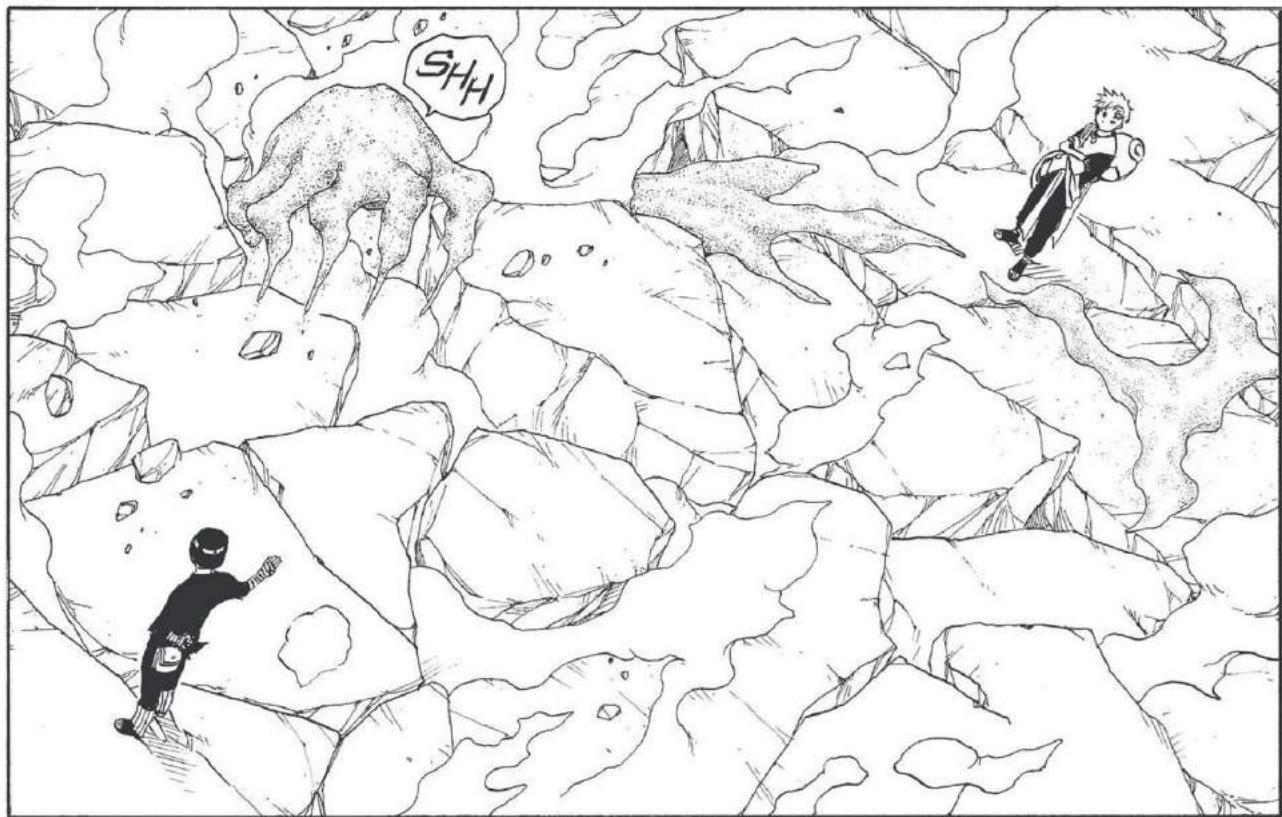
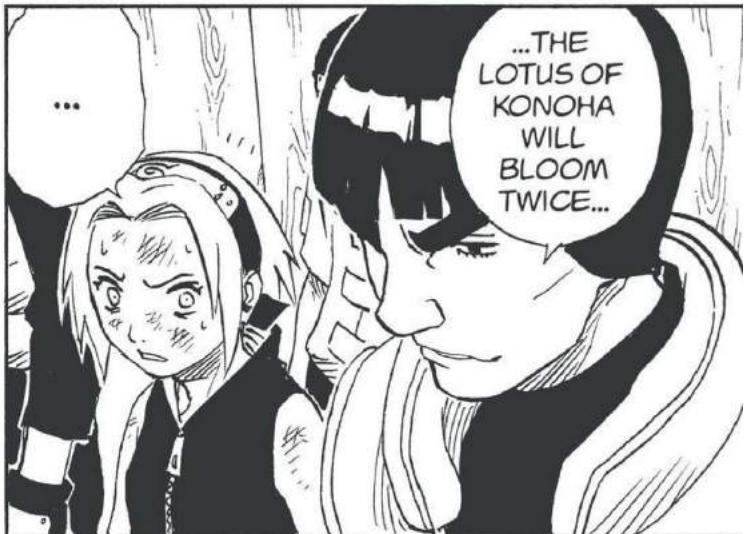
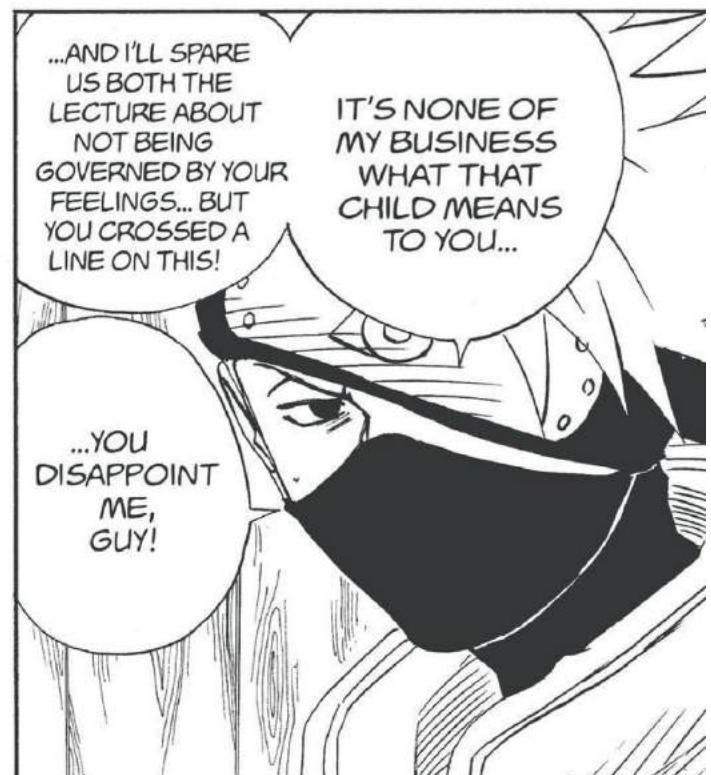
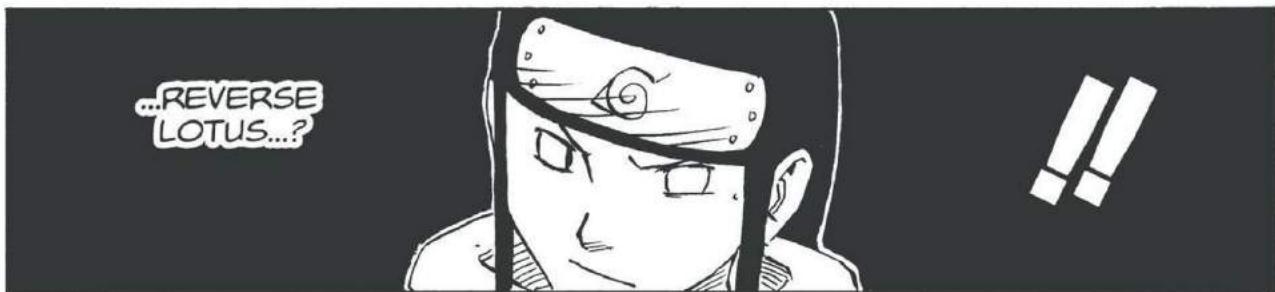


