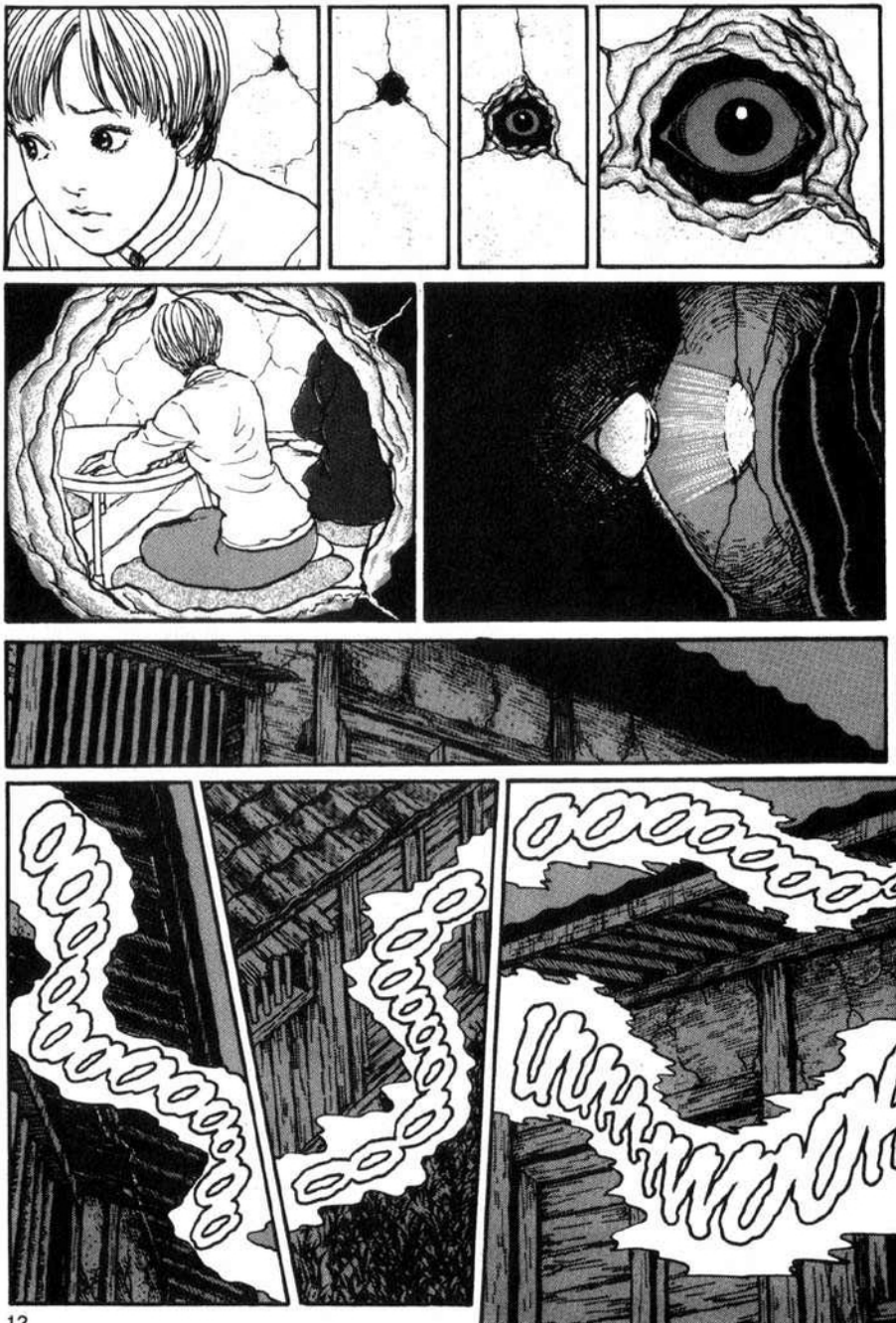
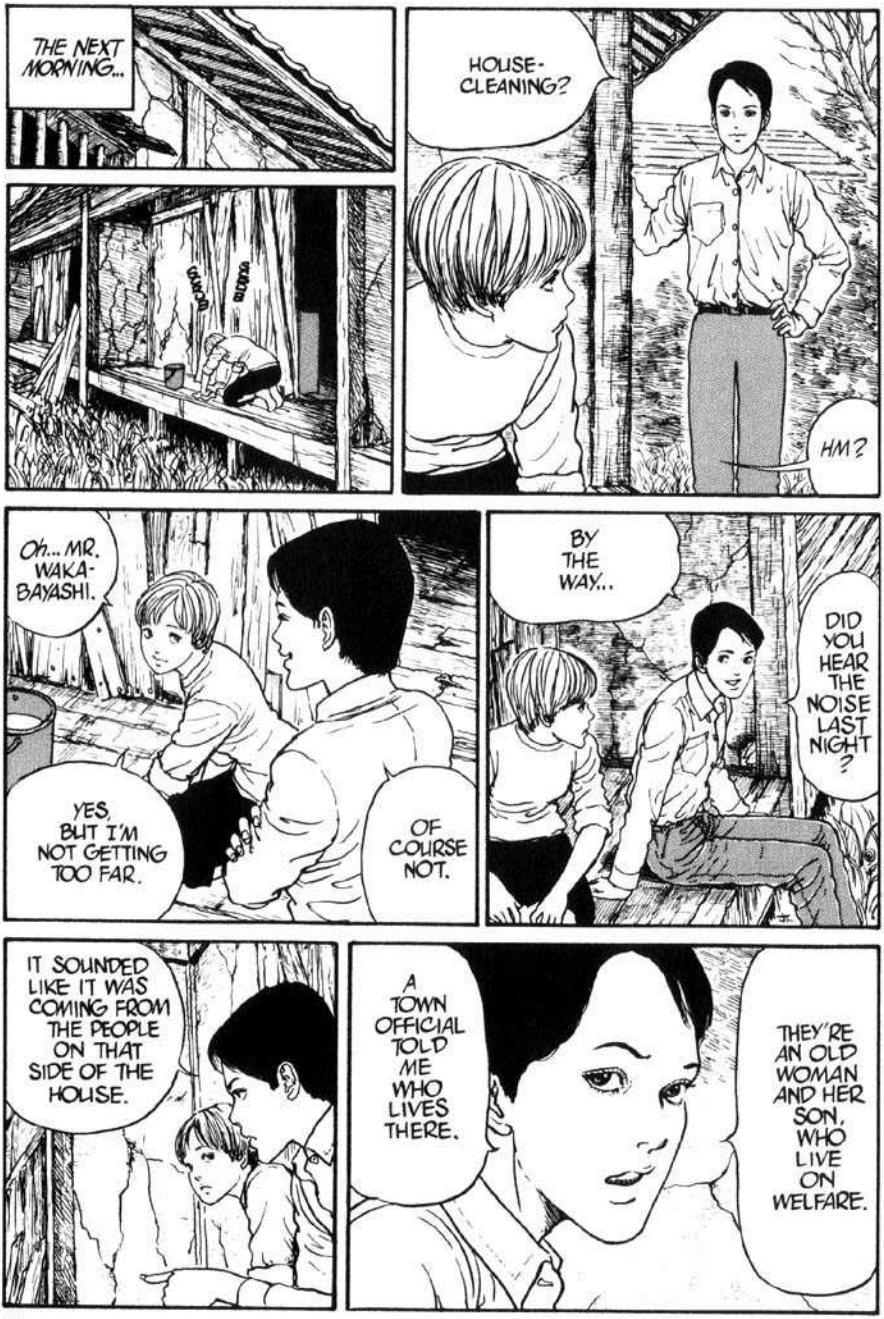
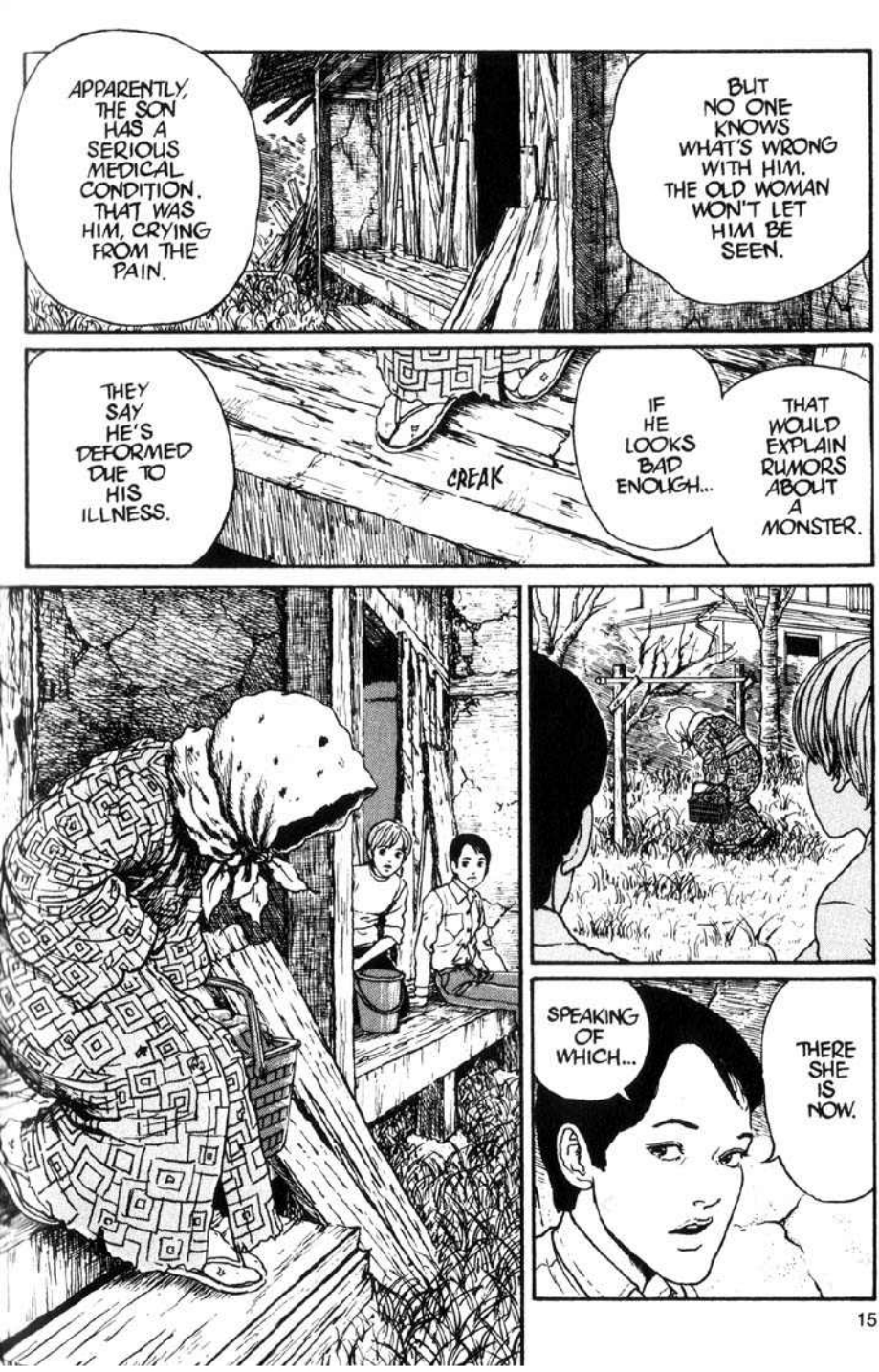
MOM ...
I THINK THE MONSTERS LIVE NEXT DOOR!
DON'T TALK SUCH NON-SENSE!
BUT IT'S SCARY!
QUIET! THEY'LL HEAR YOU!!
Ouch... WHAT'S THIS?
LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF WART. I WONDER WHEN I GOT IT.
CAN I SEE?
HERE.
SEE IT?

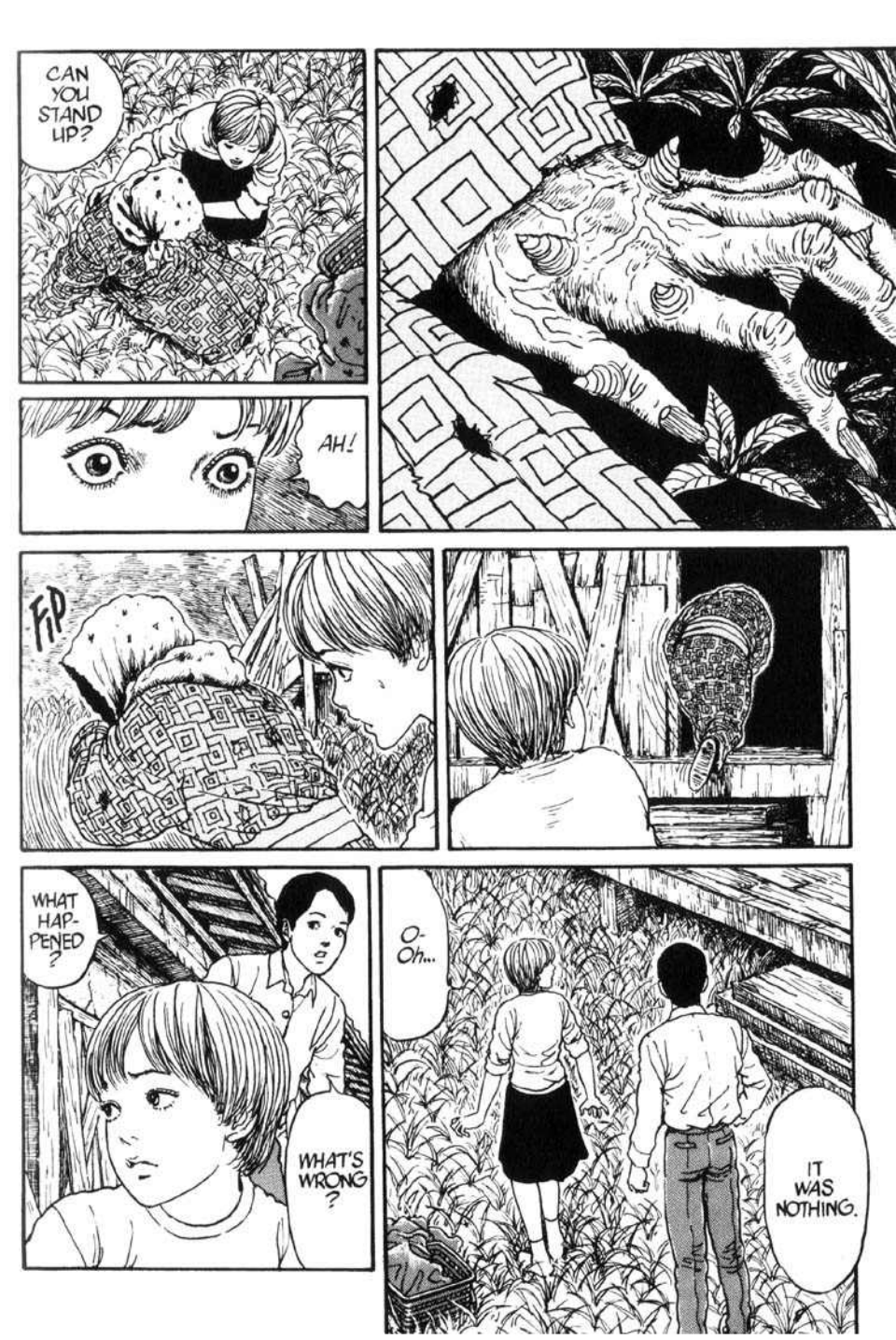


UUUUOOOOHHHH
OOHHH
OOHHH
MOM... WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
HM?
IT SOUNDS LIKE SOME ANIMAL HOWLING...
IT'S THE MONSTER!
OHH
IT'S GOT TO BE!
LISTEN! IT'S COMING FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL!
FROM THE ROOM WHERE THE WEIRD FAMILY LIVES!
UUUUOOHHHH

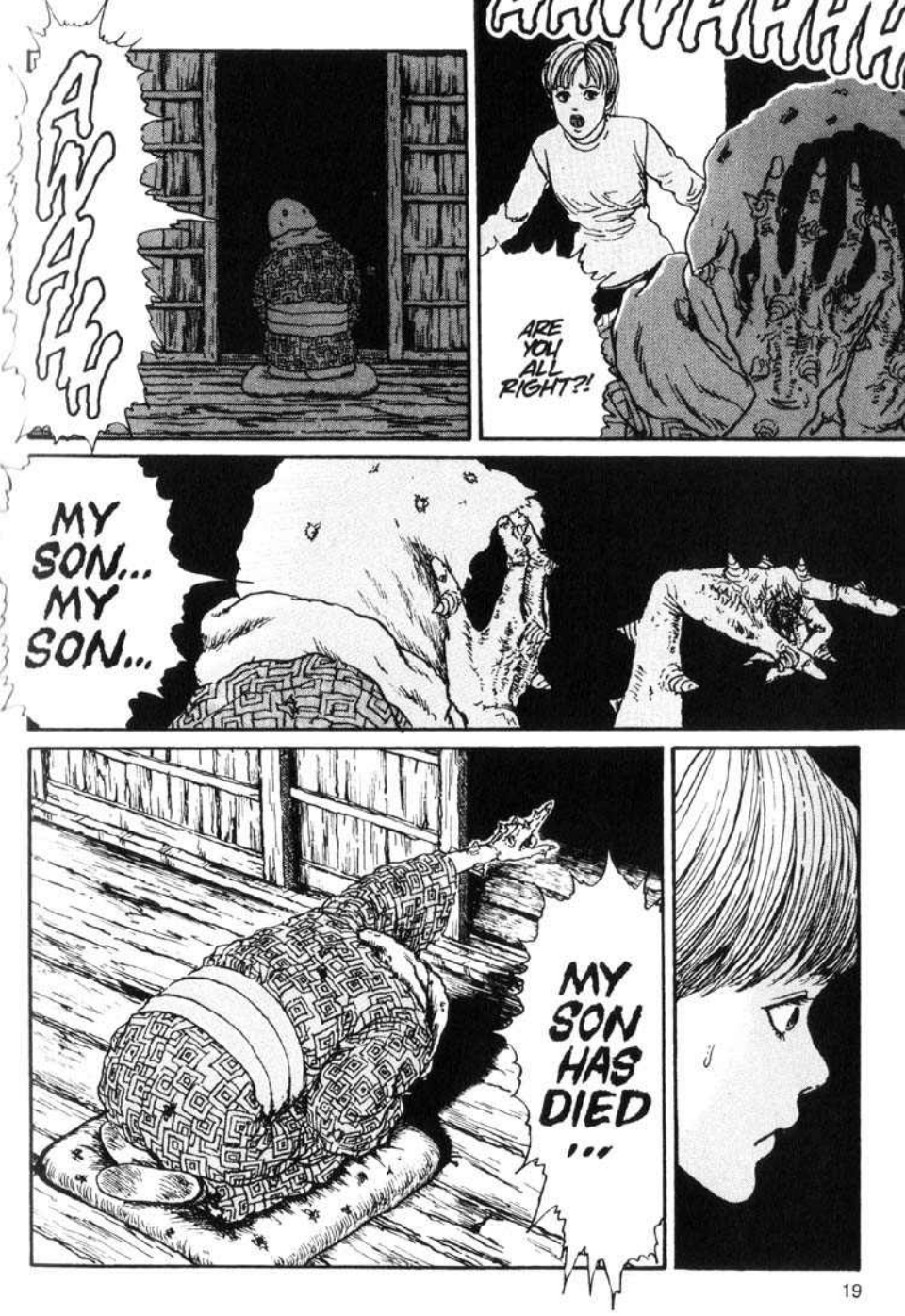

THE NEXT MORNING...
GUCCHI
GUCCHI
HOUSE-CLEANING?
HM?
Oh... MR. WAKA-BAYASHI.
YES, BUT I'M NOT GETTING TOO FAR.
OF COURSE NOT.
BY THE WAY...
DID YOU HEAR THE NOISE LAST NIGHT?
IT SOUNDED LIKE IT WAS COMING FROM THE PEOPLE ON THAT SIDE OF THE HOUSE.
A TOWN OFFICIAL TOLD ME WHO LIVES THERE.
THEY'RE AN 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.
SPEAKING OF WHICH...
THERE SHE IS NOW.

TREMBLE
TREMBLE
SLAMP
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 ...
AWAHH
AWAHH!
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!
AWAHH!
EXCUSE ME!
AWAHH!

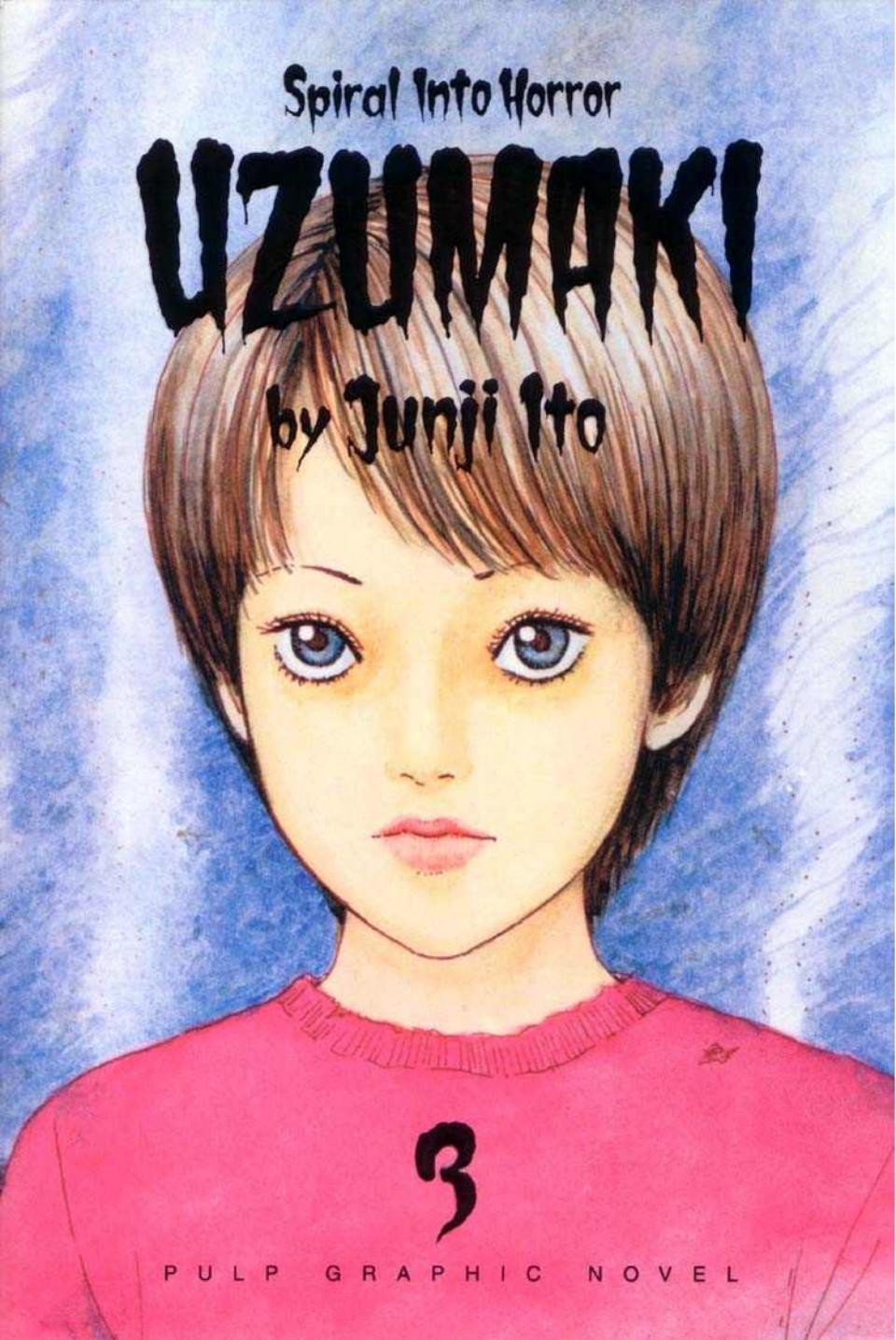

AHAH
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
MY SON... MY SON...
MY SON HAS DIED ...

HE'S DIED ...
AHH
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.

Spiral Into Horror

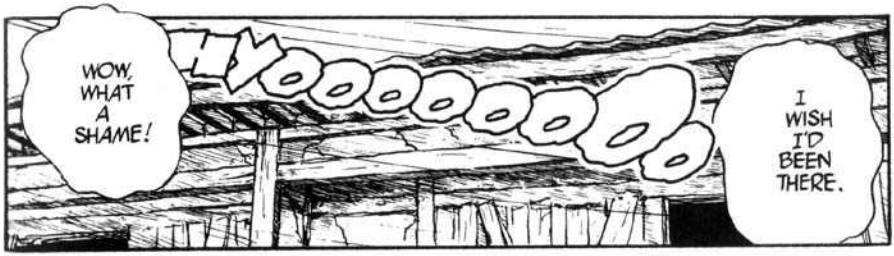
UZUMAKI

by Junji Ito



3

PULP GRAPHIC NOVEL


WOW, WHAT A SHAME!
HYOOOOOOOOOO
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?

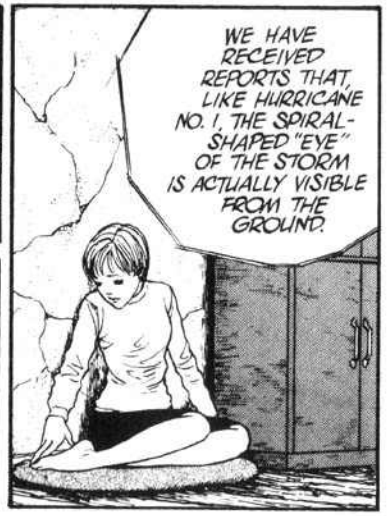
I HAVE NOTHING TO TELL YOU.
BUT HE WASN'T NORMAL, WAS HE?

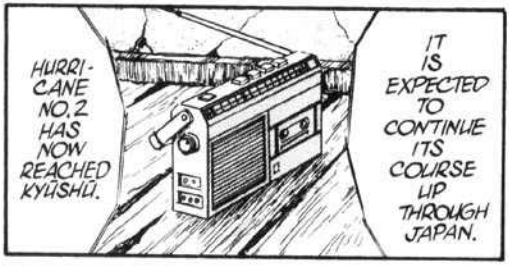
COME ON. I PROMISE NOT TO TELL ANYONE.

I'M SORRY, I'D RATHER NOT.

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

HOOOOOO OOO


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


HURRI-CANE NO. 2 HAS NOW REACHED KYŪSHŪ.
IT IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE ITS COURSE UP THROUGH JAPAN.

I'VE GOT SOME KIND OF WARTS ON MY FEET.
THERE'S LOTS OF THEM.

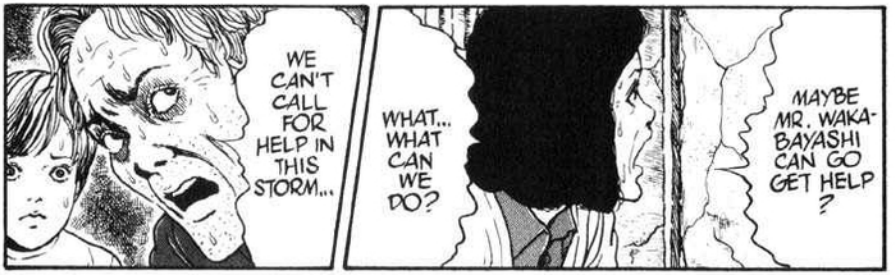
THEY'RE ON MY HANDS.
ME, TOO. THEY HURT!
BOTH OF YOU? I HAVE THEM, TOO.

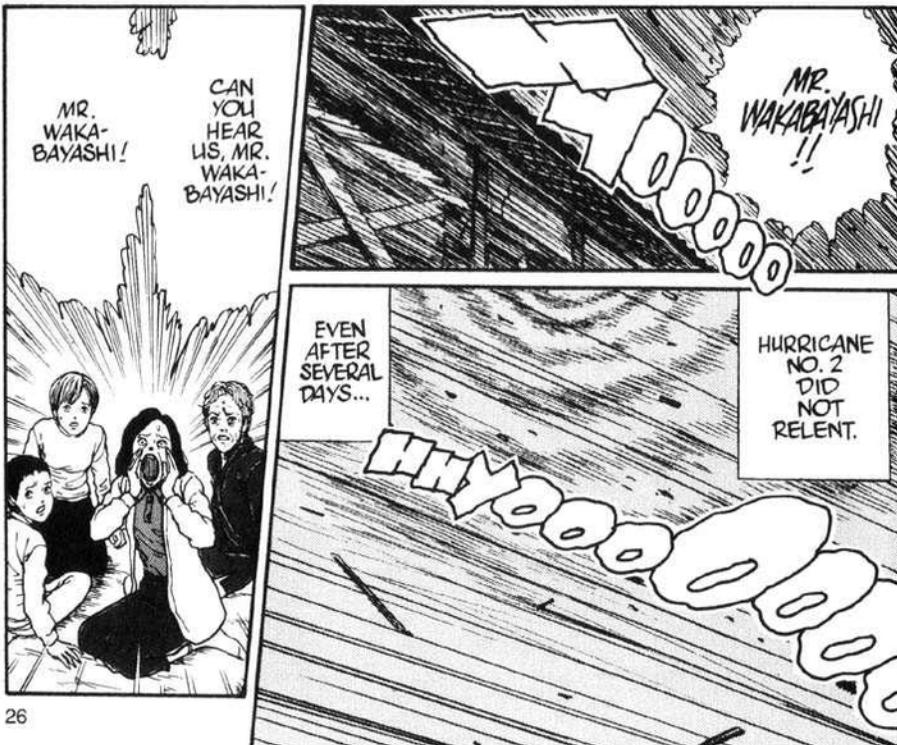
I'M HOME!
Oh, MY FEET!
THOSE GROWTHS HAVE SPREAD!
I'VE GOT THEM ALL OVER MY BODY!
Oh, NO...
HA HA HA...
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU EVER SINCE YOU MOVED IN HERE.
KIRIE, YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL AND HEADSTRONG ...I CAN'T KEEP MY EYES OFF YOU.
BUT I CAN ONLY SEE SO MUCH WITH THIS HOLE. I'LL HAVE TO MAKE A NEW ONE SOON.

MAYBE NEAR HER BED...
DAMN, WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY HAND ?!
?!
THE STORM'S RAGING.
IT HURTS!
AARG...

