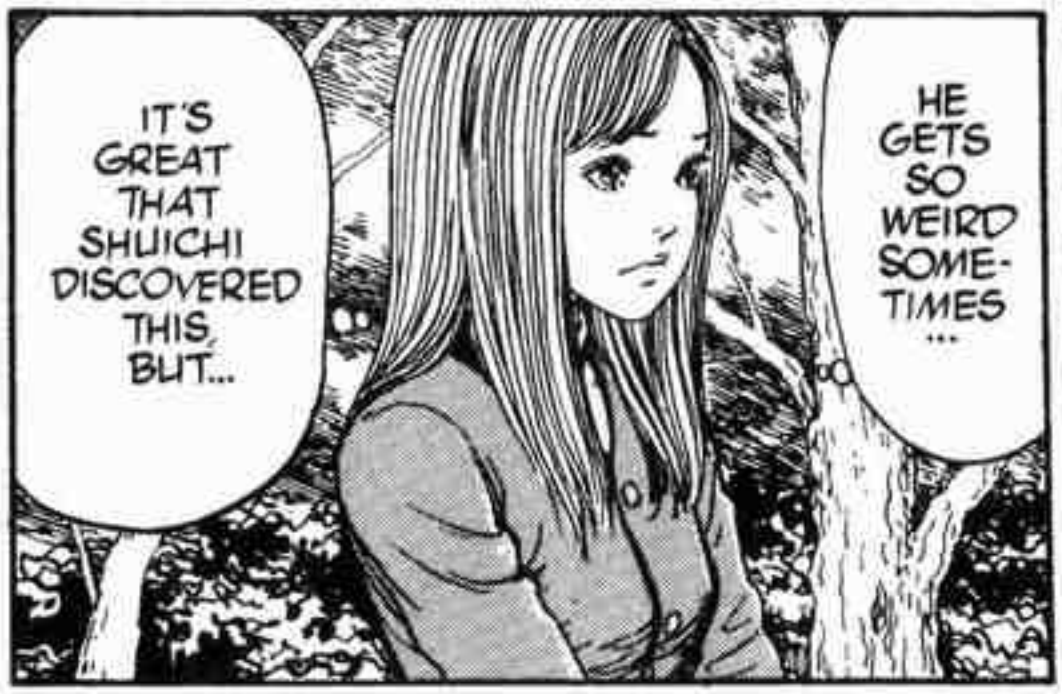


...SO ONE OF KIRIE'S FRIENDS MIGHT HAVE MADE A GREAT DISCOVERY!
I WAS SO EXCITED I COULDN'T SLEEP!

IF ANY OF YOU HAVE TELESCOPES YOU SHOULD TAKE A LOOK TONIGHT.
I'M ORDERING ONE MYSELF.


WOW! COOL!
MRR MRR
YOUR BOYFRIEND'S SO SMART.


THERE WAS A SUDDEN ASTRONOMY BOOM AT OUR SCHOOL.
THE UNIVERSE IS EXPANDING, SO...
DID YOU SEE THE METEOR SWARM IN THE LEO CONSTEL-LATION?


IT'S GREAT THAT SHUICHI DISCOVERED THIS, BUT...
HE GETS SO WEIRD SOME-TIMES ...

HE WAS SCARED.
I'D BETTER GO CHECK ON HIM...

SHIVER SHIVER

WHAT'S WRONG, SHUICHI?

I CAN FEEL IT.
CAN'T YOU FEEL IT?
F-FEEL WHAT?

THE RADIO WAVES!

I FEEL THE **RADIO WAVES!**

RADIO WAVES ...?

POWERFUL WAVES!

THEY'RE BEING TRANS-MITTED INTO MY HEAD!

THEY'RE SENDING A MESSAGE ...TALKING TO ME!