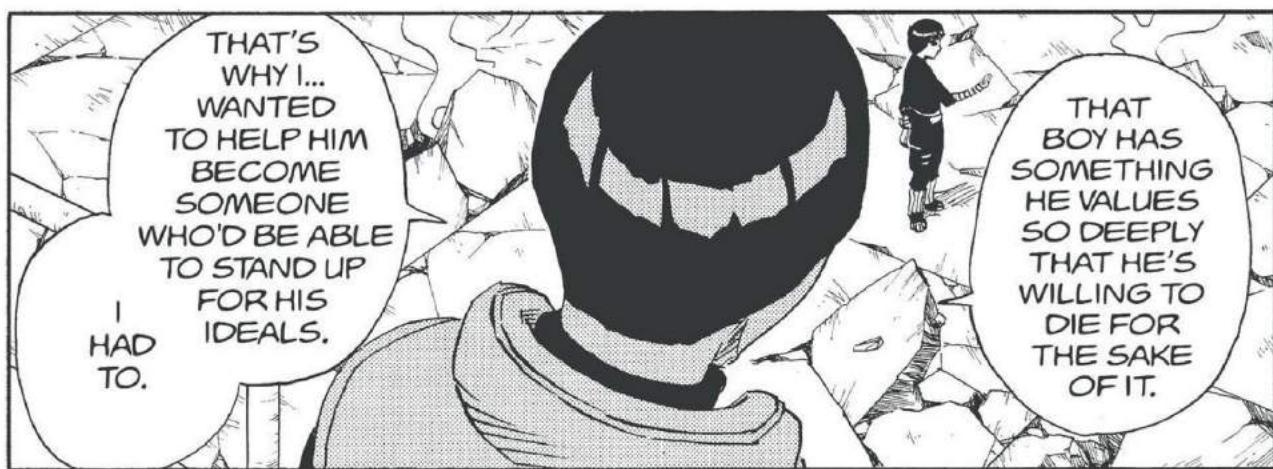
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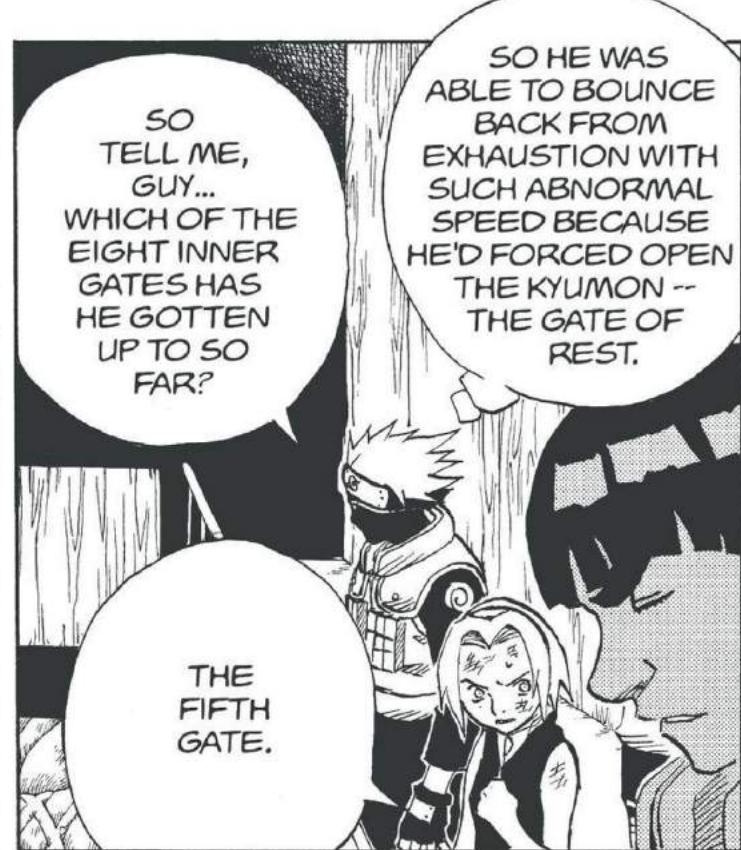
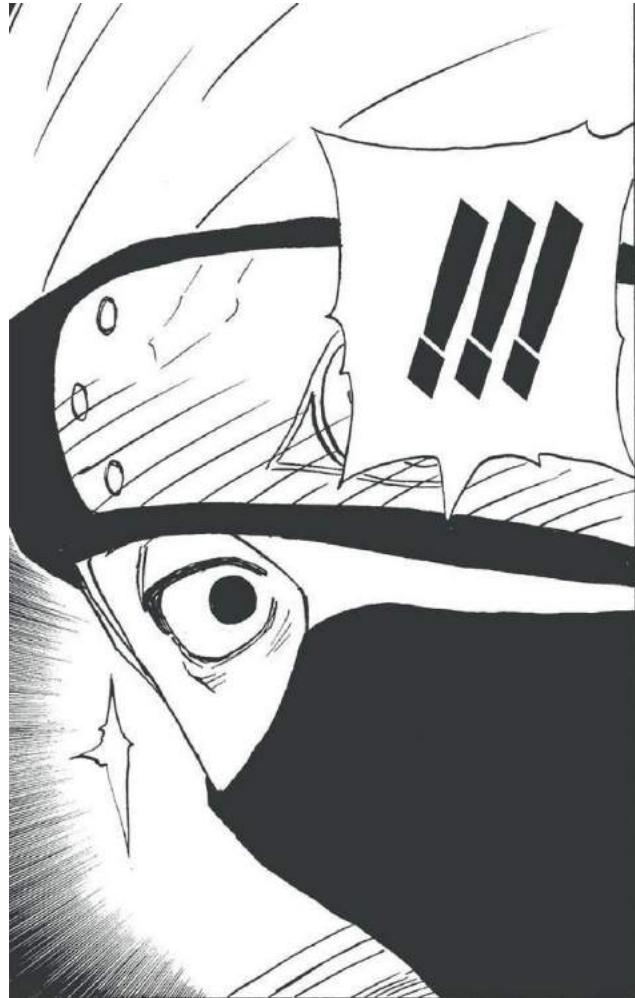








