

福本伸行

AKAGI ● Nobuyuki Fukumoto
Kindai Mahjong Comics

第 **6** 卷

Kindai
mahjong
Comics



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逆理の闘牌

闇に降り立った天才

逆理の闘牌

6

福本伸行

TAKE
SHOBO

闇に降り立った天才

近代麻雀コミックス ● 竹書房

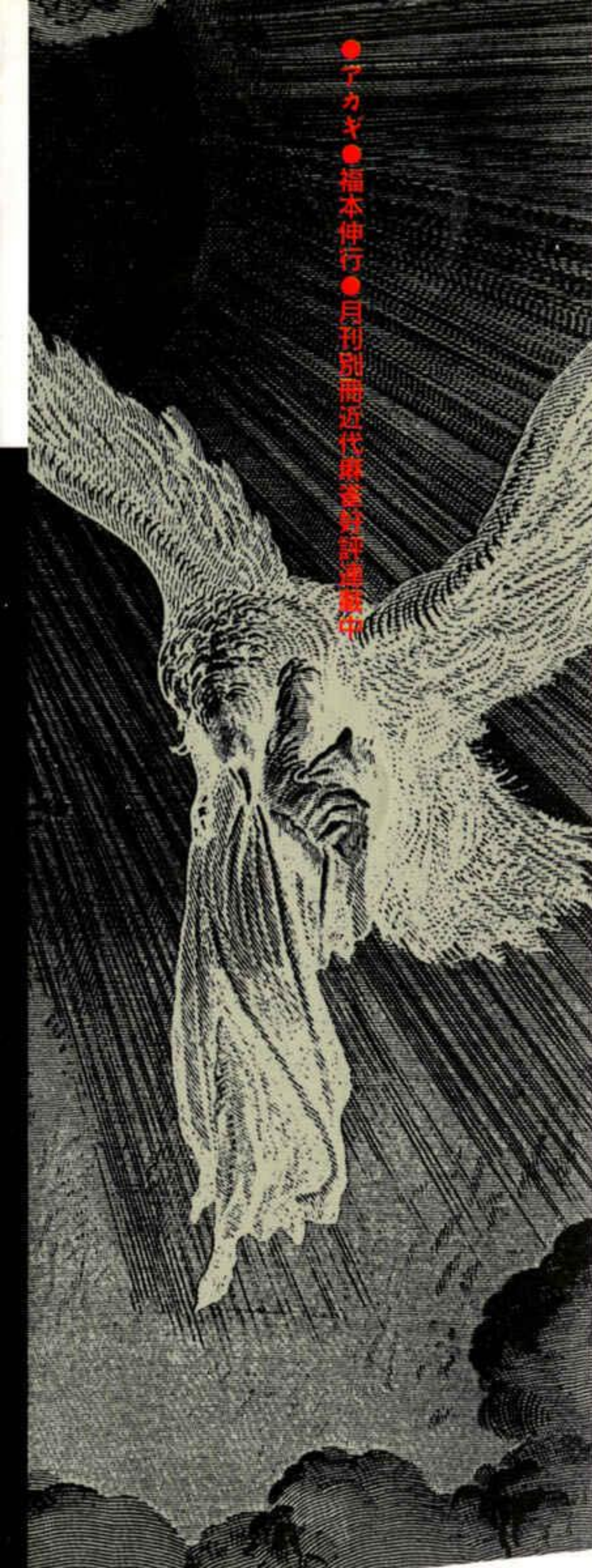
福本伸行

第 **6** 卷

漆黒の暗闇から錨豹は
肺腑を衝く叫びを上げる。
髪は逆立ち、肌は粟立ち
全身から炎を噴かん
ばかりに殺氣立つ。
その燃え立つがたまりを
冷やかに見つめる目があった。――彼の名はアカギ。
後に神域の男と呼ばれ、裏社会に君臨した男――あのアカギだった。



●アカギ●福本伸行●月刊別冊近代漫画批評連載中



アカギ

福本伸行

AKAGI ● Nobuyuki Fukumoto
Kindai Mahjong Comics

第 ⑥ 卷

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⑥

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アカギ

第 ⑥ 卷

近代麻雀コミックス

第⑥巻

麻雀

福本伸行

● TAKE SHOBO ●

赤木しげる



ニセアカギ

現在は川田組の代打ち。並外れた記憶力と雀力を持つ。詳細は不明。



治

アカギと同じ工場で働いていた少年。アカギに惚れ込み、ついてきた。

登場人物紹介

前巻までの あらすじ

昭和33年。生命を賭けたヤクザとの麻雀勝負に敗れつつあった南郷を助けた13歳の少年。彼こそ後に裏の麻雀界に君臨することになる赤木しげるであった。特に、盲目の雀士・市川を破った夜は、伝説と化した。しかし、直後に赤木は姿を消し、5年余りが経った……。昭和39年。川田組長は、不良刑事・安岡が売り込んだニセアカギと本物の赤木の対決を画策するが、対局途中であったニセアカギと藤沢組代打ち・浦部の勝負を一瞥した赤木は、浦部の方が格上だと言いつつ。果たして、予言通り浦部は、どちらかがトップをとるまで終わらない倍プッシュ勝負へと強引に持ち込んだ。ニセアカギを見限った川田組長は、赤木に代打ちを依頼。東場を治に打たせ、卓についた赤木だが、点差はまだ22500点……！



浦 部

藤沢組の代打ち。凡庸を装って倍プッシュ勝負を画策したベテラン。



川田組長(左)と石川

石川は伝説の夜に居合わせた一人。ニセアカギの真贋の判定もした。

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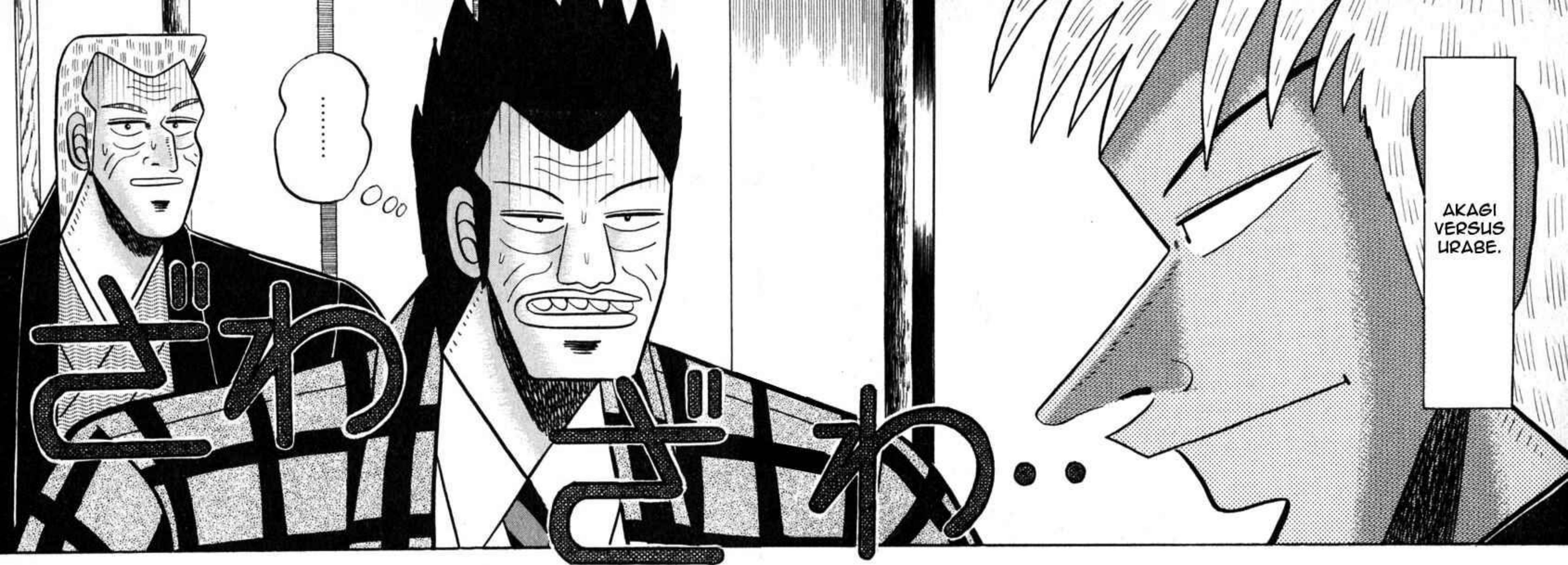
●別冊近代麻雀平成7年4月号、平成7年12月号所載

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CHAPTER 46 - CROSSROADS

第46話 岐路



AKAGI
VERSUS
URABE.



IF HE CAN BUMP
THIS UP TO A
HANEMAN
TSUMO...

AND EVEN
WORSE, EVEN
IF I CAN AVOID
GIVIN' 'IM A
DIRECT HIT...

IF I DEAL INTO
HIS HAND AS
IT IS NOW,
HE'LL TAKE ALL
OF IT BACK

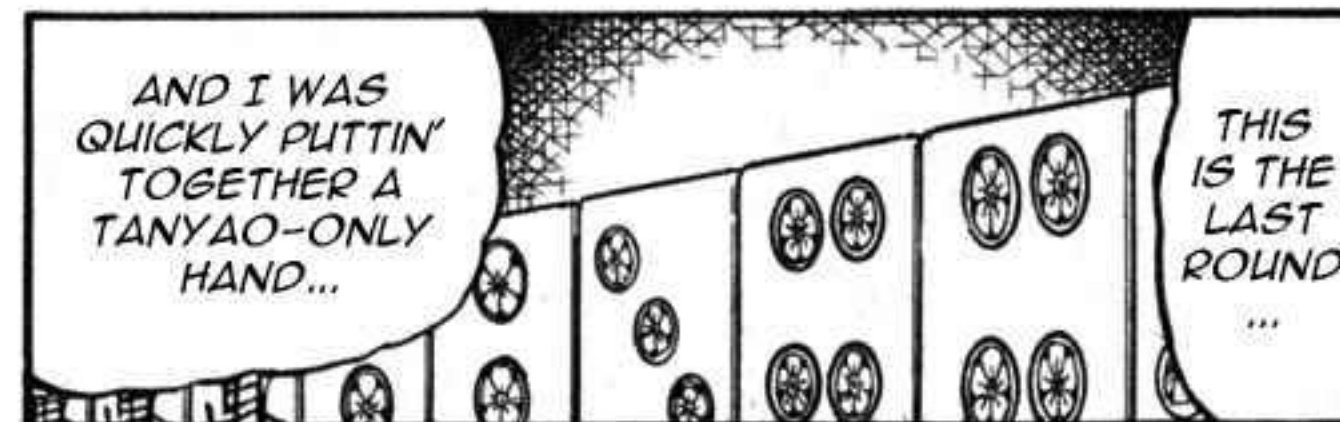
EVEN THOUGH I'M
IN THE LEAD AS
FAR AS POINTS
GO, THIS 25,500
POINT DIFFERENCE
MEANS...

IT'D BE
A COME-
BACK.



URGH
...

DAM-
MIT
...



AND I WAS
QUICKLY PUTTIN'
TOGETHER A
TANYAO-ONLY
HAND...

THIS
IS THE
LAST
ROUND
...



WITH JUST
THAT IN HIS
HAND, HE
ALREADY
HAS A
MANGAN
...

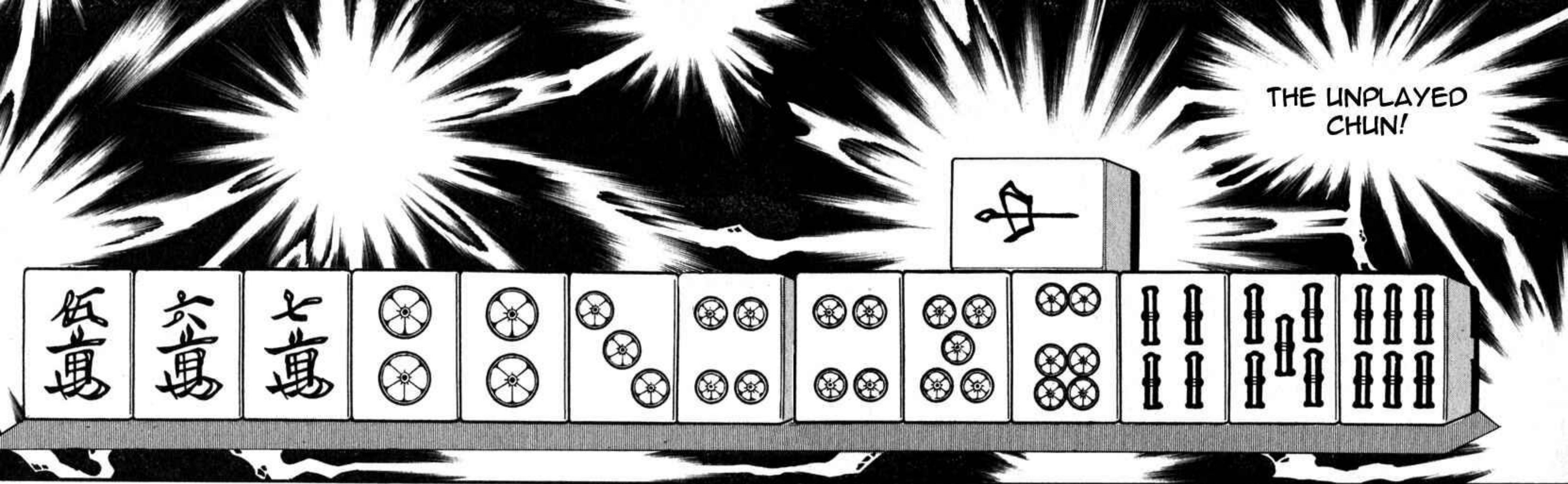
YOU'VE
GOTTA
BE
SHITTIN'
ME...

HE'S
AT
DORA
4...!