WH-WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

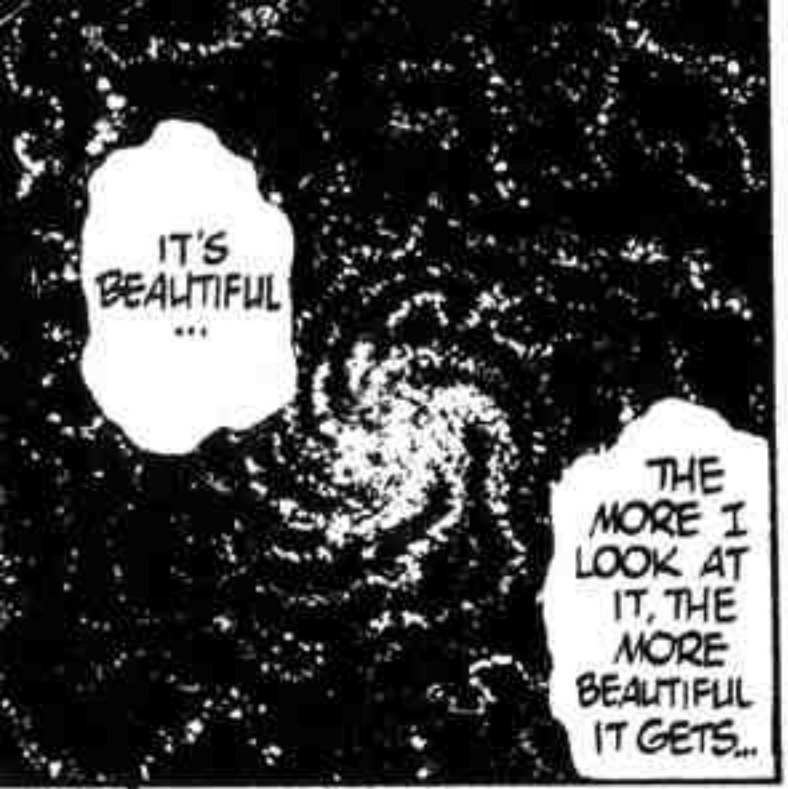
GET AHOLD OF YOUR-SELF!

uff

hff

uff

hff

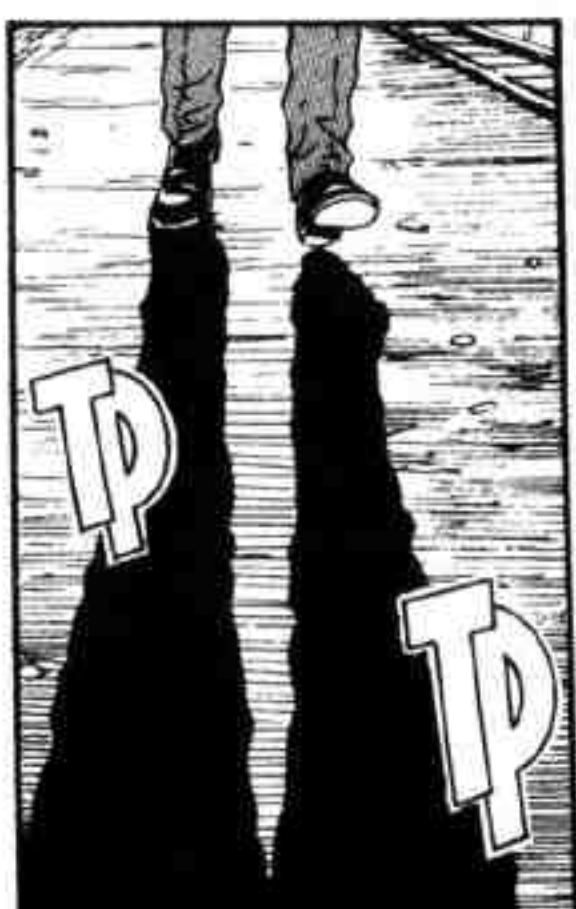

IT'S BEAUTIFUL ...
THE MORE I LOOK AT IT, THE MORE BEAUTIFUL IT GETS...

WH-WHAT IS THIS SENSATION?

SOMETHING'S TRYING TO TELL ME SOME-THING...
AHH!

AGHH!
AGHH! STOP!
STOP IT!

PLEASE!