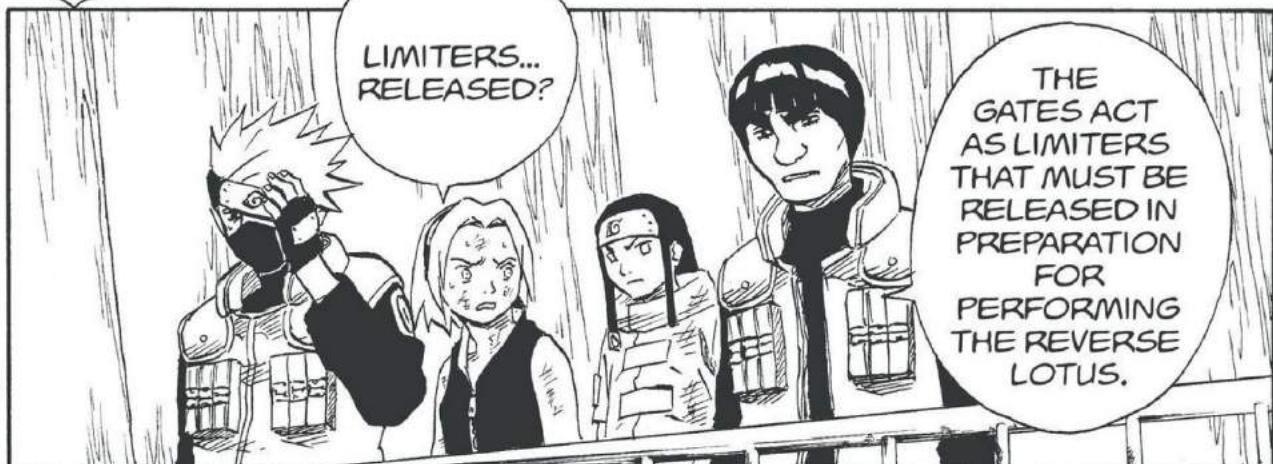


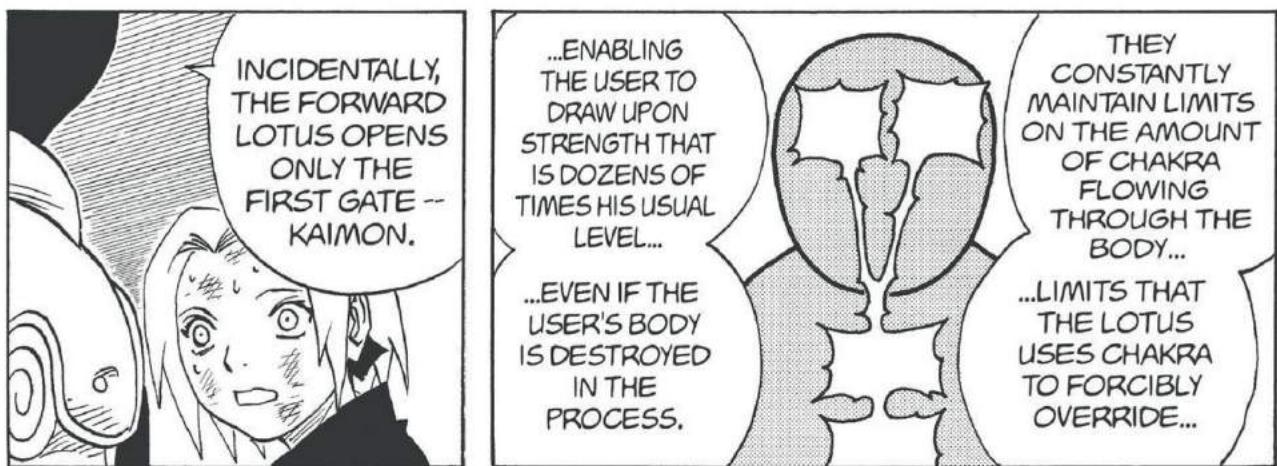
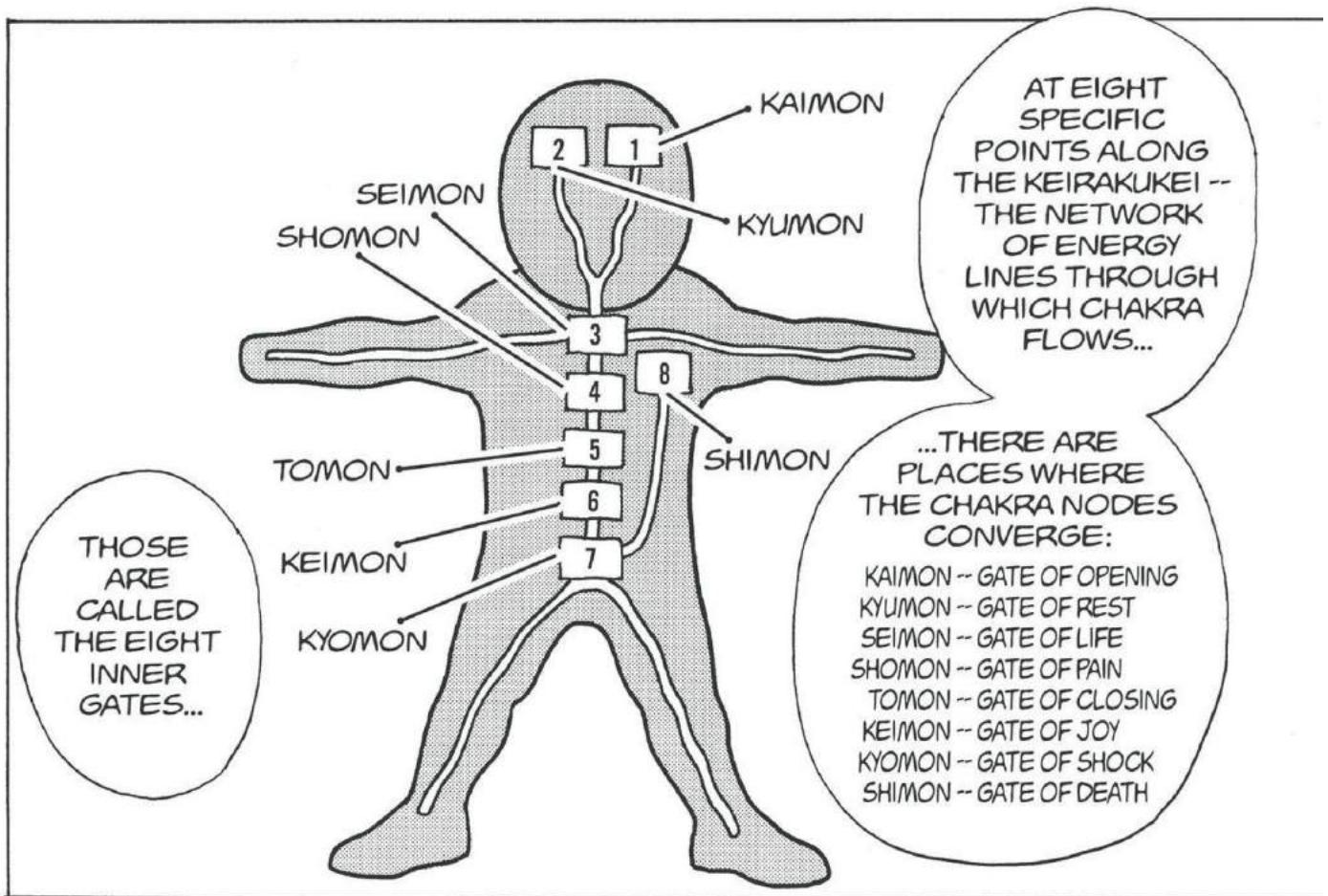