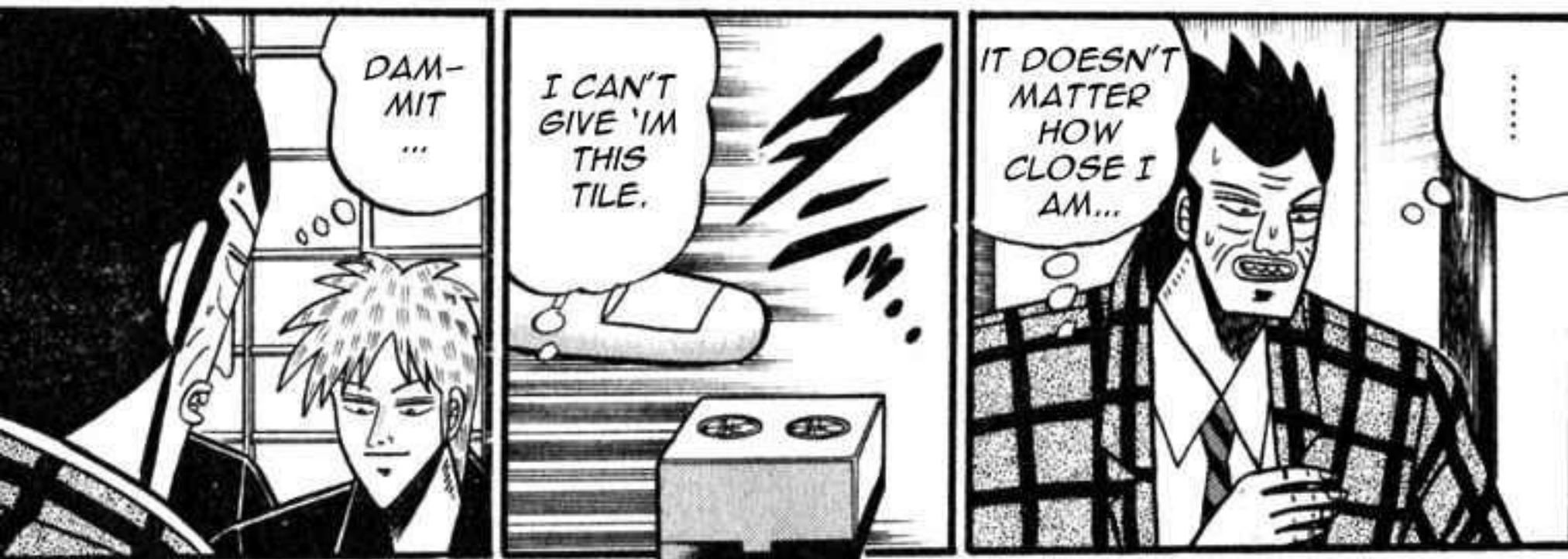
BUT THEN
HE MAKES
THIS CLOSED
KAN OF THE
NEW DORA
...



WHAT
THE
HELL
IS
THIS
...



THE UNPLAYED
CHUN!



DAM-
MIT ...

I CAN'T
GIVE 'IM
THIS
TILE.

IT DOESN'T
MATTER
HOW
CLOSE I
AM...



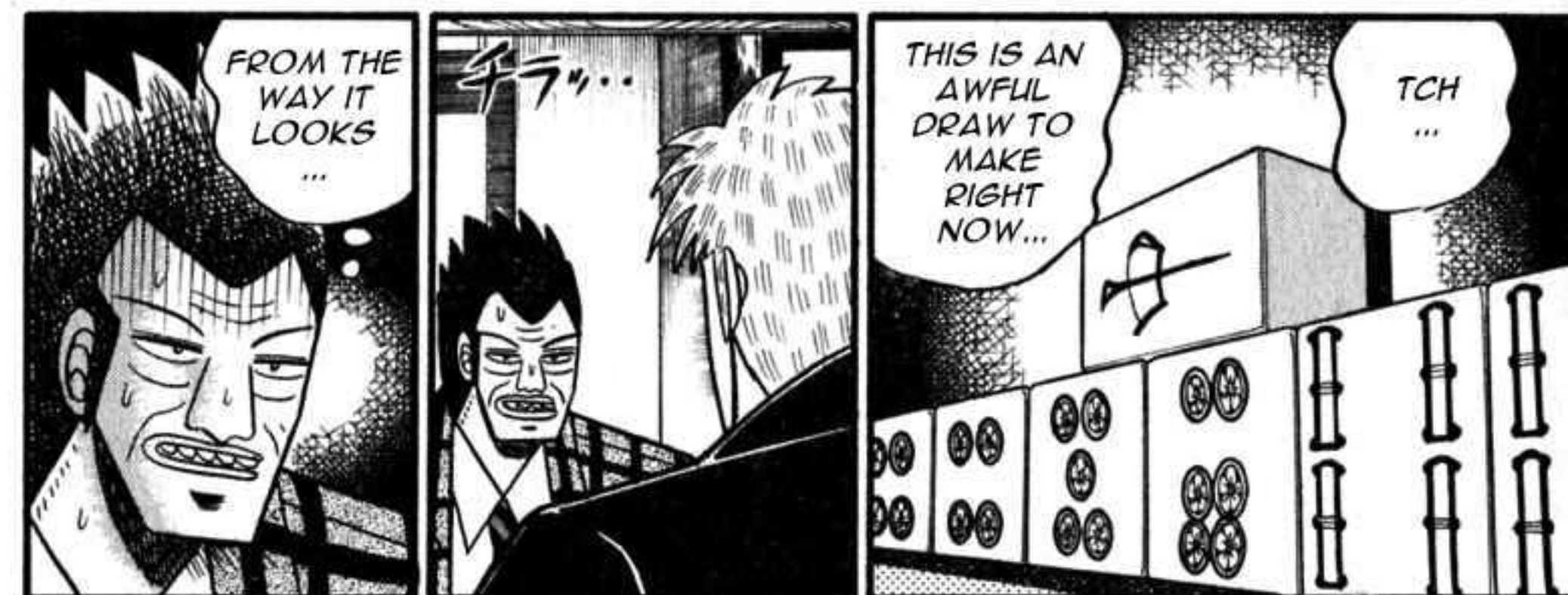
WHAT'S
THAT? IT
PASSES
...?

HUH
...!!

AKAGI
DRAWS AND
DISCARDS
A CHUN!

BUT, AT
THE START
OF THE
NEXT
TURN...

THAT RIGHT
... GOOD,
GOOD!

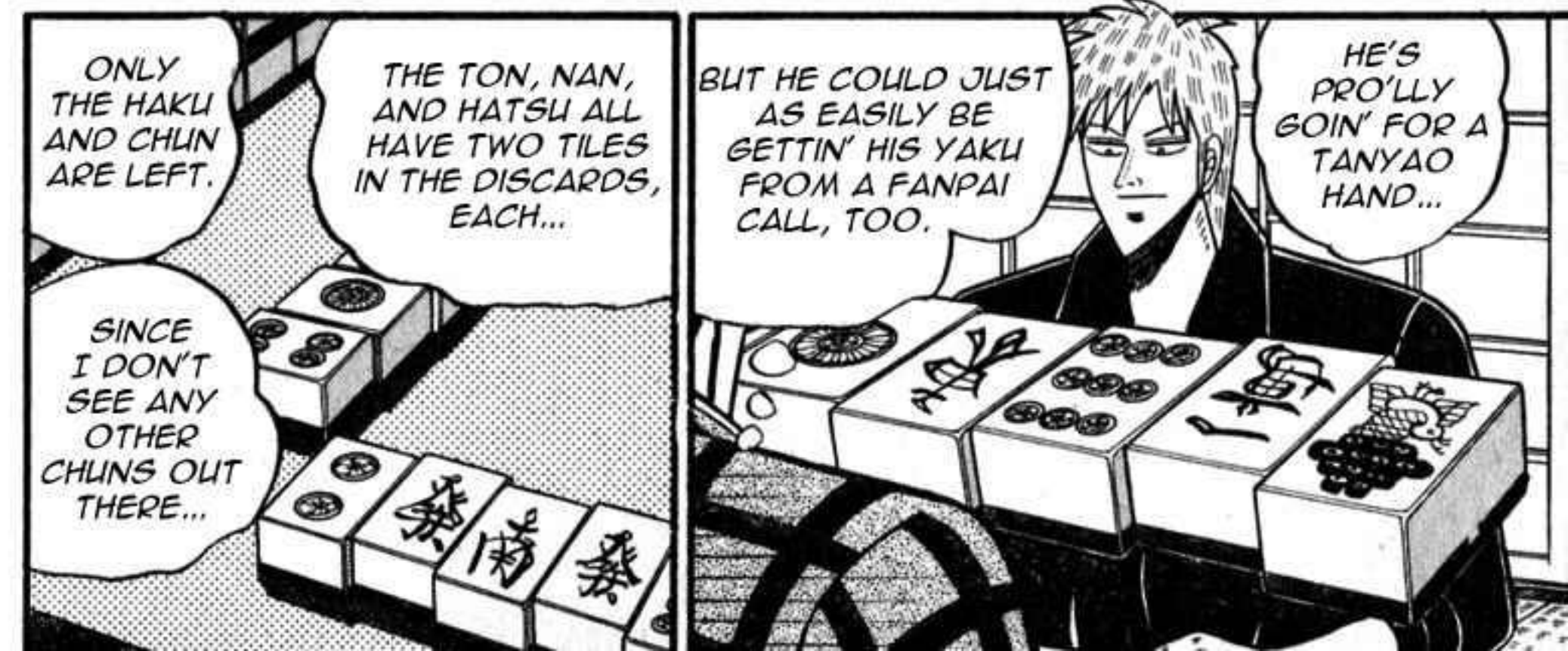


FROM THE
WAY IT
LOOKS
...

チン...

THIS IS AN
AWFUL
DRAW TO
MAKE
RIGHT
NOW...

TCH
...



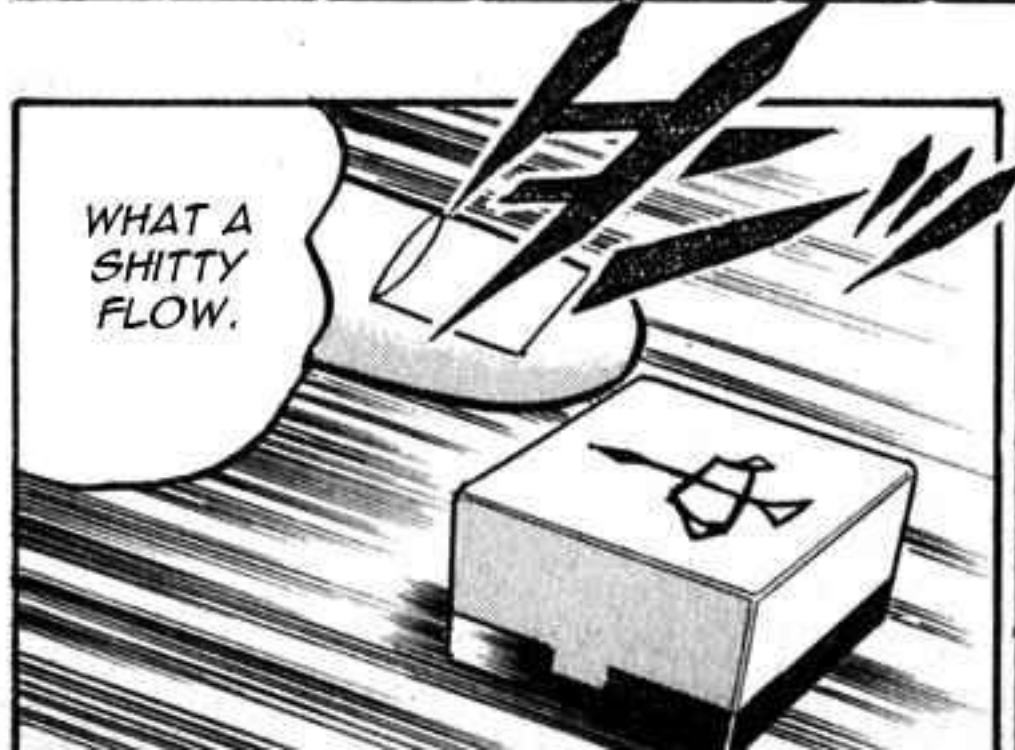
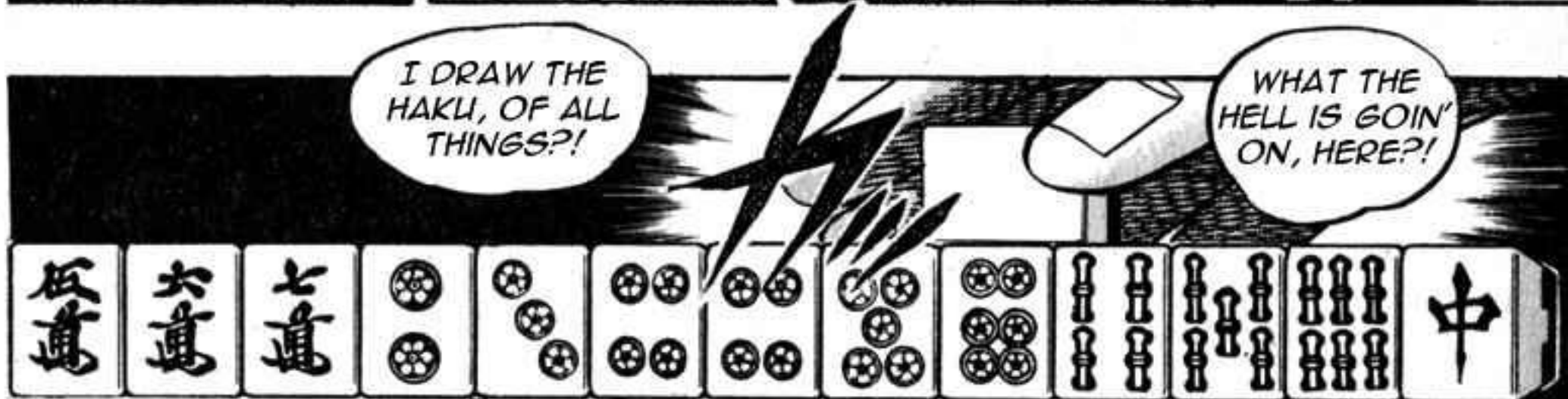
ONLY
THE HAKU
AND CHUN
ARE LEFT.