TP
TP

uff
hff

uff
hff
uff
hff
SHUICHI... IT'S ME!
IT'S ME, MR. TORINO.
CAN YOU HEAR ME?
IF YOU CAN, ANSWER ME!
HOW DID YOU KNOW WHERE I LIVE?
I KNEW RIGHT AWAY... I CAN SENSE YOUR PRESENCE LIKE A BEACON.
THE SAME WAY WE'RE COMMUNI-CATING LIKE THIS.

SO YOU FEEL THE RADIO WAVES, TOO?
SO DO I... WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?

SOME-THING IS TELLING ME... SOME ENTITY...
THAT IF I WANT TO BE THE DISCOVER-ER...

I'VE GOT TO KILL YOU!

SOME-THING'S BEEN TELLING ME, TOO...

TO KILL YOU BEFORE YOU CAN KILL ME.

I DON'T WANT TO DO THAT...
I JUST WANT TO TALK.

I'LL BE FRANK... I WANT YOU TO RELINQUISH YOUR CLAIM TO BE THE DISCOVERER OF THAT GALAXY!
I WANT THAT GALAXY!

...
I DON'T CARE... I NEVER WANTED TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT ANYWAY.
DO AS YOU LIKE.

THANK YOU. I KNEW YOU'D UNDERSTAND.
SO NOW I'M THE DISCOVERER?

YES... BUT WE BOTH KNOW ...
THAT'S ONLY IF THE INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION APPROVES ITS EXISTENCE...

I'M ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN IT WILL! IT WASN'T DISCOVERED UNTIL NOW!

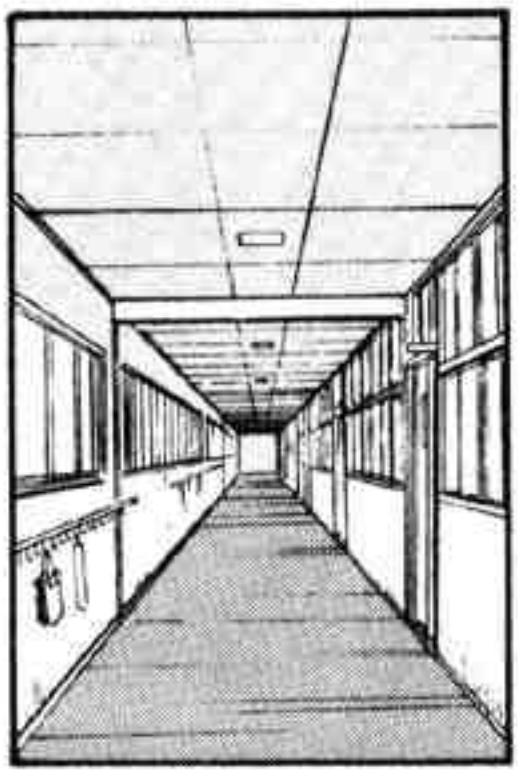
NO ONE'S KNOWN ABOUT IT FOR BILLIONS OF YEARS...
UNTIL I FOUND IT...

I SAW THAT NEW GALAXY! IT WAS AMAZING.
FINALLY, *huh?* I SAW IT, TOO.

IT'S REALLY MESMERIZING ...
MR. TORINO LET ME USE HIS OBSERVATORY. I HEARD HE'S THE ONE WHO DISCOVERED IT...

Huh? MR. TORINO?
THAT'S FUNNY. I THOUGHT IT WAS SHUICHI SAITO.