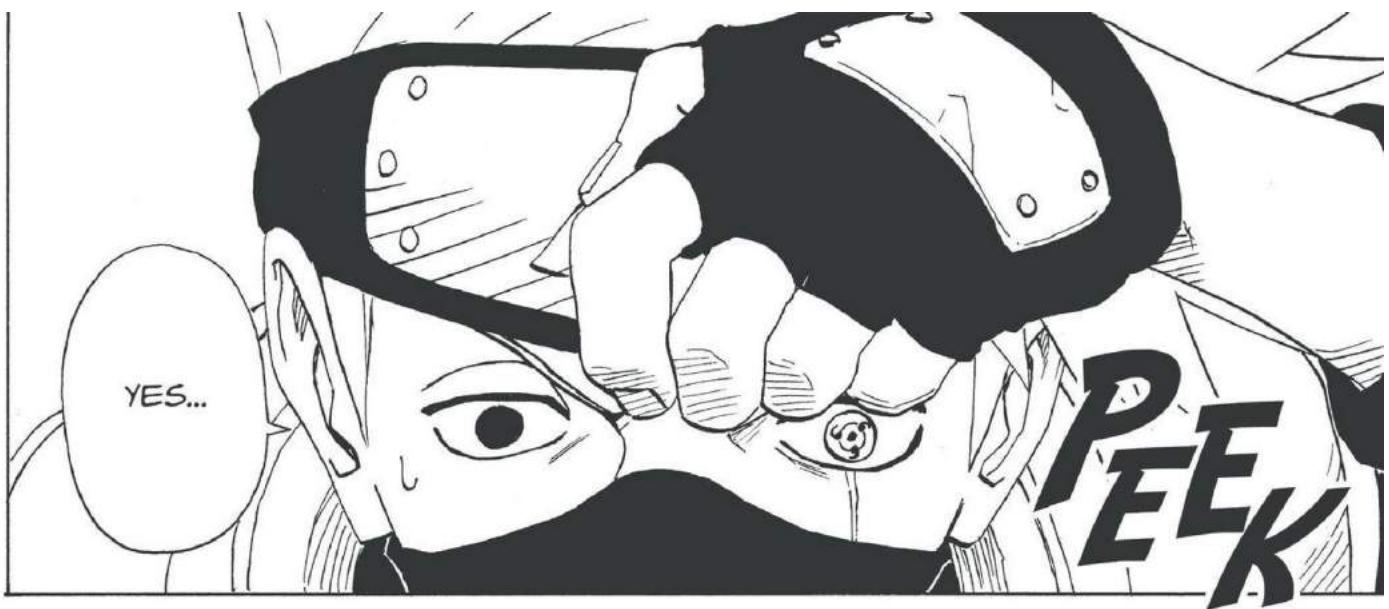


WH... WHAT ARE YOU BOTH TALKING ABOUT?!