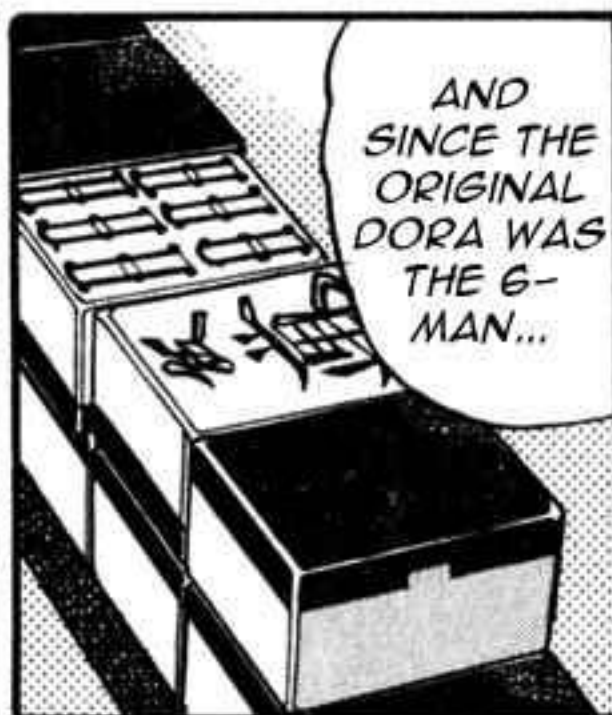
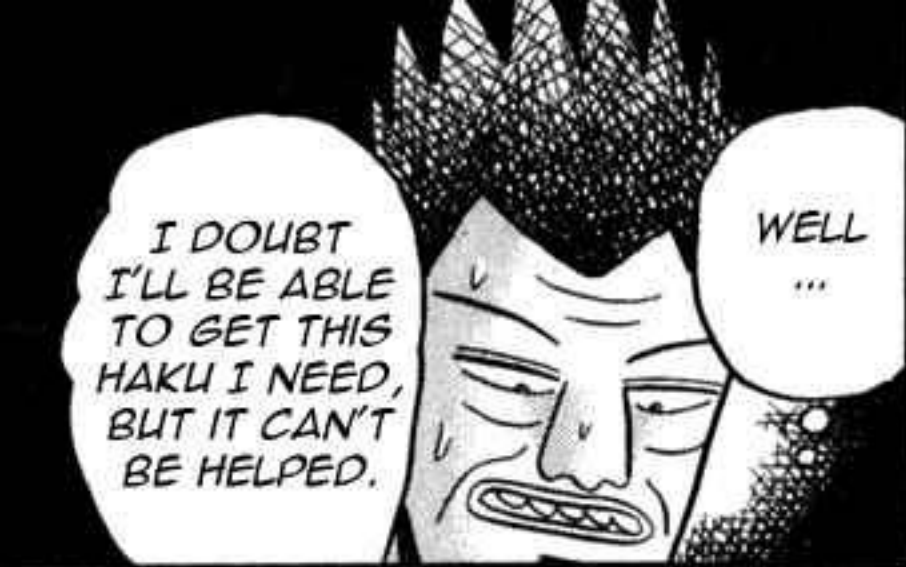
THE TON, NAN,
AND HATSU ALL
HAVE TWO TILES
IN THE DISCARDS,
EACH...

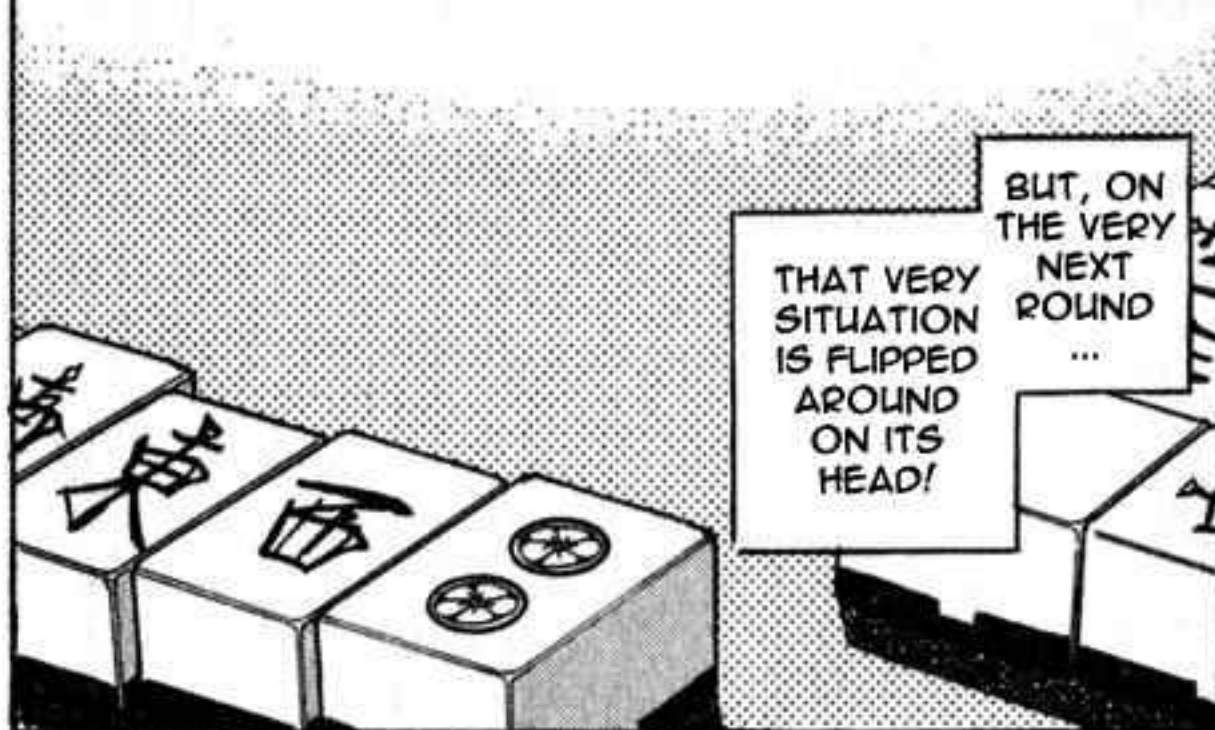
SINCE
I DON'T
SEE ANY
OTHER
CHUNS OUT
THERE...

BUT HE COULD JUST
AS EASILY BE
GETTIN' HIS YAKU
FROM A FANPAI
CALL, TOO.

HE'S
PRO'LLY
GOIN' FOR A
TANYAO
HAND...







THAT VERY
SITUATION
IS FLIPPED
AROUND
ON ITS
HEAD!

BUT, ON
THE VERY
NEXT
ROUND
...



IT WOULD
BE AB-
NORMAL
FOR HIM
NOT TO
BE, GIVEN
THE SIT-
UATION.

URABE IS
STILL TOTALLY
ON THE
DEFENSIVE...



AKAGI'S
CHANCE
TO CALL

THE
EIGHTH
TURN



HE
USES
UP THE
2-3-4
MAN...



THE 6-
MAN, THE
DORA THAT
URABE SO
FEARED!

AND
PLAYS
THE
6-
MAN!



CHI!





GOD
DAMMIT
....!!

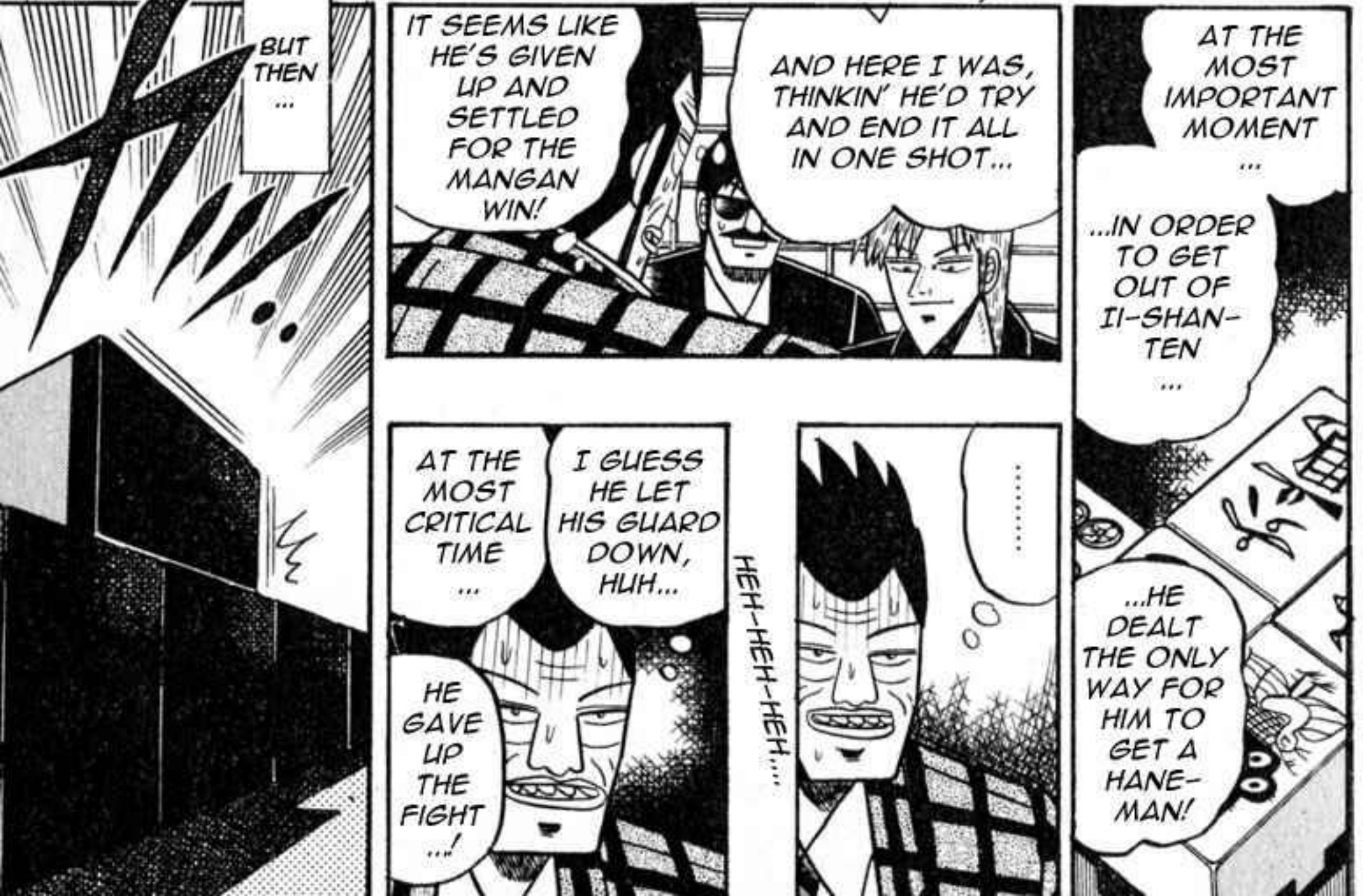


...HAS
GOT TO
BE IN
HIS
HAND.

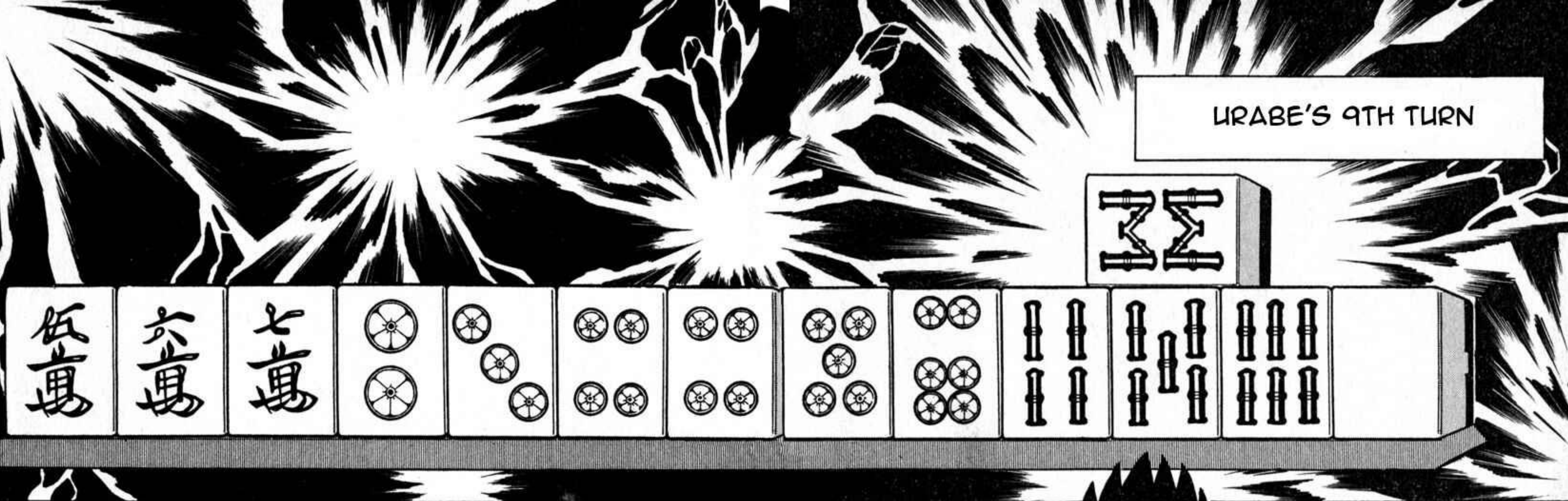


WHA-
...?!





URABE'S 9TH TURN

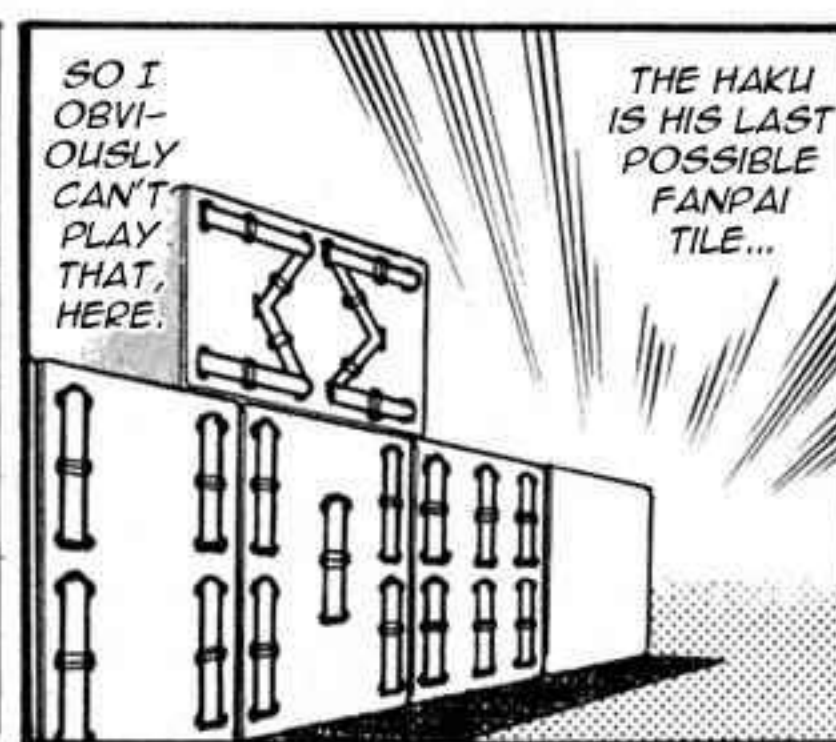


WITH THAT 7-SOU KAN...



THE 8-SOU ISN'T EXACTLY A SAFE TILE, EITHER...

BUT ...



SO I OBVIOUSLY CAN'T PLAY THAT, HERE.

THE HAKU IS HIS LAST POSSIBLE FANPAI TILE...



URABE IS AT CROSS-ROADS!