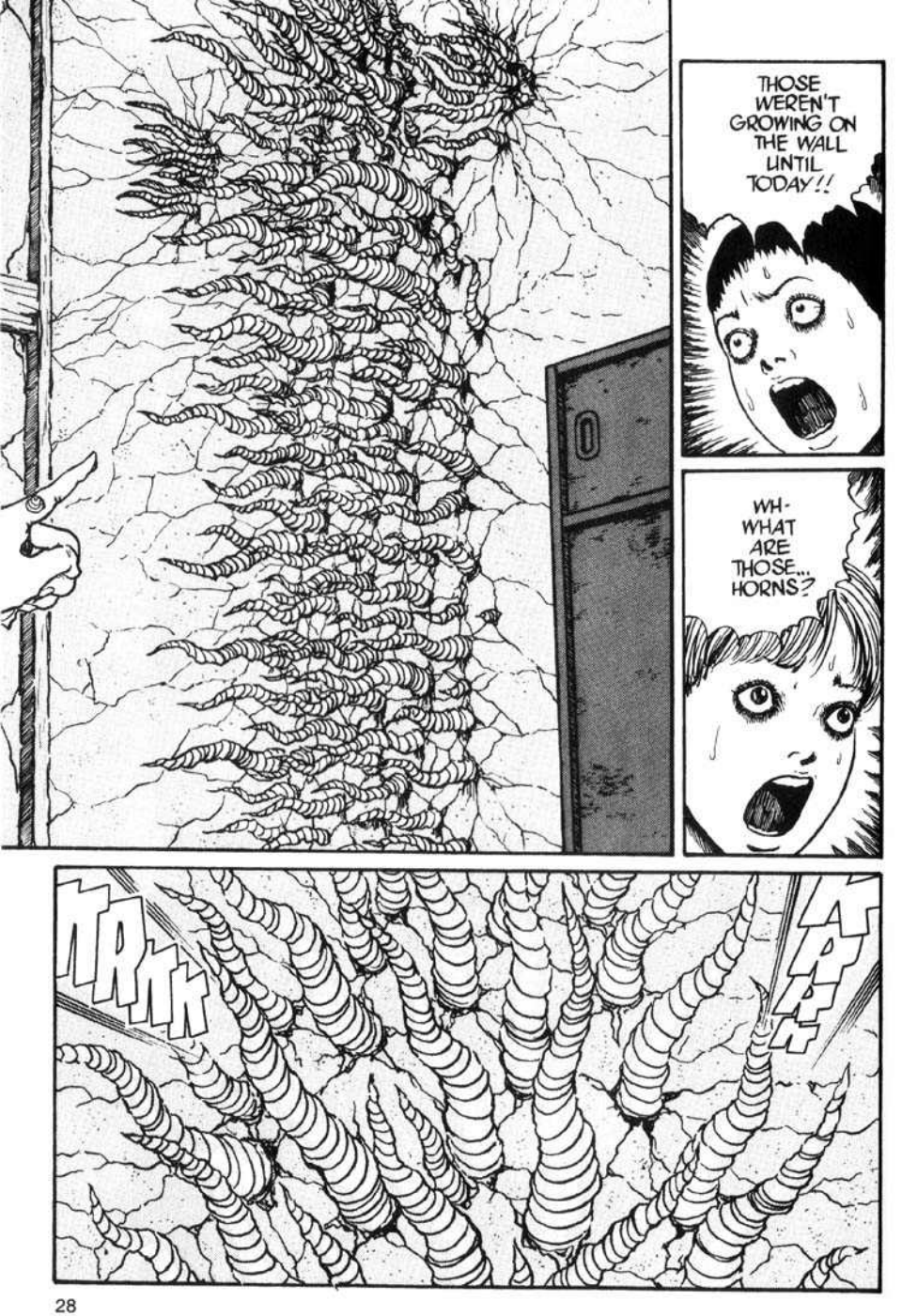
IT HURTS! IT HURTS!
W-W-WE CAN'T GO TO THE HOSPITAL, THOUGH, IN THIS STORM...
AHH! WHAT'S THIS?
THOSE THINGS ON MY FEET!
RATTRATTR
RAT
THESE... THESE...
THESE ARE THE SAME THINGS I SAW ON THAT OLD WOMAN AND HER SON!
THESE AREN'T WARTS!

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. WAKA-BAYASHI CAN GO GET HELP?

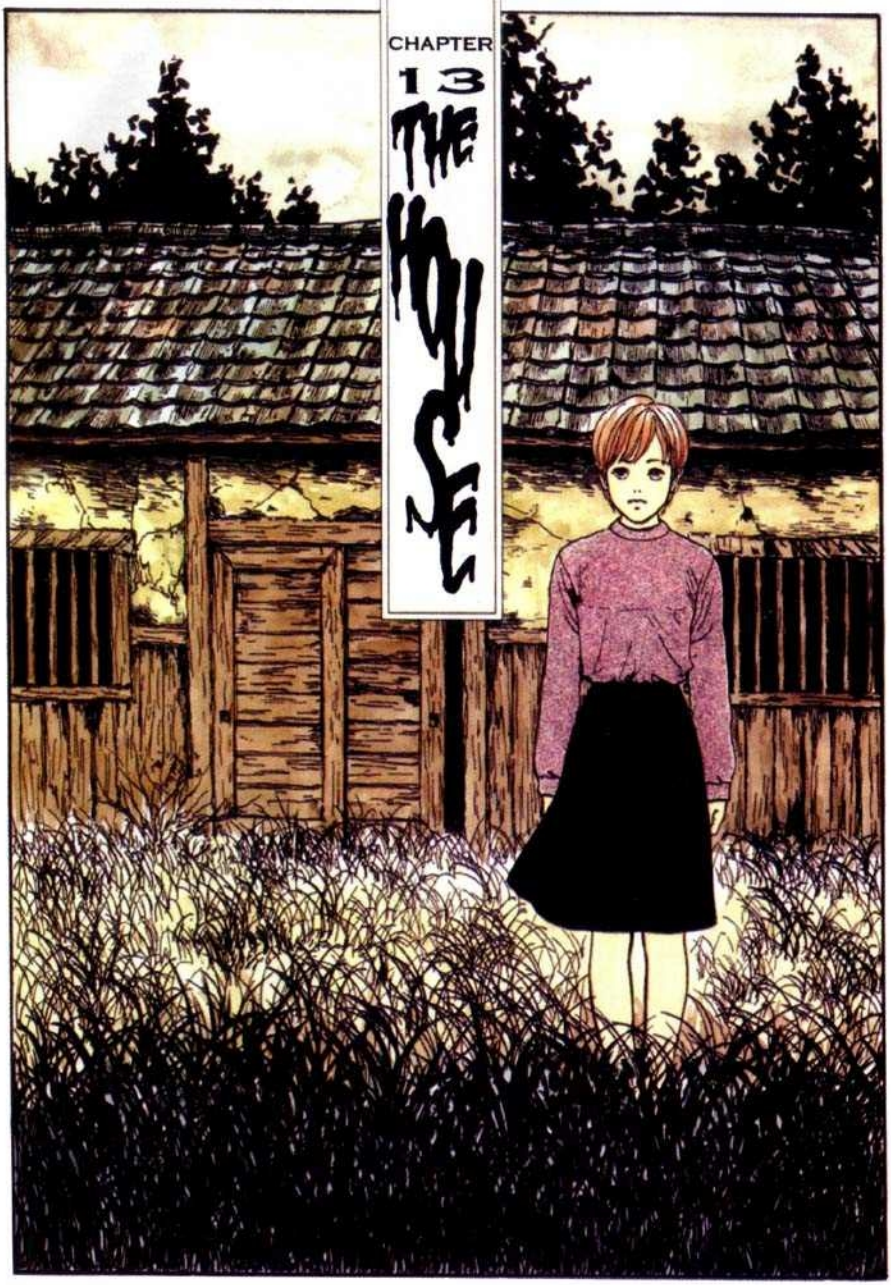

MR. WAKA-BAYASHI!
CAN YOU HEAR US, MR. WAKA-BAYASHI!
MR. WAKABAYASHI!!
EVEN AFTER SEVERAL DAYS...
HURRICANE NO. 2 DID NOT RELENT.

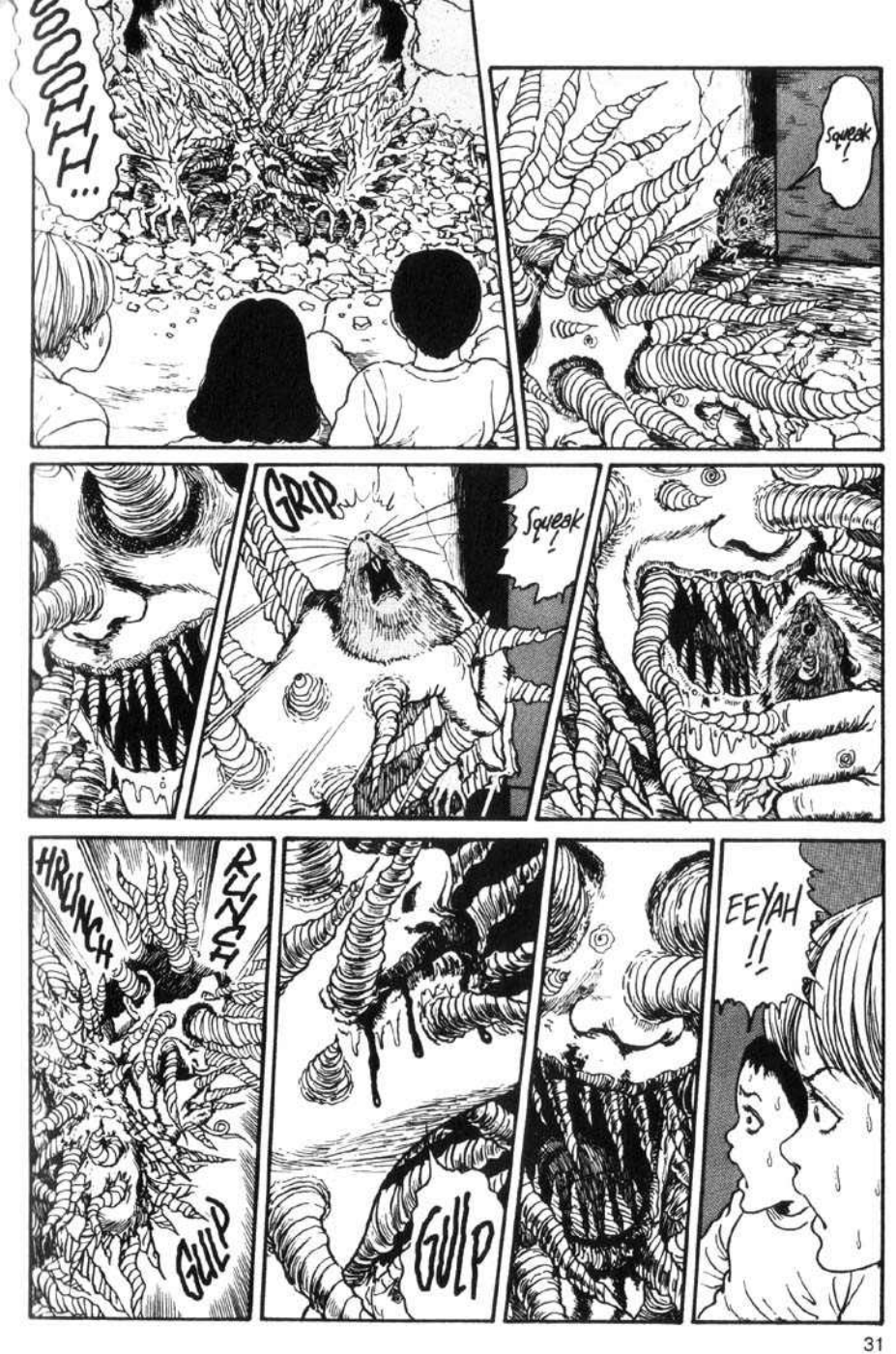
EEEEEEEE
OOOH... OOOH...
IT HURTS!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, DEAR?
WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING! HIS LIFE'S IN DANGER!
MOM...
I THINK IT'S BECAUSE OF THIS HOUSE!
WHAT?!
THE VIRUS, OR WHATEVER IT IS, MIGHT BE ALL OVER THE FLOORS AND WALLS OF THIS ROW HOUSE.
WE HAVE TO GO, EVEN IF IT'S NOT SAFE OUTSIDE!
I... I'M GOING TO CALL FOR HELP!
S-STOP ...KIRIE!
YOU WON'T MAKE IT!
THE WIND'S TOO STRONG!
LOOK!
WHAT'S THAT?

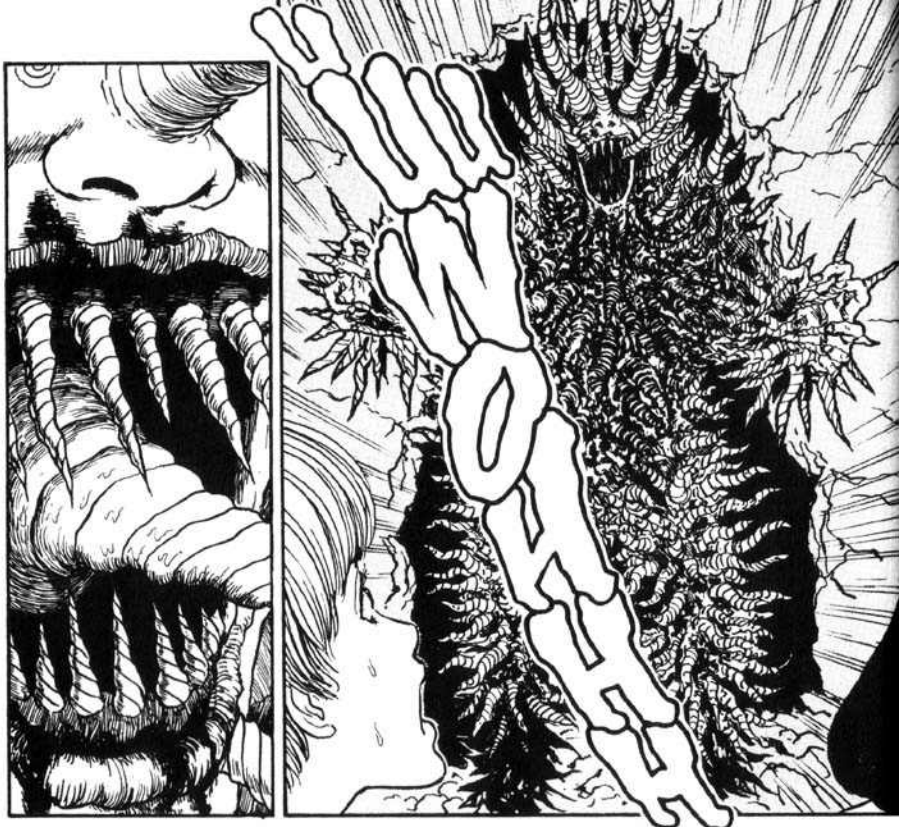

THOSE WEREN'T GROWING ON THE WALL UNTIL TODAY!!
WH-WHAT ARE THOSE... HORNS?
TRRK
TRRK

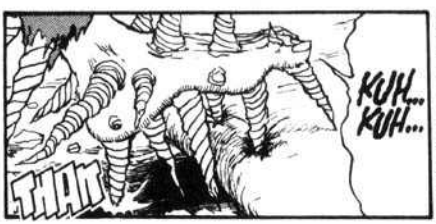
MARK
BRK
BRK
BRK
RRUMBLE
SHAUSH
EEEYA

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


CHAPTER
13
THE HOUSE


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


HUNOHH!

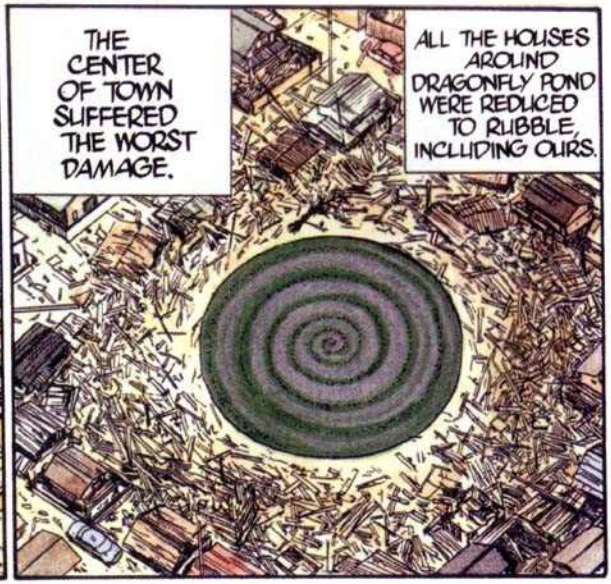

KUH... KUH...
THAM

AAAH!

KUH... KIRIE ...
KI... KIRIE ...
KIRIE... GET OUT!
GET OUT! RUN!
SHF
AIEE!

EEYAA!
FWOOM
SH
SLIP
UKK...
TUB
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.

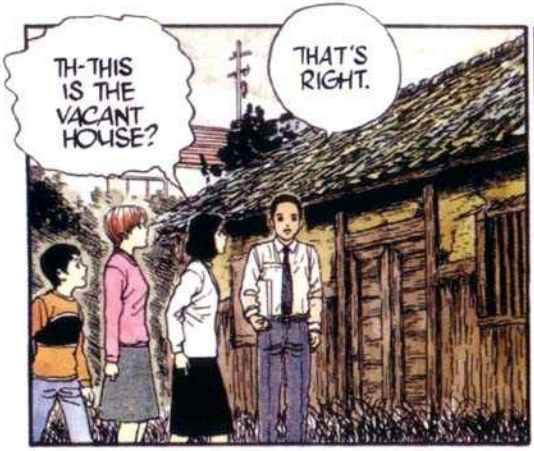
SEVERAL DAYS AGO, KURŌZU-CHO WAS DEVASTATED BY A HURRICANE.


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.

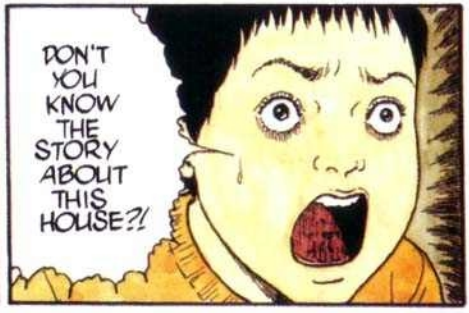
MY FAMILY MIRACULOUSLY SURVIVED ...
BUT WE HAD TO FIND ANOTHER PLACE TO LIVE.

IT'S TERRIBLE YOU LOST YOUR HOUSE IN THAT STORM.
BUT YOU'RE NOT ALONE. A LOT OF PEOPLE LOST THEIR HOMES.
I GUESS THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT, WITH ALL THE PEOPLE MOVING OUT OF TOWN WE HAVE PLENTY OF VACANCIES.
THAT'S GOOD, ISN'T IT?
MM-HMM.
HERE WE ARE.
...
WHAT...

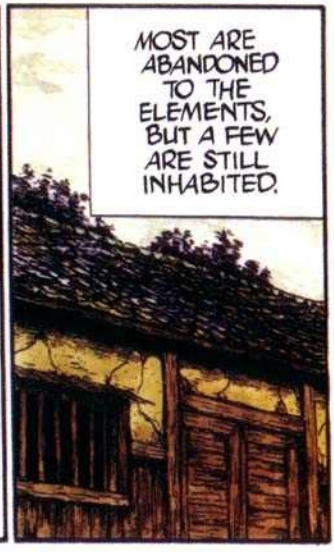

TH-THIS IS THE VACANT HOUSE?
THAT'S RIGHT.

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

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.

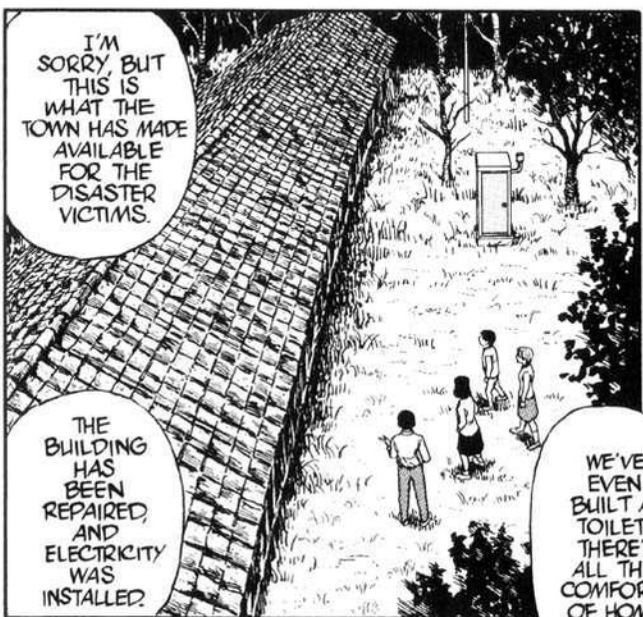

MOST ARE ABANDONED TO THE ELEMENTS, BUT A FEW ARE STILL INHABITED.

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.

THERE'S THREE SEPARATE APARTMENTS... TWO ARE ALREADY OCCUPIED.
WE'VE EVEN BUILT A TOILET. THERE'S ALL THE COMFORTS OF HOME.

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.
SCR SCR SCR SCR SCR
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.

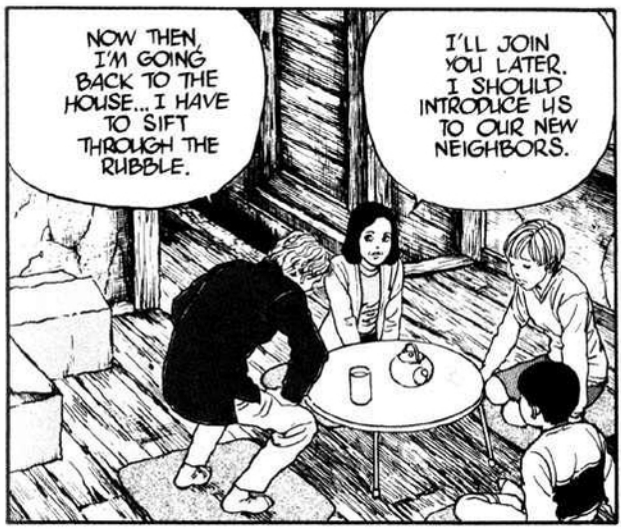
DAD, IF THIS PLACE DIDN'T HAVE ELECTRICITY OR PLUMBING, THEN WHEN DO YOU THINK IT WAS BUILT?
I DON'T KNOW... I HEARD IT WAS BEFORE THE 19TH CENTURY.

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.

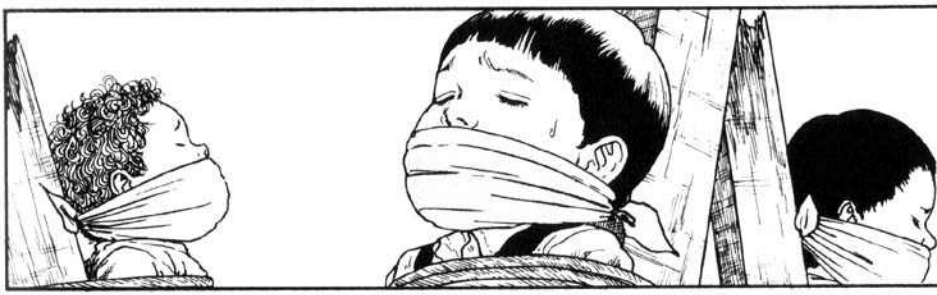
KNOCK KNOCK

KNOCK
KNOCK

...

RMB RMB RMB
RMB RMB RMB
WH-WHAT IS THIS LAKE?

RMB RMB RMB RMB



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

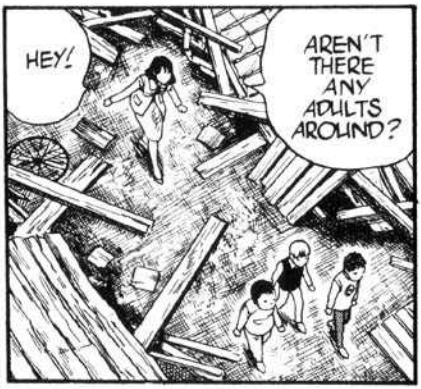
I'LL SET YOU FREE.
RMB RMB

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

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

...

WAIT!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?


HEY!
AREN'T THERE ANY ADULTS AROUND?

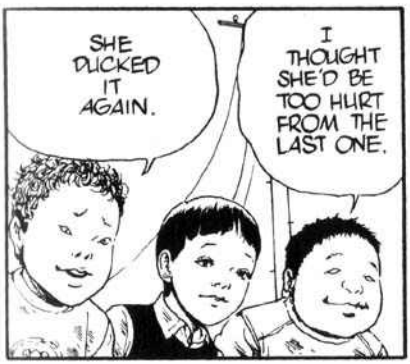
WAIT A MINUTE!

Heh Heh Heh Heh
FWOOOOOOOO
WHOOOOO
WHIRRRRRRR
RRRR

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

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.
HM?!

DON'T RUN OR IT'LL MAKE A TWISTER BEHIND US AND...
YEAH, YEAH.
SHE'S GETTING AWAY.
FOLLOW HER. FOLLOW HER SLOWLY...
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THEM?
FWOOOO


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!

WHIRRRRRRRRRRRR

...
EYAA!
HOW DID THAT HAPPEN?
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

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.

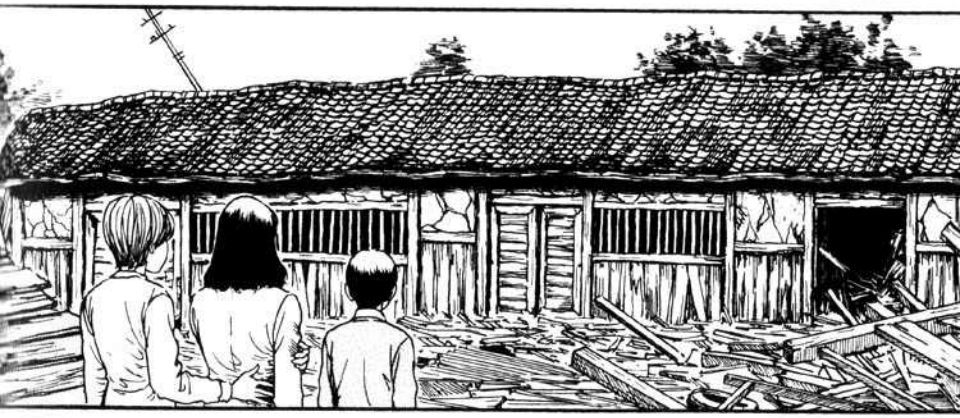
CHAPTER
14
BUTTERFLIES

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.

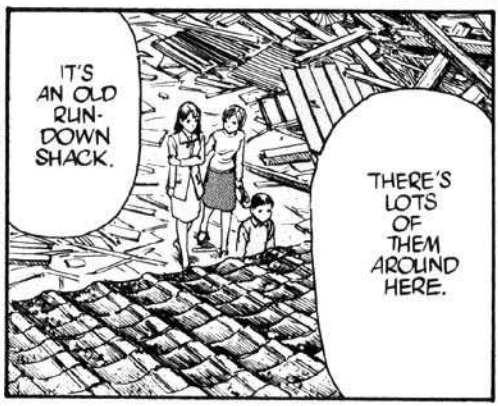
WE'RE ALMOST THERE.

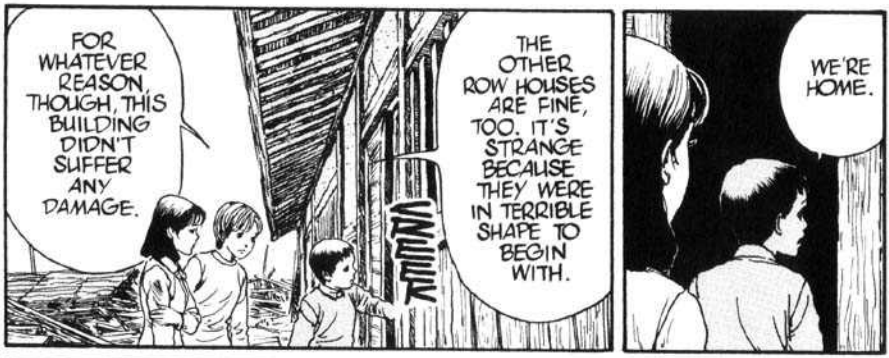
THIS IS LIKE THE "BUTTERFLY EFFECT"...
Hm?

"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.



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.

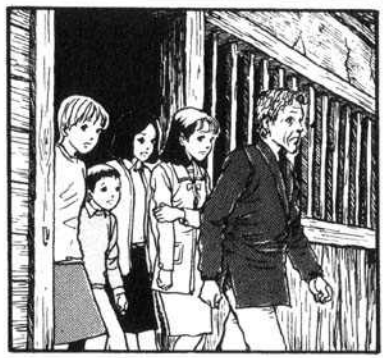
EVEN IF YOU CAME FROM OUTSIDE YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO LEAVE THIS TOWN.

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.

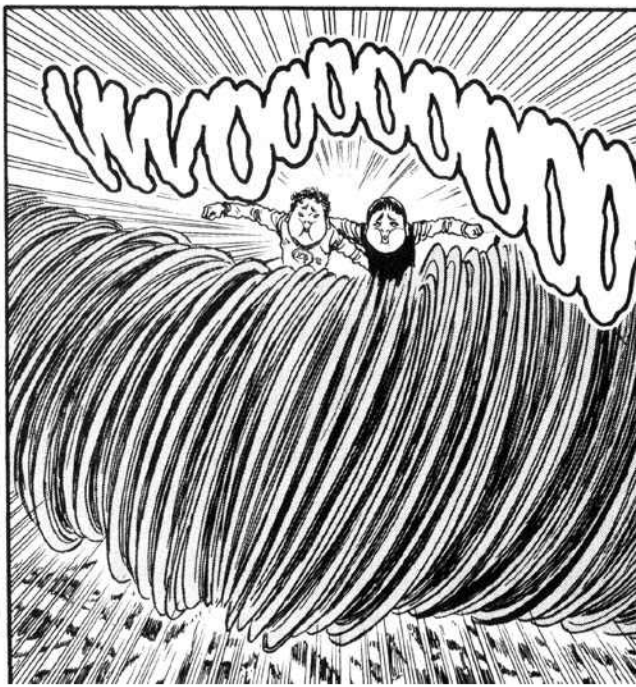
DAMN BRATS! I THOUGHT WE TIED THEM UP!
THEY MUST HAVE GOTTEN FREE SOME-HOW!

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!