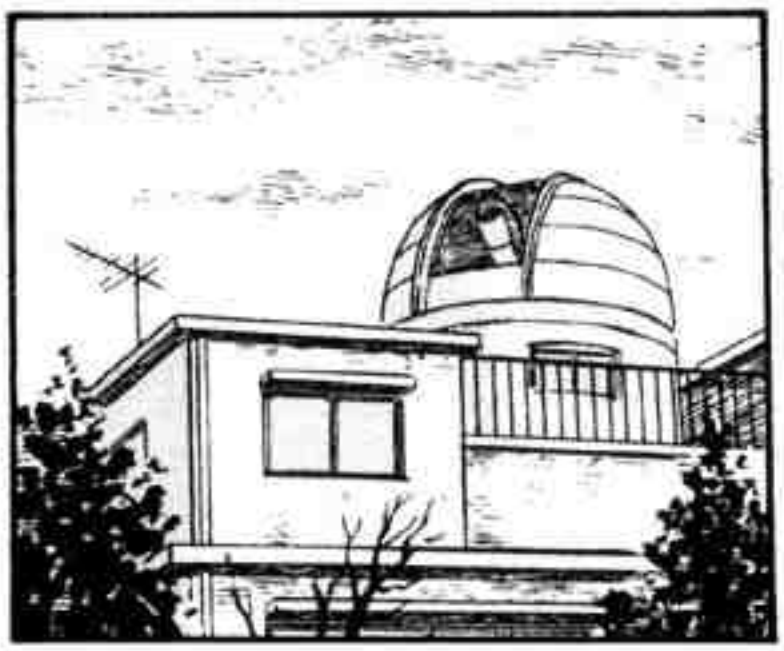
NO, MR. TORINO SAYS IT WAS HIM.

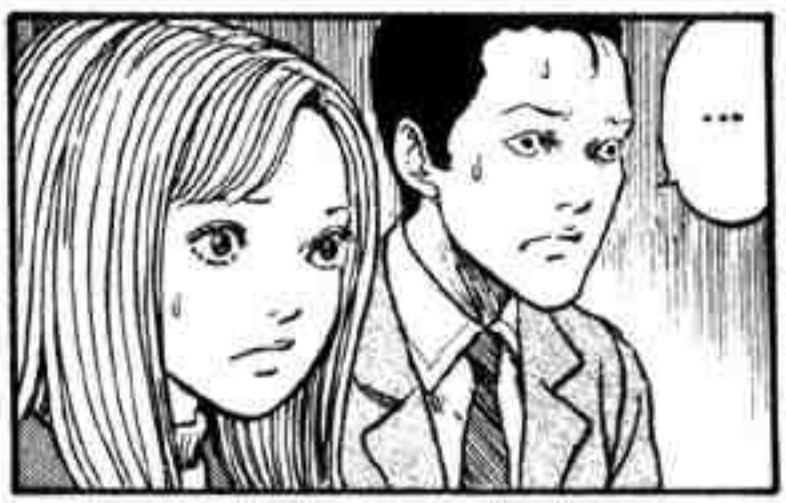


WHAT'S THIS ABOUT MR. TORINO?

IT MUST BE A MISTAKE.
BUT THAT'S WHAT I HEARD...

WELL, LET'S GO CHECK WITH HIM TODAY.




...

YES... I DID MAKE THAT CLAIM.
I AM IN FACT THE DISCOVERER.
WH-
WHAT?!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? SHUICHI FOUND IT BEFORE YOU DID!
HE RELINQUISHED HIS CLAIM, SO I DISCOVERED IT BY DEFAULT.
TH- THAT'S PRE-POSTEROUS!
THAT'S RIGHT, TORINO ...IT'S NOT FAIR!
Oh, YES IT IS.
I TALKED IT OVER WITH HIM.
IN ANY CASE, IT'S A SPECTACULAR GALAXY.
IT'LL PROVIDE YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, AND I'M SURE IT'LL YIELD UP ITS MYSTERIES.
THERE'S ONE THING I ALREADY KNOW.
IT SENDS OUT POWERFUL TRANSMISSIONS, FAR GREATER THAN MOST SO-CALLED "RADIO GALAXIES."

I KNOW THIS...

BECAUSE I MYSELF HAVE RECEIVED ITS SIGNALS!

THOSE RADIO WAVES, THAT RADIATION, FROM MILLIONS OF LIGHT YEARS AWAY, IS BEING SENT TO ME!

AND THE MOST AMAZING THING IS...

NOW I CAN SEND RADIO WAVES TOO!

Uh... TORINO...

GET OUT! I HAVE NOTHING MORE TO SAY!