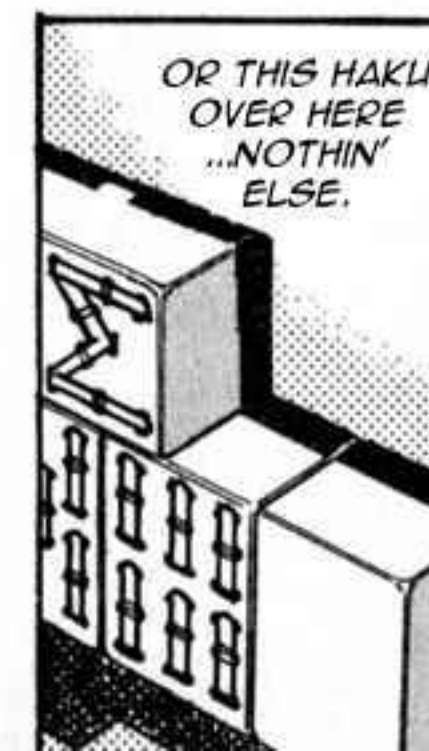


WHAT SHOULD I DO ...



IT COULD BE PART OF HIS TRAP.

FROM THE MOMENT IT HAPPENED, THAT KAN TURNED ANY 8-SOUS I DRAW INTO LANDMINES...



OR THIS HAKU OVER HERE ...NOTHIN' ELSE.



THEN I NEED TO PLAY EITHER THE 8-SOU...

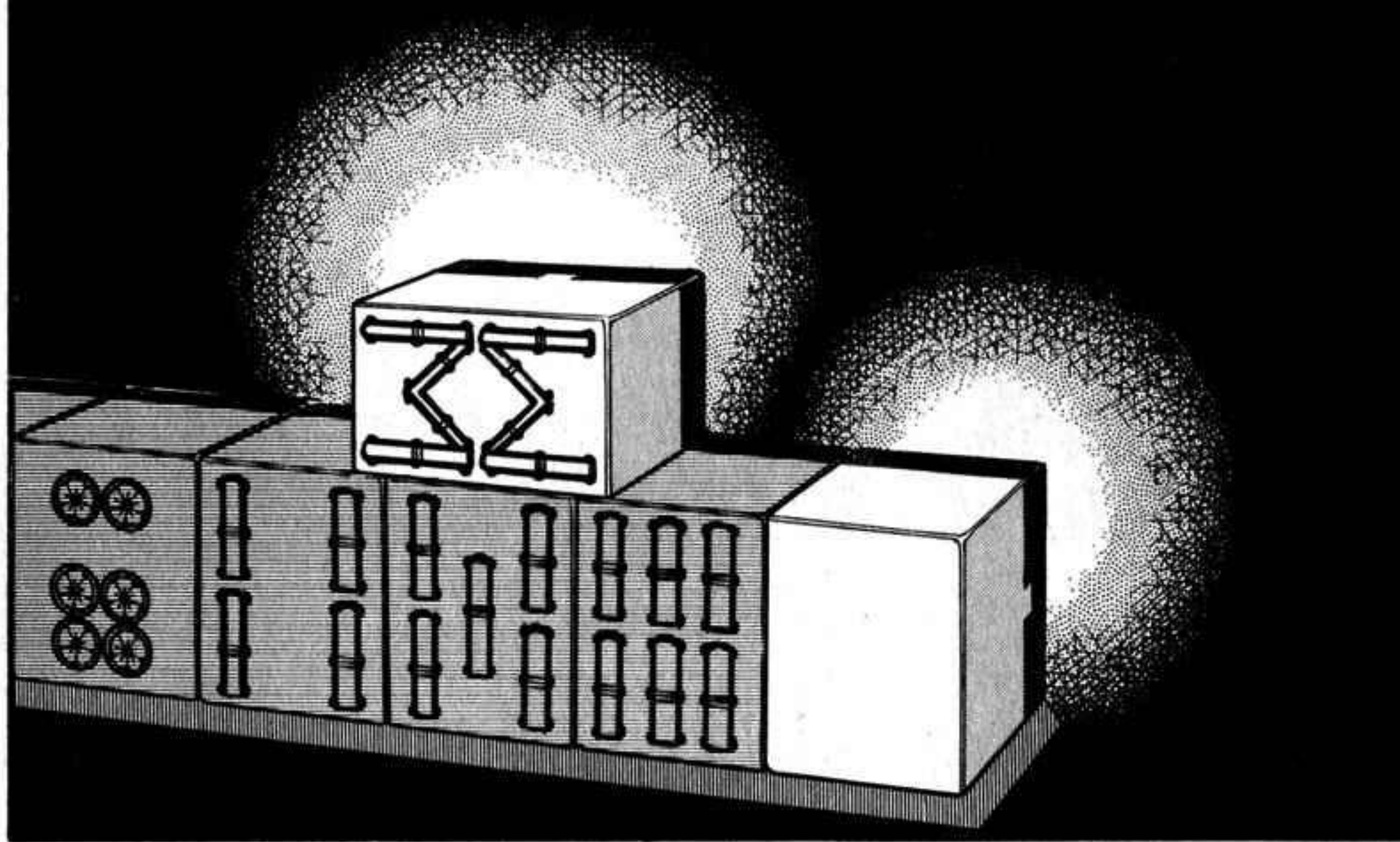
IF I WANT TO KEEP MY HAND IN TENPAI ...



I'M NOT GETTING ANY BREAKS HERE, AM I...



GH ...!



I'M SAFE FOR RIGHT NOW!

I KNOW THAT I WON'T BE DEAD EVEN IF HE MAKES A TSUMO, SINCE HE CAN'T HAVE A HANE MAN.

THANKS TO THAT DORA ...

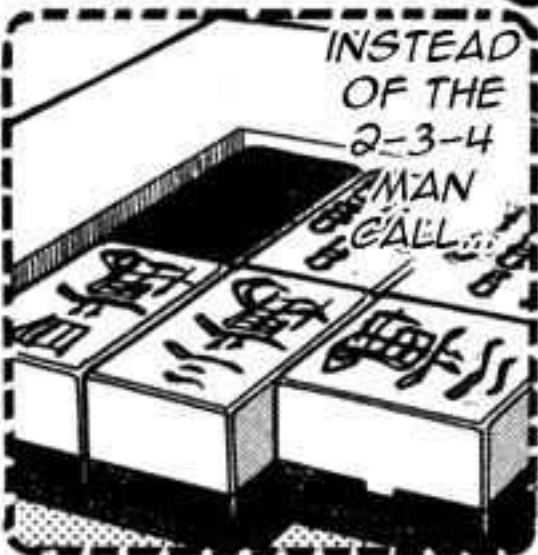
IT'S NOT TOTALLY HOPELESS JUST YET ...!

WAIT ...

THAT TAKES PRIORITY OVER EVERY THIN' ELSE.

THE ONLY FEAR I HAVE IS HIM GET-TIN' A DIRECT HIT ON ME WITH A MAN-GAN...

THAT IN MIND, THE ONLY THING I'VE GOTTA WORRY ABOUT IS A DIRECT HIT...





...HE'LL
HAVE NO
FLOW
LEFT FOR
HIM!

IN
THE
NEXT
...



BUT IF
I CAN
JUST
ENDURE
THIS
ROUND
...

HE'S HAD
THE FLOW
ON HIS SIDE
FOR THE
RIDE HERE
...



HE'S
IN EX-
TREME
PAIN
RIGHT
NOW!

HE'S
SLOWLY
FALLING
BEHIND
...



HE HAD TO
GET INTO
TENPAI
BEFORE
THAT
HAPPENED!

HE
READ
A-
HEAD!

THAT'S
WHAT'S
WEIGHING
HIM DOWN
...



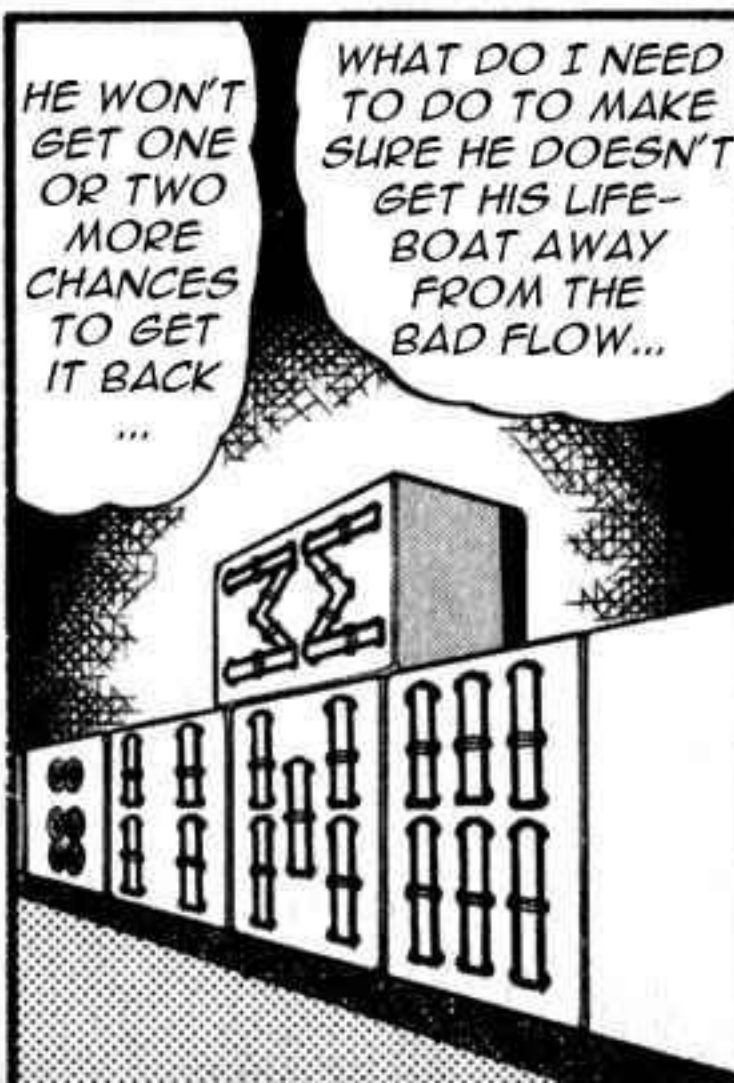
THAT'S
WHY HE
DEALT
THE
DORA!

HE MUST
HAVE
SENSED
THAT, TOO
...



I'D NEVER
BE ABLE
TO TRUST
MYSELF
AGAIN IF
I DEALT
INTO HIS
HAND!

SINCE
IT'S A
HOPE-
LESS
BATTLE
FOR HIM...



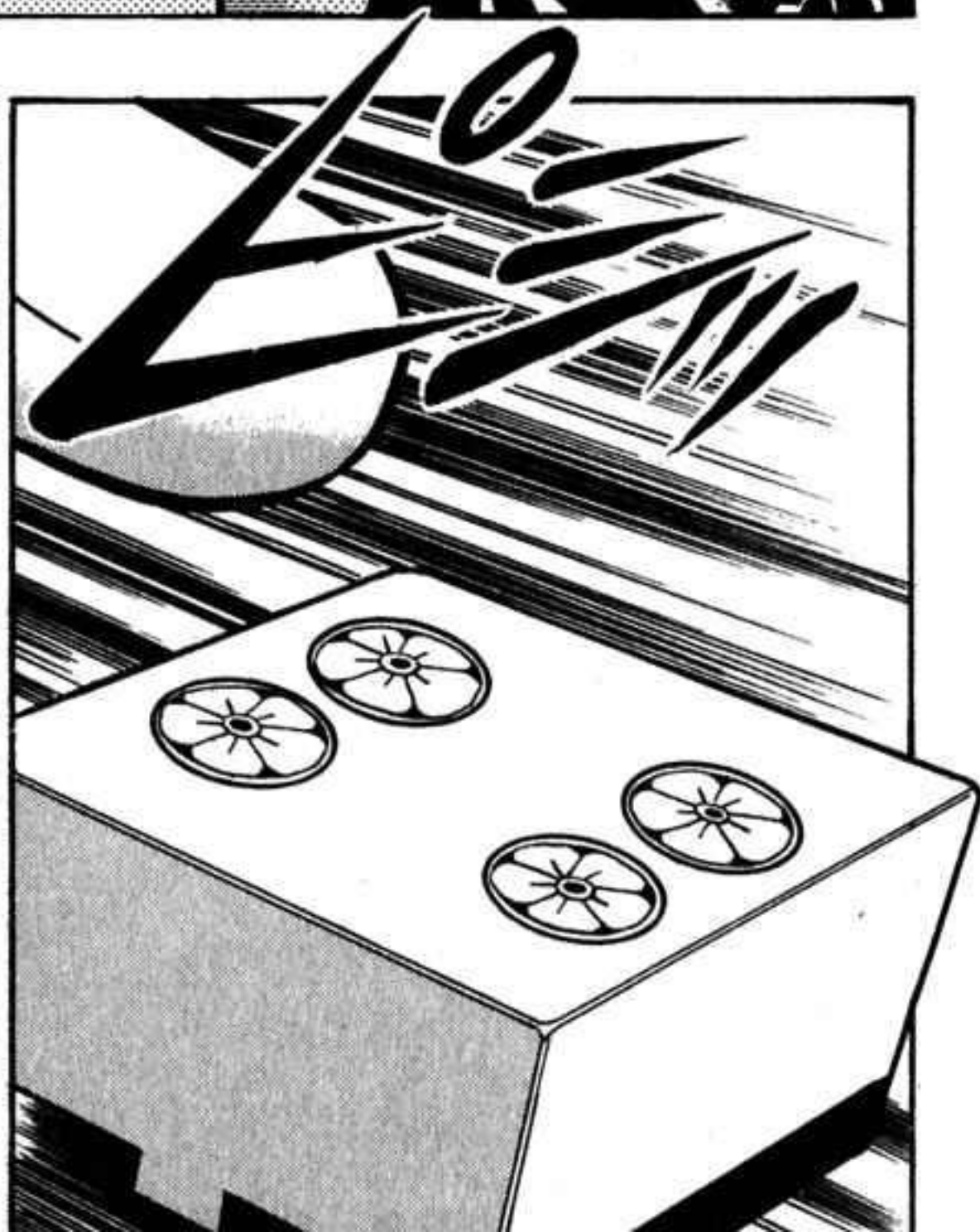
HE WON'T
GET ONE
OR TWO
MORE
CHANCES
TO GET
IT BACK
...