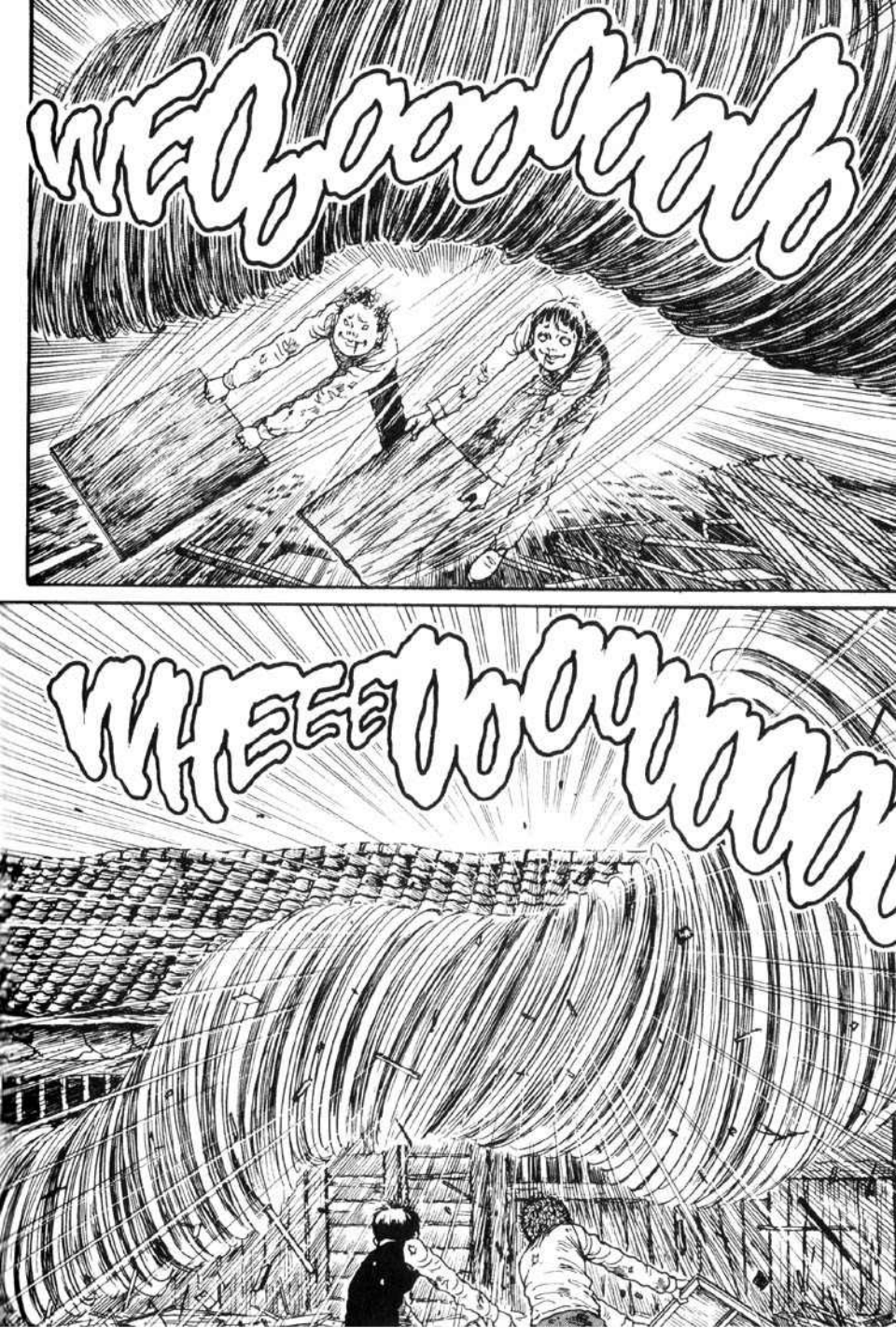

WWOOOOOOOOOO

AAH!

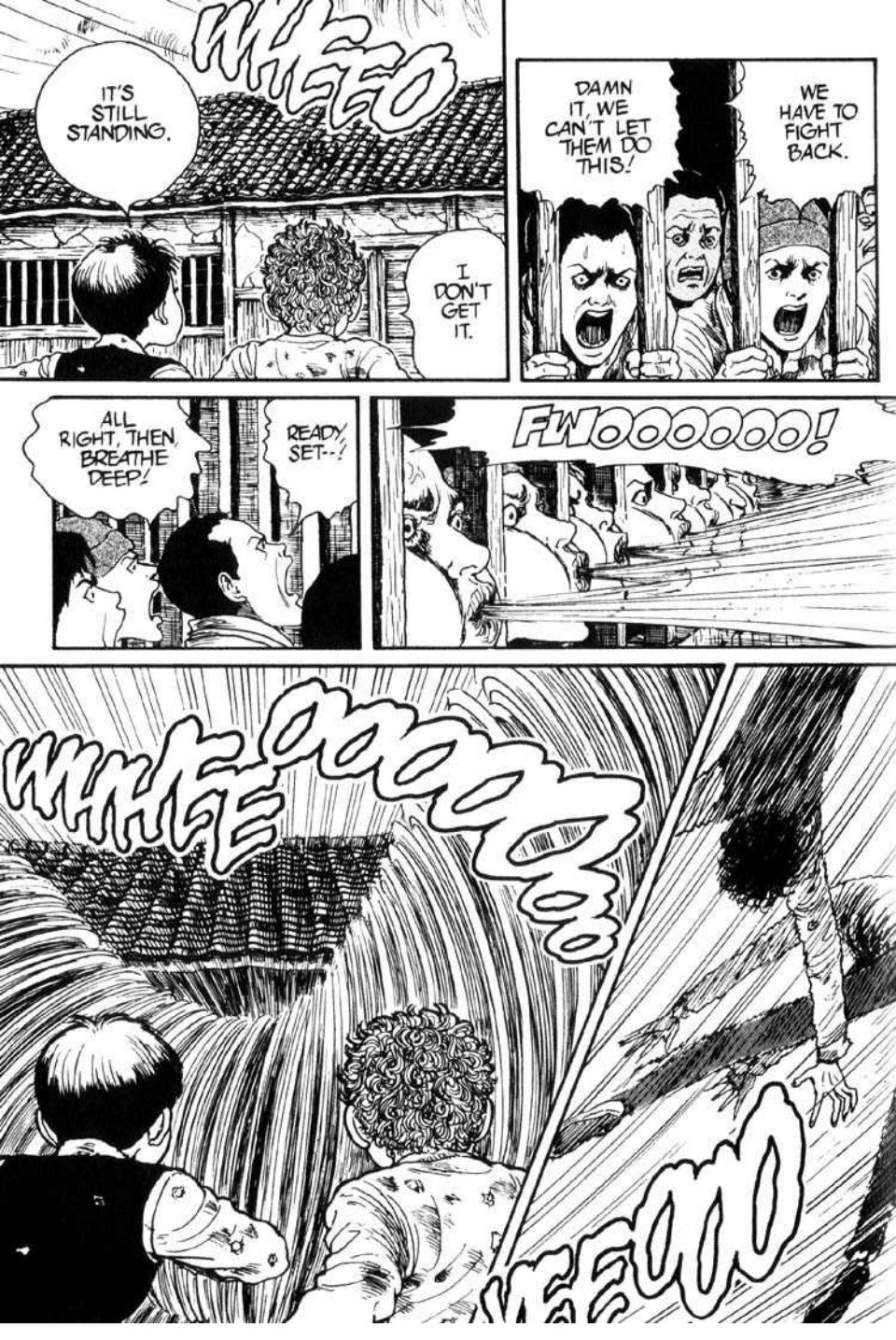
THAT'S WEIRD... IT WON'T FALL APART.
EVEN THOUGH IT'S ALL RUINED.

GOD DAMN HOUSE!
THEN TAKE THIS!!

HERE WE GO!!


WEOOOOOOO
WHEEEOOOOOOO

SO WHAT KIND OF PLACE IS THIS KURŌZU-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.


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!
WHHEEOOOOOO
WEEOOO

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.

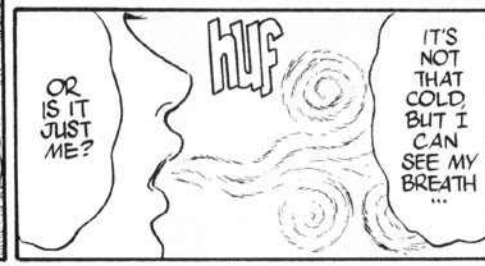
VRRR

VRR
RRRRRR
WHAM

Urgh...
Urr...
MR. ENDO!
MR. SAKAGAMI!
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...

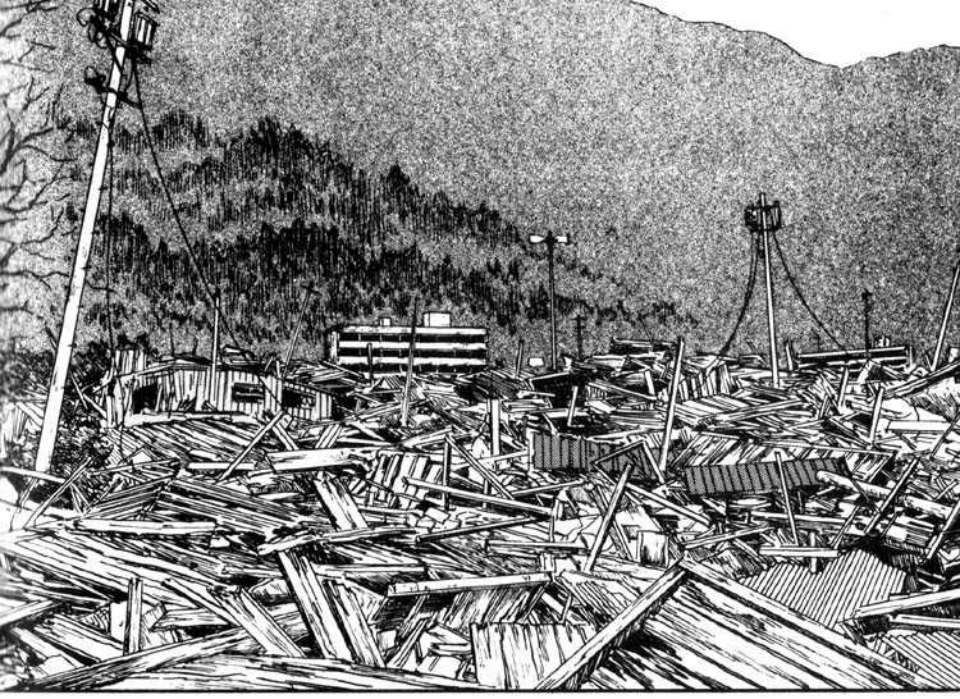

OR IS IT JUST ME?
huf
IT'S NOT THAT COLD, BUT I CAN SEE MY BREATH ...

Oh! MORE OVER-TURNED CARS!

BUT WHY IS IT SO QUIET?

I SHOULD BE NEAR THE TOWN...

WHAT?!

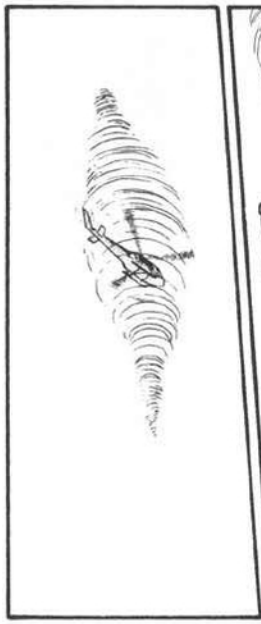


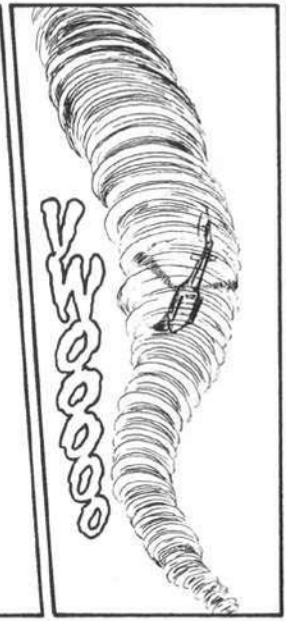
THERE'S NOTHING BUT RUBBLE.
DID THE HURRI-CANES DO THIS?

WUPWUPWUPWUP

WUPWUPWUP
IT'S A TV HELICOPTER.

Ah!




WOOOO

WOOOO

SHPASHHH

IT CRASHED!
THAT WAS WATER SPLASHING UP...

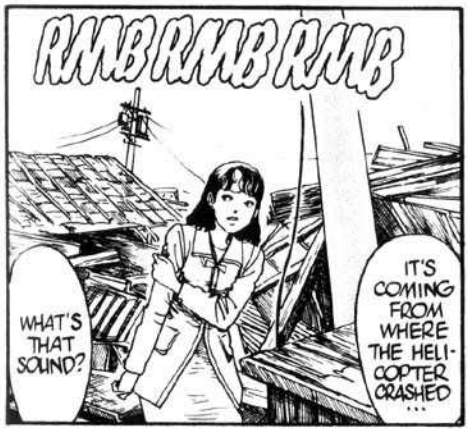
IT MUST HAVE FALLEN INTO A LAKE.
AWFUL, AWFUL...

I HAVE TO FIND HELP...
I HAVE TO FIND HELP...

AHH!

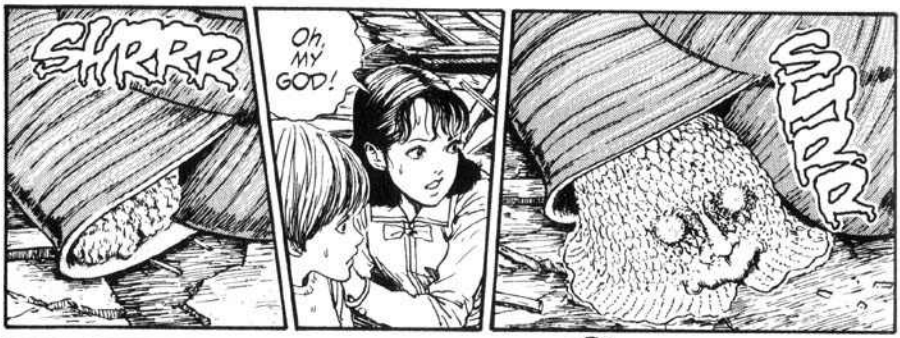
BLLLL

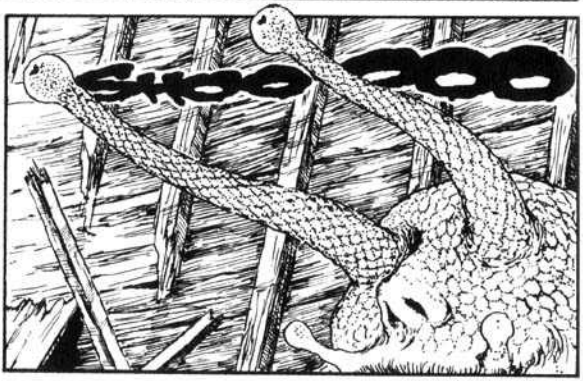
WHEN I GET CLOSER, I CAN SEE THE RUINS ARE FULL OF CORPSES...
IS ANYONE LEFT ALIVE?


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

RMBR
STD

RMB

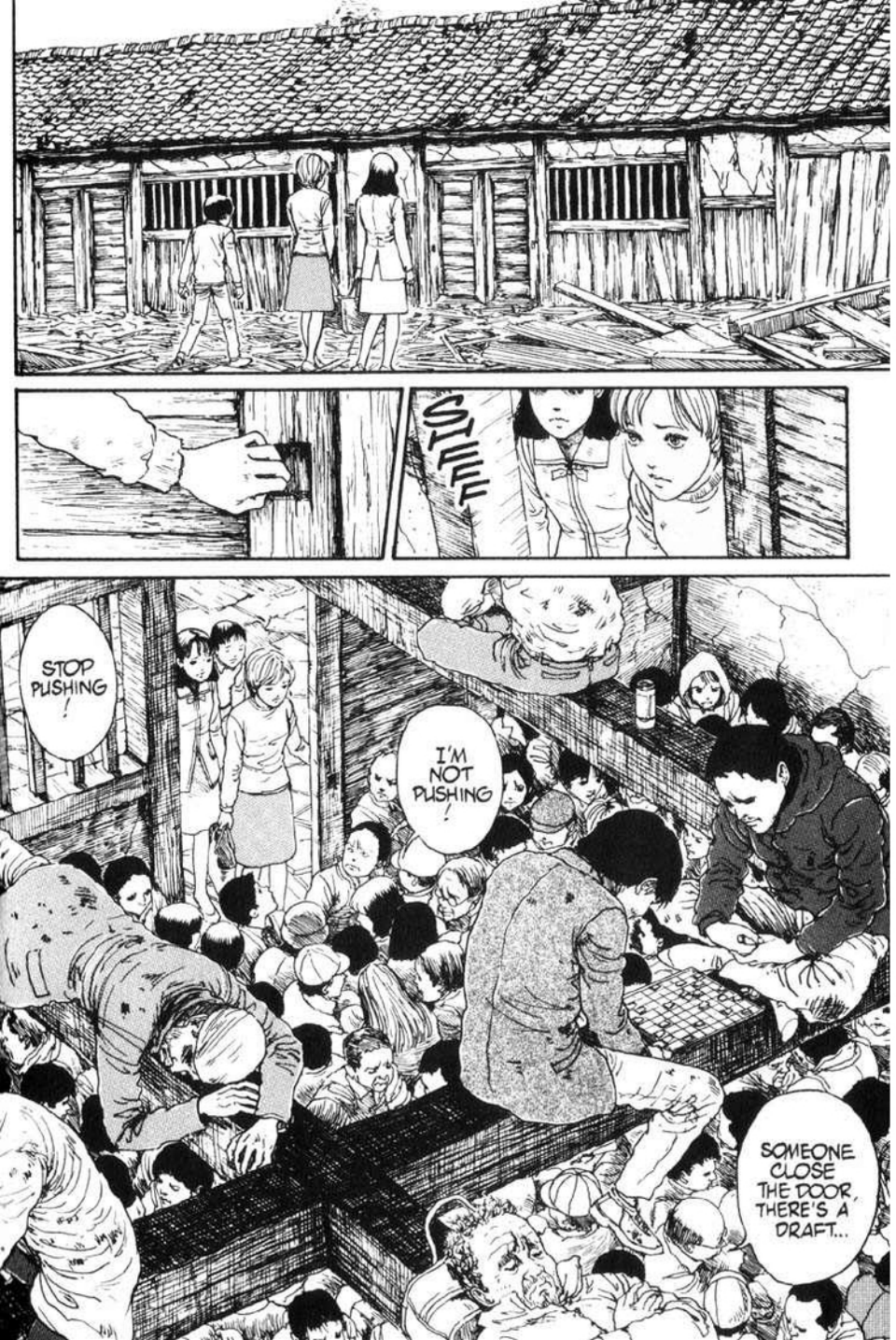

SHRRR
Oh, MY GOD!
SHRR

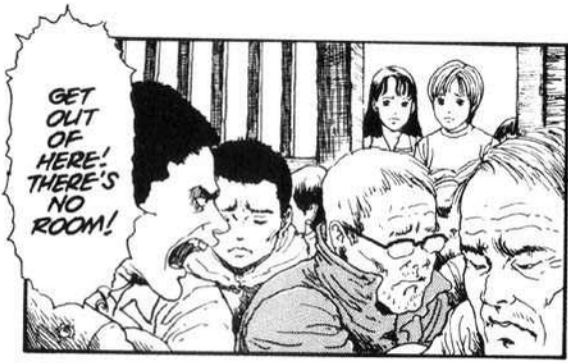

SHOO

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.


SIIEEE
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 KURŌZU-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 LEAVING.

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...
HROORRR
I TOLD YOU!
THEY'RE COOKING SOMETHING!

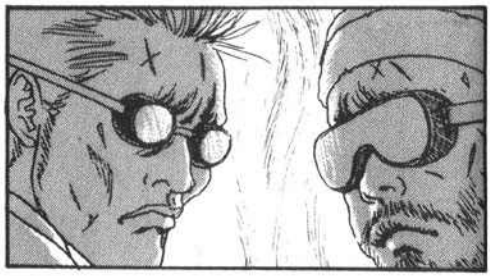
CHAPTER
15
CHAOS

MAYBE THEY'LL SHARE SOME.
STOP!
DON'T GO NEAR THEM!
IT'S THOSE CREEPS WHO WERE RIDING THE WHIRLWINDS!
LEAVE ME ALONE!

MITSUO...!

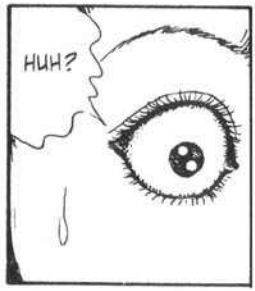
CRACKLE
CRACKLE

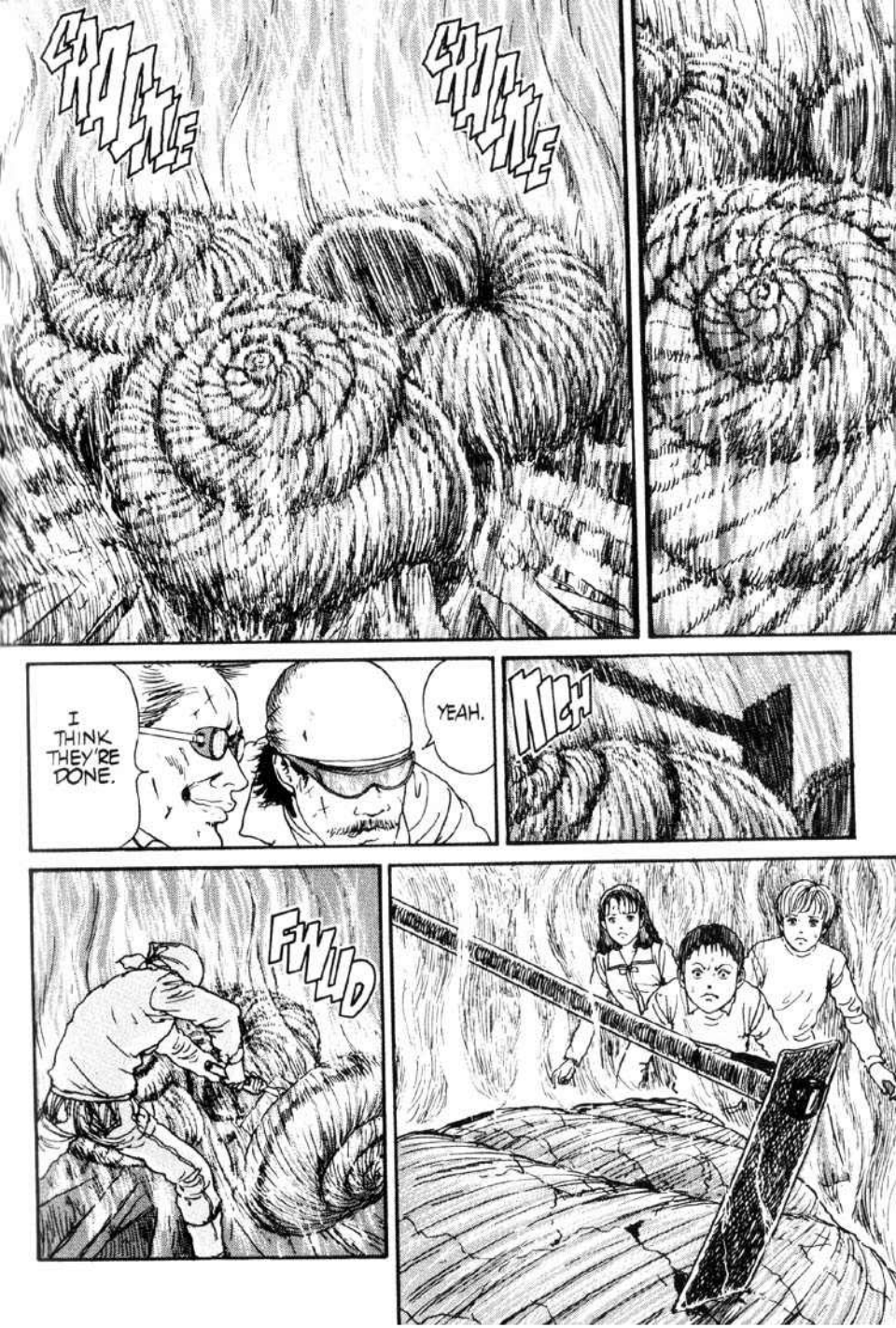
EXCUSE ME... CAN WE HAVE SOME, TOO?



...

CRACKLE
CRACKLE


HUH?


SHATTLE
SHATTLE
I THINK THEY'RE DONE.
YEAH.
NICH
FWUD

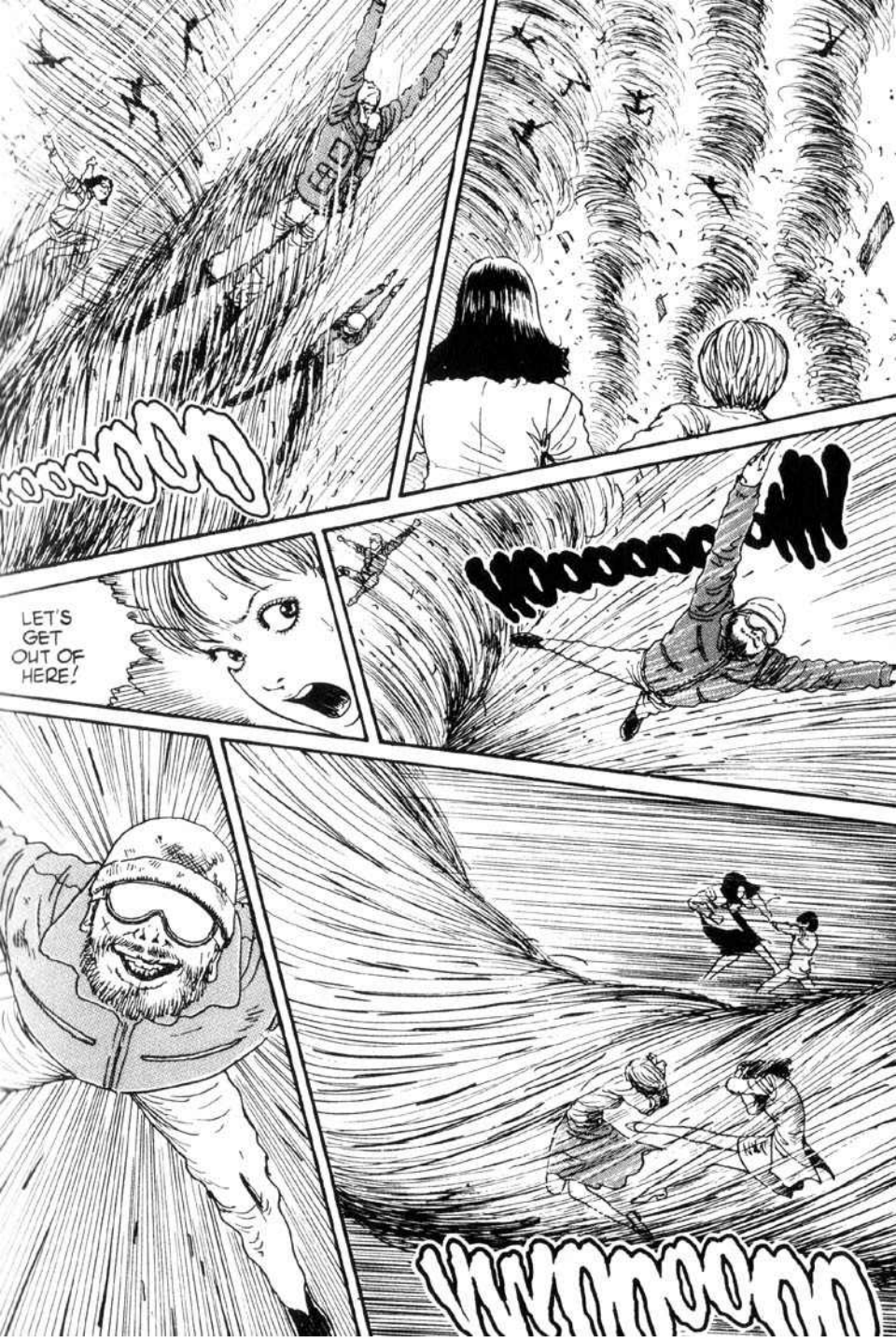
TOK
TOK
TOK
YEAH, THAT'S PERFECT.
LET'S EAT.
GULP
KIRIE ...
THEY'RE EATING THE SNAILS ...
MNCH
MNCH
YOU CAN HAVE A BITE, KID.
THEY'RE DELICIOUS.

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!
AWAAH!

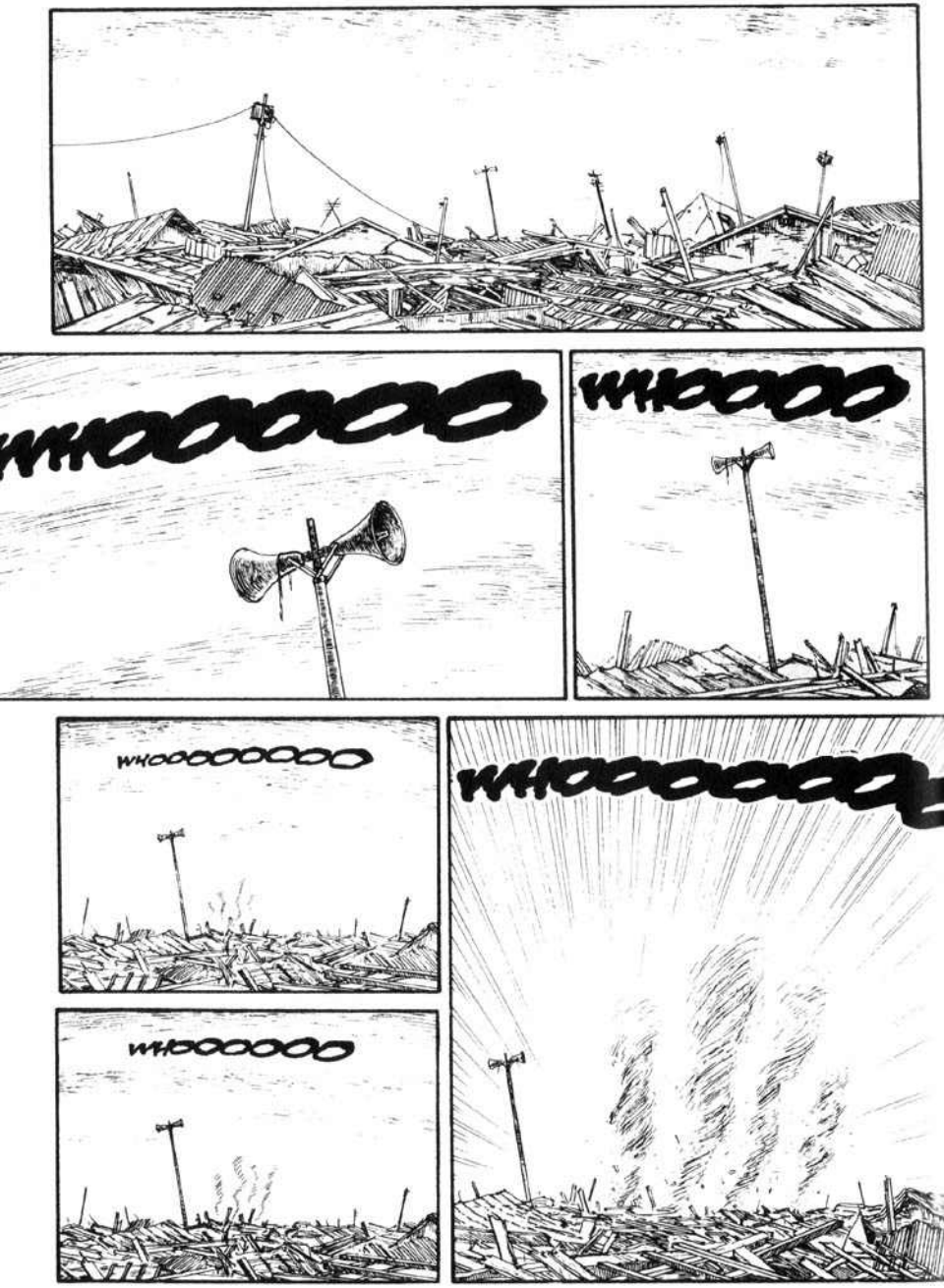
DAD!
DEAR!
H-HOW COULD YOU?
WE DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT.
WE COULD BE FRIENDS ...
BAFF

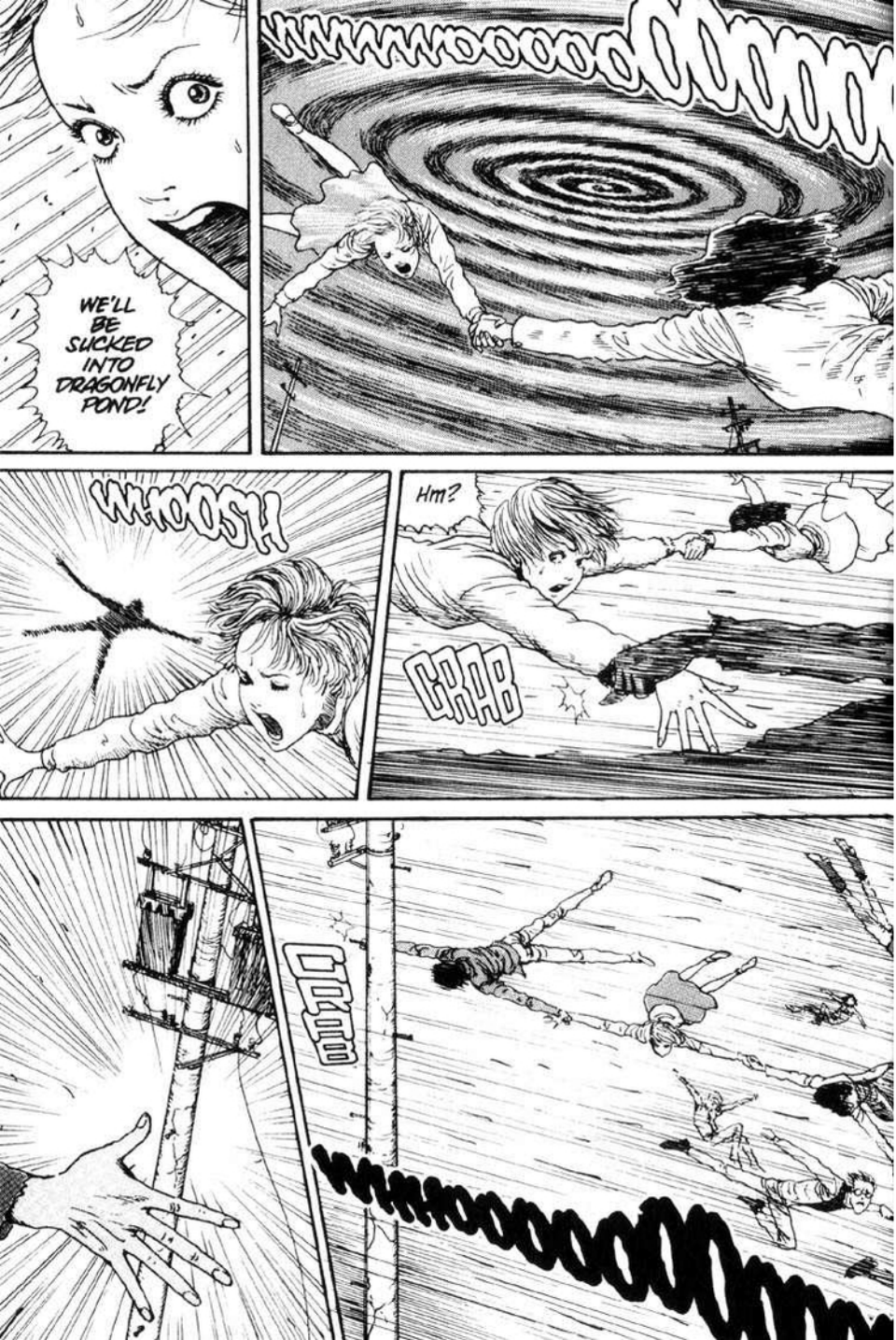
HA HAHA! THEY'RE AIRBORNE!
PREPARE FOR TAKE-OFF.