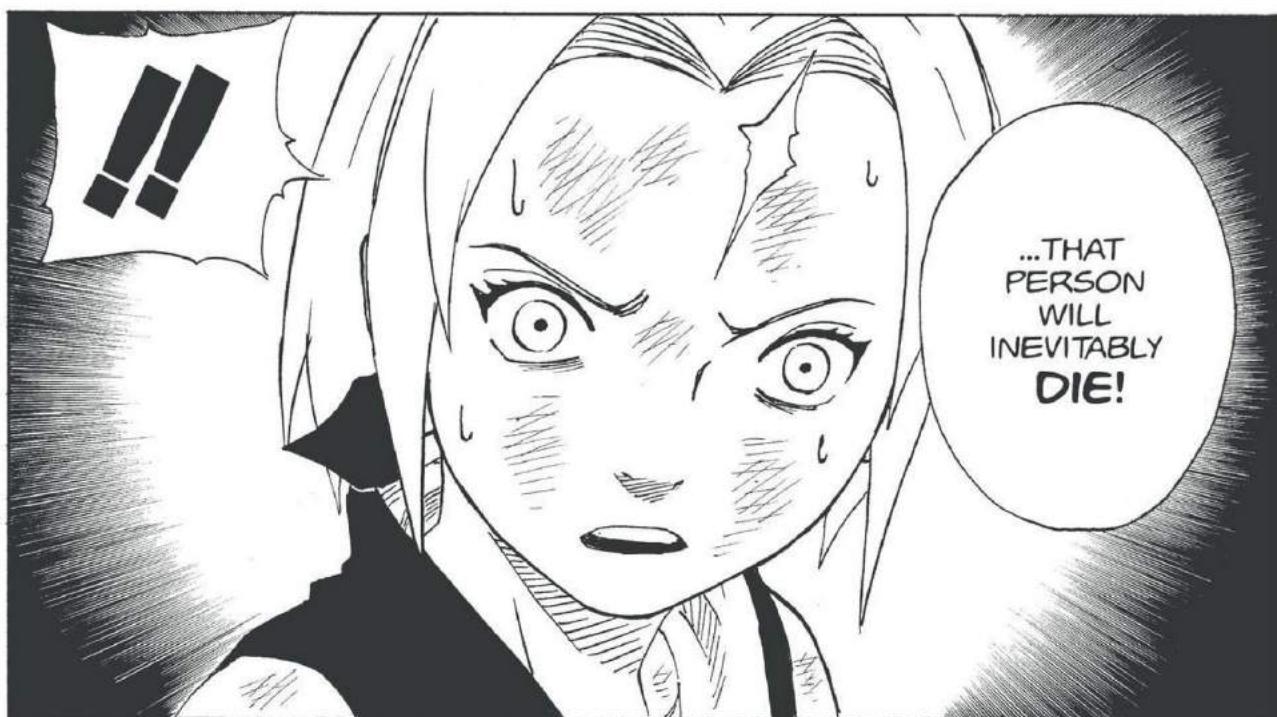
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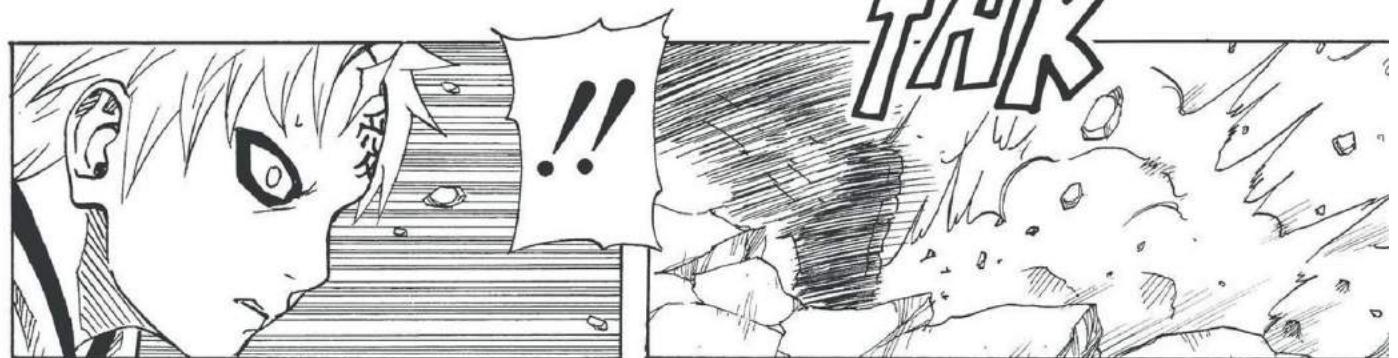