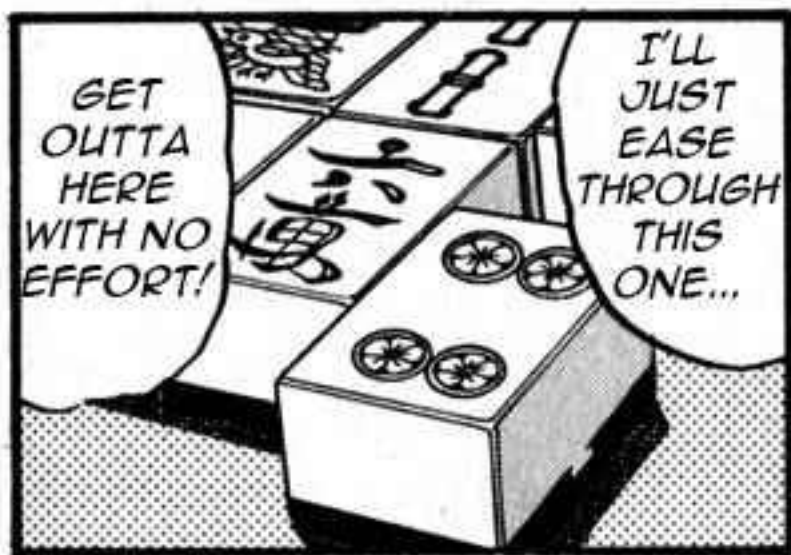
WHAT DO I NEED
TO DO TO MAKE
SURE HE DOESN'T
GET HIS LIFE-
BOAT AWAY
FROM THE
BAD FLOW...

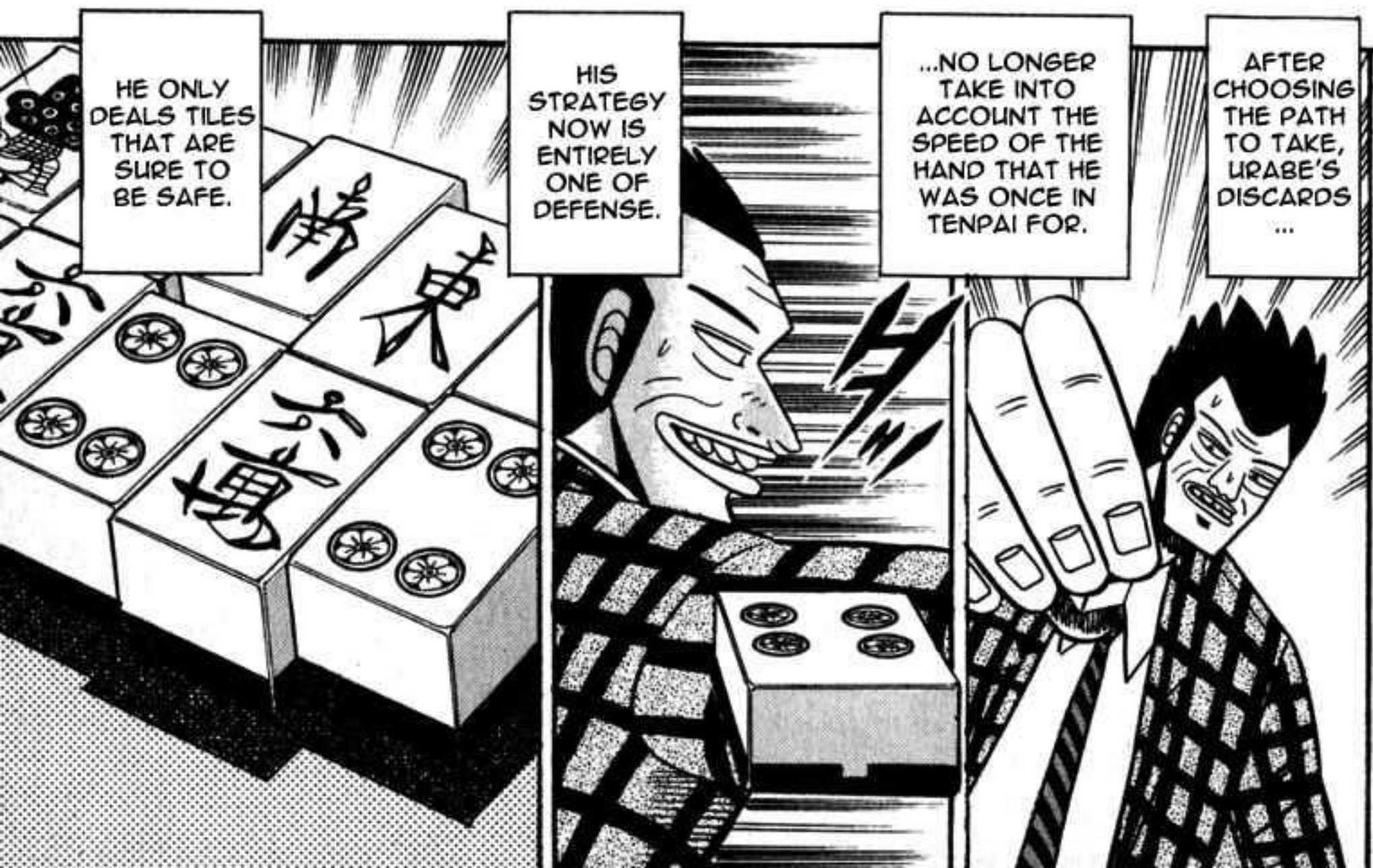
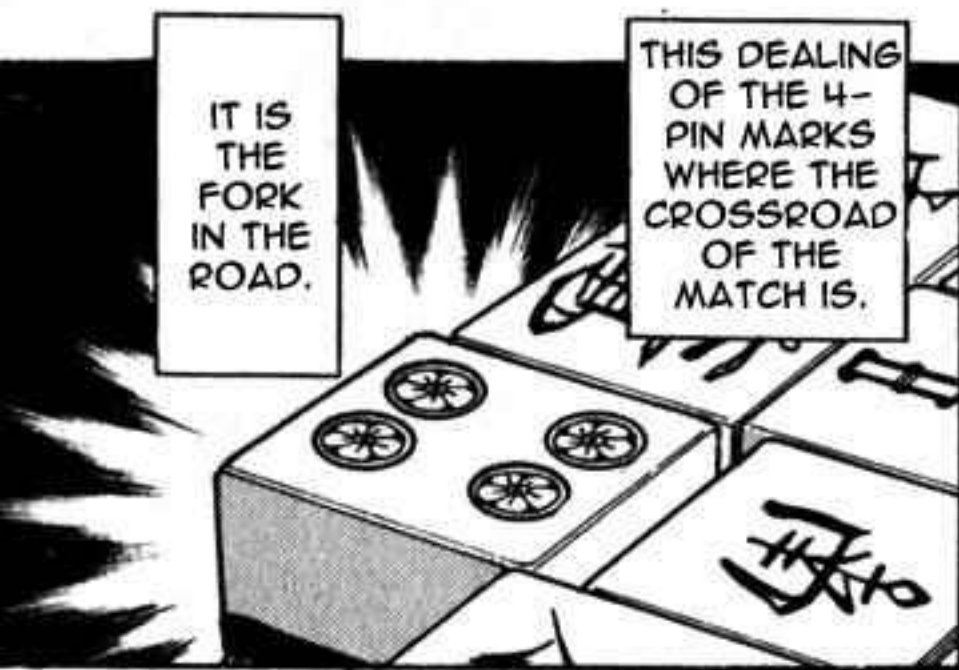


IN A
PLACE
LIKE
THIS
...

HIS FLOW'S
DECLINING
EVEN WITH
THAT CALL
FROM THE
NORTH
PLAYER'S
DISCARD.









ON THE
13TH
TURN
...



AND THEN,
AS IF PRO-
PELLING HIM
EVEN FURTHER
DOWN THIS
PATH OF
PASSIVENESS
...



HE
RUNS
AWAY
FROM
THE
DANGER
...!

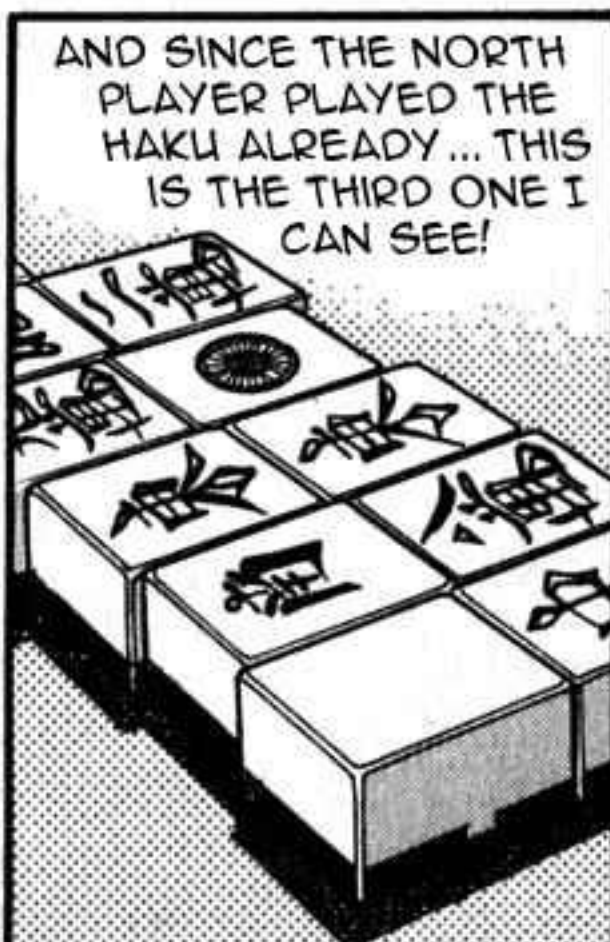
HE
GIVES
UP ON
WINNING
...



AH
...!



IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE
FOR HIM
TO HAVE A
HAKU FANPAI,
NOW!



AND SINCE THE NORTH
PLAYER PLAYED THE
HAKU ALREADY... THIS
IS THE THIRD ONE I
CAN SEE!



A
HAKU
...!

I
GOT
IT...!



HIS HAND
CAN ONLY
BE A
TANYAO
ONE!

WITH THIS,
THERE'S NO
WAY HE CAN
BE WAITIN'
ON FANPAI
TILES...

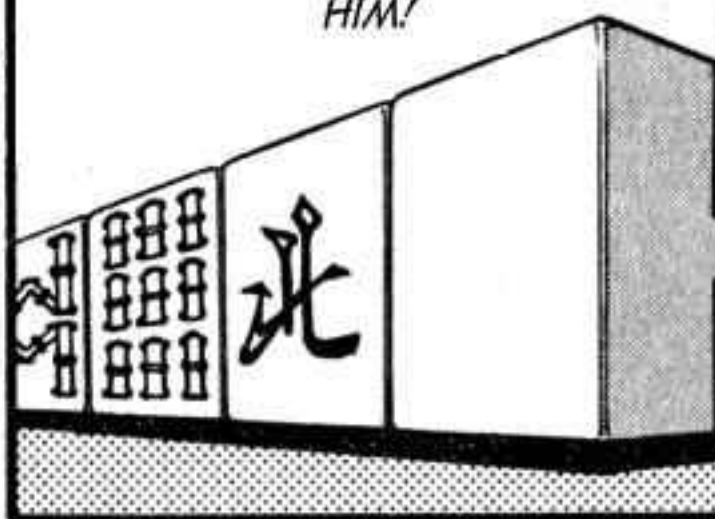


LOOKS
LIKE THE
FLOW IS
ON MY
SIDE NOW,
PAL!

HEH-
HEH-
HEH
...

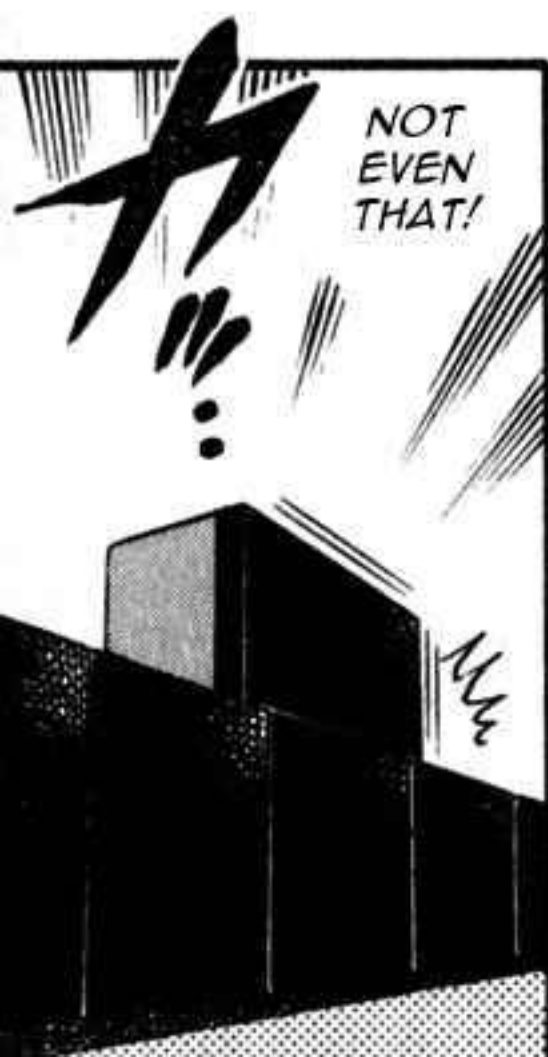


ALL OF THESE TERMINAL
AND HONOR TILES I'VE
BEEN COLLECTING ARE
NOW TOTALLY SAFE
TO PLAY AGAINST
HIM!



SINCE WE'VE
RULED OUT
A FANPAI
HAND...

SO
NOW
...



NOT
EVEN
THAT!