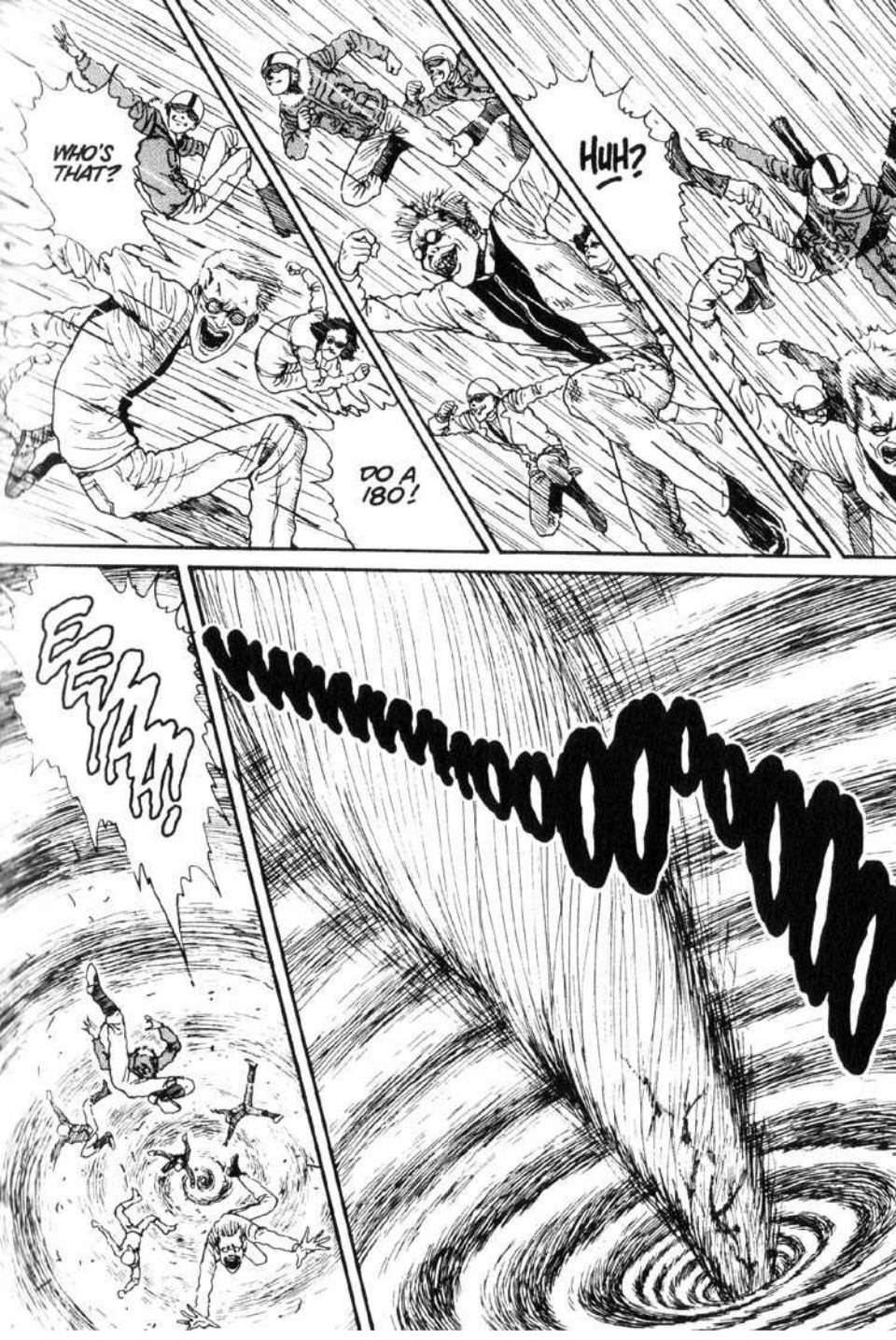

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

WHHHRRR

YAH HAH HAH
KIRIE!
CHIE!
LOOK OVER THERE!
IT'S DRAGONFLY POND!
WE'RE GETTING CLOSER!
WE'RE BEING BLOWN IN!


WHOOOOOOO
WHOOOO
WHOOOOOOOO
WHOOOOOOOO
WHOOOOOOO


WE'LL BE SUCKED INTO DRAGONFLY POND!
WHOOO


WHO'S THAT?
HUH?
DO A 180!
EEYAH!

WHO
SH...
SHUICHI ...?
...
MAD ...
PMBRMBRM

WOOO

YEEAHHH!
Transkeenz
KURÔZU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, DEAD AHEAD!
PREPARE FOR ATTACK!
ROGER WILCO!
UNITE AND ATTACK!

URAK
URAK

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.

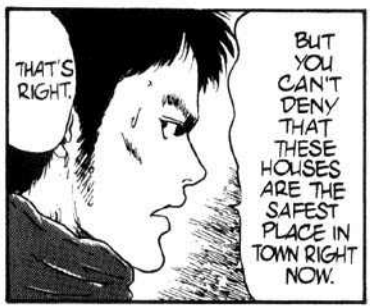
BUT WE'RE STARVING! WHILE WE'RE SNEAKING AROUND LIKE SNAILS, TRYING NOT TO MAKE ANY WHIRL-WINDS...
THEY'RE DOING WHATEVER THEY WANT!
SHUT UP, MITSUO!
KEEP QUIET OR YOU'LL MAKE A TORNADO!
EEYAAAAH!
WWOOOOOOOOOO
CHIE...?!

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 MOVING...
THEY'RE SNAIL PEOPLE...

HEY... LOOK AT MY BACK FOR ME...
M-ME TOO!
Whew.
IT'S FINE.
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.

BUT HOW SAFE DO YOU THINK THESE HOUSES ARE?
I MEAN, WE REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT'S MAKING PEOPLE CHANGE INTO SNAILS.


THAT'S RIGHT.
BUT YOU CAN'T DENY THAT THESE HOUSES ARE THE SAFEST PLACE IN TOWN RIGHT NOW.

S-SAY TANIZAKI... DO YOU THINK THE SPIRAL WILL DISAPPEAR AS LONG AS I'M INSIDE THE ROW HOUSE?
I DON'T KNOW, TOGAWA.

I-I DON'T WANT TO TURN INTO A SNAIL.
SOMEBODY HELP ME!

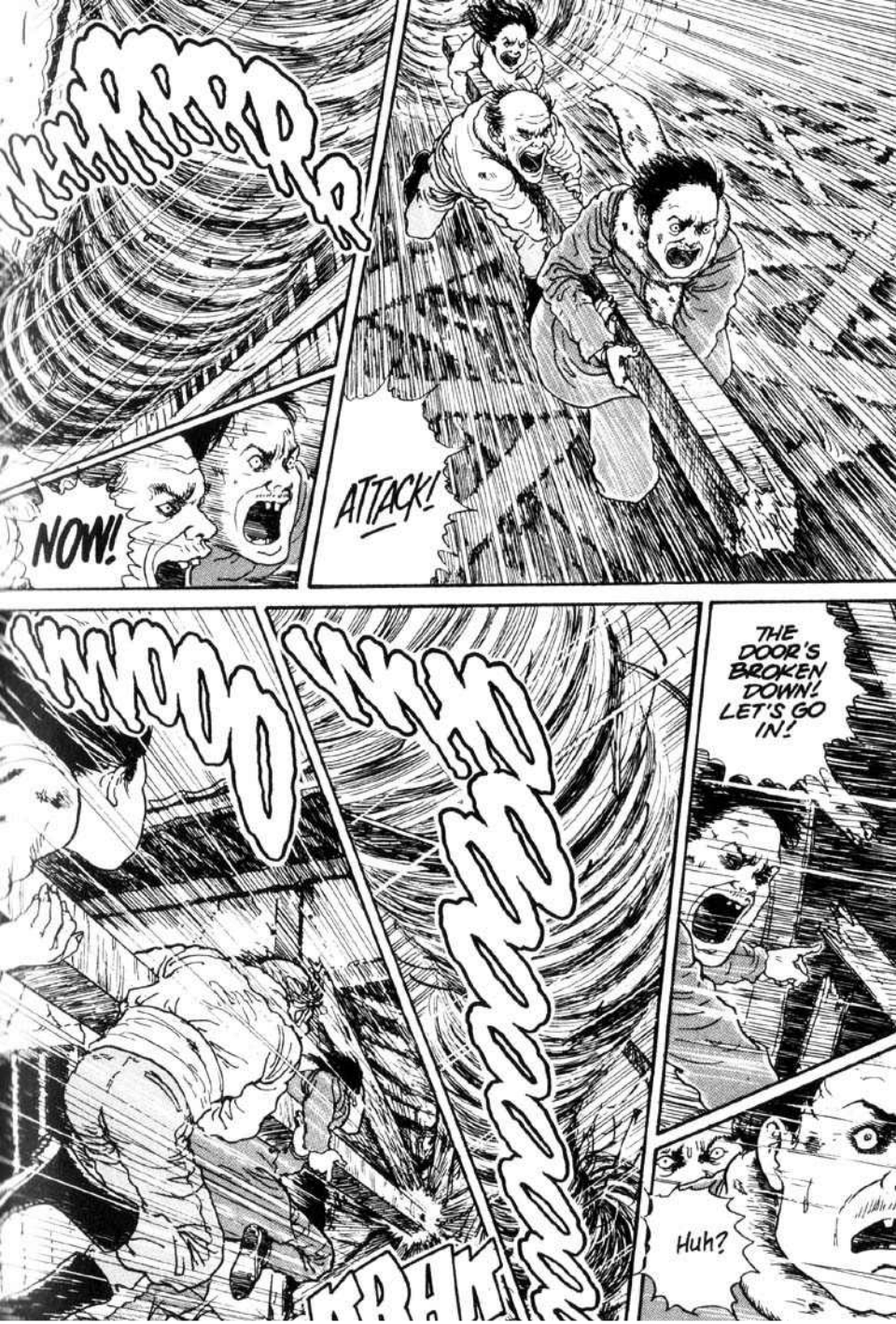
I DON'T WANT TO... I DON'T WANT TO!
Shh! LOWER YOUR VOICE!
AND WALK SOFTLY.

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!

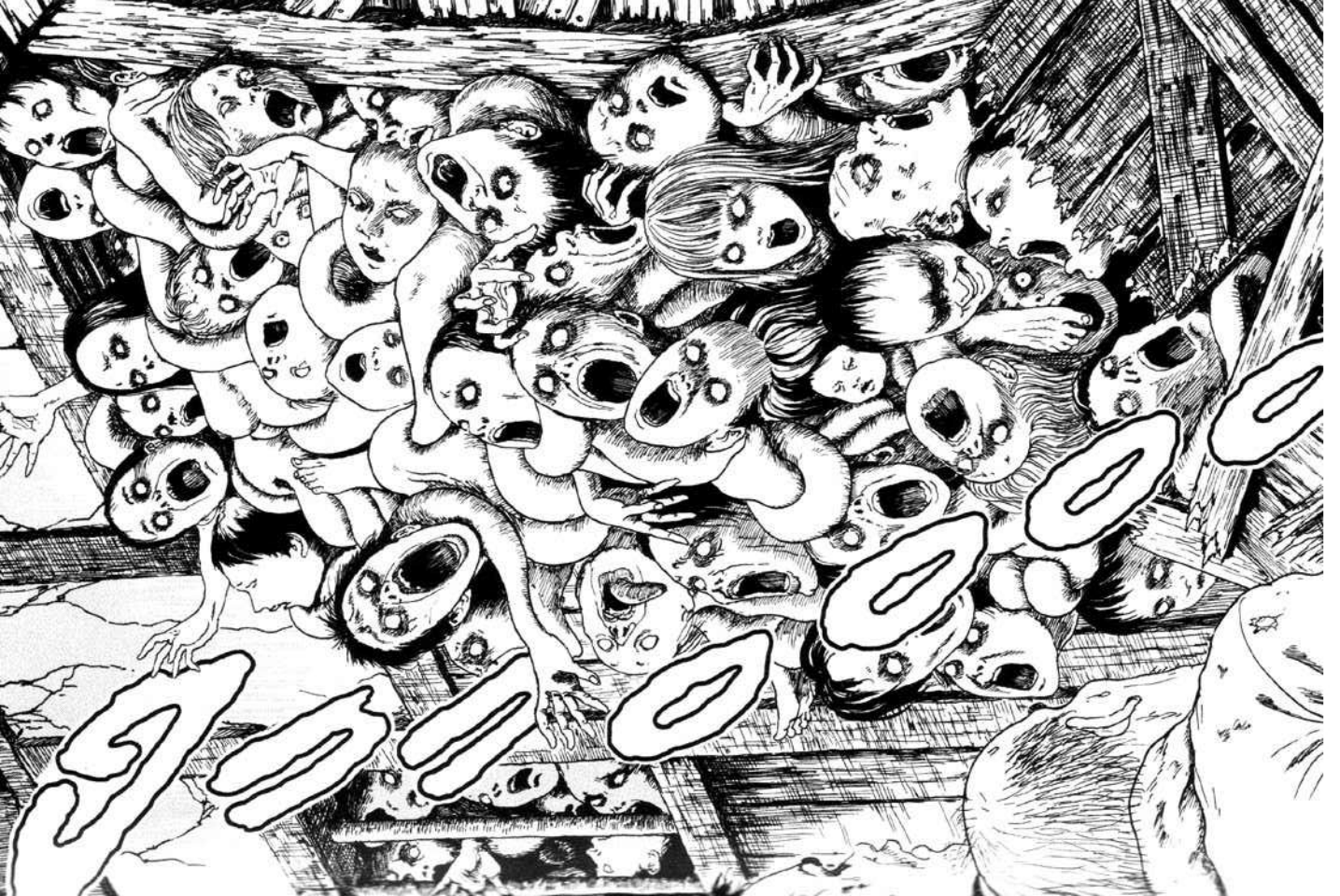
PLEASE ...PLEASE ...
TOGAWA ...
PLEASE LET ME IN.
I'M TURNING INTO A SNAIL!
NO! GO AWAY!
WHAT DO I CARE IF YOU BECOME A SNAIL OR NOT?
WHAT ...?
YOU--
I'M GOING INSIDE WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT!
OPEN UP!
OPEN UP, YOU BASTARDS!
Y-YES...
WE'RE WITH YOU, TOO!
PULL!
HERE IT COMES...

STOP IT!!
GET OUT OF HERE!
GOOD, IT'S OPEN-ING!
PULL!
?!
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...



CRAK CRAK
CRAK CRAK
FWAM
FWAM

CHAPTER
16
EROSION

WOOOO
OOOOOO
WHHOO
GUUB

WHAT ARE THEY DOING?
THEY'RE TRYING TO COVER THEIR EXPOSED BODIES WITH THE SCRAP WOOD.
WHE
EOOOOD
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?

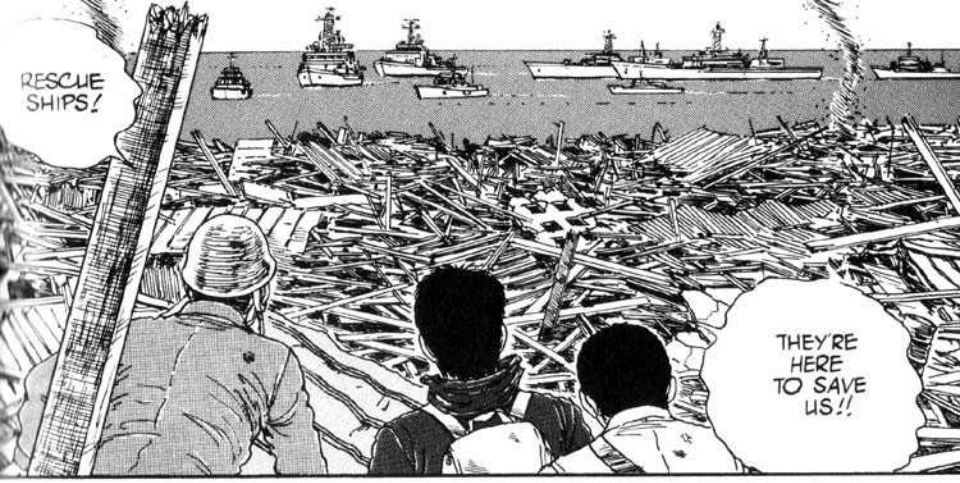
HEY, I'VE BEEN THINKING ...

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!

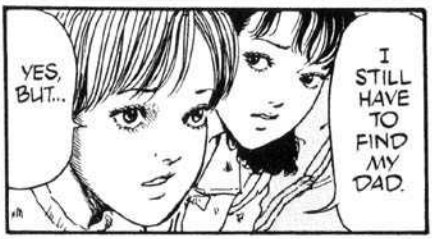

RESCUE SHIPS!
THEY'RE HERE TO SAVE US!!

THEY MUST HAVE BEEN DISPATCHED BY THE COAST GUARD OR THE SELF DEFENSE TROOPS.
REAL BIG SHIPS.

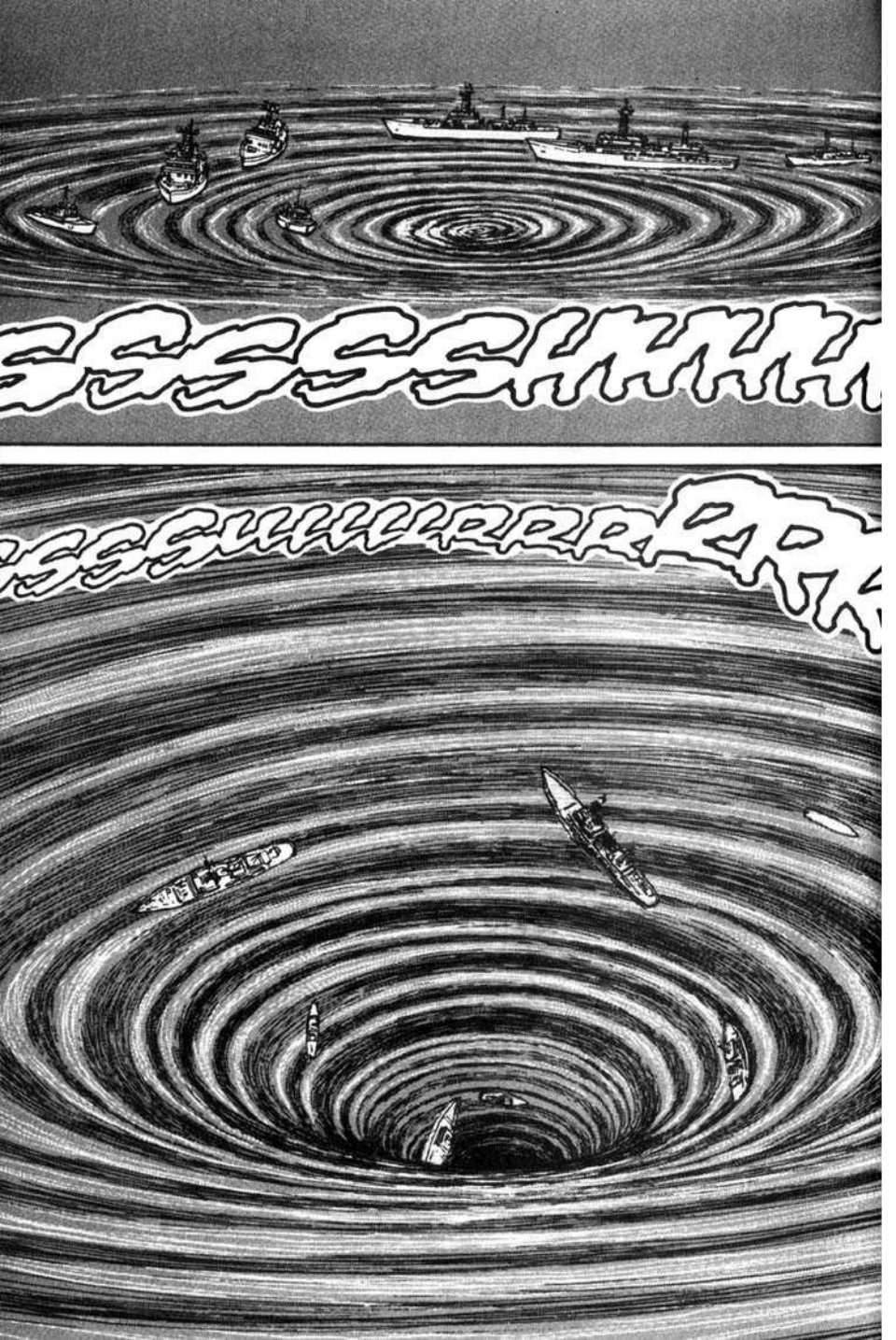
THEY CERTAINLY TOOK THEIR TIME!
WHAT THE HELL WERE THEY DOING?

WELL, WE'RE SAFE NOW.
I'M GOING TO RUN ON BOARD AND NEVER GET OFF.

KIRIE, YOU LOOK LIKE YOU DON'T BELIEVE IT!
THEY'RE HERE! WE'LL HAVE TO TELL YOUR MOTHER!


YES, BUT...
I STILL HAVE TO FIND MY DAD.

Huh?


SSSSSHHH
SSSSHHHRRRRAP

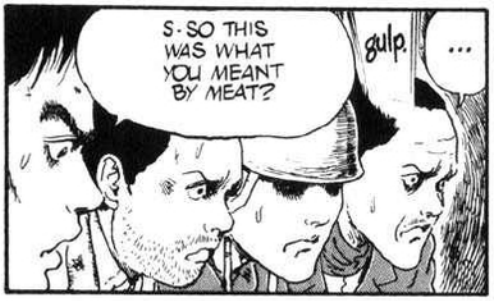
THAT...
THAT CAN'T BE...
IT'S DARK NOW...
RMORMG
IS THIS ALL WE HAVE LEFT?

THIS ISN'T ENOUGH TO SUSTAIN US.
RMBB
ISN'T THERE ANYTHING IN TOWN? SOME CANNED FOOD?

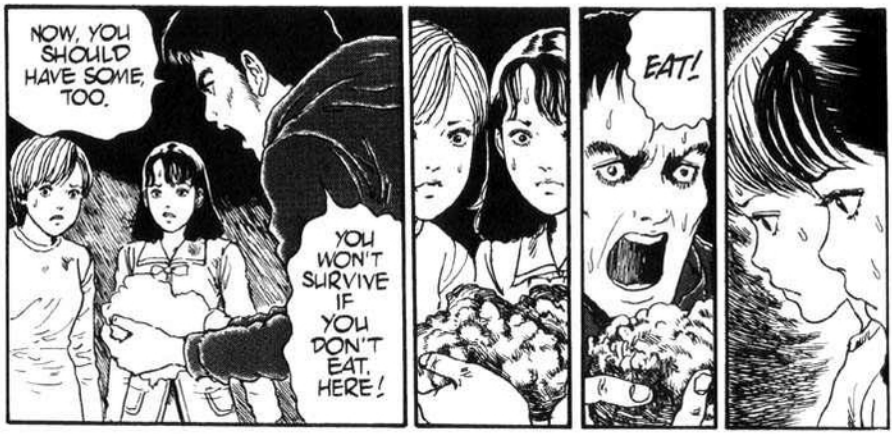
HEY, EVERY-ONE!
I FOUND SOME MEAT!

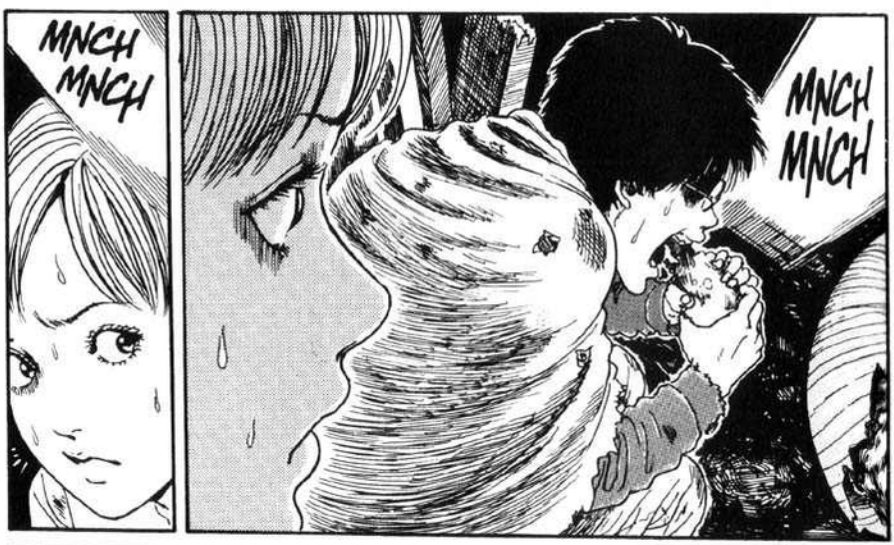
WHAT?! REALLY?!

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.

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
WWWWWOOO OOOOO

THE NEXT MORNING, WE PARTED WAYS WITH TANIZAKI'S GROUP AND HEADED BACK TO THE SHACK WHERE MY MOTHER AND MITSUO WERE.
WE BROUGHT THE REMAINING SCRAPS OF MEAT WITH US IN AN OLD PLASTIC BAG.
Hm?
I THOUGHT IT WAS AROUND HERE.
THE SHACK IS GONE!
...
N-NO...
KIRIE!
KIRIE! I'M STUCK!
MITSUO!
I'LL GET YOU OUT!
IT WAS A WHIRLWIND, RIGHT?

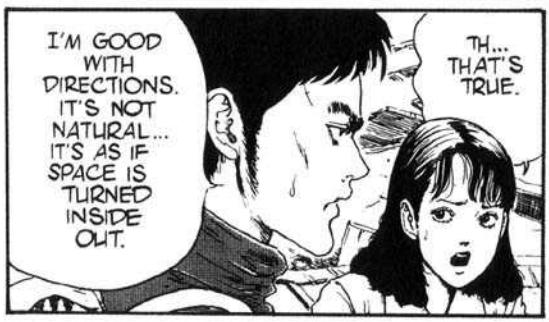
MOM!
MITSUO, WHERE'S MOM?
SH-SHE GOT BLOWN AWAY!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
Oh, GOD...
HIS BACK...
AT THAT MO-MENT...
I KNEW I HAD TO ESCAPE.

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...?

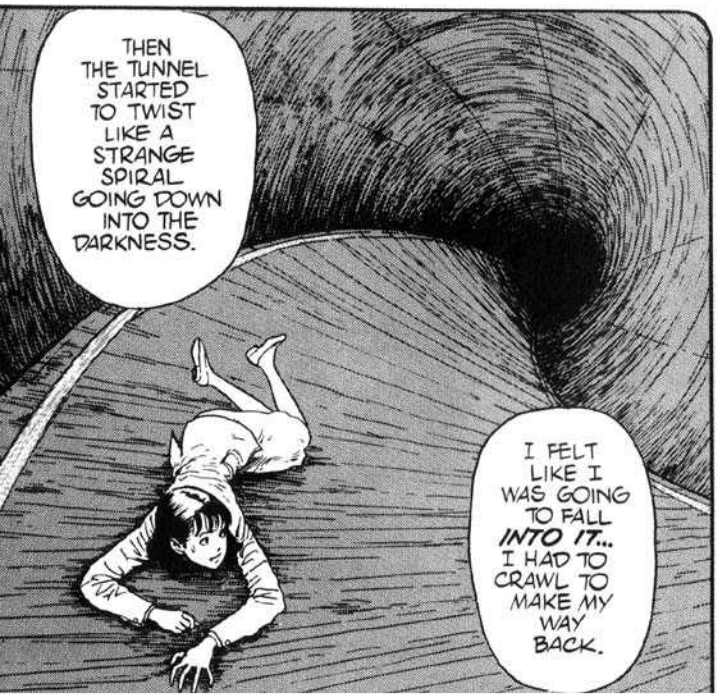
WE LOST SOMEONE AGAIN...
THE WIND'S STILL STIRRED UP FROM THOSE TWISTER GANGS.
HEY, YOU!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YES... WE'RE OKAY.
I WALKED HERE FROM MIDORIYAMA-SHI FIVE DAYS AGO.
I HEARD THERE WAS A DISASTER IN KURŌZU-CHO SO I CAME AS A VOLUNTEER.
I HAVE RELATIVES HERE. I CAME FOUR DAYS AGO LOOKING FOR 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.