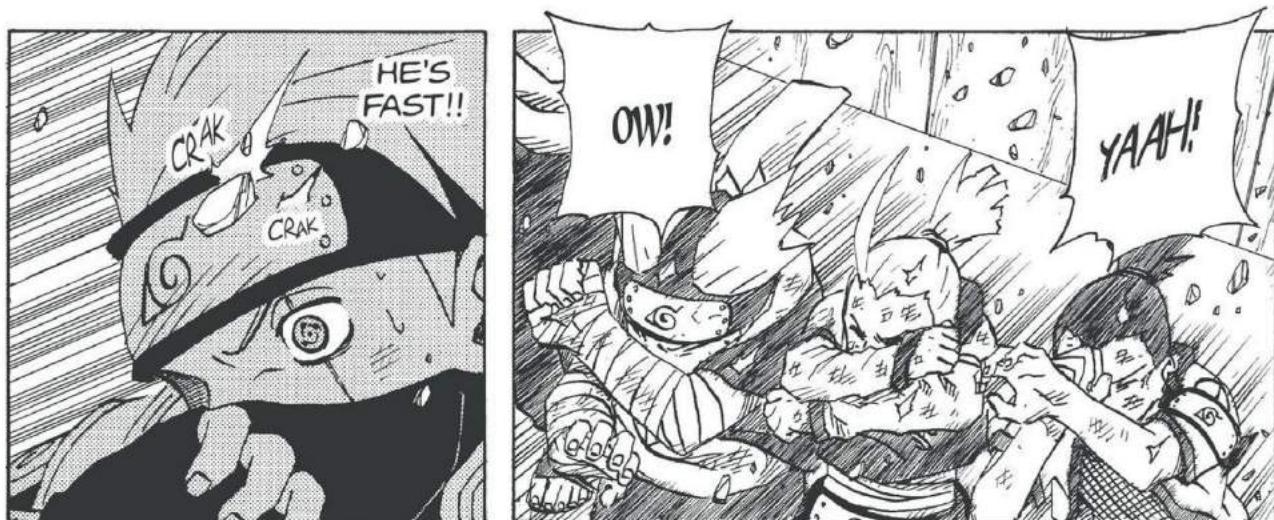
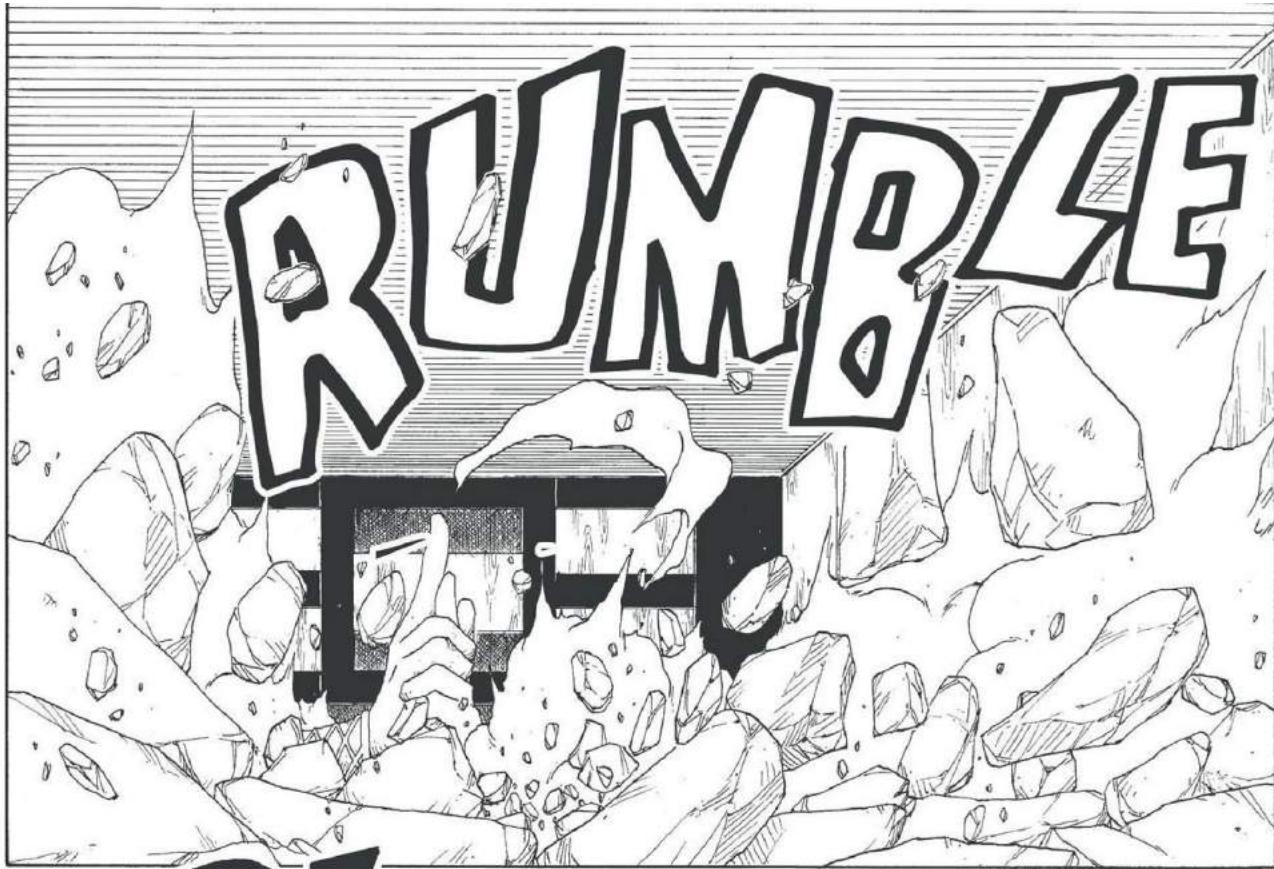
AND...
THE
REVERSE
LOTUS?
...!