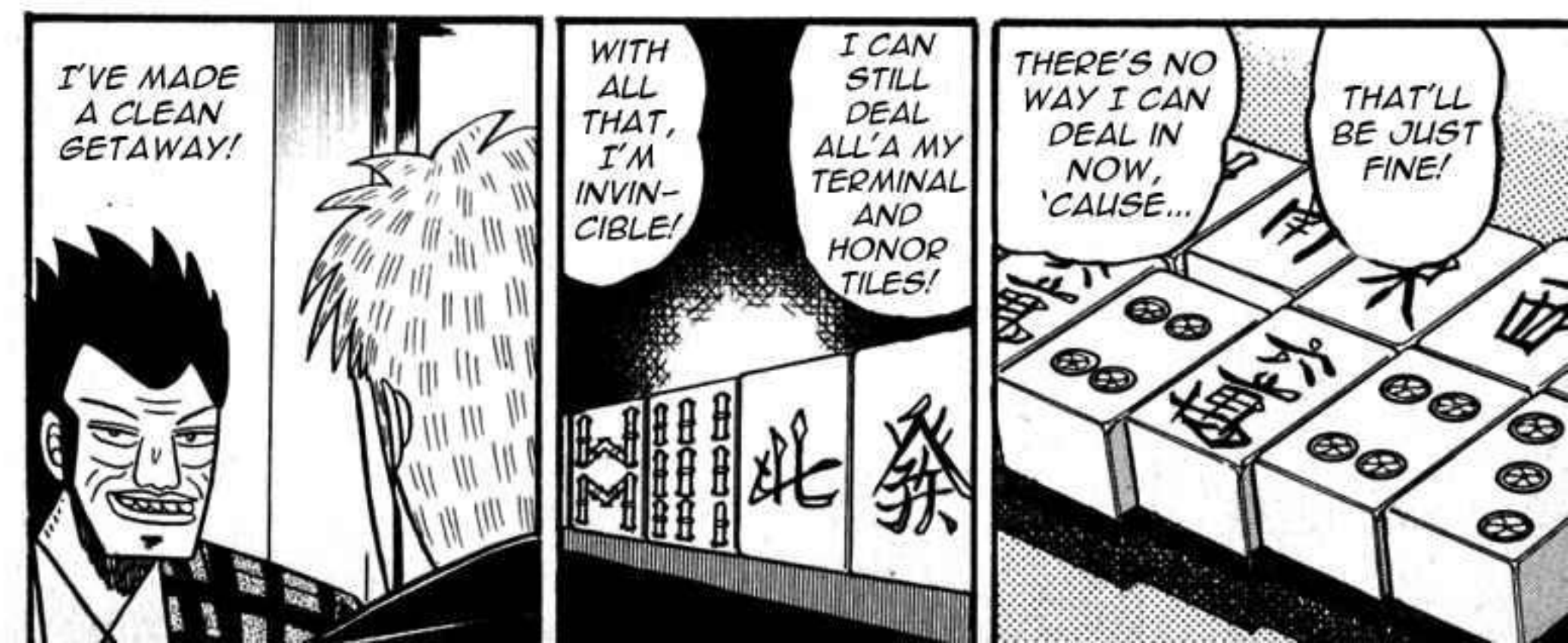
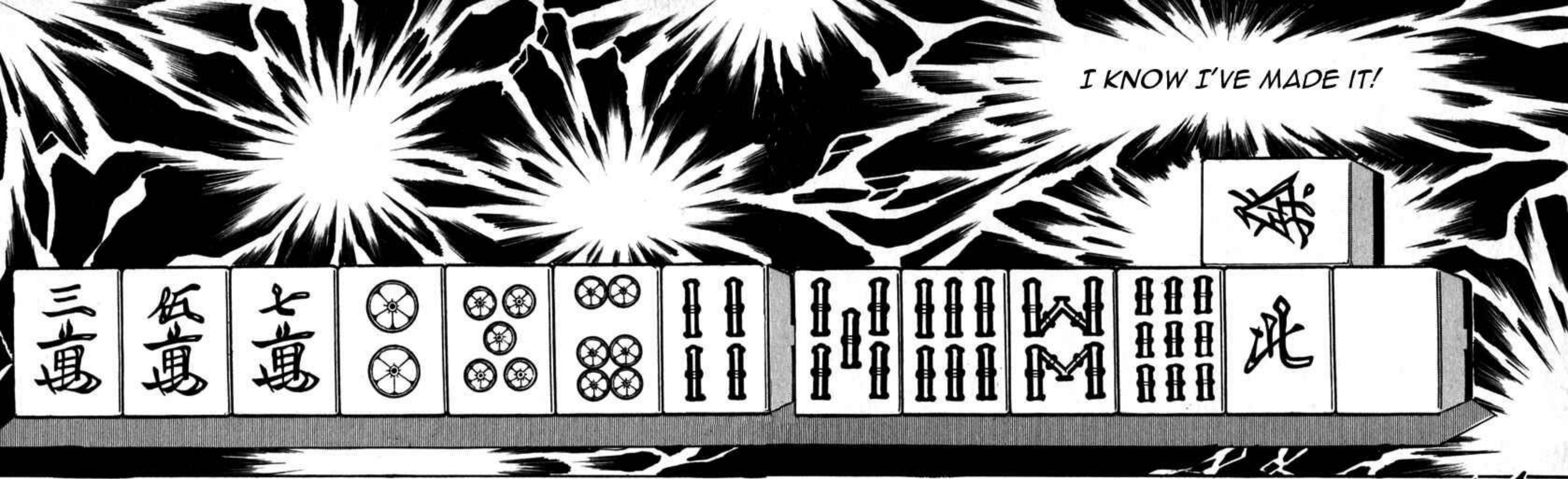
NO
...

I'VE
PRO-
BAB-
LY
MADE
IT,
THEN!



HEH-
HEH-
HEH
...

I KNOW I'VE MADE IT!





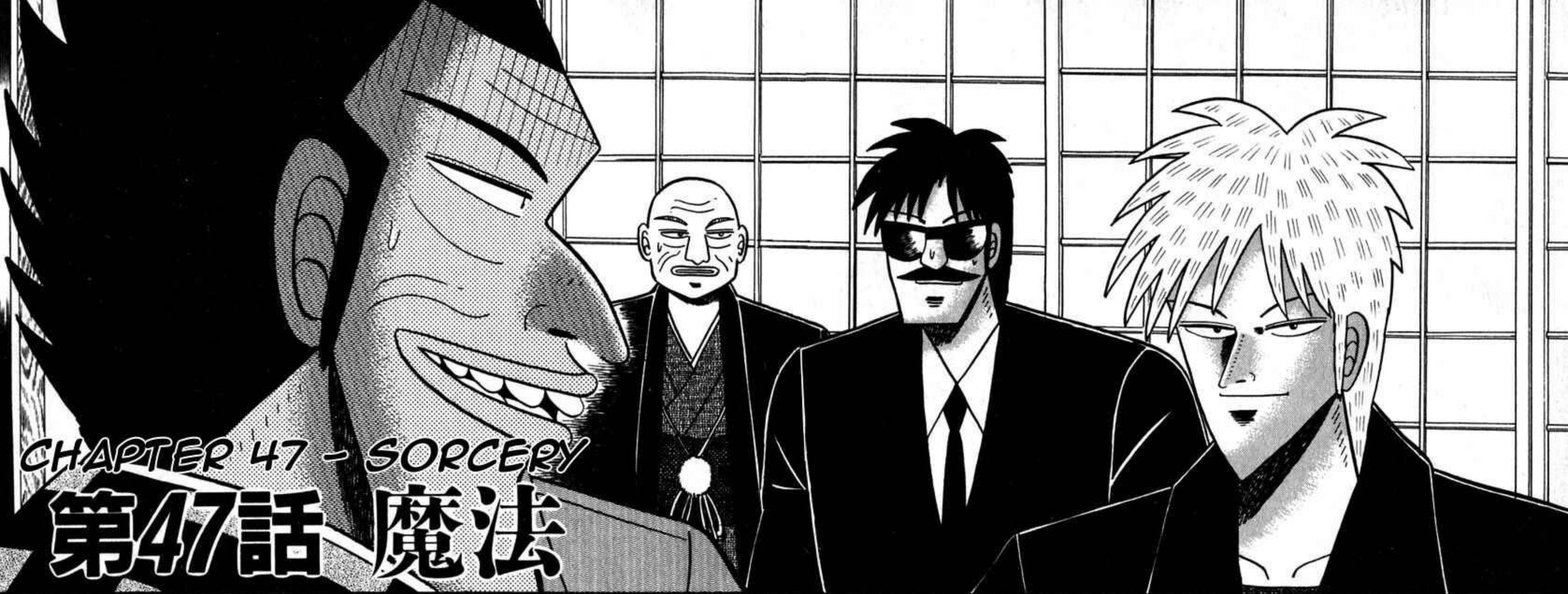
IT'S STILL
WAY TOO
SOON FOR
YOU TO
ASSUME
THAT
YOU'RE
SAFE...



YOU'LL
BE FROZEN
DEAD IN
YOUR
TRACKS.

JUST
YOU WAIT
AND SEE
...





...IT'LL
COME ON
OVER TO
MY SIDE!

HIS
FLOW IS
FALLING
APART AT
THE
SEAMS
...



IF THAT'S
ALL HE CAN
DO, THEN
I CAN STILL
MOVE ON
...

AS LONG
AS IT'S
JUST THAT,
THERE'S NO
PROBLEM!



GO AHEAD
AND GET
YOUR
MANGAN
TSUMO!

DOESN'T
MATTER
TO ME
IF HE
DRAWS
IT OR
NOT...



THE
22,500-
POINT GAP
BETWEEN
US IS MORE
THAN JUST
THAT CAN
SHAKE
OFF!



AND I KNOW
NOW WHERE
ALL THE G-
MANS ARE!

THERE'S
TWO
DORA
RE-
VEALED
...



NOT
HARD AT
ALL!

ALL I'VE
GOTTA DO
IS EASE ON
BY...



AS LONG AS
I DON'T DEAL
IN, THERE'S
NOTHING TO
FEAR!

HE CAN'T
TURN THIS
GAME BACK
TO HIM WITH
JUST ONE
MANGAN
TSUMO!



CAN'T
BE ANY-
THING BUT
TANYAO,
DORA 4!

AND
THAT MEANS
THAT HIS
HAND...



IN-
DEED
...

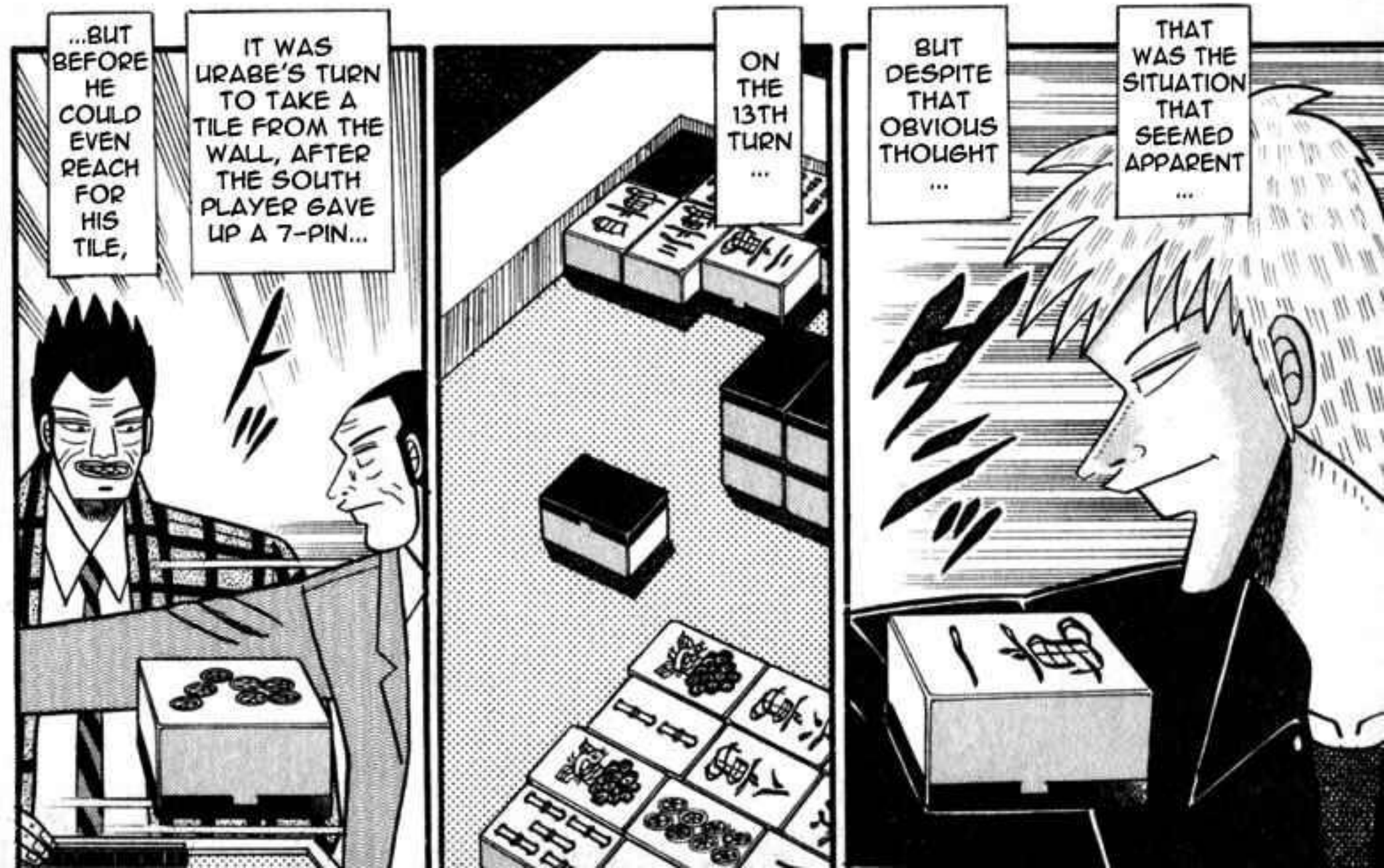
HMM-
HM-
HM
...

AKAGI
...

I'VE
MADE A
CLEAN
GET-
AWAY!

CERTAINLY, THAT
THERE WAS NO
WAY FOR THE
ROUND TO END
WITH URABE
DEALING INTO
HIS HAND.

IT SEEMED
AS THOUGH
AKAGI WAS
COMPLETELY
OUT OF WAYS
TO BE ABLE
TO WIN THE
MATCH...