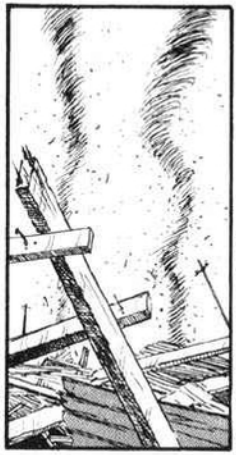
I ALSO TRIED TO ESCAPE BY SEA.
ALL THE FISHING BOATS IN THE HARBOR WERE WRECKED. THEY MUST HAVE BEEN THE FIRST TO GO IN THE STORM.
A COUPLE OF US DECIDED TO BUILD A RAFT.
WHILE WE WERE GATHERING BUILDING MATERIALS, WE SAW ANOTHER GROUP LEAVING.
THEY MUST HAVE BUILT THEIRS JUST BEFORE US.
ALL RIGHT, HERE'S WHAT WE'LL DO...
BUT THEN...
LOOK!
SHHPARAPAPAP
AHHH
SSSLLLRR

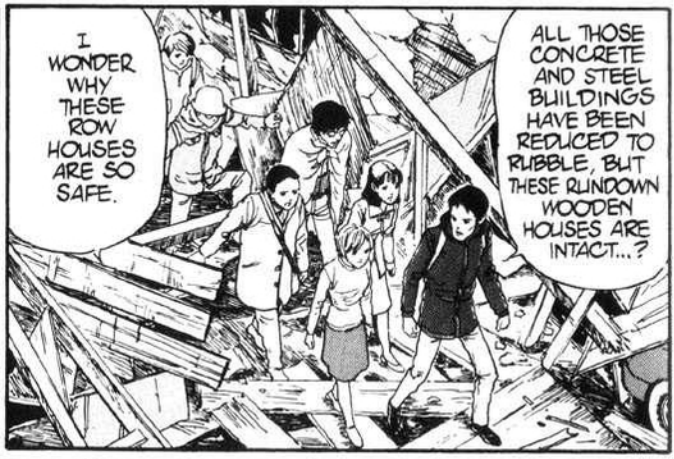
THE SEA HAD TURNED INTO A GIGANTIC WHIRLPOOL, SWALLOWING THE RAFT RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES.
SO I DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET OUT.
BUT CONSIDERING WHAT I'VE HEARD, WE COULD BE WORSE.
YEAH... SOME PEOPLE ARE IN PRETTY BAD SHAPE. THEY'VE GONE CRAZY.
BY THE WAY, WHERE DO YOU LIVE?
ARE YOU IN ONE OF THE ROW HOUSES? IF SO, CAN YOU LET US IN? I HEAR THEY'RE THE ONLY SAFE PLACES LEFT.
NO... ALL THE ROW HOUSES ARE FULL. WE'RE STAYING UNDER A HOUSE THAT'S COLLAPSED.
RIGHT NOW WE'RE ON OUR WAY HOME.

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

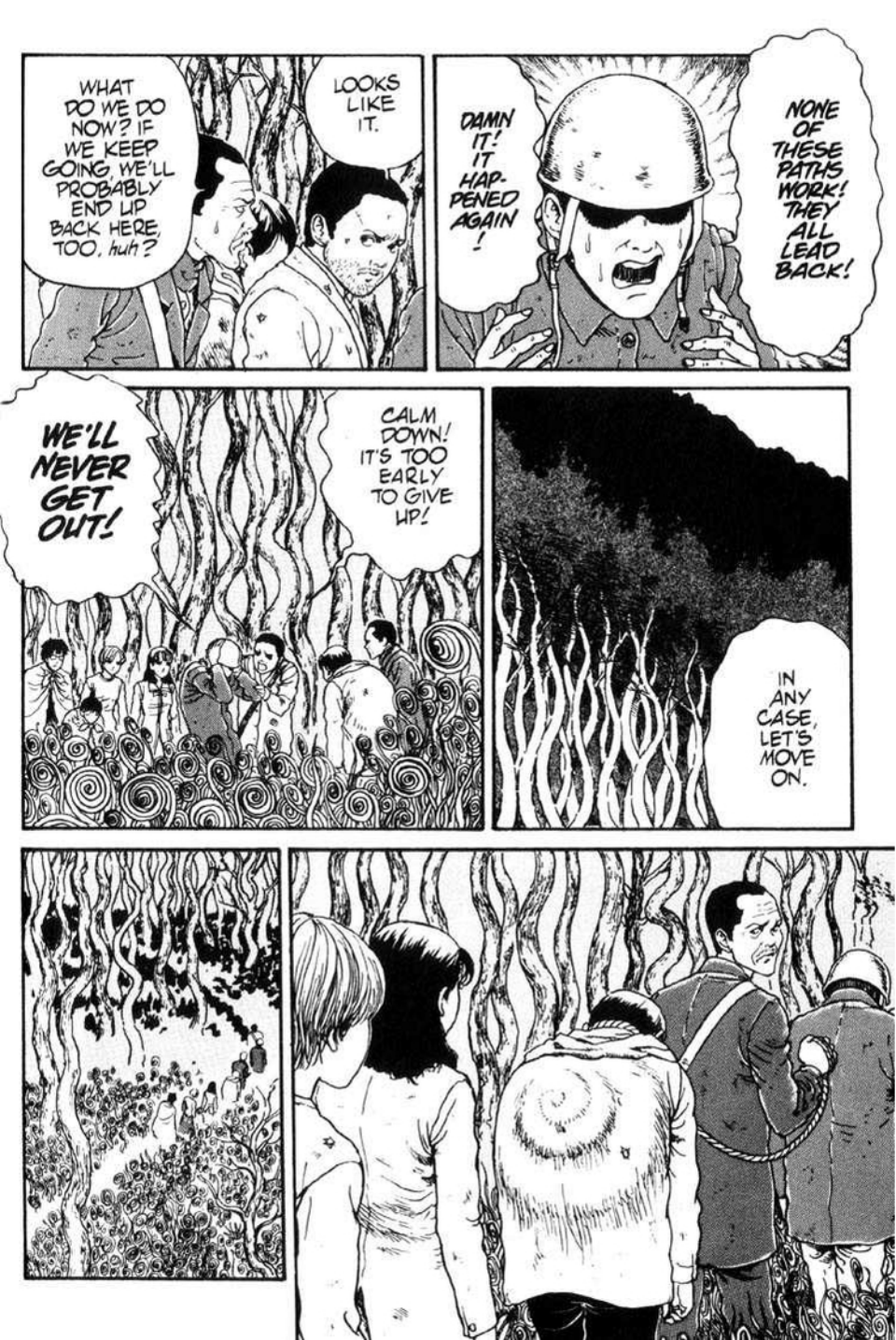
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, OKAMOTO? ARE YOU SICK?

NO... MY BACK FEELS FUNNY...
CAN YOU TAKE A LOOK?

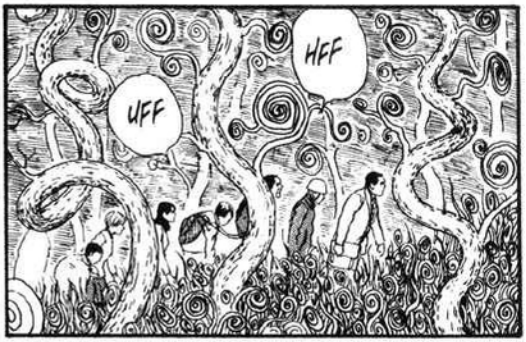
YOUR BACK?

SHF

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.


HFF
UFF

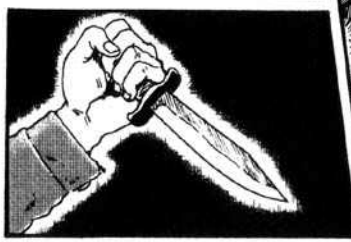
I CAN'T LOOK AT THIS.
IT'S MAKING ME DIZZY.

KIRIE, MY BACK ITCHES!
I NEED YOU TO SCRATCH IT!

SHLOOO
Shudder
Shudder
TOMP
SHLP
SHLP
WELL, WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT!
HA HA HA!

DAMN...
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GOING AROUND IN CIRCLES.
URR...
GRR
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



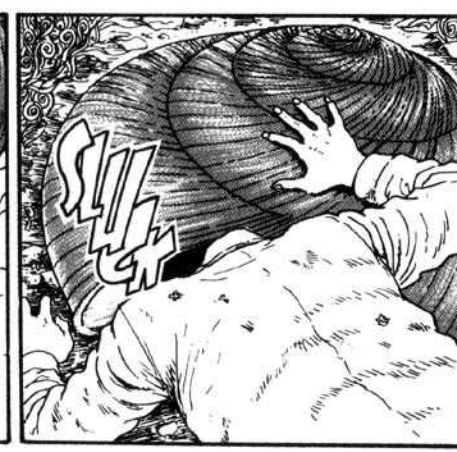
HEY!

HE'S HIDING FROM US!

SCREW IT. LET'S JUST CRACK HIM OPEN.
STOP THAT. YOU'LL MAKE A WHIRLWIND IF YOU THROW THAT.

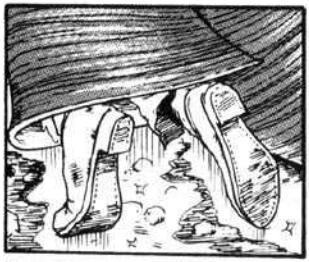
WE DON'T NEED THAT.
I'LL SHOW YOU THE BEST WAY TO EAT HIM!

DID YOU KNOW THAT SOME INSECTS EAT SNAILS THIS WAY?


SLIK

MNCH
MNCH
MNCH
GULP
MNCH
MNCH
HOW IS IT?
IS IT GOOD?
RNCH
RNCH
rnch rnch

SLRR SLRR
ROLLLLLLL
GRNGH



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...

CHAPTER
17
ESCAPE

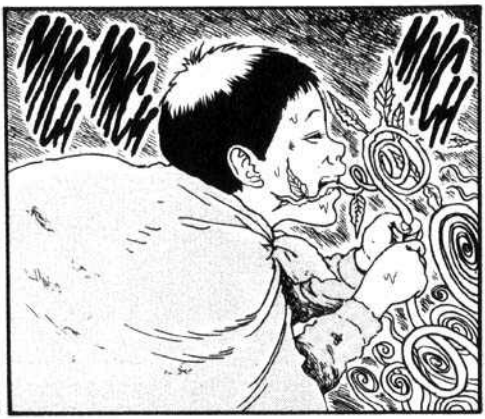
THAT'S RIGHT!
YOU CAN TELL NORTH BY LOOKING AT A TREE STUMP.
SHUICHI...
COME JOIN ME...
D-D-DAD! DAD! IT'S MY DAD!
WHAT'S WRONG, SHUICHI?
IT'S HIM! IT'S HIM!
CALM DOWN. YOU'RE JUST IMAGINING IT!
UWAAA!

SO SLOW ...

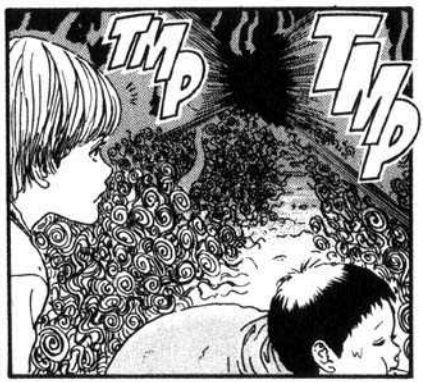
WE'RE WALKING SO SLOW...
HFF
HFF
IT FEELS LIKE TIME IS MOVING FASTER, LEAVING US BEHIND.

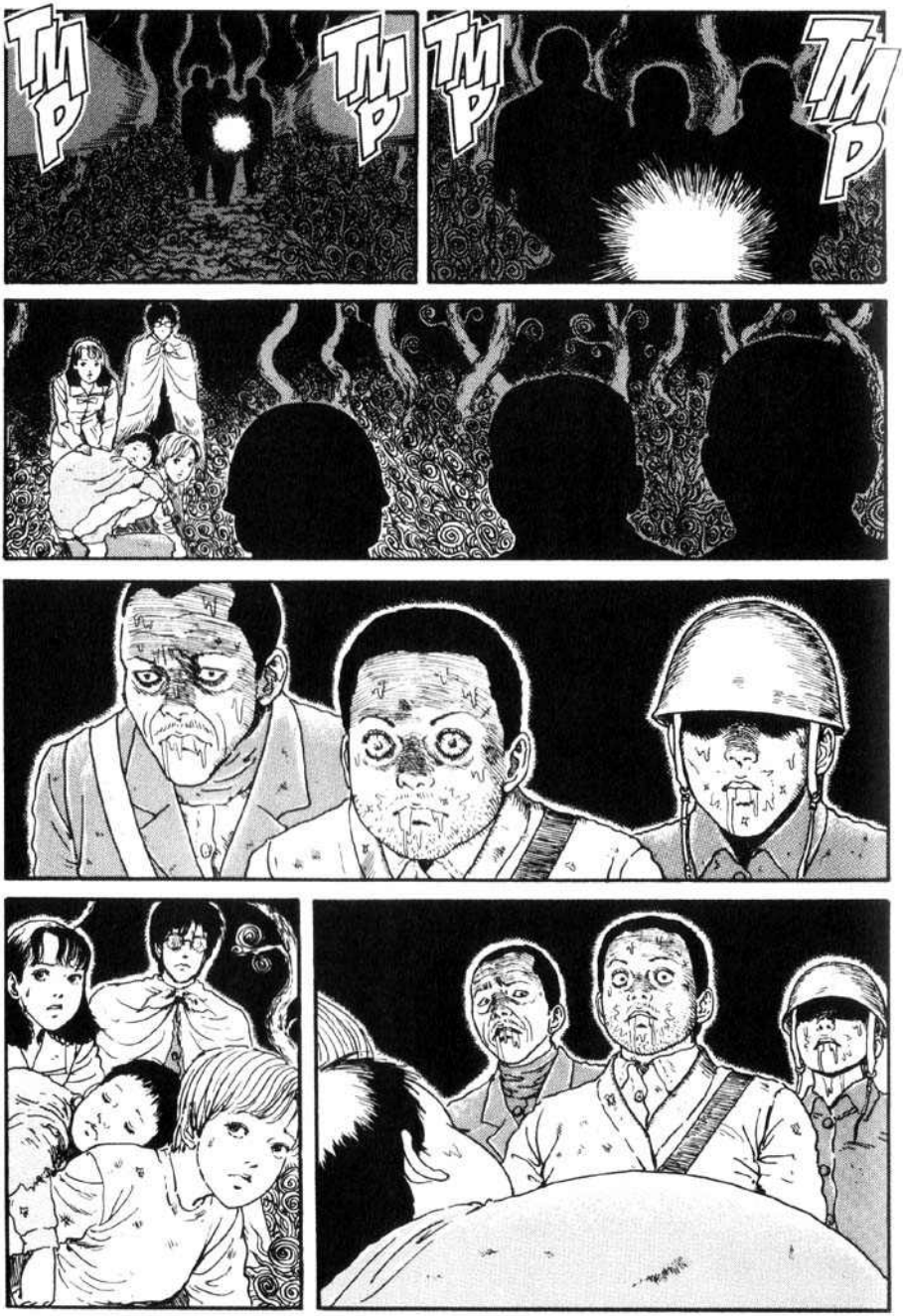
WHAT TIME IS IT, ANY-WAY?

Tik
TOK


MNCH
MNCH
MNCH

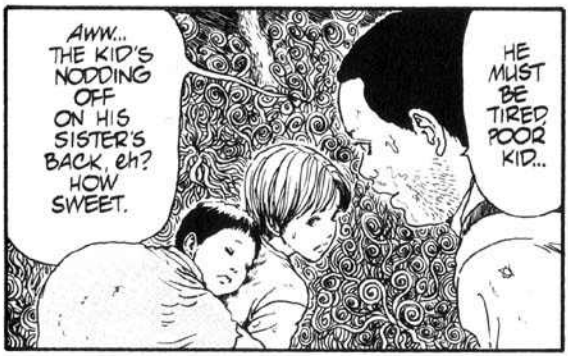
MITSUO, THOSE LEAVES AREN'T GOOD FOR YOU!
I'LL CARRY YOU IF YOU'RE TIRED.


TMP
TMP


ТИР
ТИР
ТИР
ТИР

WE MEET AGAIN.
WHY DID YOU LEAVE US?

Oh...
WE DIDN'T MEAN TO...WE JUST GOT LOST.

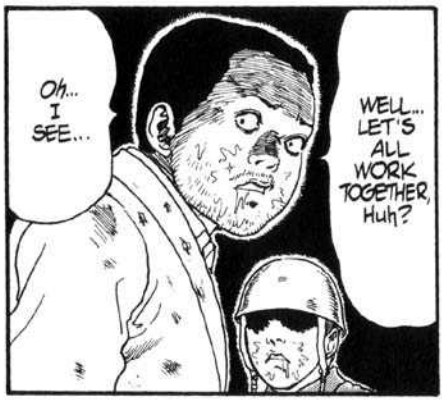

AWW... THE KID'S NODDING OFF ON HIS SISTER'S BACK, eh? HOW SWEET.
HE MUST BE TIRED POOR KID...

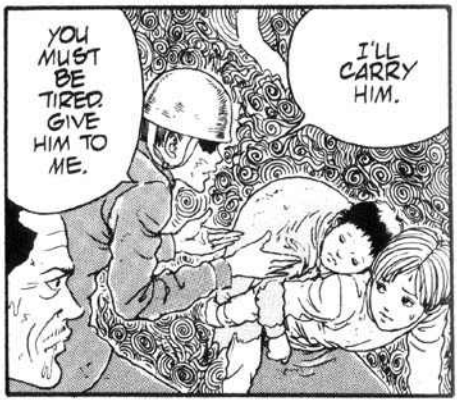
HEY ...
...

IS SOME-THING WRONG WITH HIS BACK?
IT LOOKS SO SWOLLEN...

WHAT?

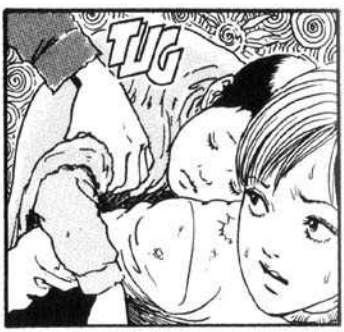
Oh, uh... THAT'S BECAUSE HE'S CARRYING A BACKPACK.


Oh... I SEE...
WELL... LET'S ALL WORK TOGETHER, Huh?

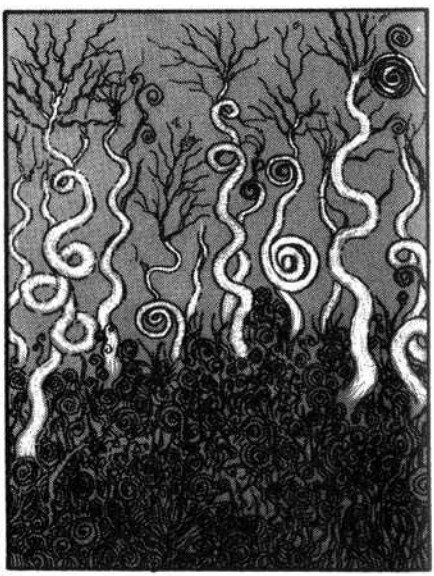

YOU MUST BE TIRED. GIVE HIM TO ME.
I'LL CARRY HIM.

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
EWOO
AAHH!
!!
SHWIFT

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.
TMP TMP TMP
HFF
HFF
SLAAAA
HOW DID WE GET TO THE SEA CLIFF?
WE WERE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN!
THERE THEY ARE.

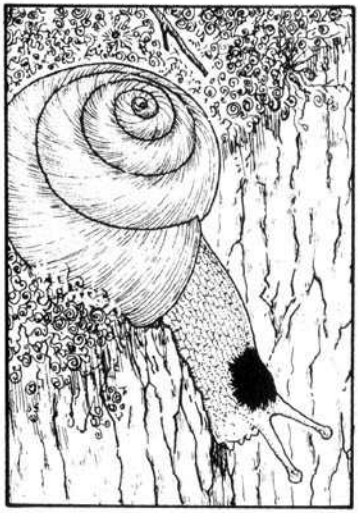
WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
WE HAVE TO LET MITSUO ESCAPE BEFORE THEY GET HERE.
ESCAPE?
BUT HOW?
SSHAAAAAA
CAN YOU CRAWL DOWN THIS CLIFF?
MITSUO ...
YOU CAN?
THEN GO! GET AWAY!
YOU HAVE TO HURRY!
GO NOW!
SHAA
NO, MITSUO! GO NOW!

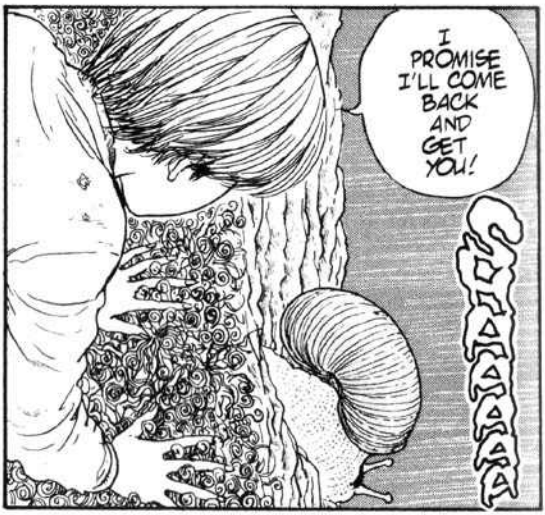
WE'RE GOING.
I'VE GOT TO GET MITSUO OUT OF HERE...
...BEFORE HE TURNS COMPLETELY INTO A SNAIL.
HE'LL GO BACK TO NORMAL ONCE WE'RE OUTSIDE KURÔZU-CHO.
AFTER THAT I'LL KNOW THE WAY OUT...
AND SO I'LL COME BACK FOR MY PARENTS.
BUT HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO GET OUT?
WE CAN'T GO BY THE ROAD OR BY SEA...
WHAT ABOUT THE HILLS?

I'LL HIT YOU IF YOU DON'T!

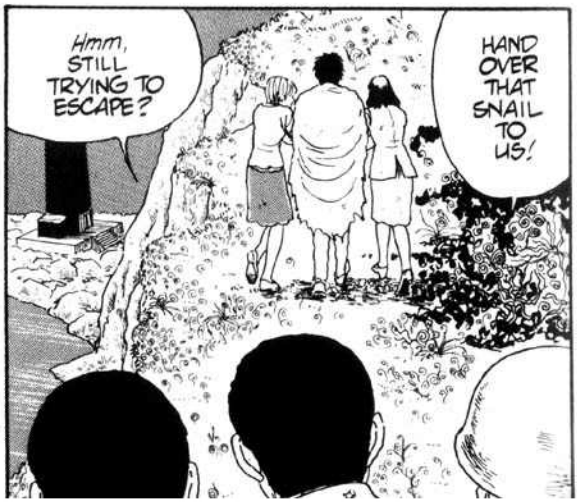
GO, MITSUO!
POKE

GO!
POKE




I PROMISE I'LL COME BACK AND GET YOU!
GURAGARAGARA

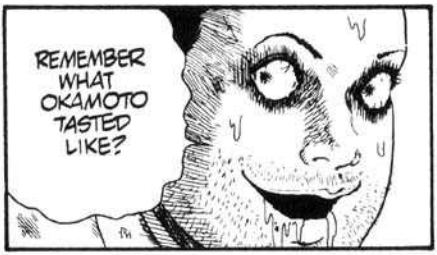
ACT LIKE WE'RE STILL CARRYING MITSUO.


Hmm, STILL TRYING TO ESCAPE?
HAND OVER THAT SNAIL TO US!

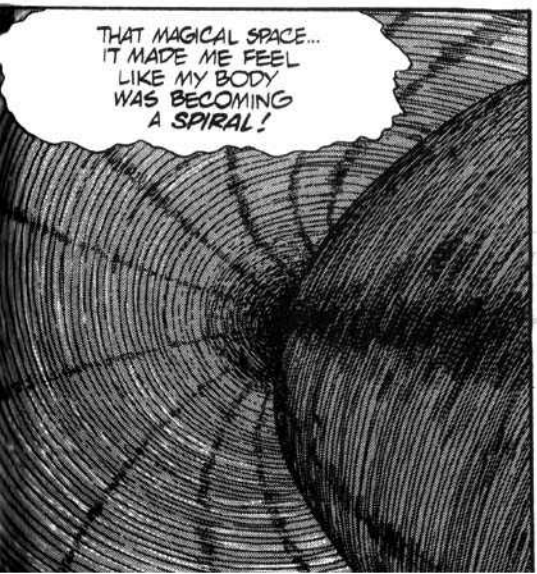
HEY, KURŌZU-CHO'S THAT WAY!
ARE YOU GOING TO GO BACK? HAHAHA...

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.

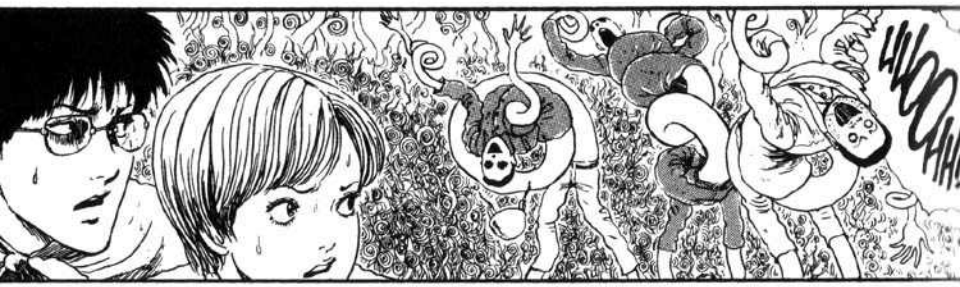

REMEMBER WHAT OKAMOTO TASTED LIKE?

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...

HUOOHH!


HUOOHH!

IT'S IN US AND AROUND US...
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

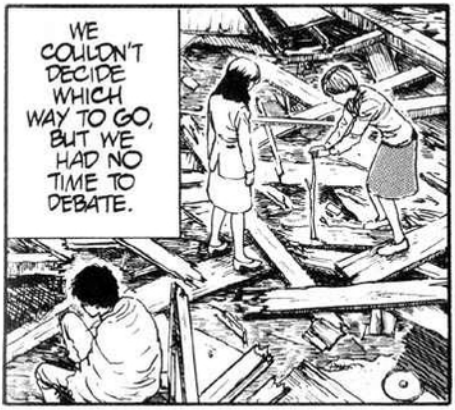
UP AHEAD ...
Ahh...

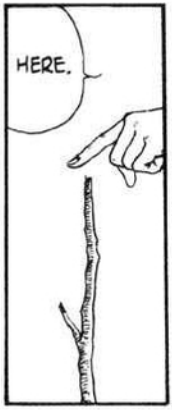
twch
twch
uff
hff
hff
SHF
uff
uff
WE SHOULD BE NEAR THE TOWN BY NOW.
..
WHAT...?!

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
FHOO

SHHOOO

SO WE END UP WITH THE STEEP HILL.
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO TRY IT. NORTH IT IS.
IT'S NO USE...

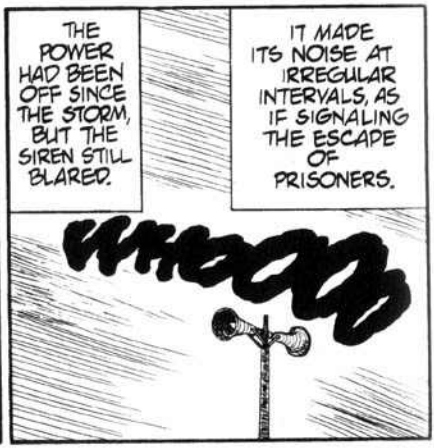
KIRIE, MY BACK ITCHES...
CAN YOU SCRATCH IT?
WE'LL BE OUT OF HERE IN A FEW HOURS.
JUST HANG ON. YOU'LL BE FINE.
Skritch
Skritch

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!
THAT'S ...
THAT'S MR. TANIZAKI!
HEY YOU! ARE YOU TRYING TO ESCAPE?
I'LL BE DONE BY THE TIME YOU COME BACK! THERE'LL BE A PLACE FOR ALL OF YOU!
HHOOOOOO

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.

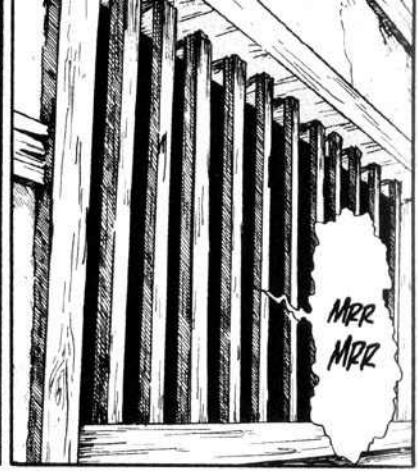
I CAN'T STAND THAT SOUND!
IT JUST PIERCES THROUGH MY EARS!
AARG! COME ON!

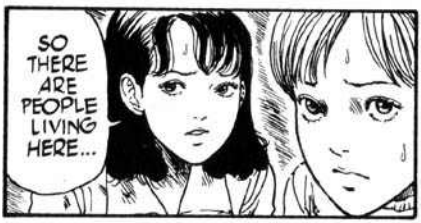

THE POWER HAD BEEN OFF SINCE THE STORM, BUT THE SIREN STILL BLARED.
IT MADE ITS NOISE AT IRREGULAR INTERVALS, AS IF SIGNALING THE ESCAPE OF PRISONERS.

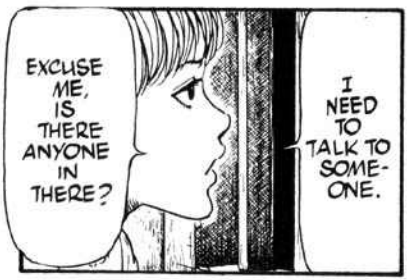
THE GRASS, THE TREES...
HOW LONG HAVE THEY BEEN LIKE THIS?

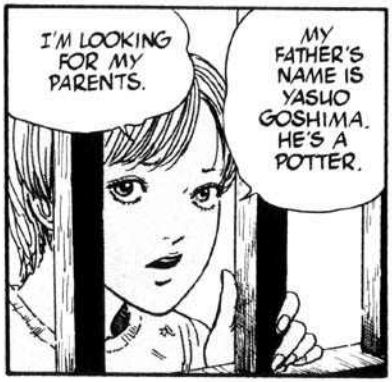
THE PATTERN'S HERE, TOO.
IT'S DOWN TO THE LEVEL OF GROWING CELLS.
WE'VE BEEN WALKING FOR A WHILE... HOW LONG DOES THIS TRAIL GO ON?
NOT MUCH LONGER... IT SHOULD LEAD TO A PAVED ROAD SOON.
HFF
BUT IT'S LONGER THAN I REMEMBER.
HFF
HFF
KIRIE, MY BACK HURTS... WE'RE WALKING TOO FAST...
TMP
TMP
LOOKS LIKE MORE VISITORS TO KURÔZU-CHO.
Ah!