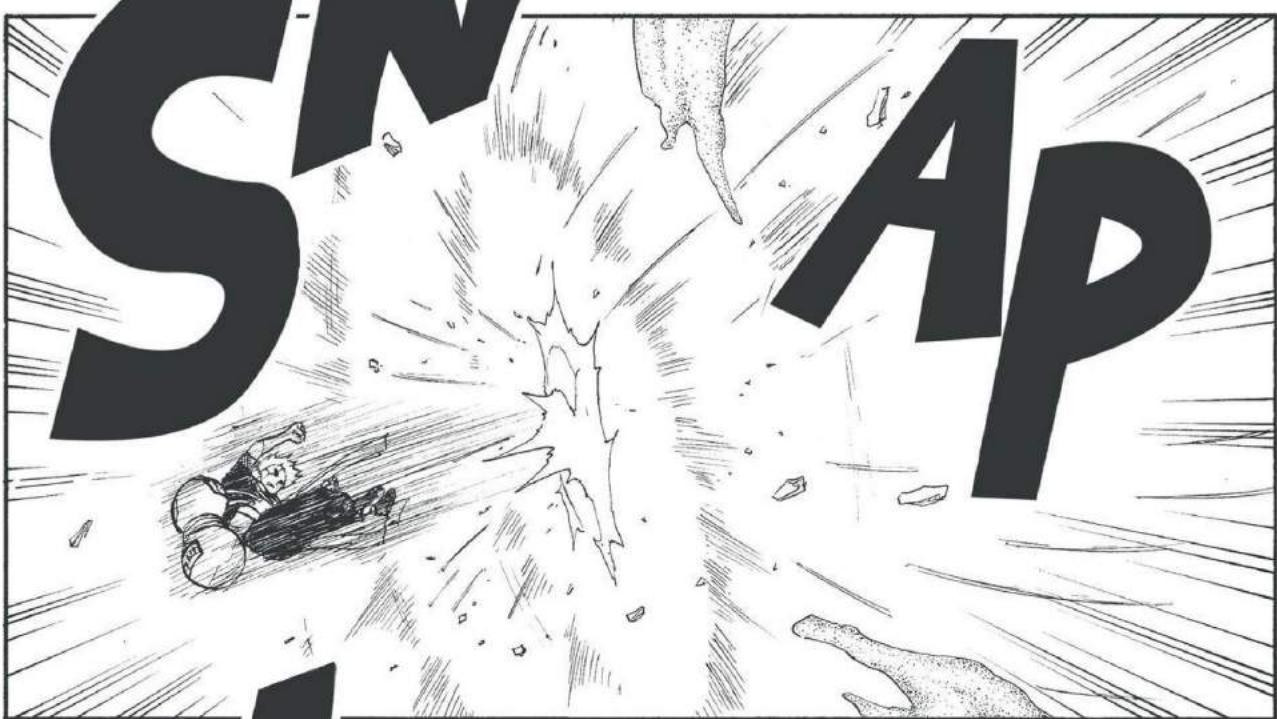


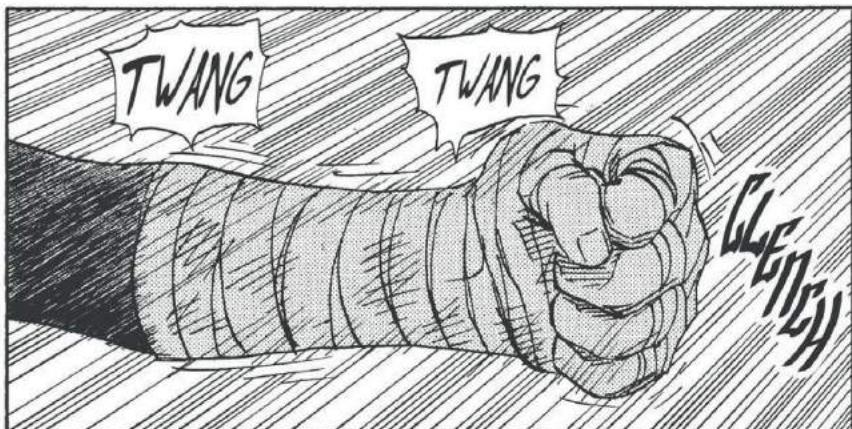
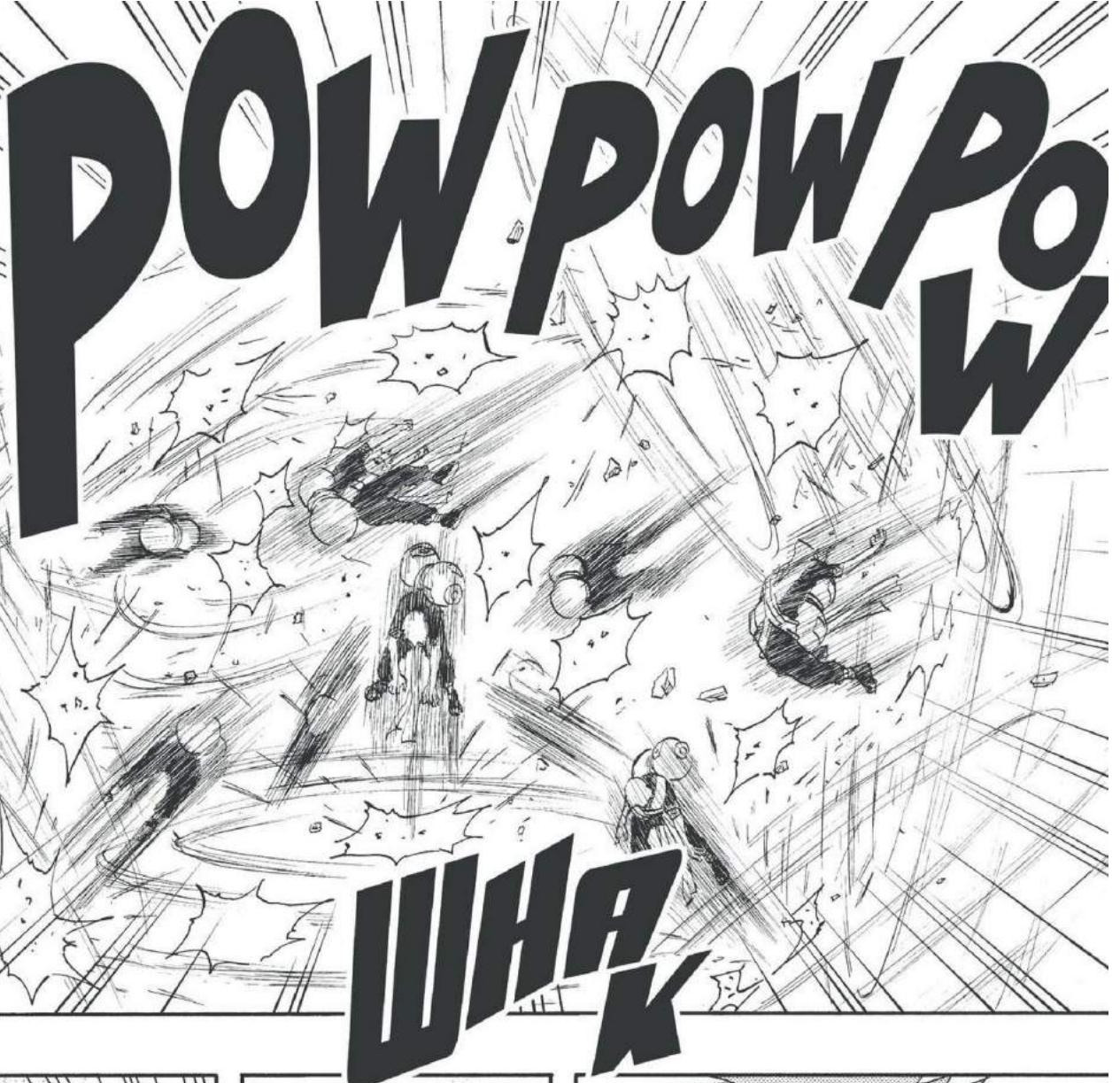