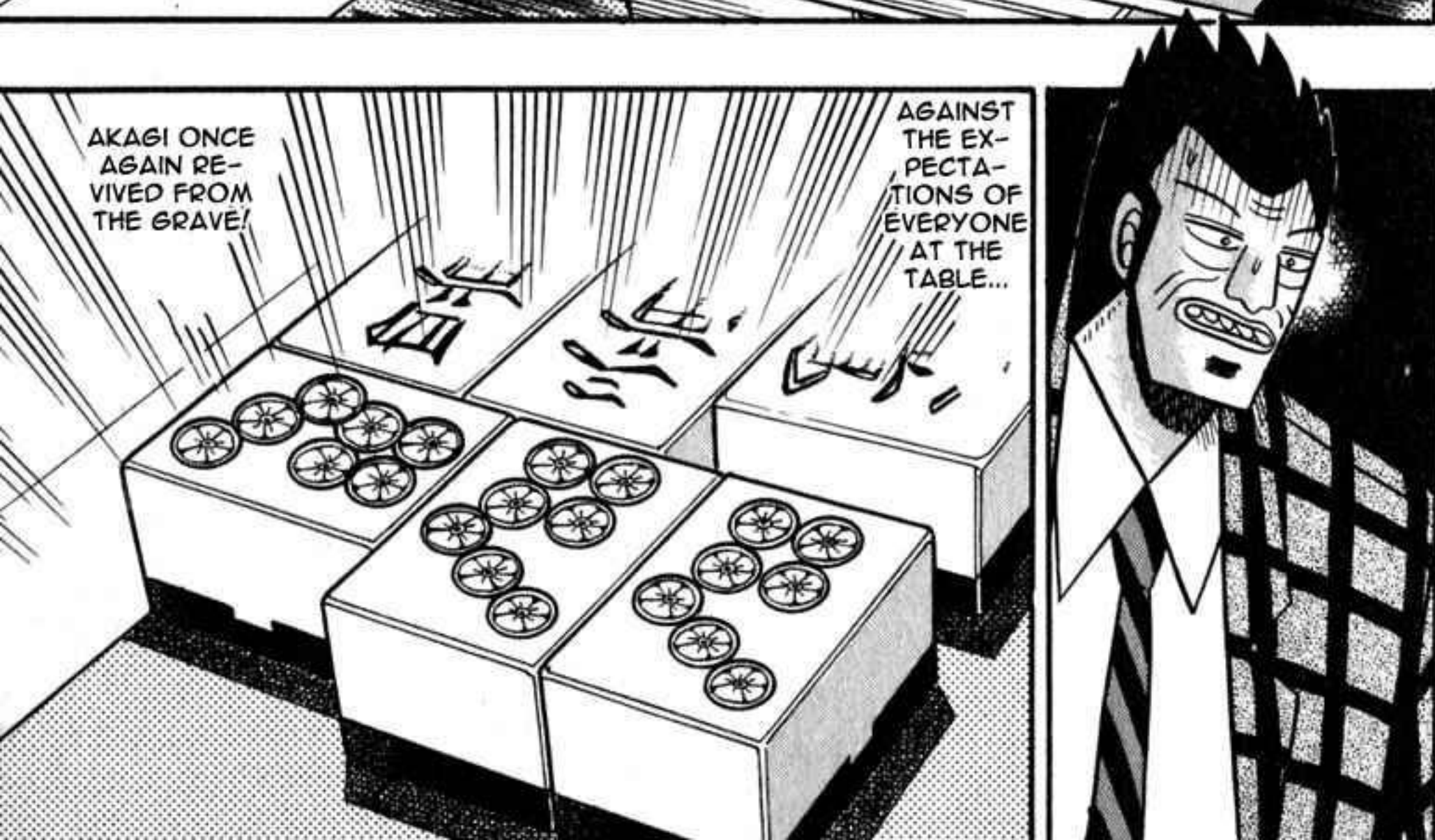
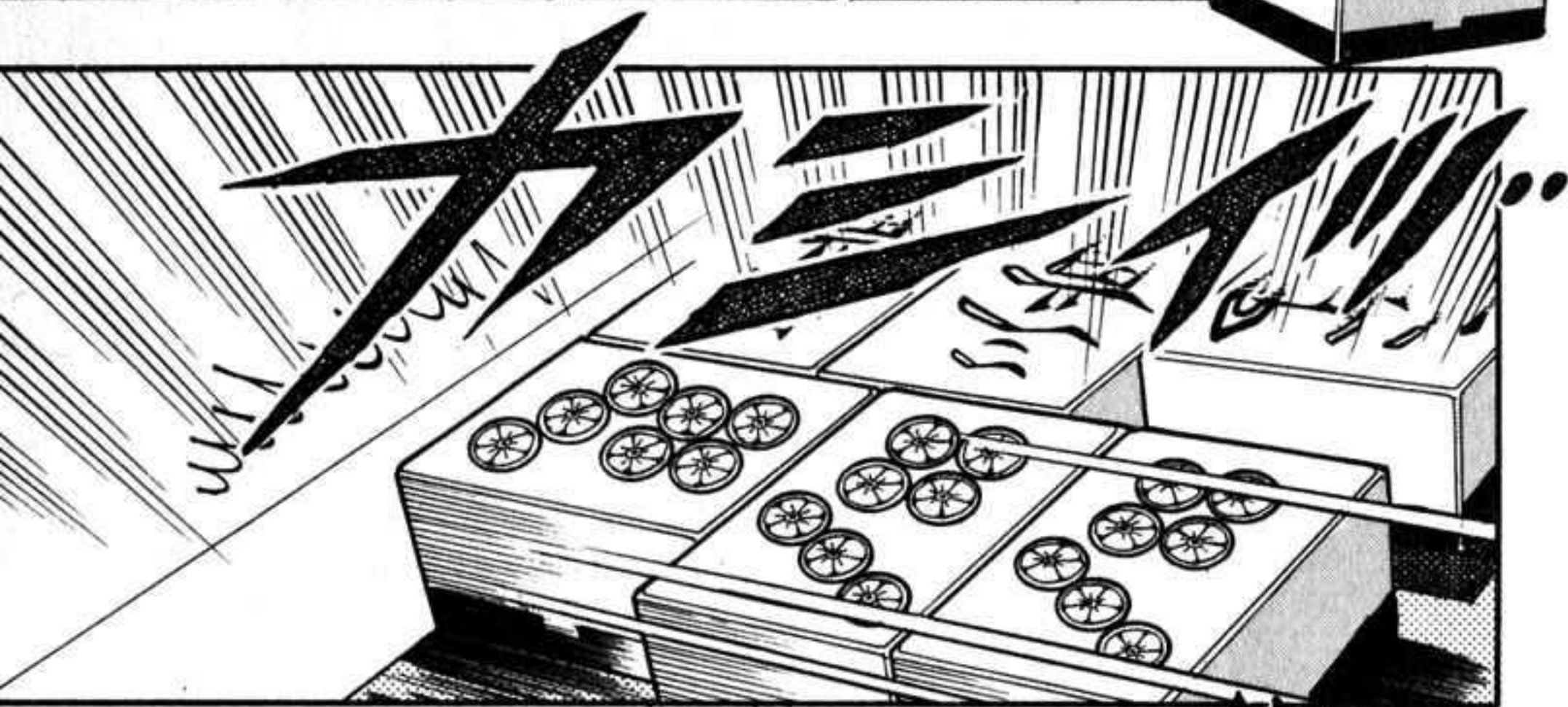
...BUT
BEFORE
HE
COULD
EVEN
REACH
FOR
HIS
TILE,

IT WAS
URABE'S TURN
TO TAKE A
TILE FROM THE
WALL, AFTER
THE SOUTH
PLAYER GAVE
UP A 7-PIN...

ON
THE
13TH
TURN
...

BUT
DESPITE
THAT
OBVIOUS
THOUGHT
...

THAT
WAS THE
SITUATION
THAT
SEEMED
APPARENT
...







A HAND
LIKE THIS
JUST
POPS
UP?!



THIS
CLOSE
TO THE
END
...

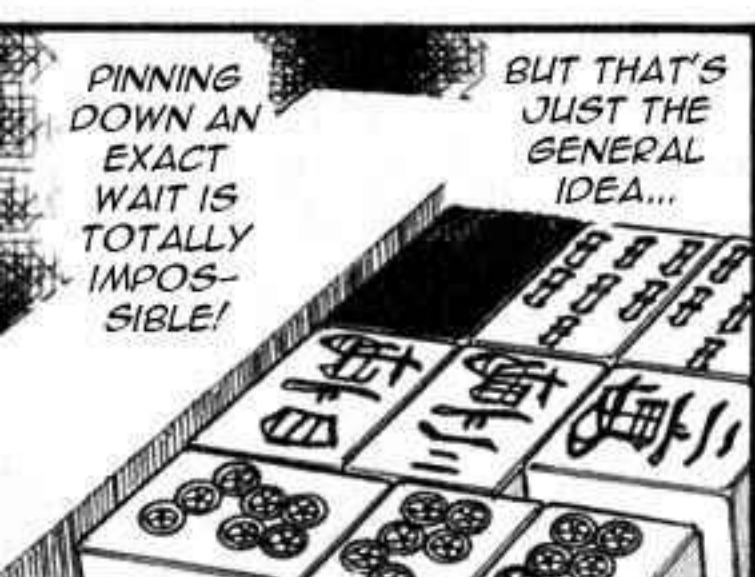


WHAT'S
UP WITH
THIS
FLOW?!



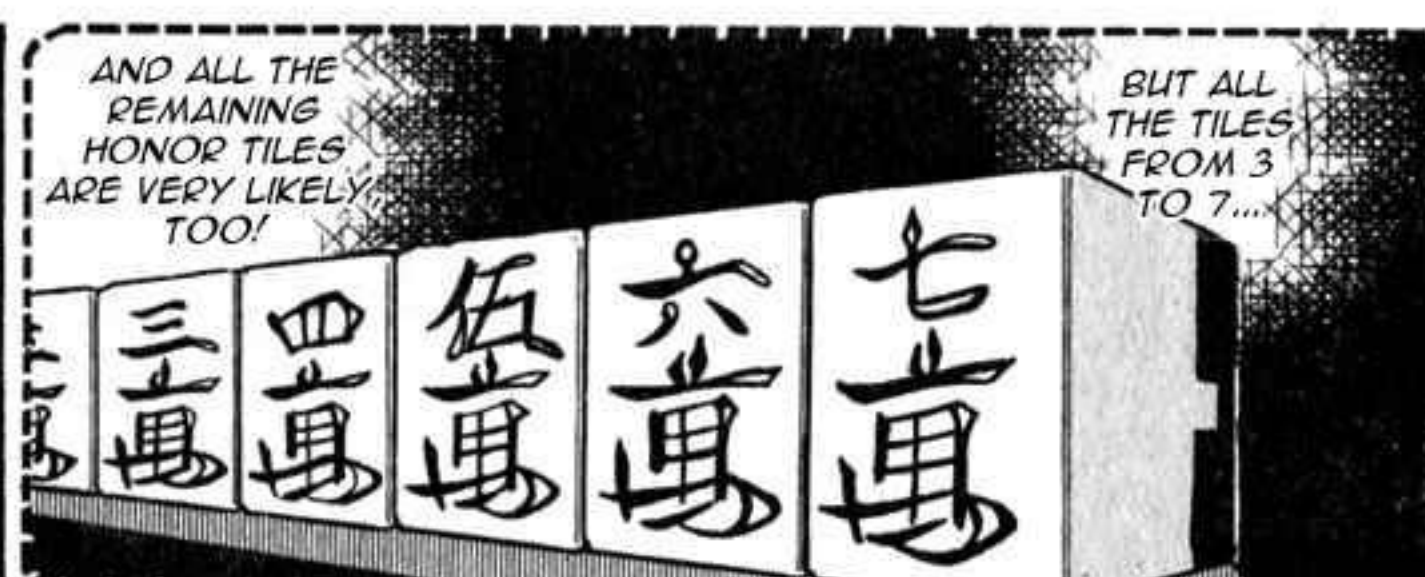
IT'S PROBABLE
THAT HE'S
WAITING ON
MY HATSU,
OR HAS SOME
WAIT TIED TO
THE 8 AND 9

IF IT'S
REALLY A
SAN SHOKU-
KU DOU
KOU, THEN



PINNING
DOWN AN
EXACT
WAIT IS
TOTALLY
IMPOS-
SIBLE!

BUT THAT'S
JUST THE
GENERAL
IDEA...



AND ALL THE
REMAINING
HONOR TILES
ARE VERY LIKELY
TOO!

BUT ALL
THE TILES
FROM 3
TO 7...

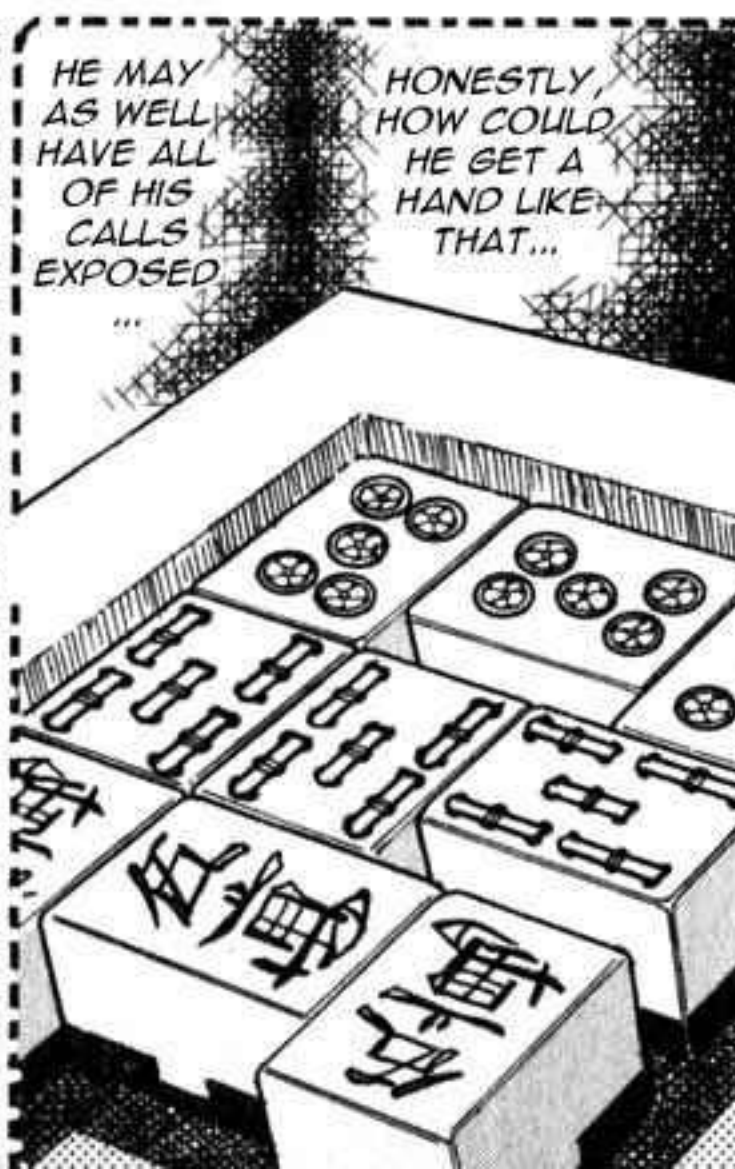


THAT'S JUST
HOW AB-
NORMAL THIS
YAKU IS!

IN FACT,
IT MIGHT
BE MORE
THREAT-
ENING
THAN
EVEN AN
OPEN
YAKU-
MAN...