THAT GALAXY IS MINE!

WAIT A MINUTE!

BY DEFAULT, I'M THE DISCOVERER! AFTER ALL, I SAW IT BEFORE YOU DID!

AND I WON'T LET YOU TAKE CREDIT FROM SHUICHI!

...

HEY... WHAT'S THIS?!
DID YOU FIND SOMETHING?!

I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS GALAXY. IT'S NOT THE ONE IN THE SERPENT CONSTEL-LATION.
HEY, YOU'RE RIGHT... I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS IN ANY STAR CHART.

I'VE GOT THE SAME THING OVER HERE.
I'VE BEEN OBSERVING IT FOR A WHILE NOW.
ANOTHER DISCOVERY? LET'S GO HOME AND CHECK OUR BOOKS!

STRANGELY, MANY MORE NEW GALAXIES WERE DISCOVERED ...
...BY PEOPLE ALL OVER TOWN.

ONE NIGHT ...
uff
hff

WHAT IS THIS FEELING?
IT'S COMING OVER ME SO SUDDENLY ... LIKE SOMETHING'S INVADING MY THOUGHTS...

LIKE VOICES IN STATIC ...
COULD THESE BE THE RADIO WAVES?

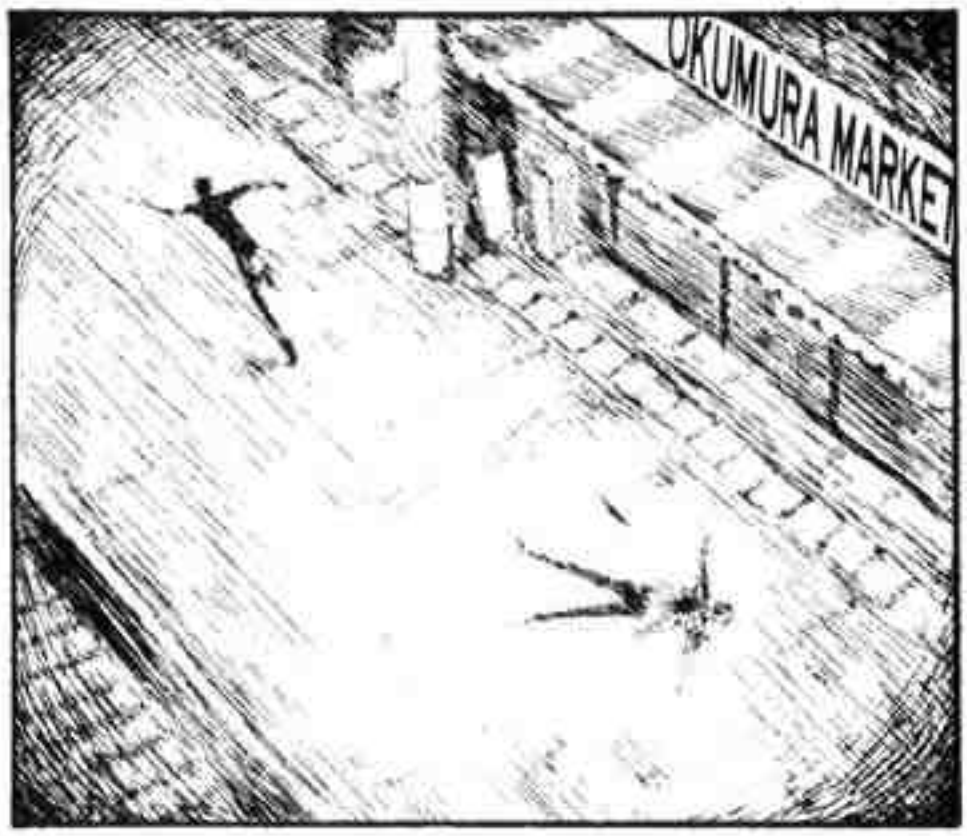
I'M THE ONE WHO FOUND IT!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THE GALAXY NEXT TO COMA BERENICES IS MINE!
Huh?!