CREEK
MURMUR MURMUR...
MMBL MMBL


MRR
MRR

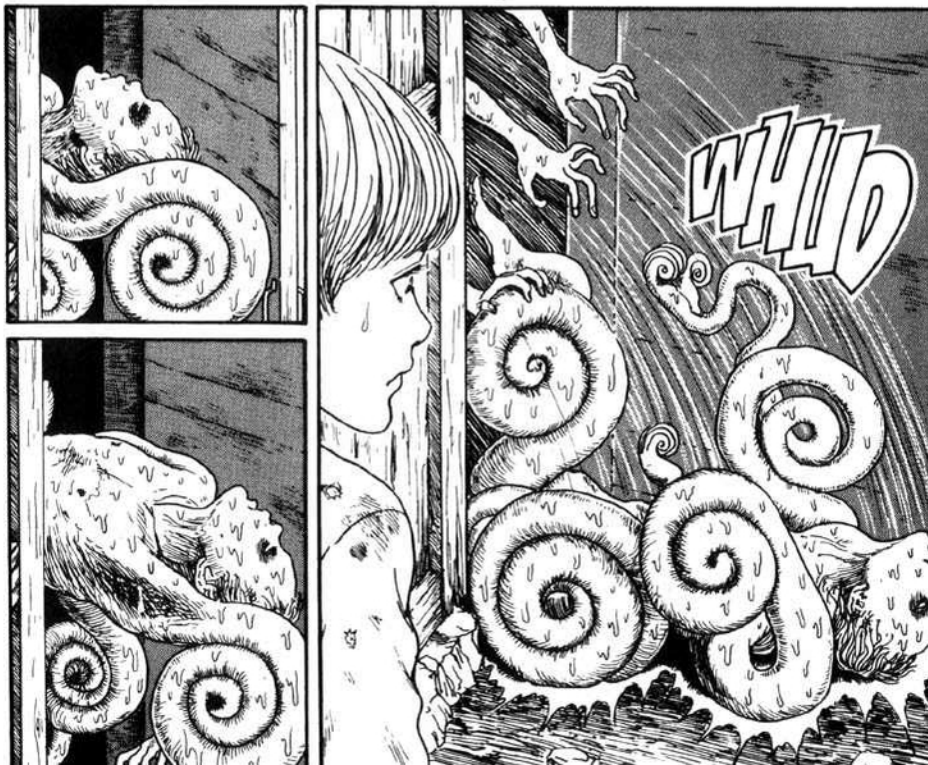

SO THERE ARE PEOPLE LIVING HERE...


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

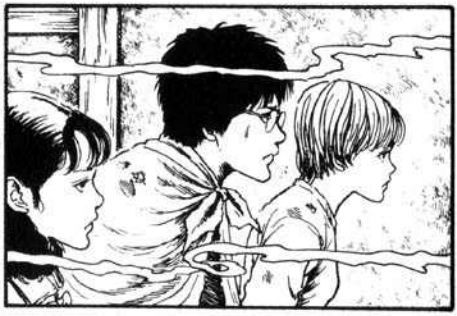

WHIP

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
CLEEK
CLEEK
ZR ZR
MMBL MMBL
MURMUR
CLEEK



WHAT'S THAT SMELL?
IT'S COMING FROM UP AHEAD.

THEY'VE BEEN DEAD A WHILE.
THERE'S CORPSES HERE, TOO.
YOU THERE.
SAY...
THEY'RE DEAD... THEY TURN INTO SPIRALS AND DIE...

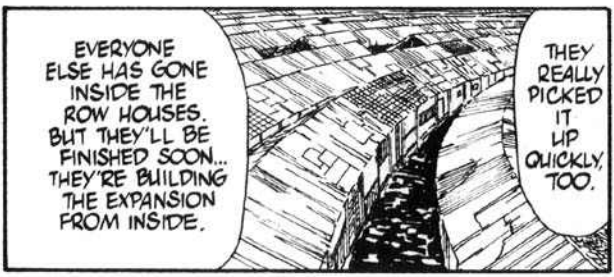
COULD YOU TAKE THOSE ROTTING CORPSES WITH YOU?
THE SMELL IS SO BAD.
Um... MAYBE YOU COULD HELP ME.
I'M LOOKING FOR MY PARENTS.
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR PARENTS?
SHILL
SHILL
SHILL
SHILL
SHILL
SHILL
SHILL

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.

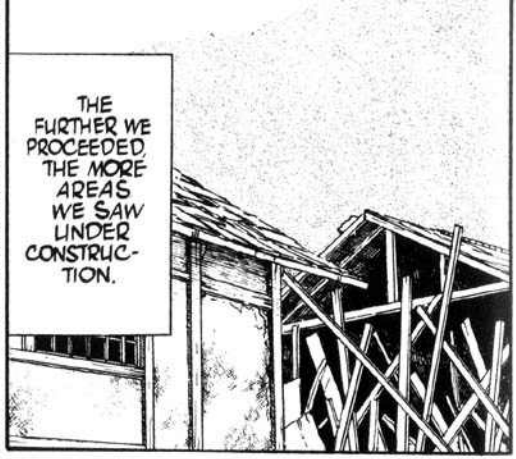
MR. TANI-ZAKI...

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR MY PARENTS. THEY WERE BOTH CAUGHT IN TORNADOES.
MY FATHER IS A POTTER.

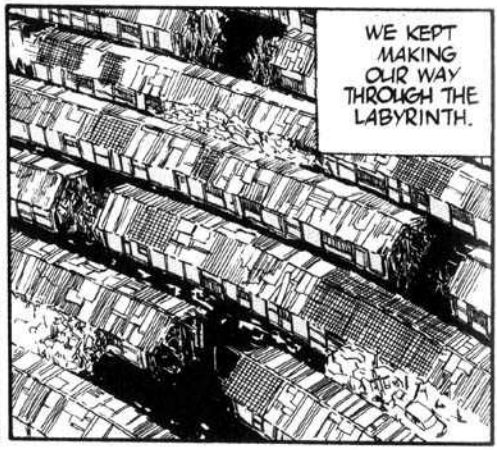
A POTTER ?

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.

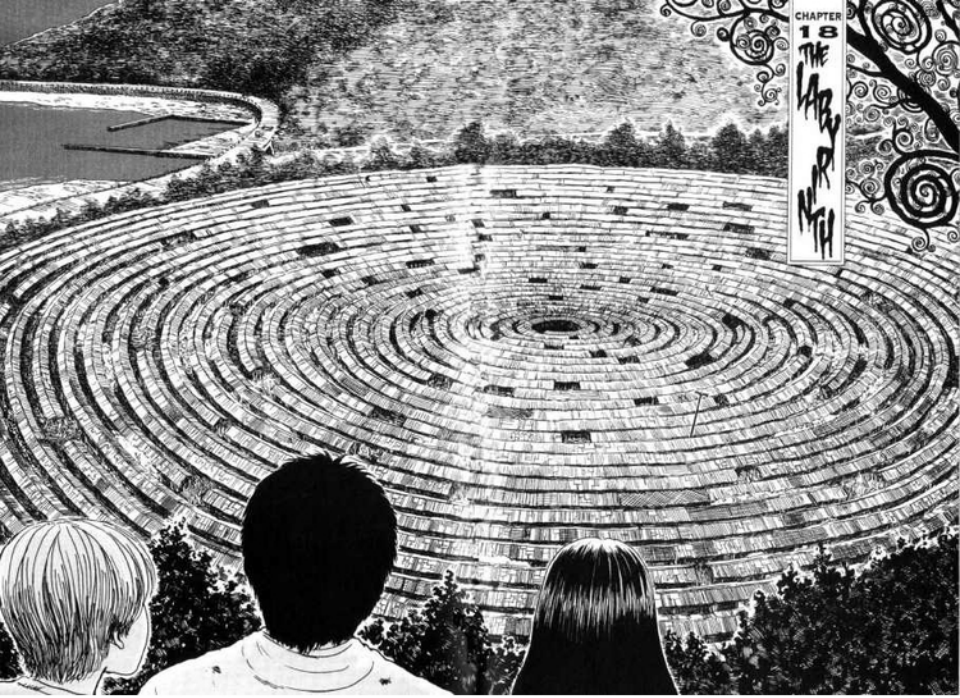
MOST OF ALLEYS WERE BLOCKED BY HEAPS OF RUBBLE OVER WHICH WE WERE TOO EXHAUSTED TO CLIMB.


WE KEPT MAKING OUR WAY THROUGH THE LABYRINTH.

ANOTHER DEAD END.

I WONDER WHERE WE ARE?
THERE'S AN OPENING THIS WAY.

TAP TAP
BAMBAM
SIZZ SIZZ
BAM TAP
CLATTER
I WONDER IF ALL THE BUILDINGS IN TOWN...
...ARE STUFFED WITH PEOPLE LIKE THAT.


CHAPTER
18
THE LABYRINTH

FWOOO
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
SCRRRRR
TUNK
NO!

CHIE!
CHIE!
KIRIE...
BANG
CHIE?!
WE'RE CONNECTED...
WE'RE CONNECTED HERE TOO...
WE'RE ALL CONNECTED...
OVER HERE, TOO...

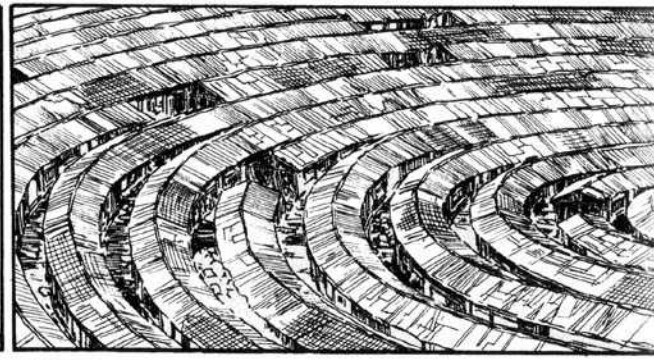
SHRR
SHRR
SHRRRRR
SHRRRRRRR
A RUMBLING SOUND ROARED THROUGH THE ENTIRE TOWN.
SOMETHING WAS MOVING THROUGH THE HOUSES.
SHRRRR
SHRRRR
IT MOVED TOWARDS THE CENTER, TRACING A CIRCLE...
THEN IT WAS GONE.
AND THE ENTIRE AREA WAS DEAD SILENT.
...

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.
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...

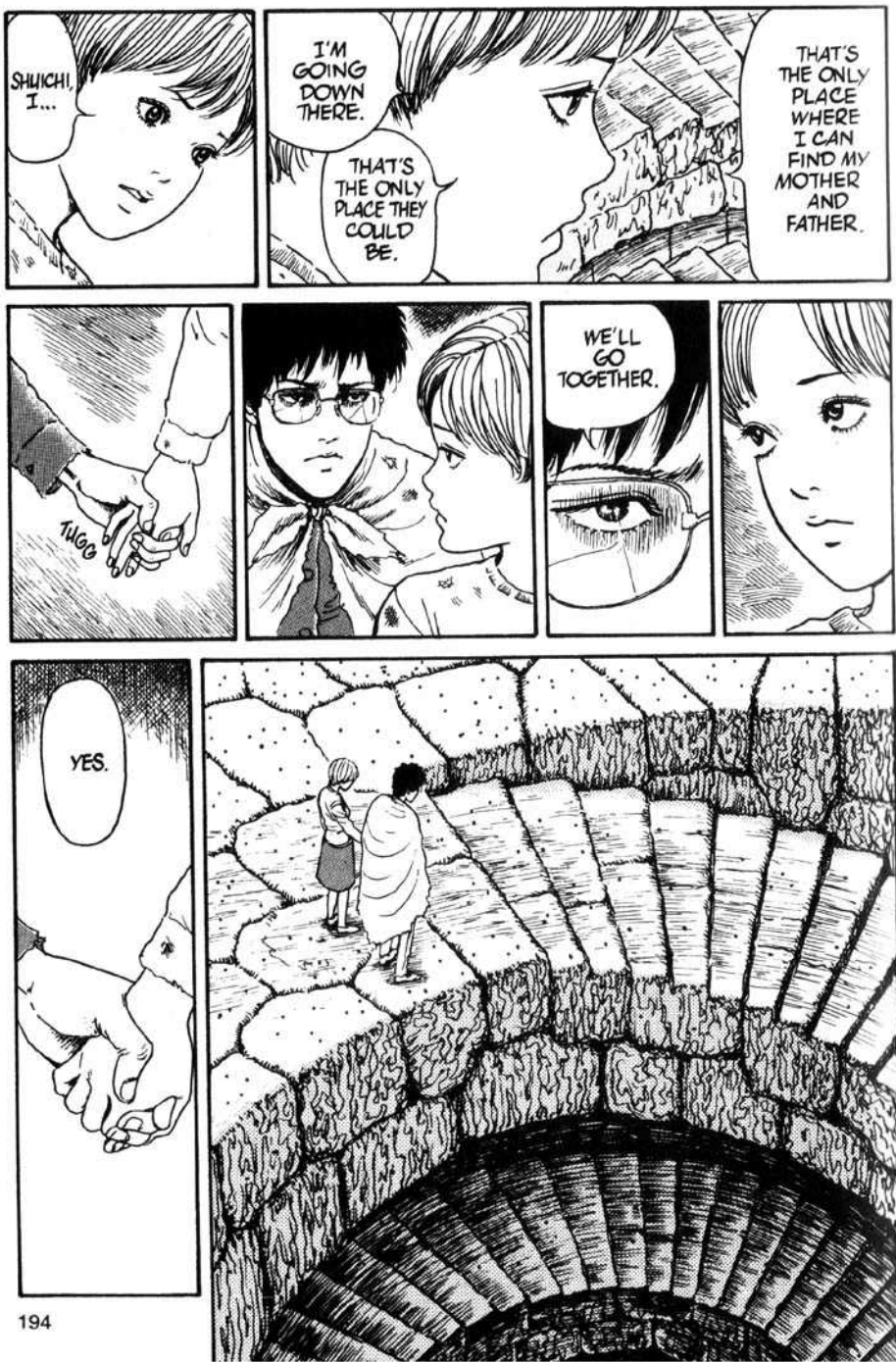
WHERE ARE WE?
THIS ISN'T KURÔZU-CHO.
SHUF
WE ENDED UP SOMEWHERE STRANGE AGAIN.

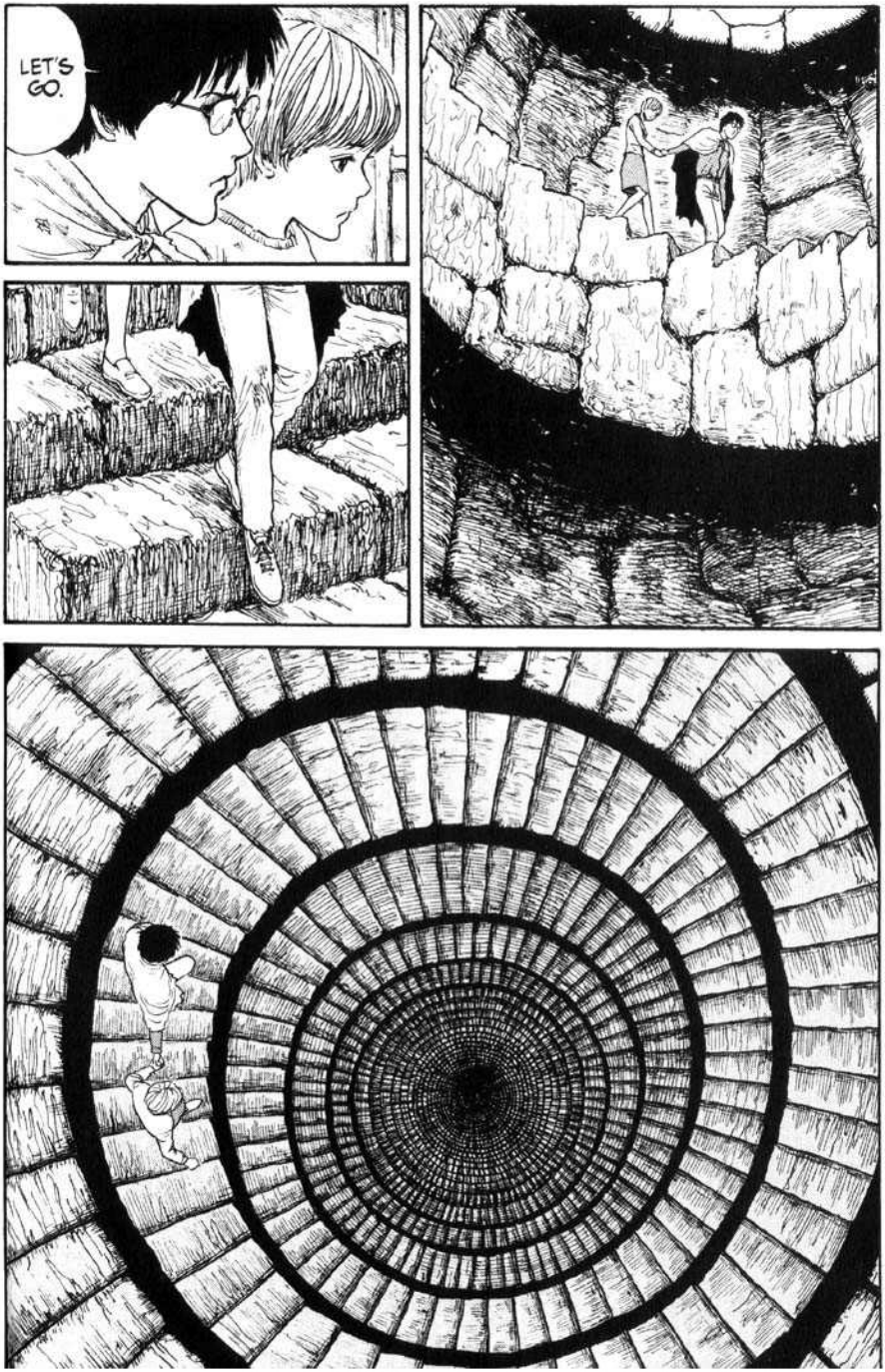


...

NO. THIS IS KURÔZU-CHO. LOOK OVER THERE.

DOESN'T THAT BUILDING LOOK FAMILIAR?
WHAT?


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.
TUGG
WE'LL GO TOGETHER.
YES.

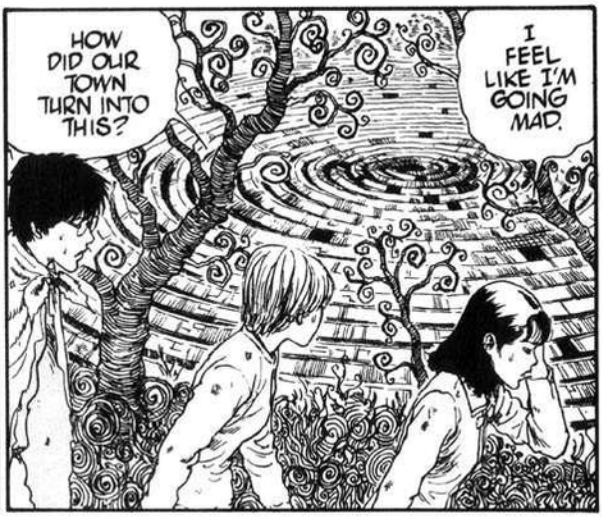

LET'S GO.

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.

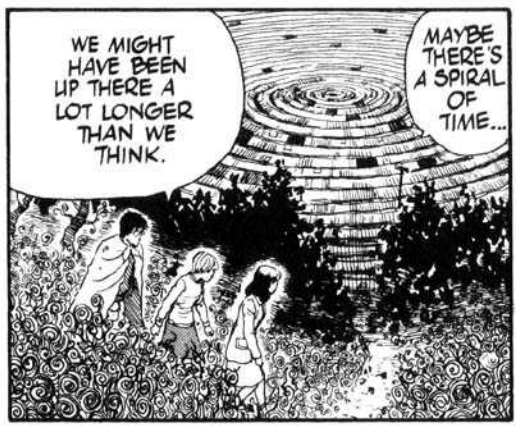
THEY BUILT THEM.
THE SURVIVORS MADE THE TOWN LIKE THIS.
WHAT?!

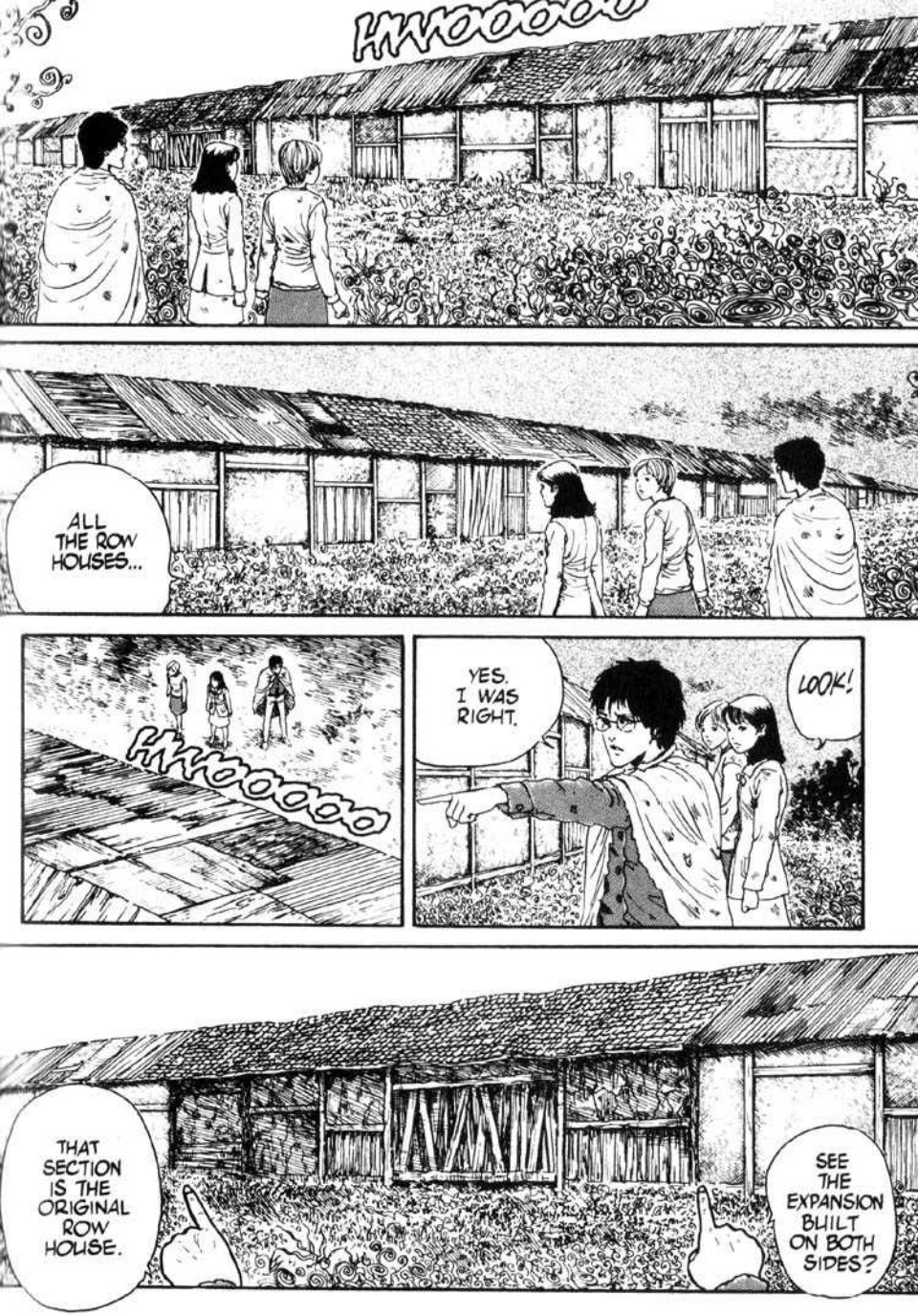
YOU REMEMBER HOW PEOPLE ALL OVER TOWN WERE EXPANDING THE ROW HOUSES?
WITH ALL THOSE ROW HOUSES EXTENDED ON BOTH SIDES, THEY FINALLY ENDED UP CONNECTING LIKE THAT.

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 REMEMBER... I COULDN'T TELL...


WE MIGHT HAVE BEEN UP THERE A LOT LONGER THAN WE THINK.
MAYBE THERE'S A SPIRAL OF TIME...


HHOOOOOO
ALL THE ROW HOUSES...
HHOOOOOO
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 RECON-STRUCTION 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?

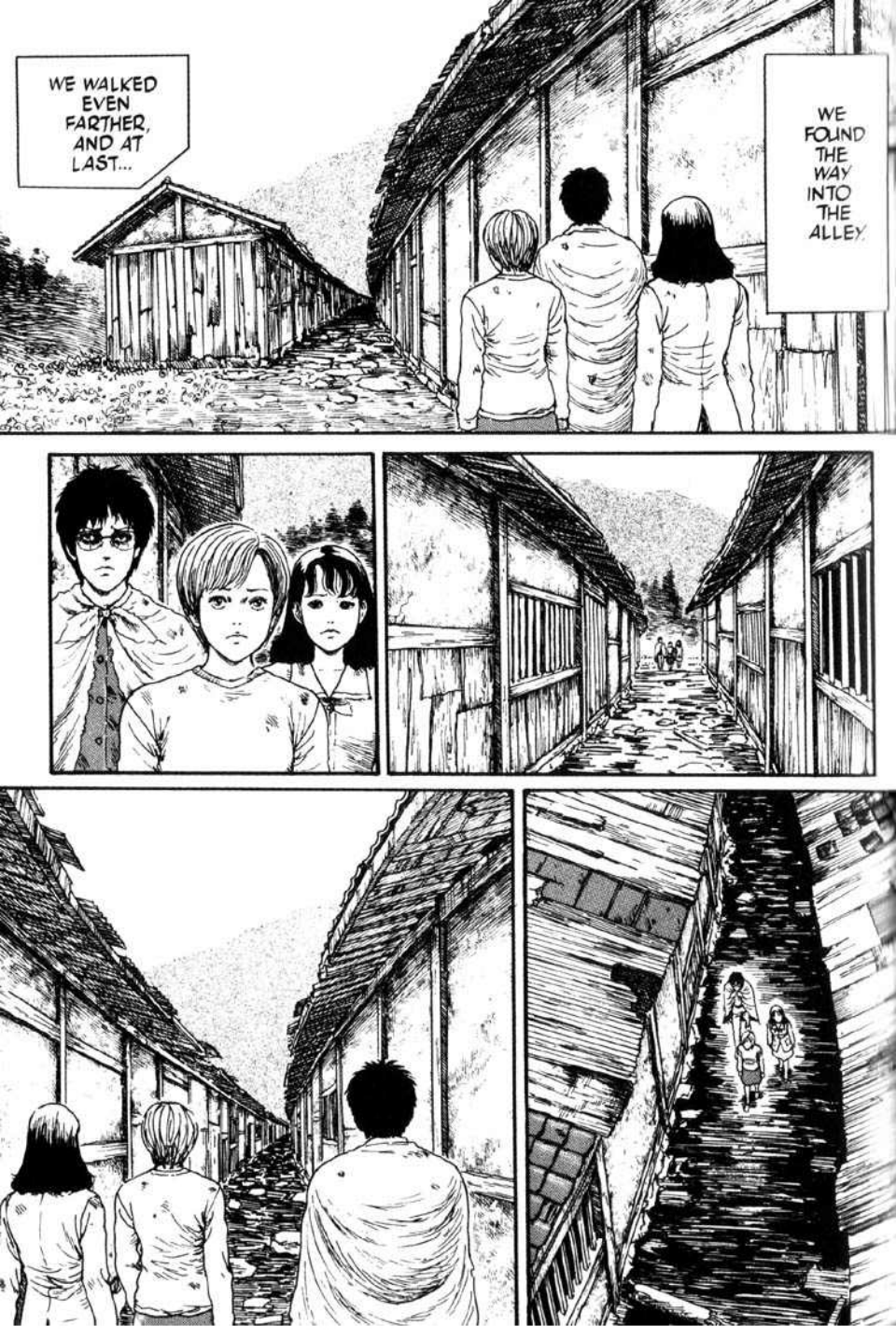
I'M GOING IN THERE...
I HAVE TO FIND MY MOTHER AND FATHER.

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.

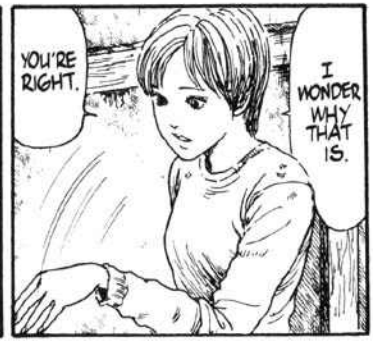
BUT THEY'RE ALSO CURVED IN A SPIRAL PARALLEL TO THE ROW HOUSES.


WE WALKED EVEN FARTHER, AND AT LAST...
WE FOUND THE WAY INTO THE ALLEY.

I DON'T THINK I COULD REMEMBER A STRAIGHT LINE.
IT'S MAKING ME DIZZY ...

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?

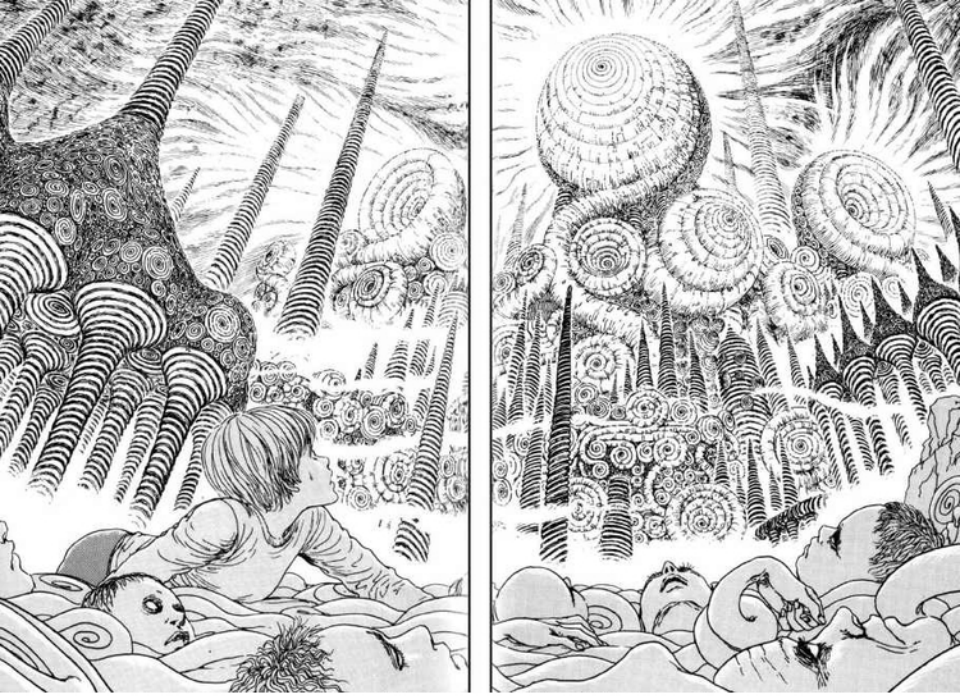
SAFE?
THAT'S HORRIBLE... THINK OF WHERE WE ARE...