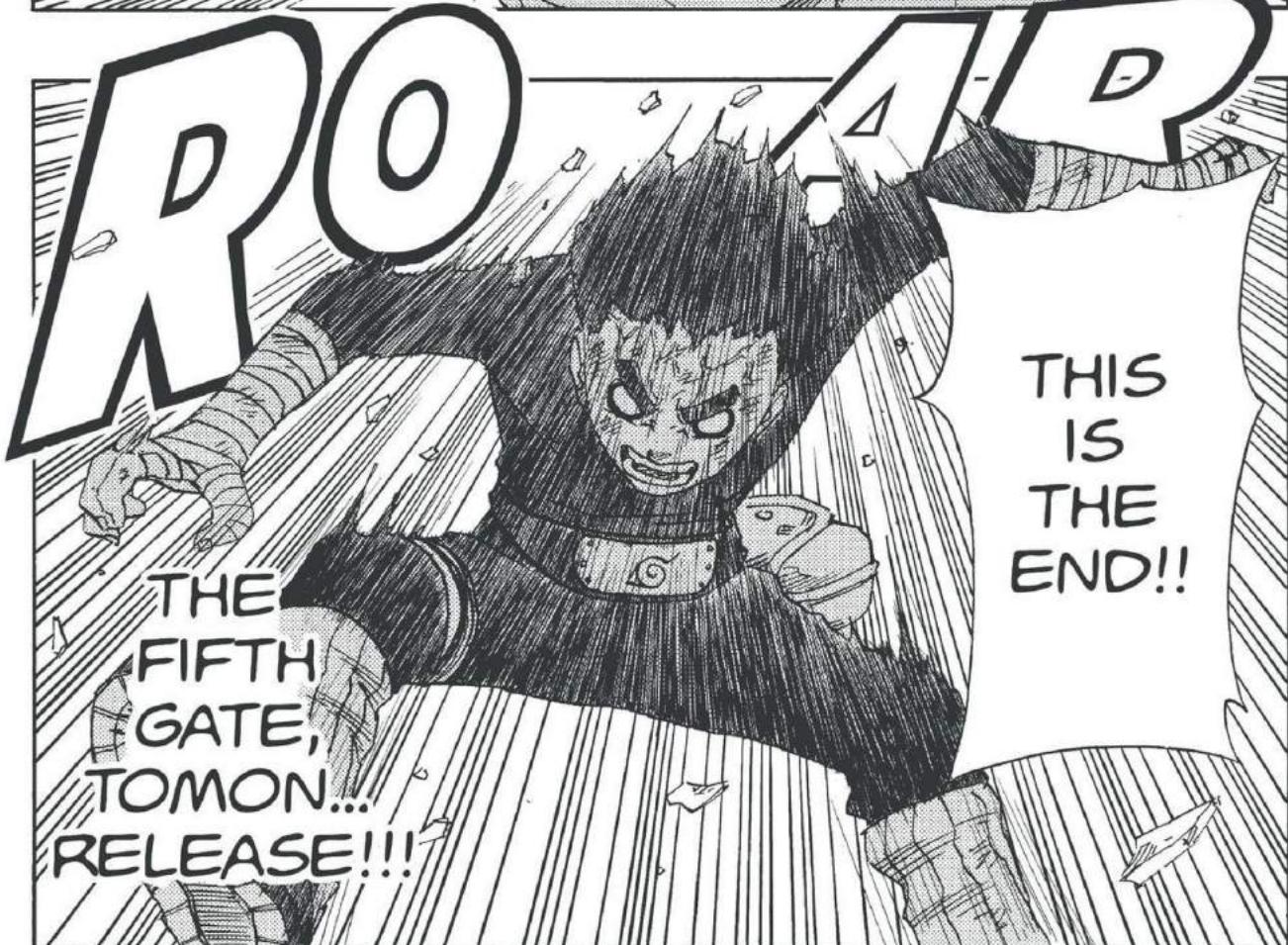












THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI MY PERSONAL HISTORY, PART 12

IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, I WAS SO FOCUSED ON BASEBALL THAT I ALMOST STOPPED DRAWING COMPLETELY.

THERE WERE GAMES EVERY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, AND PRACTICE EVERY WEEKDAY MORNING. EVEN MY AFTER-SCHOOL TIME WAS FILLED WITH HOURS OF CRAM SCHOOL, SO I WAS ALWAYS INCREDIBLY BUSY. IT WAS LIKE ANOTHER WORLD COMPARED TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AND ALL OF THE TIME I HAD ONCE SPENT DRAWING WAS GONE.

ONE DAY, JUST WHEN I WAS STARTING TO THINK, "MAYBE I'VE OUTGROWN THE URGE TO BE DRAWING ALL THE TIME," I HAD A SUDDEN AND INCREDIBLE REVELATION. IT WAS SO AMAZING THAT I STILL LOOK BACK ON THAT MOMENT AS A HUGE TURNING POINT. THE AMAZING MOMENT OCCURRED WHEN I SAW A MOVIE POSTER.

I WAS ON MY WAY HOME ONE DAY WHEN I HAPPENED TO GLANCE AT A POSTER FOR OTOMO KATSUHIRO'S *AKIRA*.

IN AN INSTANT, THE SIGHT OF IT HAD AN IMPACT ON ME SO POWERFUL THAT EVEN NOW IT'S HARD TO DESCRIBE. I STOOD STARING AT IT FOR OVER AN HOUR. THE POSTER FEATURED AN OVERHEAD SHOT OF THE MAIN CHARACTER, KANEDA, WALKING TOWARDS A MOTORCYCLE. THE COMPOSITION OF IT WAS INCREDIBLY COMPLEX. "HOW DID THIS GUY DRAW ANYTHING SO COMPLICATED THAT WELL?" "I'VE NEVER KNOWN ANYONE WHO COULD HAVE MADE THAT COMPOSITION WORK..."

DESPITE THE TRICKY ANGLES OF THE PERSPECTIVE, THE BIKE AND KANEDA WERE BOTH DRAWN PERFECTLY, WITH ALL THE SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS CORRECT. THE SENSE THAT KANEDA WAS ACTUALLY STANDING SOLIDLY ON THE GROUND WAS CONVEYED IN A WAY THAT SEEMED TOTALLY REAL AND COOL. THE BIKE HAD AN AMAZING DESIGN, AND THERE WERE CRACKS IN THE GROUND AND PEBBLES SCATTERED ABOUT, SEEMINGLY AT RANDOM. THAT POSTER SEEMED LIKE THE COOLEST, MOST ORIGINAL THING I HAD EVER SEEN AND IT REKINDLED THE FLAME OF MY ARTISTIC PASSION. EVER SINCE THAT DAY, I'VE KEPT DRAWING WITH THE HOPE THAT SOMEDAY I CAN APPROACH THE STANDARD SET BY THAT PICTURE.