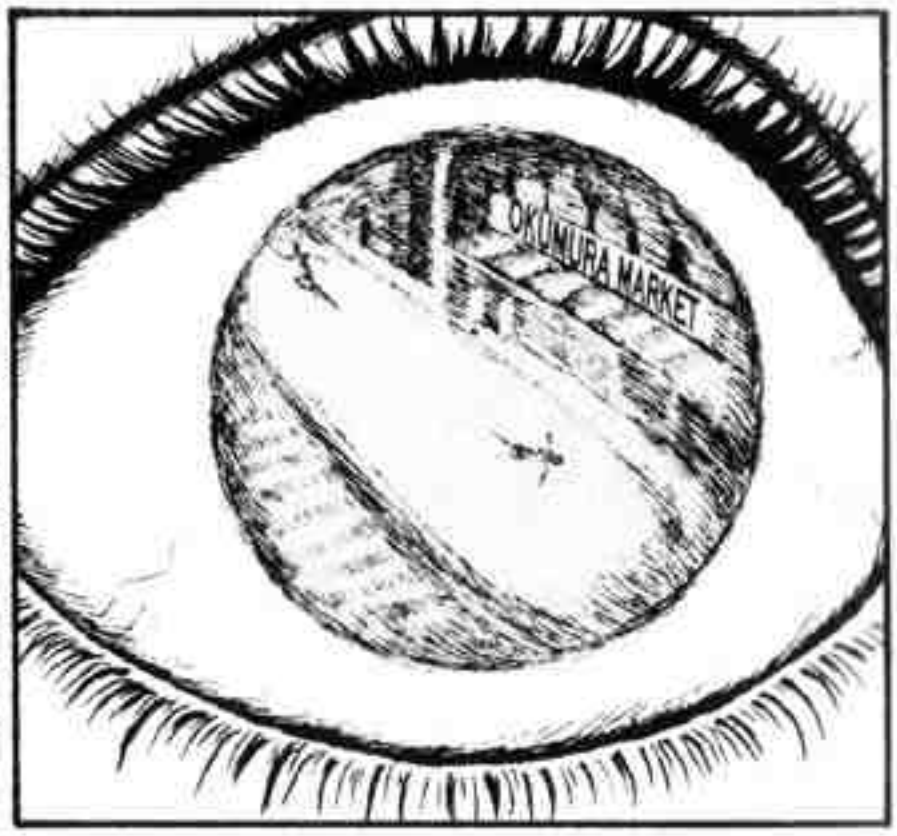
HEY! I WAS THE ONE WHO FOUND THE SPIRAL GALAXY NEXT TO LEO REGULUS!
Oh, YEAH? YOU DON'T HAVE ANY PROOF!
Hm?!

YOU DAMN THIEF! YOU STOLE MY DISCOVERY!
WH-WHAT IS THIS?
I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!
I'M HEARING PEOPLE'S CONVERSATIONS IN MY HEAD!
YOU'LL BE THE DEAD ONE IF YOU SHOW YOUR FACE AROUND HERE. I DARE YOU!
I'M ALREADY HEADED YOUR WAY. YOU'LL SEE.
THE STARS ARE TELLING ME, KILL, KILL...
LIAR! THAT'S WHAT THEY TOLD ME!
COME ON, THEN, YOU BETTER BE ARMED!
NOW I SEE YOU!
I'M COMING CLOSER... 100 METERS... 90...80...
Huff... hff... gasp... ahh...
uff... hff... hff... hhh...
TAKE THIS, YOU BASTARD!
AAGH!
KYAA!

GHGG!

Uggh... nnn...
Hhh heh...YOU BASTARD...


OKUMURA MARKET


OKUMURA MARKET

THAT WAS IN FRONT OF THE OKUMURA MARKET ...

DID THAT REALLY HAPPEN?

SHFF

uff
hff

YOU WON'T BELIEVE THIS, BUT... I SAW IT ALL HAPPEN...

ME, TOO! IT JUST APPEARED IN MY HEAD, AND THEN I WENT HERE AND THERE WAS A CROWD. I GUESS EVERYONE ELSE SAW IT, TOO.