CREEK
HOOO
CREEK
CREEK
CREEK

gulp.
GRAB
SLIP

WHUD
WHFF
I CAN'T ...
HOLD ON ANY-MORE ...

GEYAAA
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 KURŌZU-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.

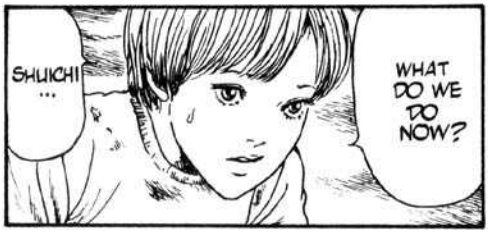
KIRIE...
LOOK AT THE RUINS.

THEY'RE LIKE A LIVING THING.
IT'S LIKE IT HAS A WILL ALL OF IT'S OWN.

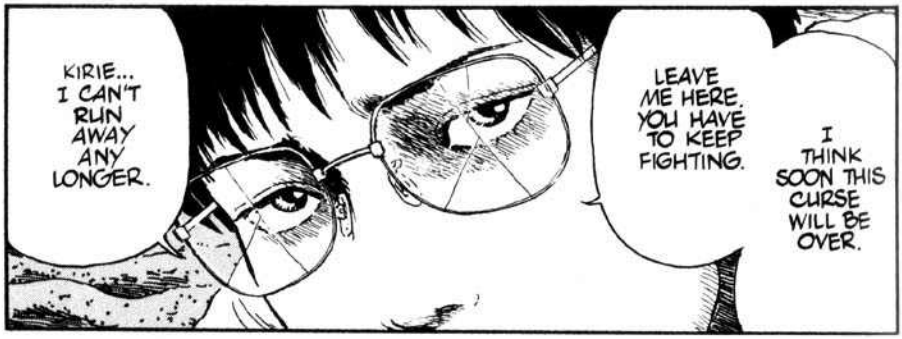
I FEEL LIKE IT'S INVADING ME EVERY MOMENT.
IT'S LIKE IT'S CURSING US FOR BEING UNDERGROUND, HIDDEN FROM ALL THE EYES UP THERE.

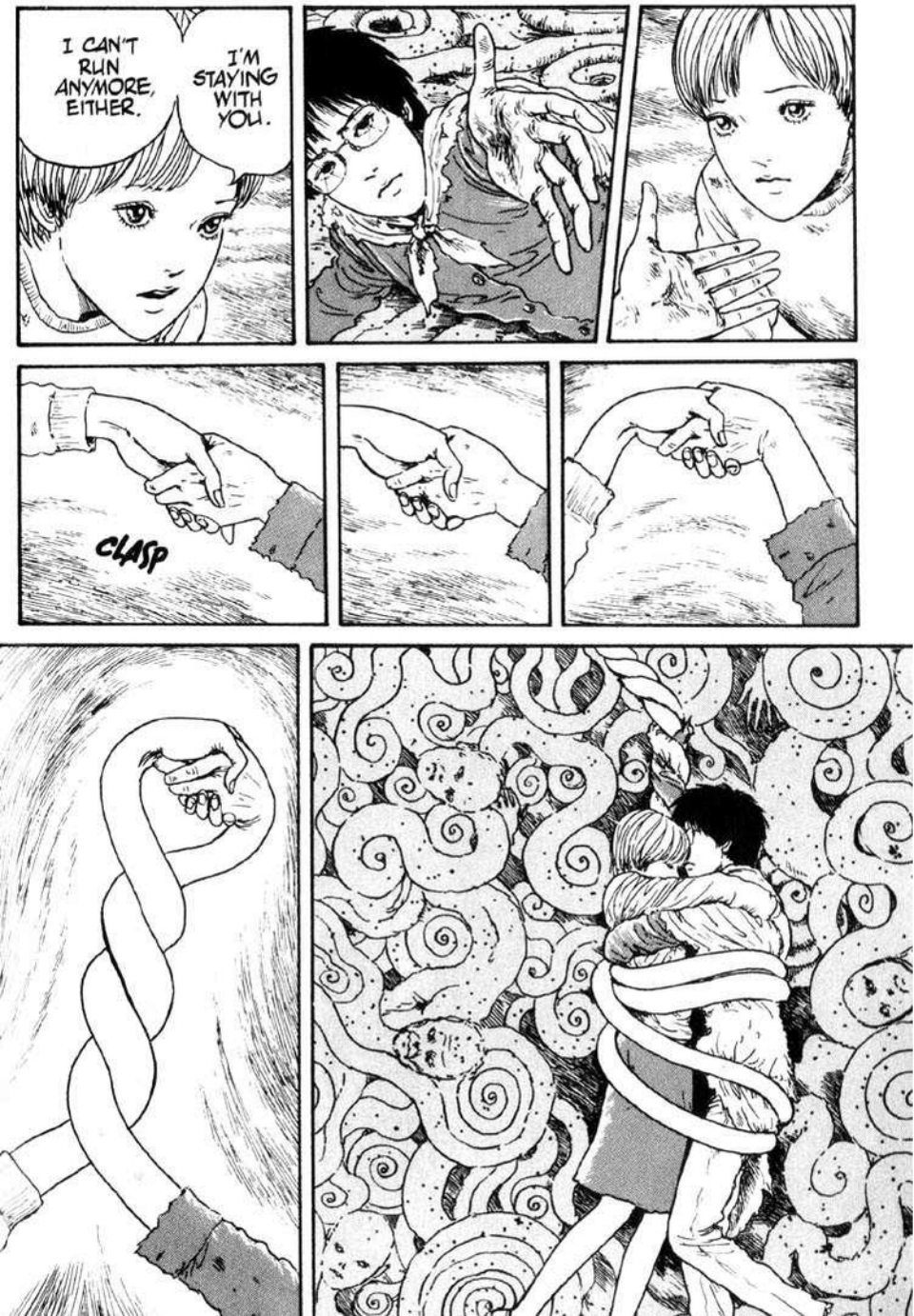
SPIRALS SUCK THINGS IN... THE EYE FOLLOWS THE PATTERN TO ITS CENTER.
I DON'T KNOW WHO... OR WHAT BUILT IT HERE, OR WHY...

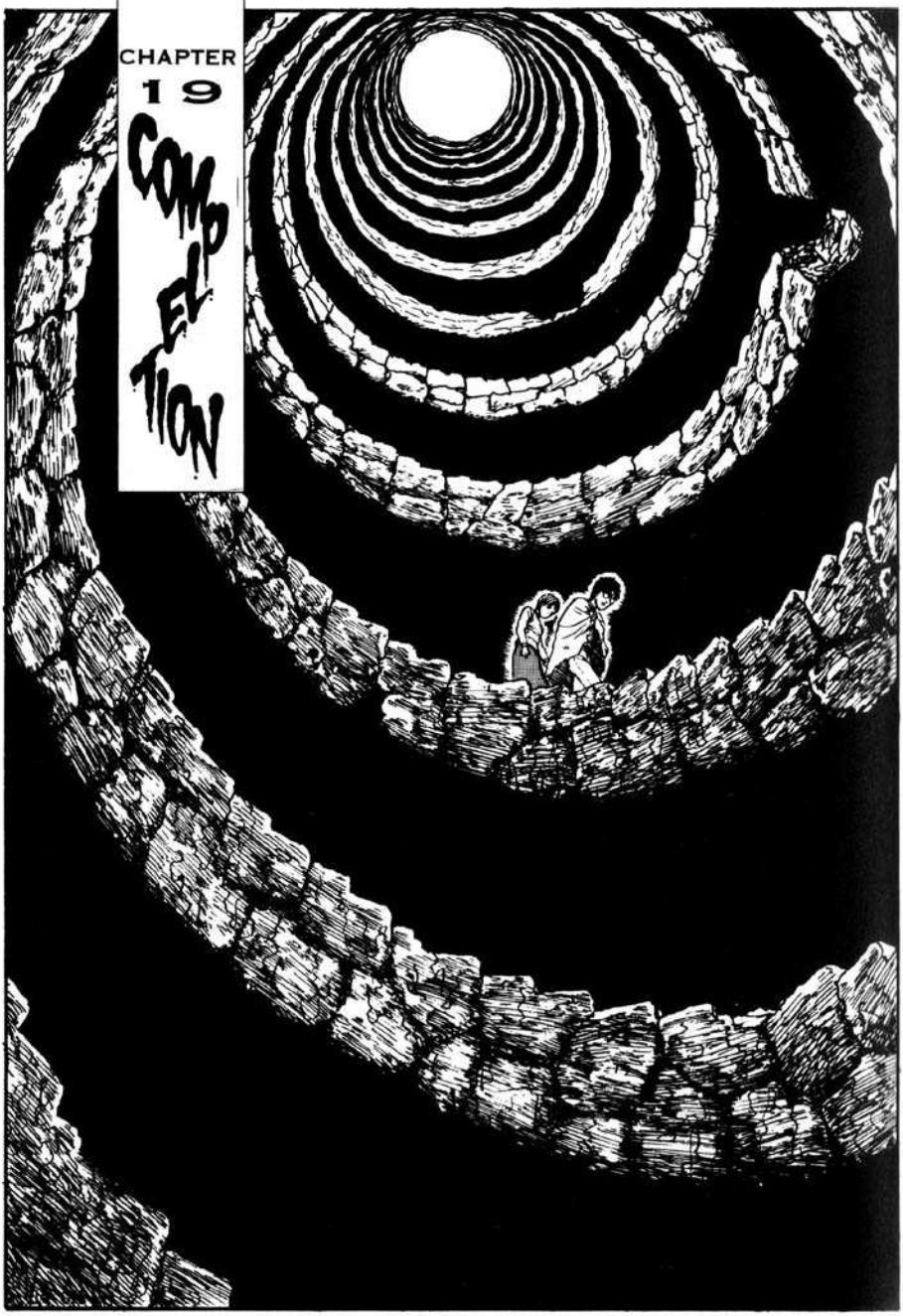
BUT EVERY SO OFTEN, EVERY FEW HUNDREDS, OR THOUSANDS, OR TENS OF THOUSAND YEARS, IT CAN REACH THE PEOPLE ABOVE GROUND. AND EVEN THOUGH ITS BUILDERS ARE GONE...
MAYBE IT'S STILL BUILDING ITSELF.

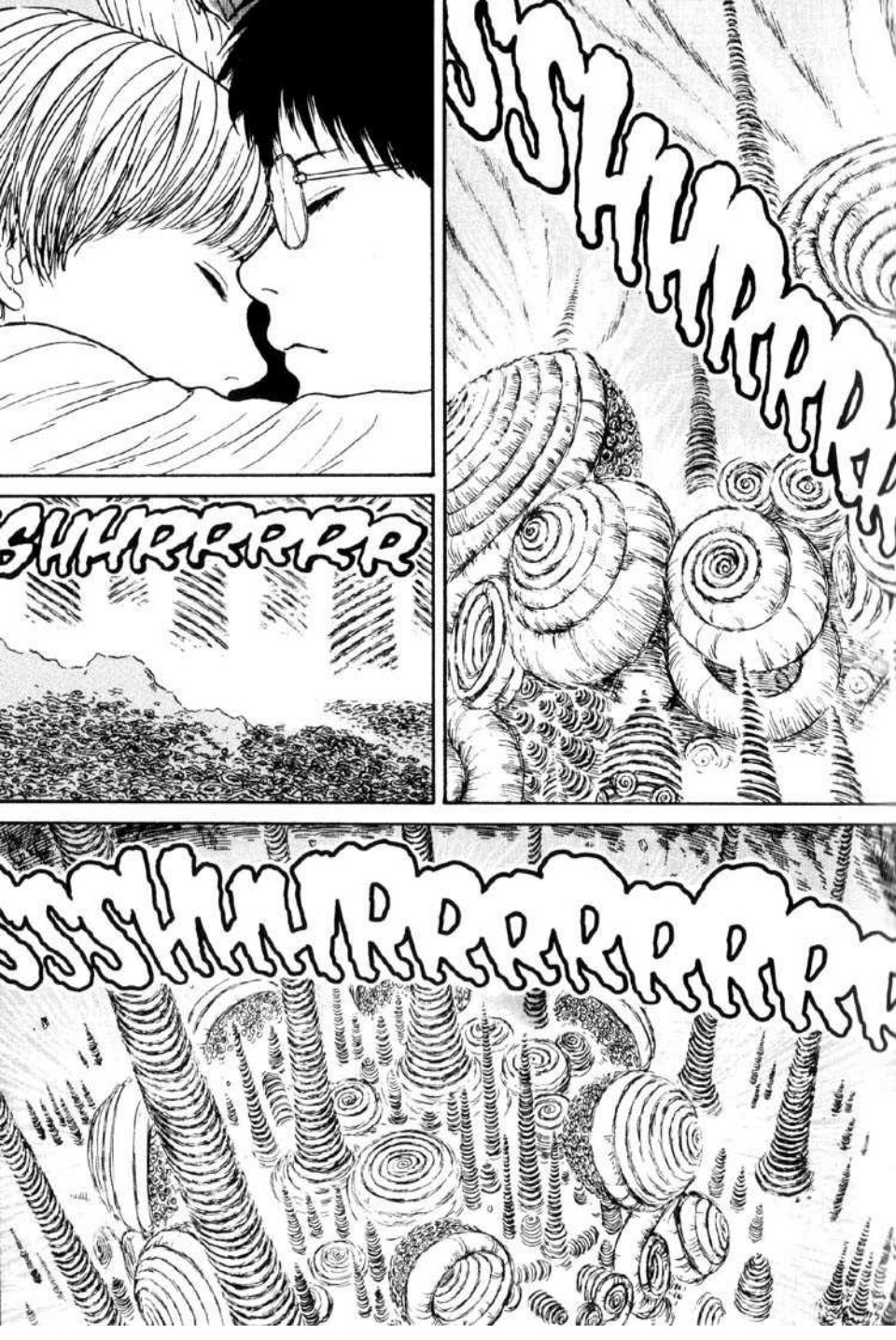

SHUICHI ...
WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

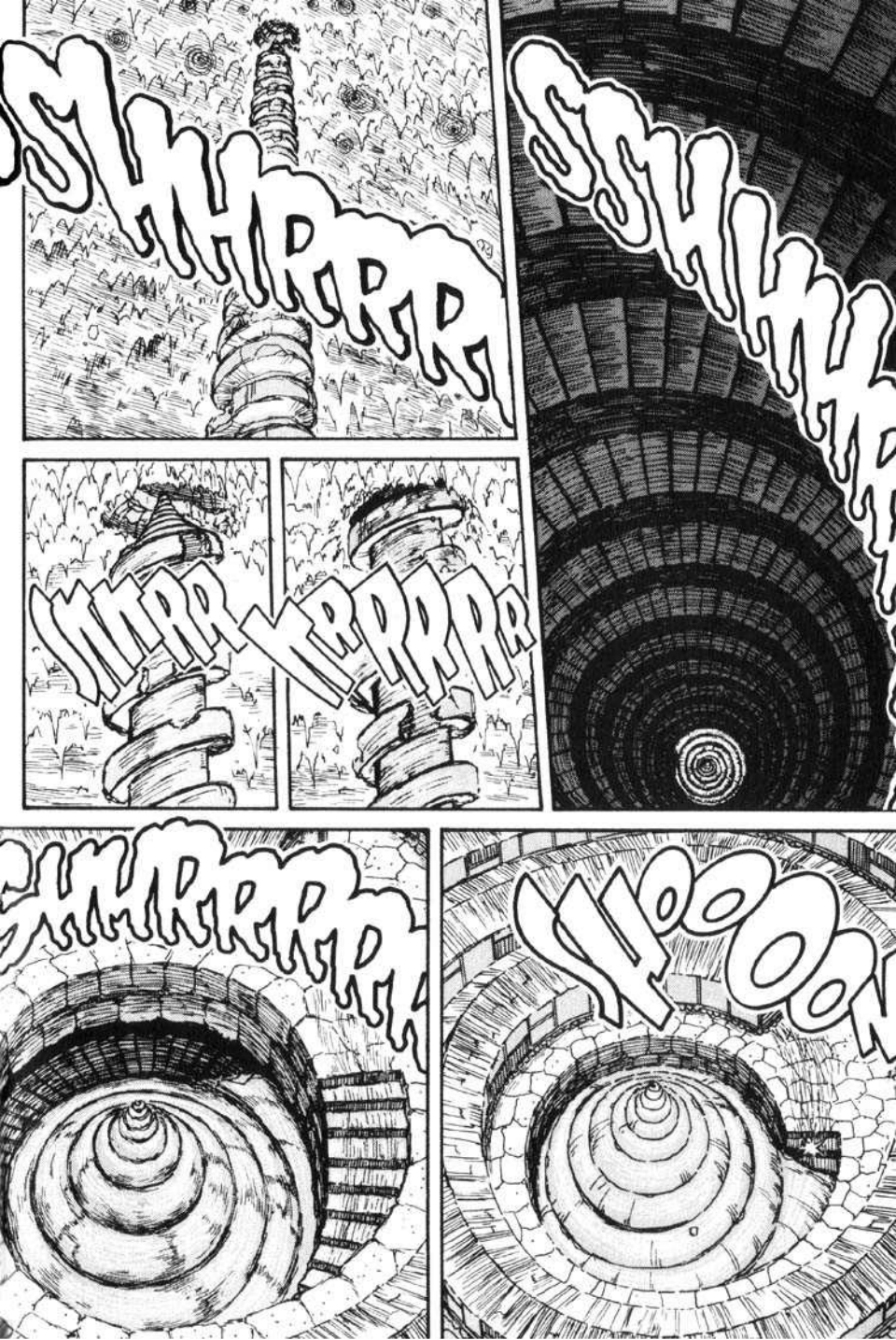
...

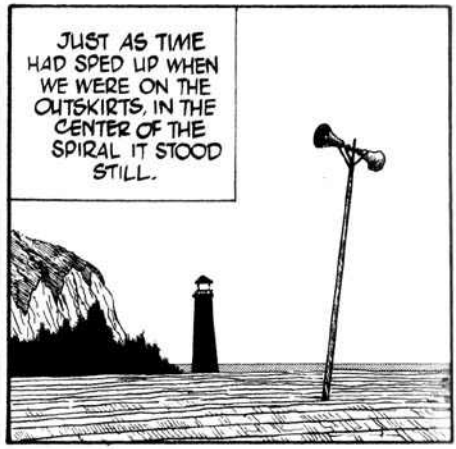

KIRIE... I CAN'T RUN AWAY ANY LONGER.
LEAVE ME HERE. YOU HAVE TO KEEP FIGHTING.
I THINK SOON THIS CURSE WILL BE OVER.


I CAN'T RUN ANYMORE, EITHER.
I'M STAYING WITH YOU.
CLASP


CHAPTER
19
COMPELLTION


SHHRRRRRR
SSSHHRRRRRRRRRR


SHRRRR
SSHHHH
MRR
KRRRRR
SHRRRR
SPOON

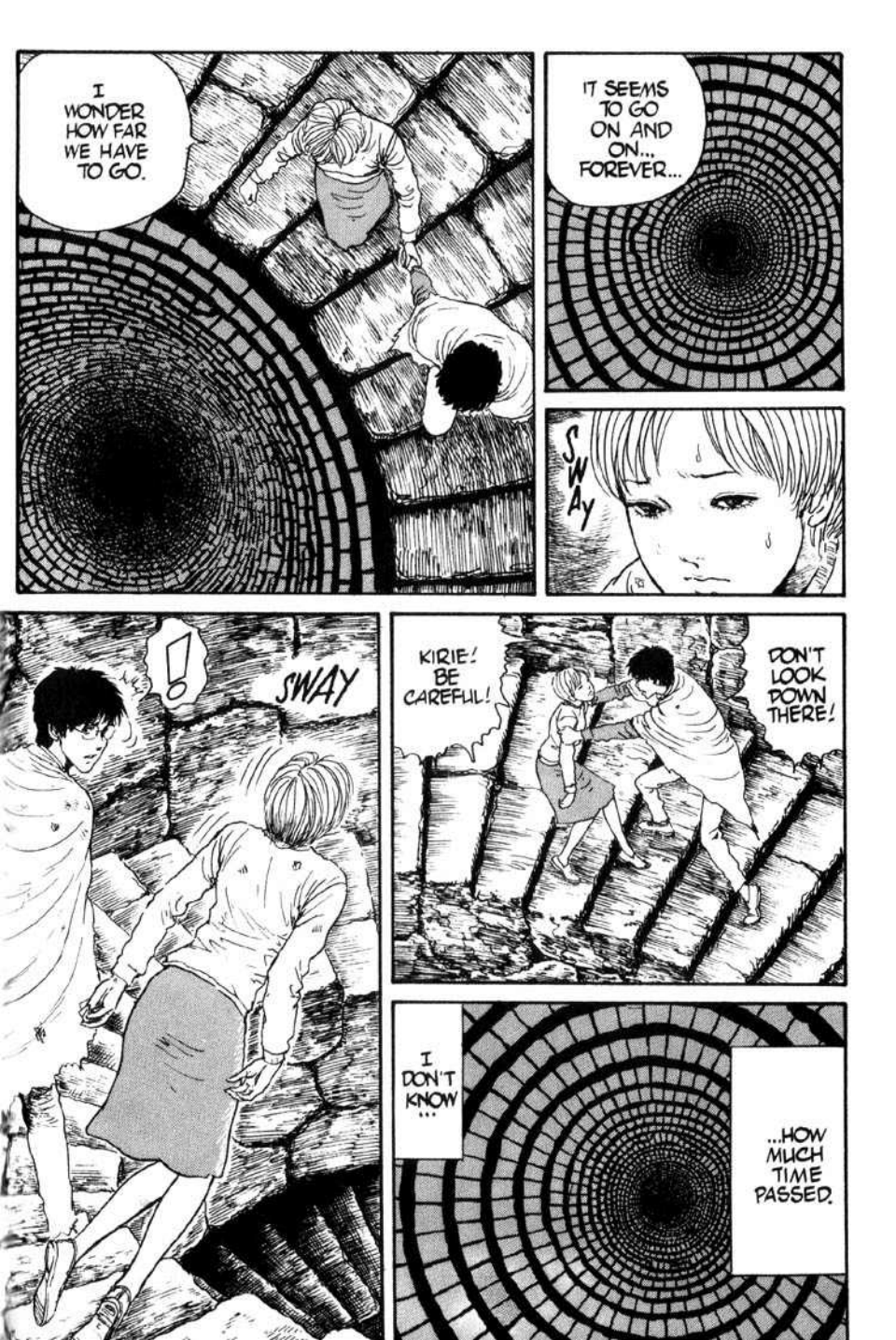


SO THE CURSE WAS OVER THE SAME MOMENT THAT IT BEGAN, THE ENDLESS FROZEN MOMENT THAT I SPENT IN SHUICHI'S ARMS.

AND IT WILL BE THE SAME MOMENT WHEN IT ENDS AGAIN... WHEN THE NEXT KURŌZU-CHO IS BUILT WHERE THE RUINS OF THE OLD ONCE LAY.

WHEN THE ETERNAL SPIRAL AWAKES ONCE MORE.

The End


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...

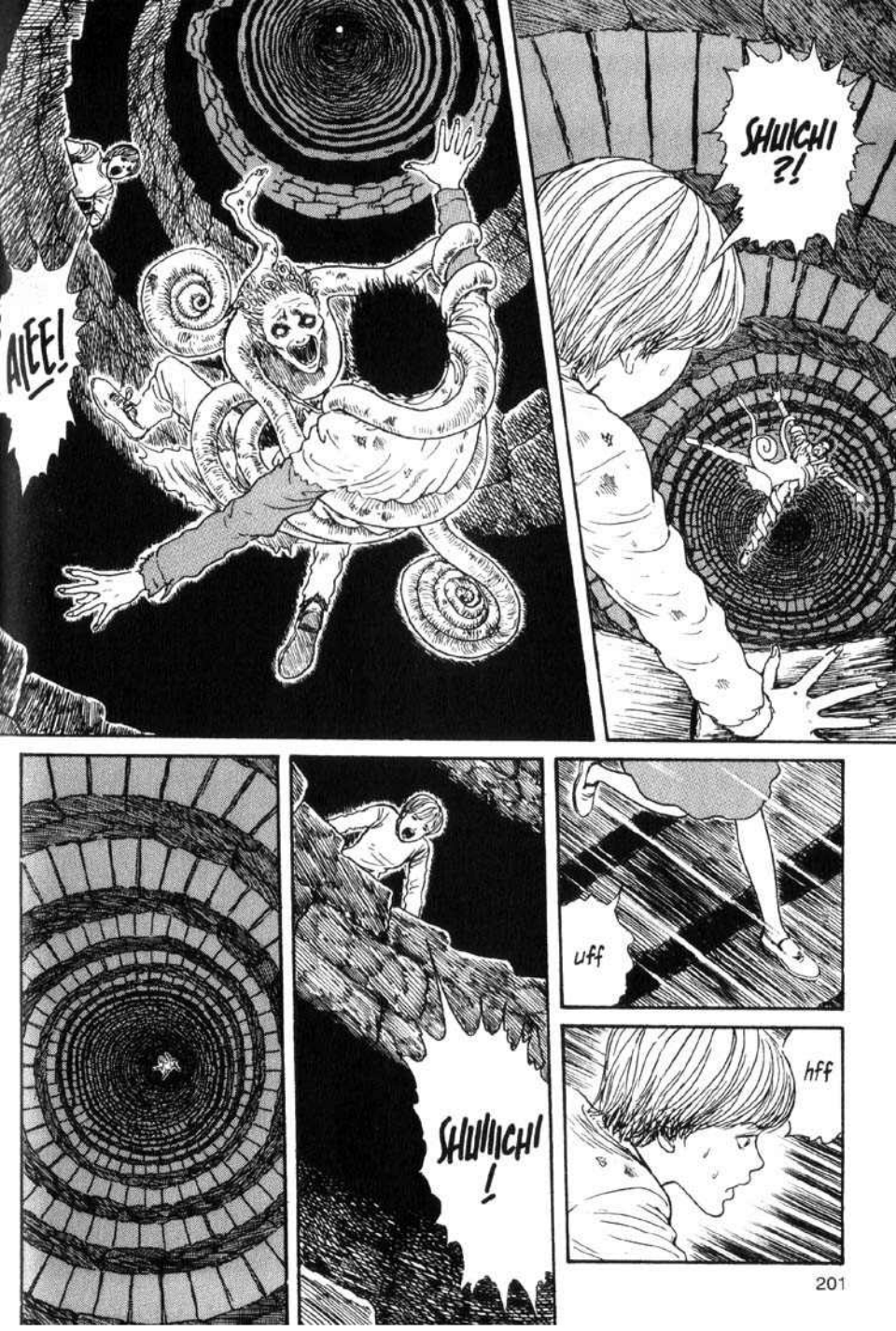
WAIT... TAKE ME WITH YOU...
THERE'S SUPPOSED TO BE SOMETHING WONDERFUL DOWN THERE...

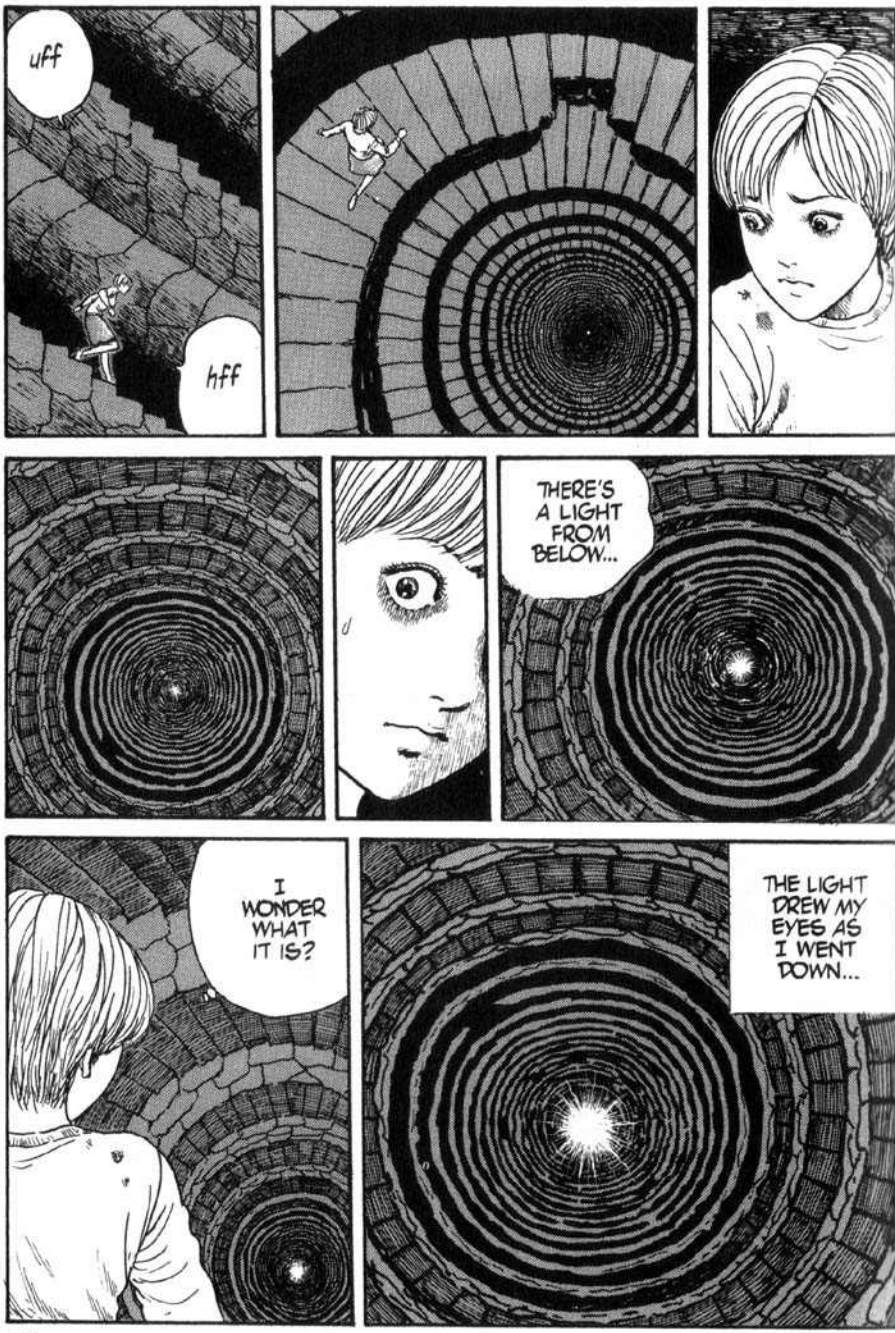
WE CAN'T. WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH STRENGTH TO CARRY YOU.