THIS IS SO STRANGE... CLAIRVOYANCE? I WONDER IF IT'S FROM THE RADIO WAVES.

WELL... ISN'T THAT HOW WE'RE TALKING RIGHT NOW?

YOU'RE RIGHT! OUR LIPS AREN'T EVEN MOVING!

SO THE SPIRAL GALAXIES ARE CAUSING THIS, TOO?

DOES THIS MEAN SOMETHING LIKE THIS MIGHT HAPPEN AGAIN?

I MEAN, I KEEP HEARING THESE ARGUMENTS... IN MY HEAD... NIGHT AFTER NIGHT!

YOU'D BETTER TAKE YOUR BATH RIGHT NOW!

I LOVE YOU...

I LOVE YOU, TOO...

THE GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED ITS POLICIES TO STIMULATE THE STAGNANT ECONOMY ...

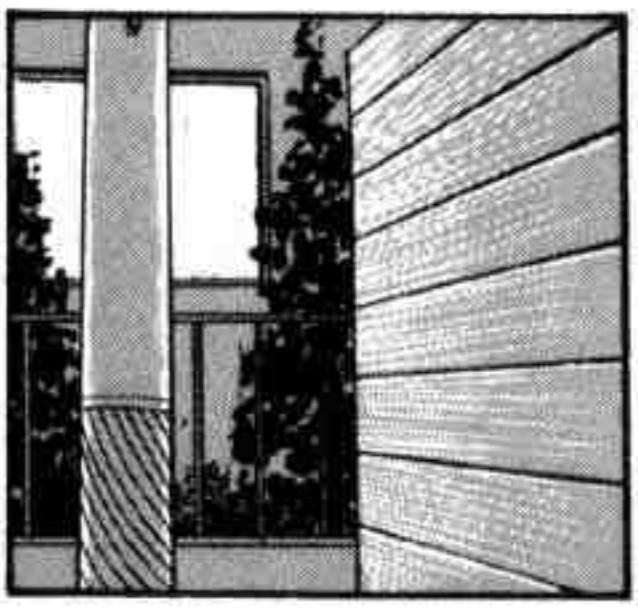
AND IT'S A GOAL!

I ALREADY TOLD YOU!!

BUT... BUT, THE THING IS...

AGGH... SO MUCH NOISE...

I FOUND YOU, KIRIE!



THAT'S MR. TORINO!
WHAT'S HE DOING BEHIND THAT CORNER...?
AH?!
TMP

hff
hff
TWP
STOP KIRIE!
YOU'RE IN MY WAY! I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!
HELP ME!
SOMEBODY HELP ME!
AHA HA HA! THEY CAN'T HEAR YOU!
THE WHOLE AREA IS DROWNED IN NOISE!
IT'S A FOUL BALL!
NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW YOU'RE BEING KILLED!
THEN HOW ABOUT TOMORROW?
BRUSH YOUR TEETH BEFORE YOU GO TO BED!
HELP!

HELP! PLEASE!
AHAHAHA
SOMEONE PLEASE HELP ME!
TUGG
WHUD
HA HA HA!
NOW IT'S OVER!
ONCE YOU'RE DEAD, I SAW IT FIRST!
DIE!
WHAT...?

Hm?
WHAT... WHAT... WHAT IS THIS?
THIS IS IM-POSSIBLE!
IT'S VISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE!

THIS IS WONDER-FUL!

THIS IS IN-CREDIBLE!

AND I... I DIS-COVERED IT!

I WAS THE FIRST HUMAN TO SEE!

TELL ME, STARS!

ANSWER ME! NOW!

NOW!

AHH!
I--I FEEL IT!
I--I FEEL IT!
IT'S SO POWERFUL!
AAA...

EEE
EEE
EEE
GHHH?
GHHH
BLA
NIN!

SWAAAAAAAA

WAS IT A NIGHTMARE? I ONLY KNOW WHAT I SAW.

AFTER EXPLODING LIKE AN EGG IN A MICROWAVE, TORINO'S HEAD TURNED INTO A SMALL GALAXY, AND FLEW OFF INTO THE NIGHT SKY.

ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY'S DATA ANALYSIS CENTER, NONE OF THE NUMEROUS GALAXY SIGHTINGS REPORTED IN KURÔZU-CHO WERE CONFIRMED.

THEY WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN IN THIS TOWN AS WELL.

THE END

AFTER WORD

THE HORROR...
BIP BIP BIP
THE HORROR...

RINNG RINNG
BIG COMIC SPIRITS. NAKAGUMA SPEAKING.

N-NAKAGUMA? I-I'M IN TROUBLE...
SLURP SLURP
ITO? WHAT'S GOING ON?

H-HE'S HERE!
THE SPIRAL MASTER--UZUMAKI-SEN'NIN--IS IN MY HOUSE!

"UZUMAKI-SEN'NIN?" WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
DON'T YOU REMEMBER? LAST VOLUME? THE TWO OF US WENT UP TO THE MOUNTAINS OF G____ PREFECTURE AND MET THAT MAD HERMIT?

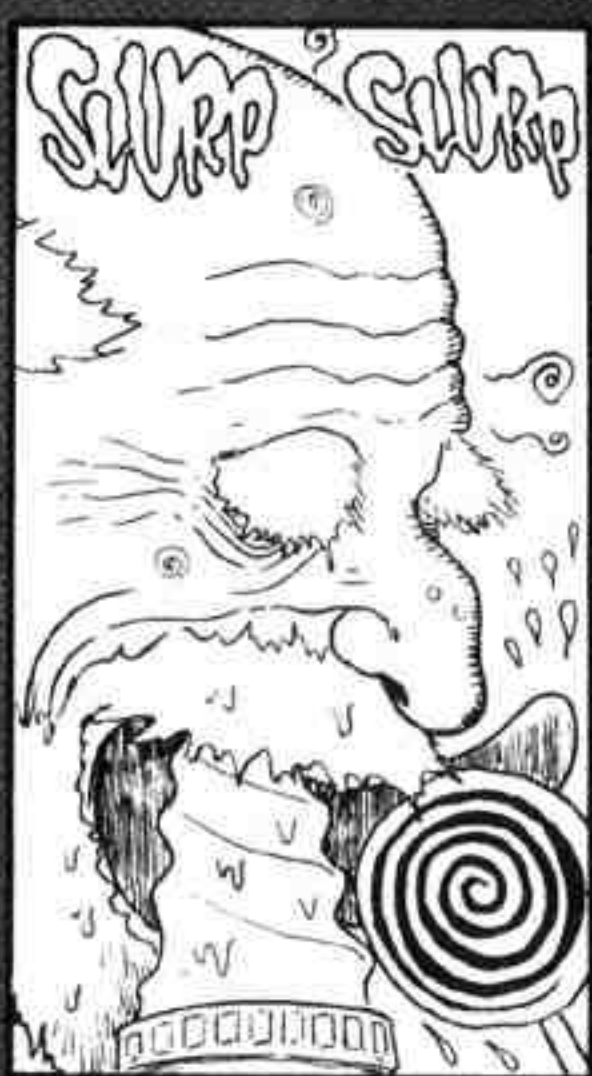
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THAT ENDED WITH A STUPID "IT WAS JUST A DREAM!" PUNCHLINE!
THAT WASN'T A DREAM! IT WAS REAL! IT WAS A REAL PUNCHLINE!

ITO... STOP KIDDING AROUND.
KLK

AND NOW EVEN MY EDITOR HAS ABANDONED ME...
SLURP SLURP

SLURP SLURP

SLURP LICK
SLURP SLURP


SLURP SLURP

SO YOU WANT TO KNOW THE SECRET OF THE SPIRAL, DO YOU? THAT'S EASILY DONE! GYEE HEE HEE!
BUT FIRST, GIVE ME MORE FOOD! BRING ME MORE DELICIOUS SPIRALS TO EAT!

...
THIS TIME... THERE ISN'T ANY KIND OF PUNCH-LINE...

THE END