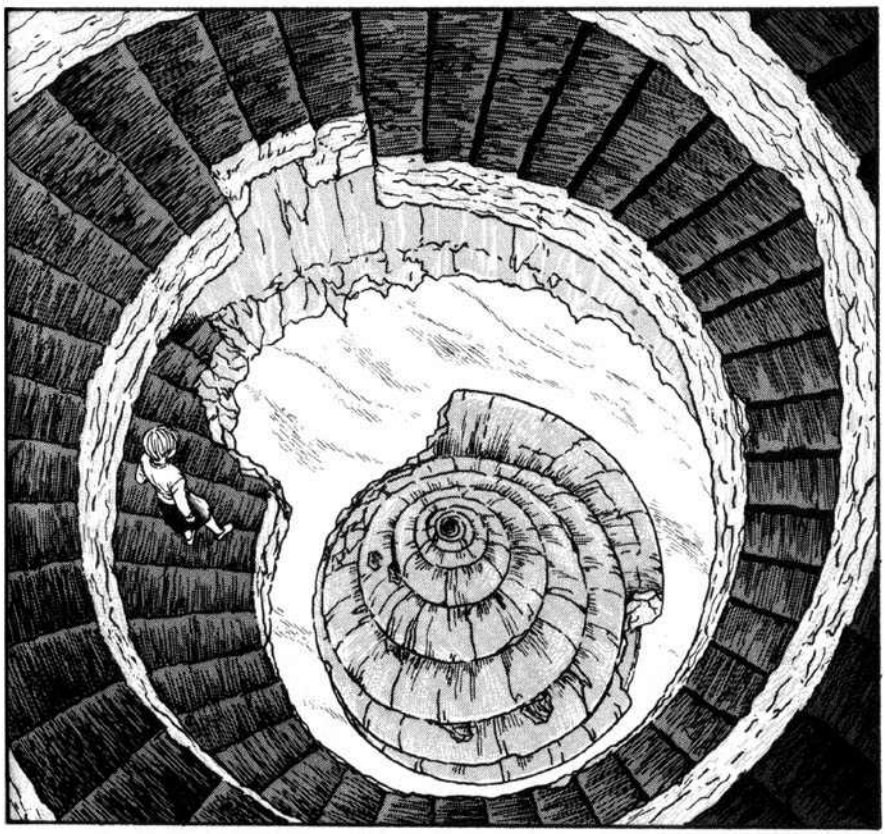
O-OKAY...
COME ON, KIRIE.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
LET GO OF ME!

TAKE ME WITH YOU!
LET GO OF ME!
HOLD
AAGH!
STOP IT! LET GO OF HER!
?!


AIEE!
SHUICHI ?!
uff
hff
SHUUICHI !

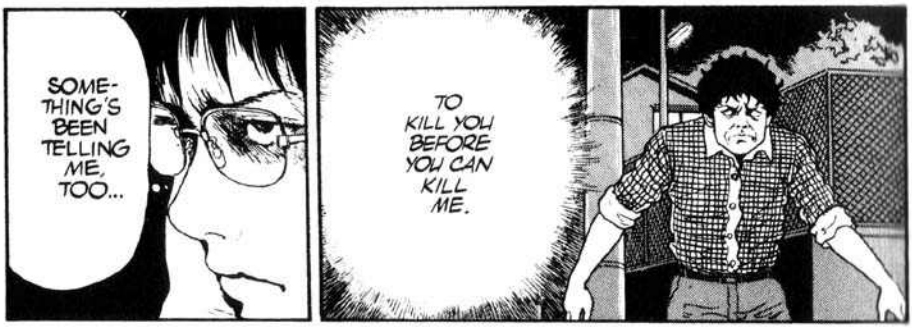

uff
hff
THERE'S A LIGHT FROM BELOW...
I WONDER WHAT IT IS?
THE LIGHT DREW MY EYES AS I WENT DOWN...



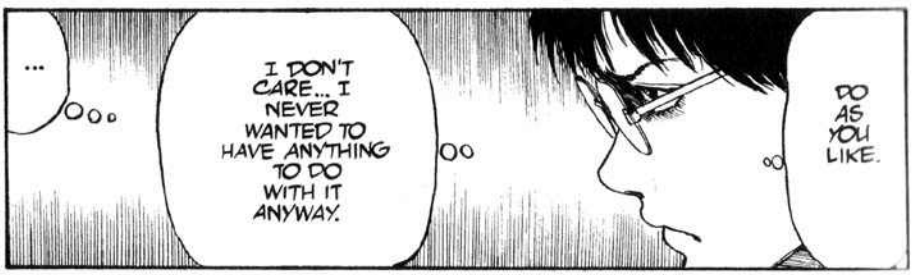
IT'S BEAUTIFUL ...
THE MORE I LOOK AT IT, THE MORE BEAUTIFUL IT GETS...
WH- WHAT IS THIS SENSATION?
SOMETHING'S TRYING TO TELL ME SOME-THING...
AHHH!
AGHH!
AGHH! STOP!
STOP IT!
PLEASE!
TP
TP
uff
hff

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?
SOMETHING IS TELLING ME... SOME ENTITY...
THAT IF I WANT TO BE THE DISCOVERER...
I'VE GOT TO KILL YOU!


SOMETHING'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 UNDER-STAND.
SO NOW I'M THE DISCOV-ERER?

YES... BUT WE BOTH KNOW ...
THAT'S ONLY IF THE INTER-NATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION APPROVES ITS EXISTENCE...

I'M ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN IT WILL! IT WASN'T DISCOVERED UNTIL NOW!

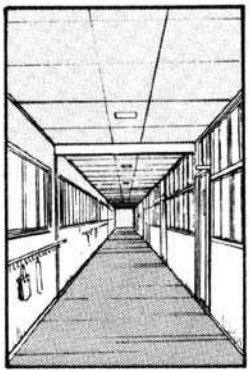
NO ONE'S KNOWN ABOUT IT FOR BILLIONS OF YEARS...
UNTIL I FOUND IT...

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.

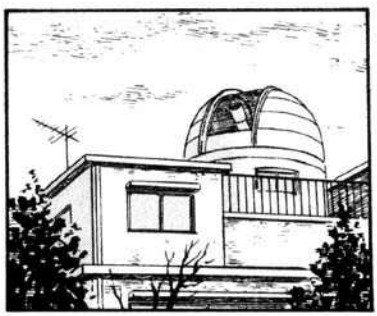
NO, MR. TORINO SAYS IT WAS HIM.

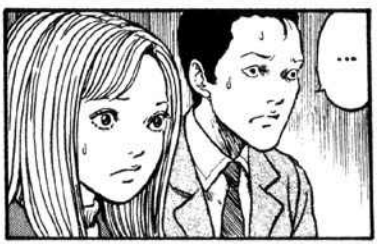


WHAT'S THIS ABOUT MR. TORINO?

IT MUST BE A MISTAKE.
BUT THAT'S WHAT I HEARD...

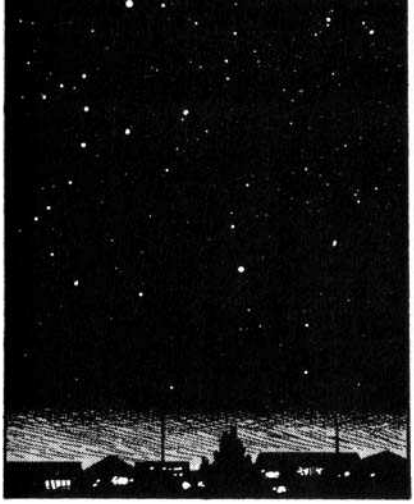
WELL, LET'S GO CHECK WITH HIM TODAY.




...

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!
EEEEEEEEEEE
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

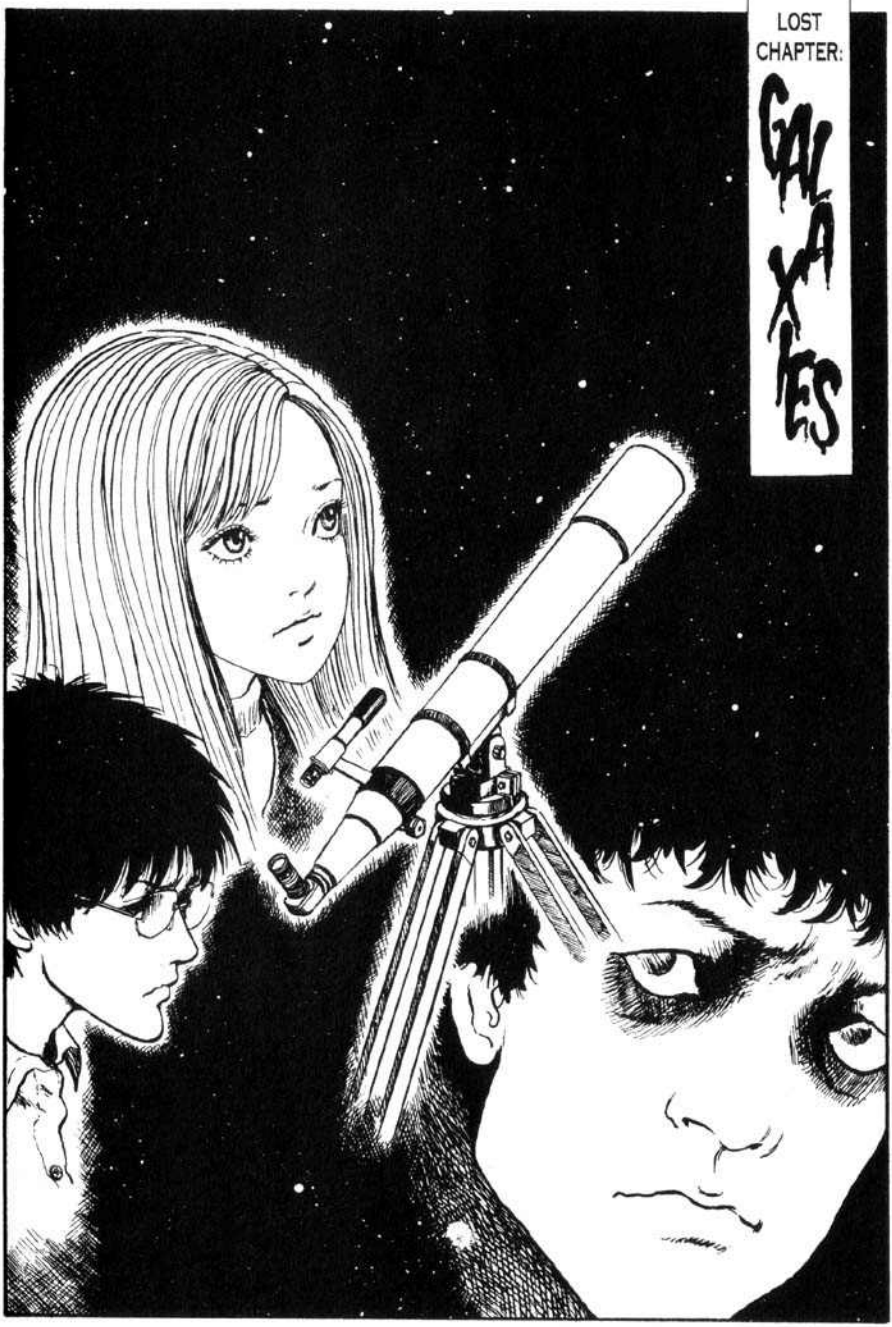
WHAT IS THIS FEELING?
IT'S COMING OVER ME SO SUDDENLY ...LIKE SOMETHING'S INVADING MY THOUGHTS...

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?!

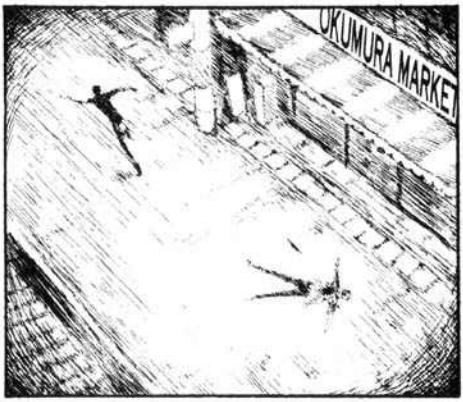
HEY! I WAS THE ONE WHO FOUND THE SPIRAL GALAXY NEXT TO LEO REGULUS!
Oh, YEAH? YOU DON'T HAVE ANY PROOF!
Hm?!

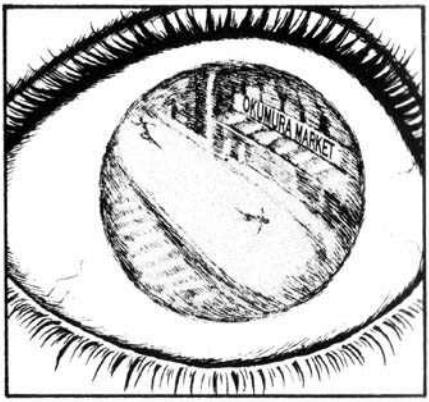
YOU DAMN THIEF! YOU STOLE MY DISCOVERY!
WH-WHAT IS THIS?
I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!
I'M HEARING PEOPLE'S CONVERSATIONS IN MY HEAD!
YOU'LL BE THE DEAD ONE IF YOU SHOW YOUR FACE AROUND HERE. I DARE YOU!
I'M ALREADY HEADED YOUR WAY. YOU'LL SEE.
THE STARS ARE TELLING ME, KILL, KILL...
LIAR! THAT'S WHAT THEY 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!
AAAGH!
KYAA!


LOST
CHAPTER:
GALAXIES

GHGG!

Uggh... nnn...
Hhh heh... YOU BASTARD...


OKUMURA MARKET

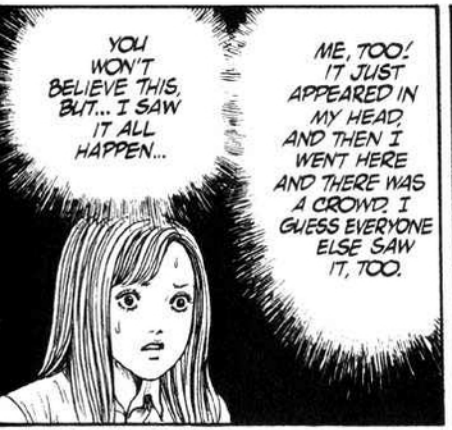

OKUMURA MARKET

THAT WAS IN FRONT OF THE OKUMURA MARKET ...

DID THAT REALLY HAPPEN?

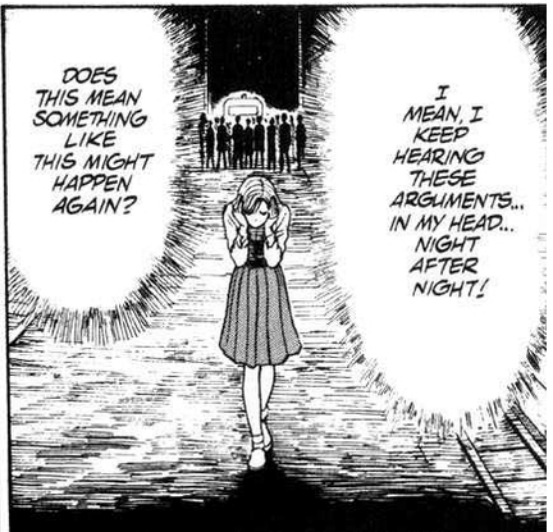
SHFF

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?

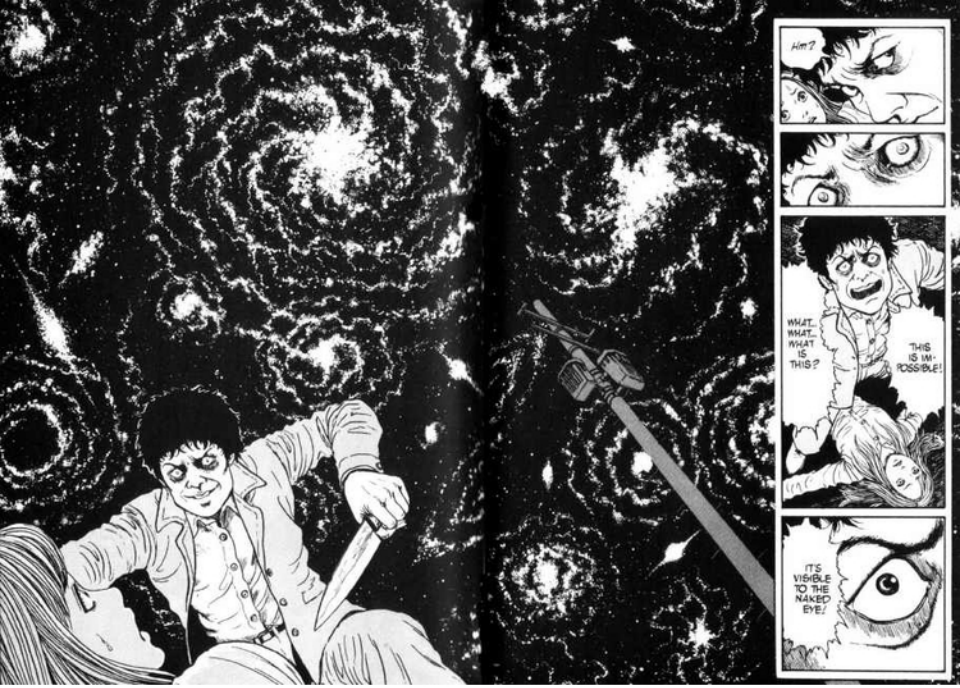

DOES THIS MEAN SOMETHING LIKE THIS MIGHT HAPPEN AGAIN?
I MEAN, I KEEP HEARING THESE ARGUMENTS... IN MY HEAD... NIGHT AFTER NIGHT!

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
TMP
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!
AHAHAHAHA!
SOMEONE PLEASE HELP ME!
TUGG
WHUD
HA HA HA!
NOW IT'S OVER!
ONCE YOU'RE DEAD, I SAW IT FIRST!
DIE!
WHAT...?

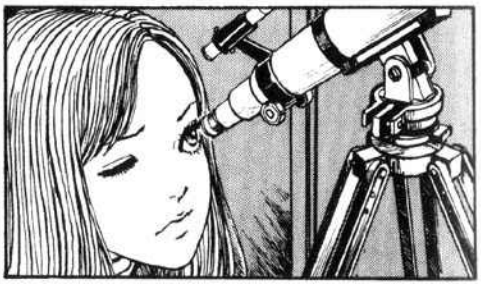

Hm?
WHAT... WHAT... WHAT IS THIS?
THIS IS IM-POSSIBLE!
IT'S VISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE!

THIS IS WONDER-FUL!
THIS IS IN-CREDIBLE!
AND I... I DIS-COVERED IT!
I WAS THE FIRST HUMAN TO SEE!
AM I RIGHT? ANSWER ME, GALAXIES!
IF IT'S "YES," SEND ME A SIGNAL! SEND ME ALL OF THEM! BEAM ME ALL YOUR TRANSMISSIONS AT ONCE!
TELL ME, STARS!
NOW!
ANSWER ME! NOW!

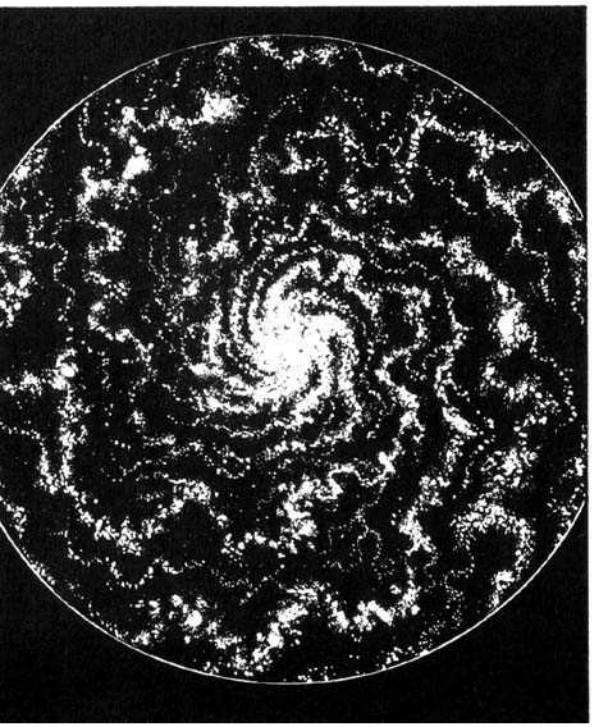
EEE
AHH!
I--I FEEL IT!
EEE EEE EEE EEE
EEE
I--I FEEL IT!
IT'S SO POWERFUL!
EEH
AAA...
GUGUG

EEE
EEE
GHAAA
EEE
GHUO?
KA
TTT!!

LOOK AT THAT, KIRIE.
CAN YOU SEE IT?



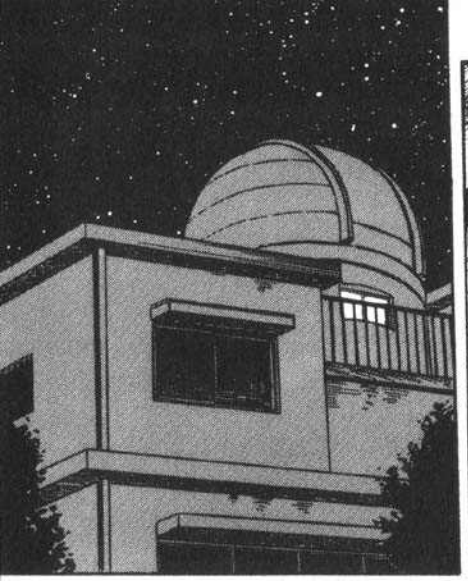
WOW, YOU'RE RIGHT.
I SEE IT, SHUICHI.

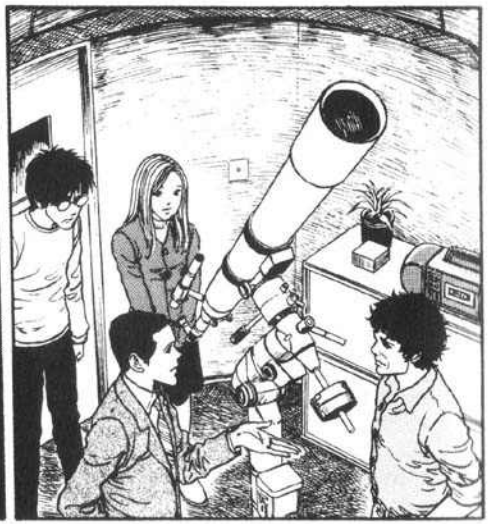


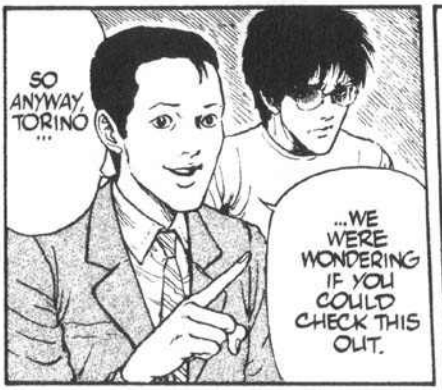
I FOUND IT LAST NIGHT.
THIS GALAXY ISN'T LISTED IN ANY BOOK.

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 KURŌZU-CHO WERE CONFIRMED.
THEY WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN IN THIS TOWN AS WELL.
THE END

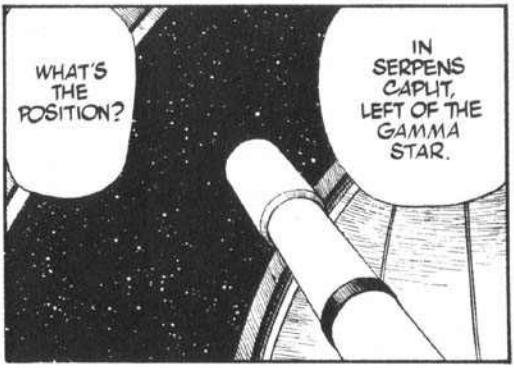
THE NEXT DAY...
YES, MR. YOKOTA.
WHAT? YOU DISCOVERED A NEW GALAXY?
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE ...NOW A COMET, MAYBE...
BUT AN ENTIRE GALAXY? YOUR TELESCOPE WOULD HAVE TO BE PRETTY STRONG.
BUT SHUICHI'S REALLY GOOD AT ASTRONOMY. I'M SURE HE HASN'T MADE A MISTAKE.
PLEASE COME AND TAKE A LOOK!
Hmm...
ALL RIGHT. 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.



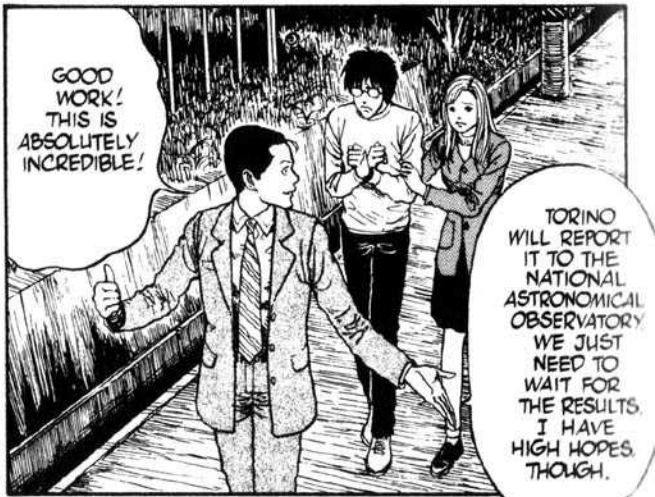


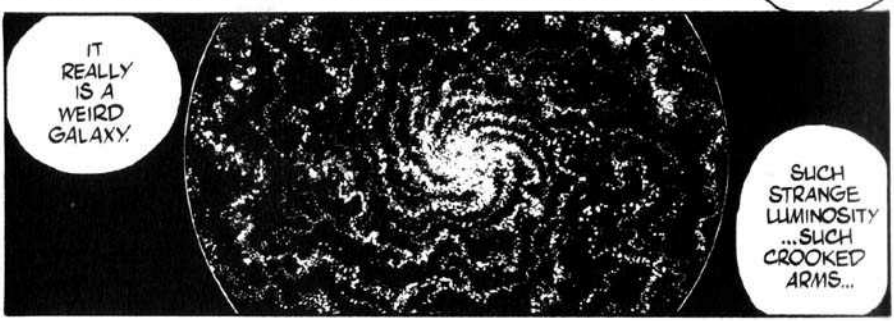

SO ANYWAY, TORINO ...
...WE WERE WONDERING IF YOU COULD CHECK THIS OUT.

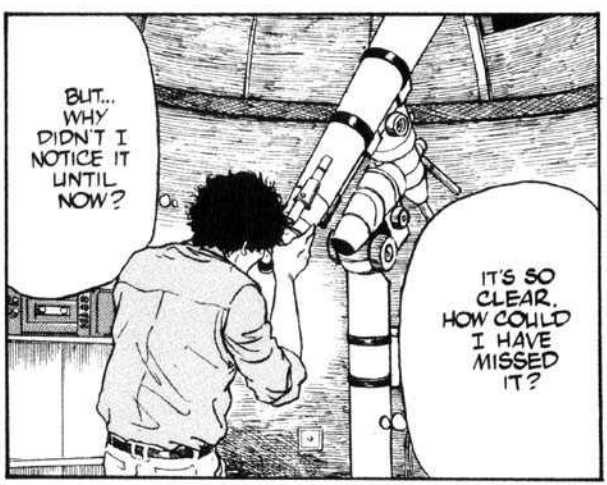
I SEE... YOU'RE SHUICHI, RIGHT?
WHY DON'T WE TAKE A LOOK THROUGH MY TELE-SCOPE?


WHAT'S THE POSITION?
IN SERPENS CAPUT, LEFT OF THE GAMMA STAR.

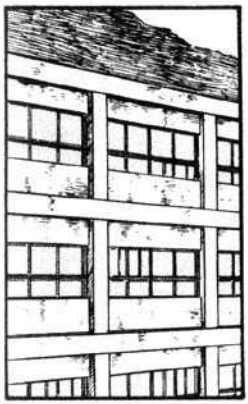
...
WHAT?!
YOU'RE RIGHT!
I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS SPIRAL GALAXY BEFORE!
REALLY? THEN IT'S TRUE?!
HOLD ON... WE SHOULDN'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS.
WE'LL HAVE TO CHECK WITH THE NATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY TO MAKE SURE IT ISN'T REGISTERED ALREADY.
BUT... IF IT'S TRUE, THEN THIS IS A REAL FIND.
THAT'S RIGHT.
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...

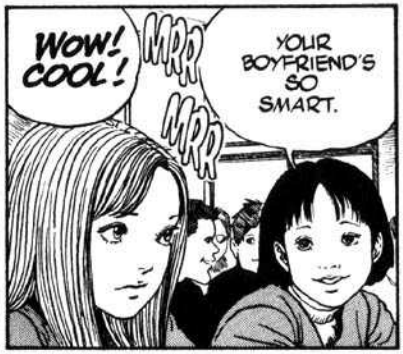

BUT... WHY DIDN'T I NOTICE IT UNTIL NOW?
IT'S SO CLEAR. HOW COULD I HAVE MISSED IT?

IF THIS IS A NEW DISCOVERY ...
THEN IT'S ABSOLUTELY AMAZING!

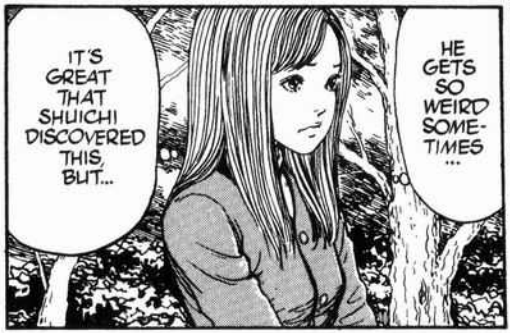


...SO ONE OF KIRIE'S FRIENDS MIGHT HAVE MADE A GREAT DISCOVERY!
I WAS SO EXCITED I COULDN'T SLEEP!

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 CONSTELLATION?


IT'S GREAT THAT SHUICHI DISCOVERED THIS, BUT...
HE GETS SO WEIRD SOME-TIMES ...

HE WAS SCARED.
I'D BETTER GO CHECK ON HIM...

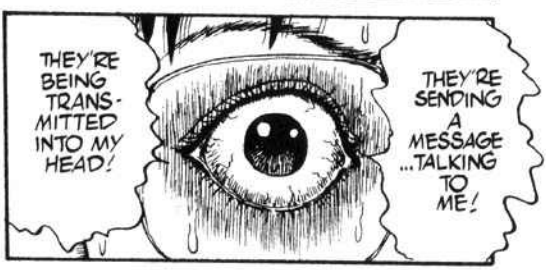
SHIVER SHIVER

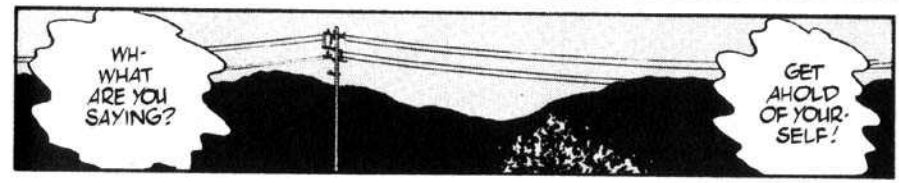
WHAT'S WRONG, SHUICHI?

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!

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hff

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hff