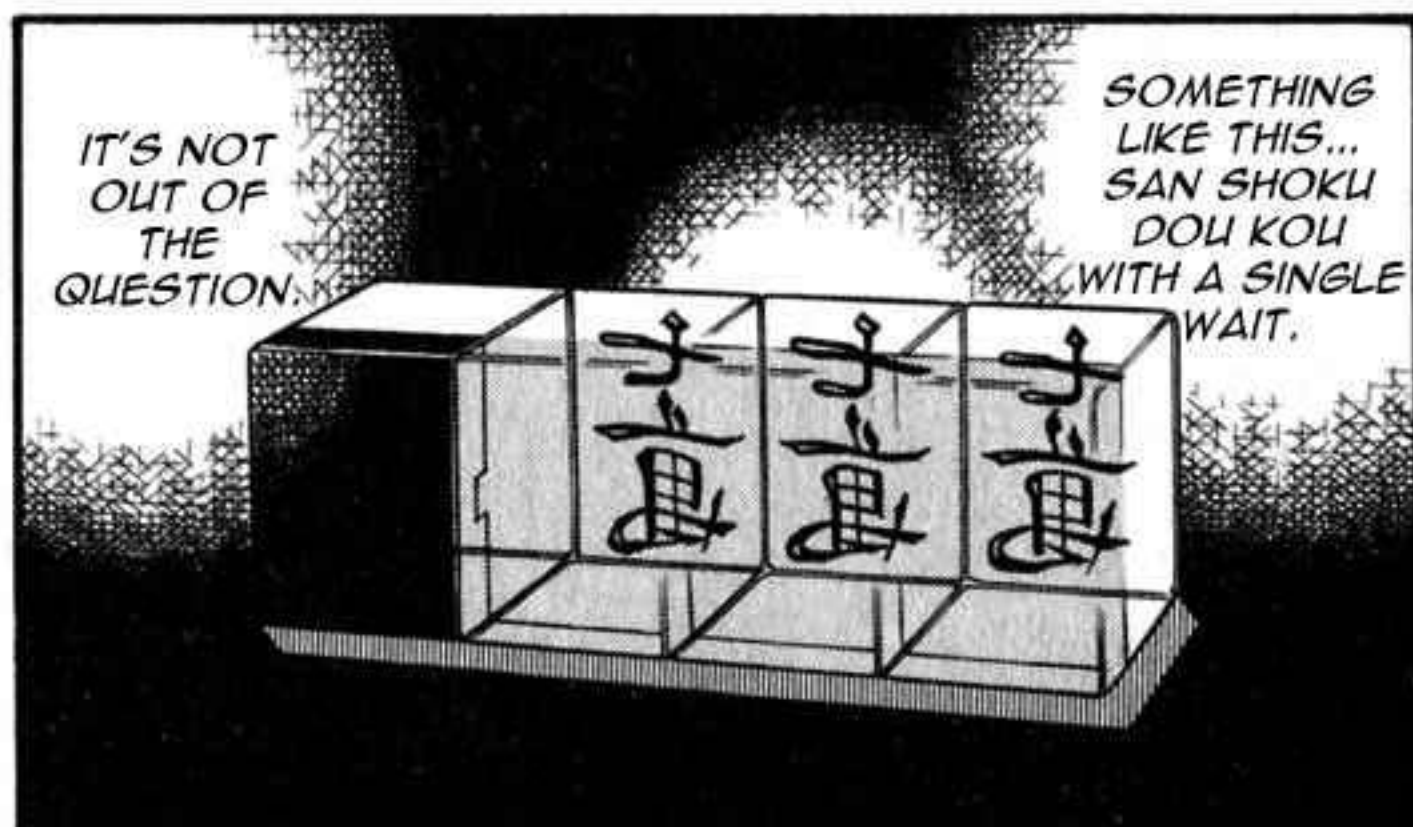
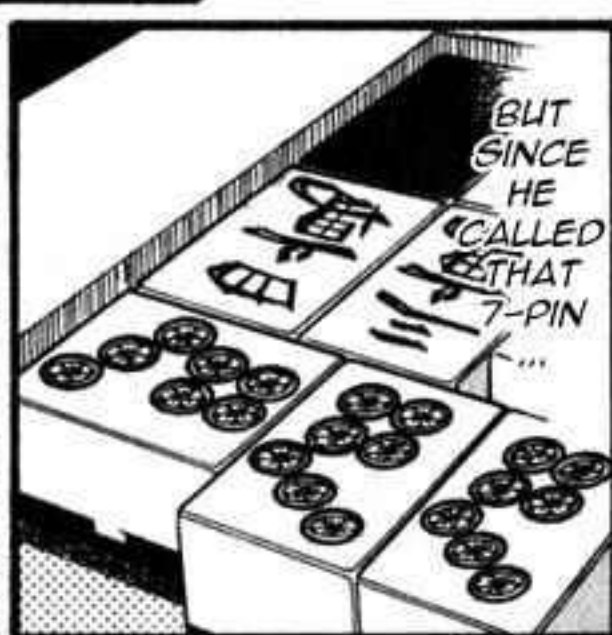
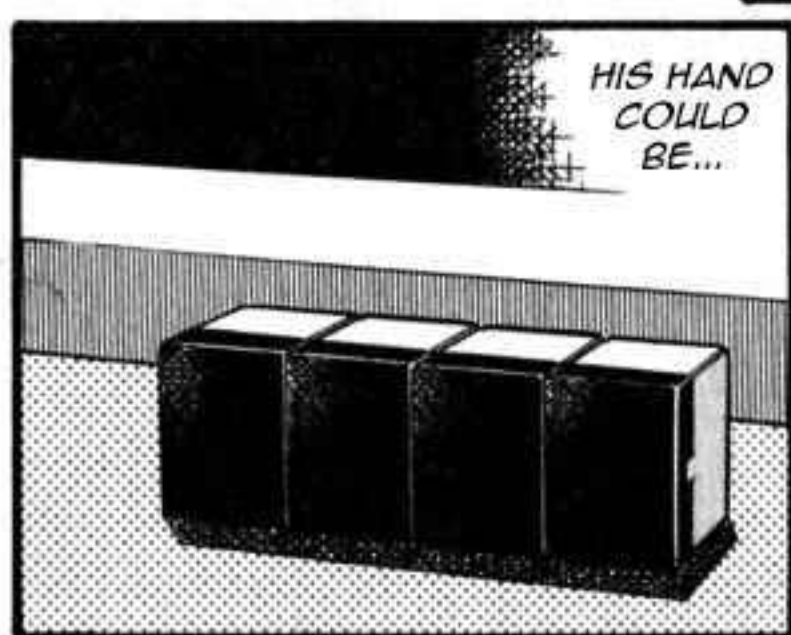
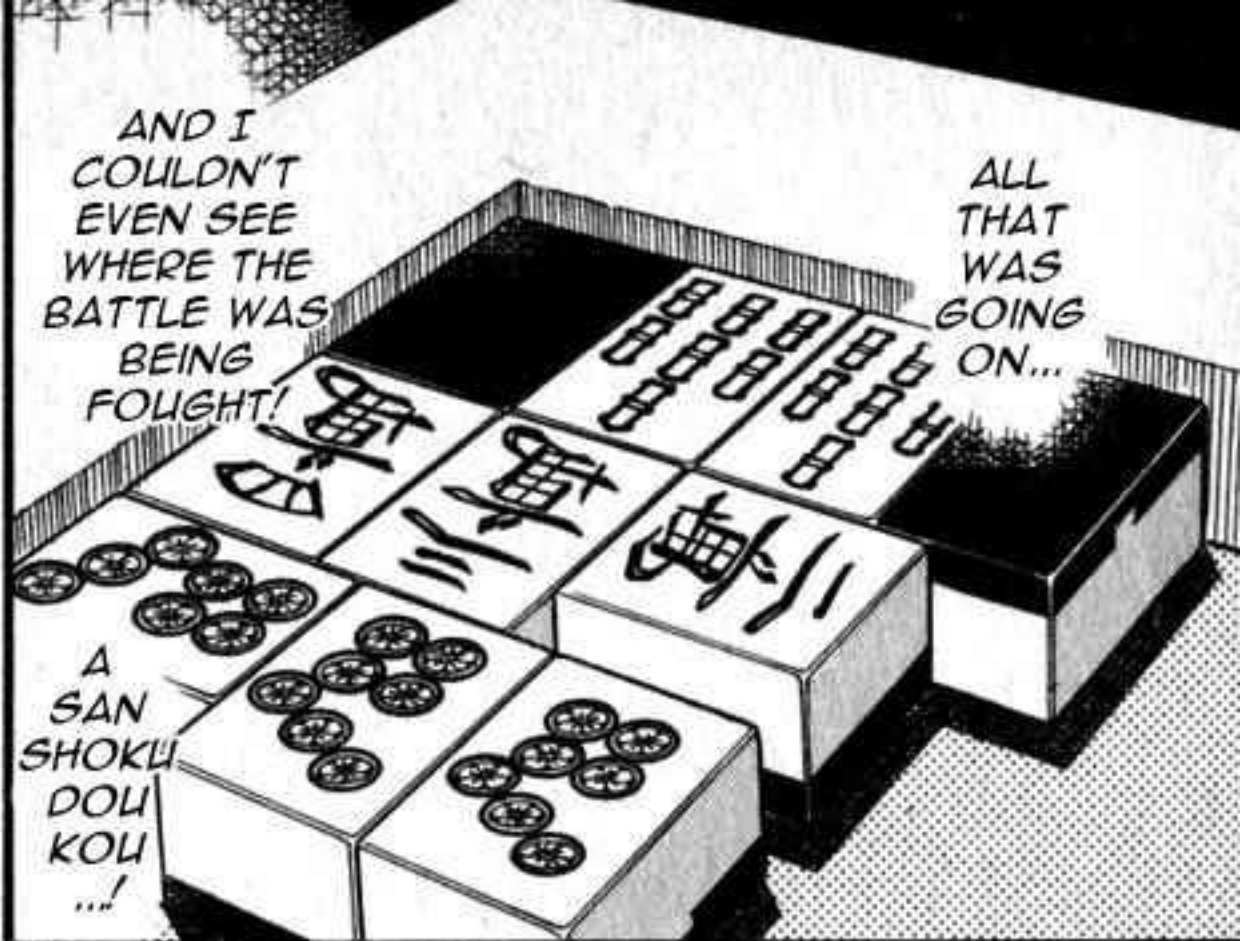


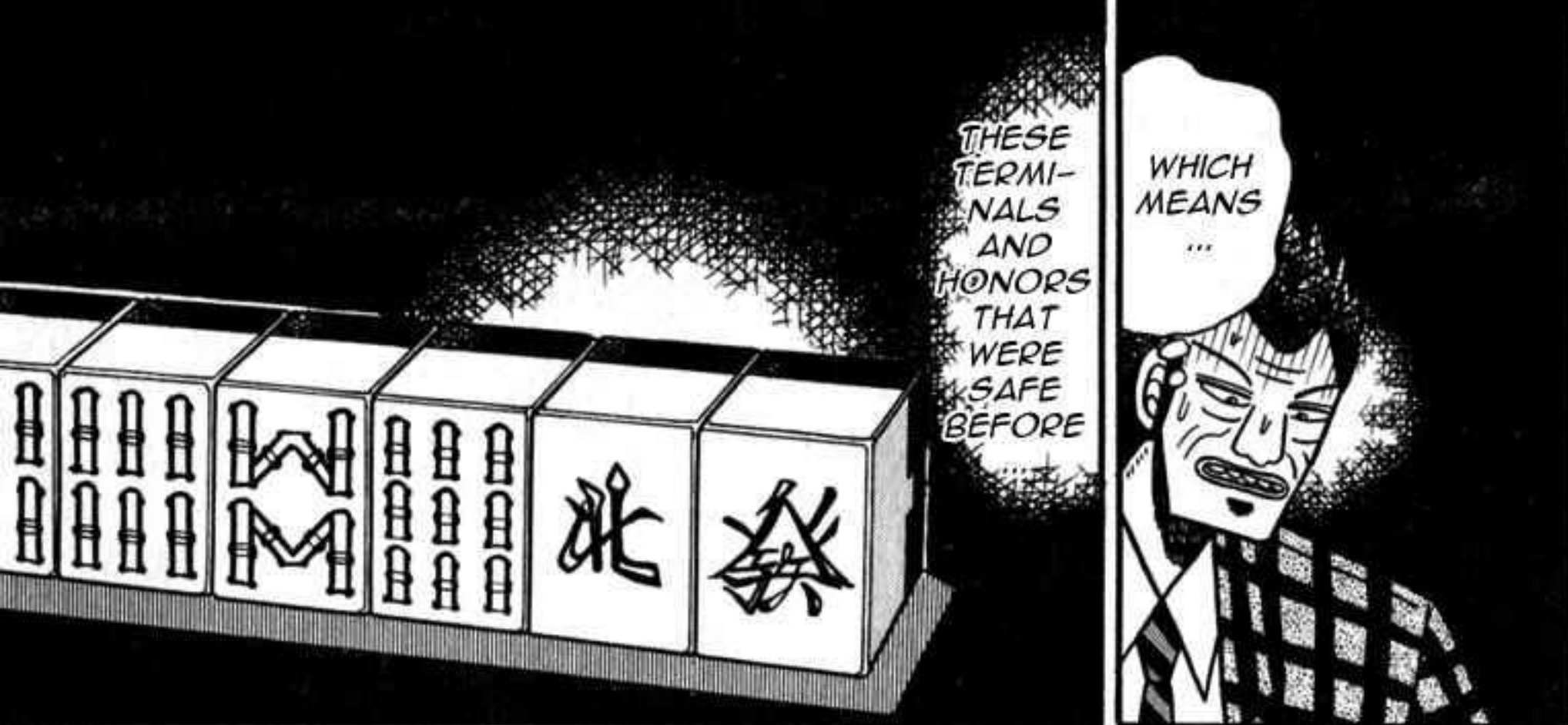
IT'S ALMOST AS
RARE TO GET A
SAN SHOKU DOU
KOU AS IT IS A
DAI SAN GEN...
AND JUST AS
THREATENING!



HE MAY
AS WELL
HAVE ALL
OF HIS
CALLS
EXPOSED
...

HONESTLY,
HOW COULD
HE GET A
HAND LIKE
THAT...





THESE
TERMI-
NALS
AND
HONORS
THAT
WERE
SAFE
BEFORE

WHICH
MEANS
...



I'VE GOT
NO SAFE
TILES.

ARE NOW
EQUALLY
AS RISKY
AS ANY-
THING ELSE
...



'CAUSE IF NOT,
I CAN'T BELIEVE
HOW MUCH THE
HEAVENS ARE
FAVORING THIS
SON OF A
BITCH...

OOOO

WHAT, IS
THE GUY
TO MY
LEFT IN
ON IT,
TOO?!

JESUS
CHRIST
...



AT LEAST
GIVE THIS
TO ME...

C'MON...



JESUS
CHRIST
...



I NEED
A SAFE
TILE....!



IT'S
ONLY
FAIR
....!

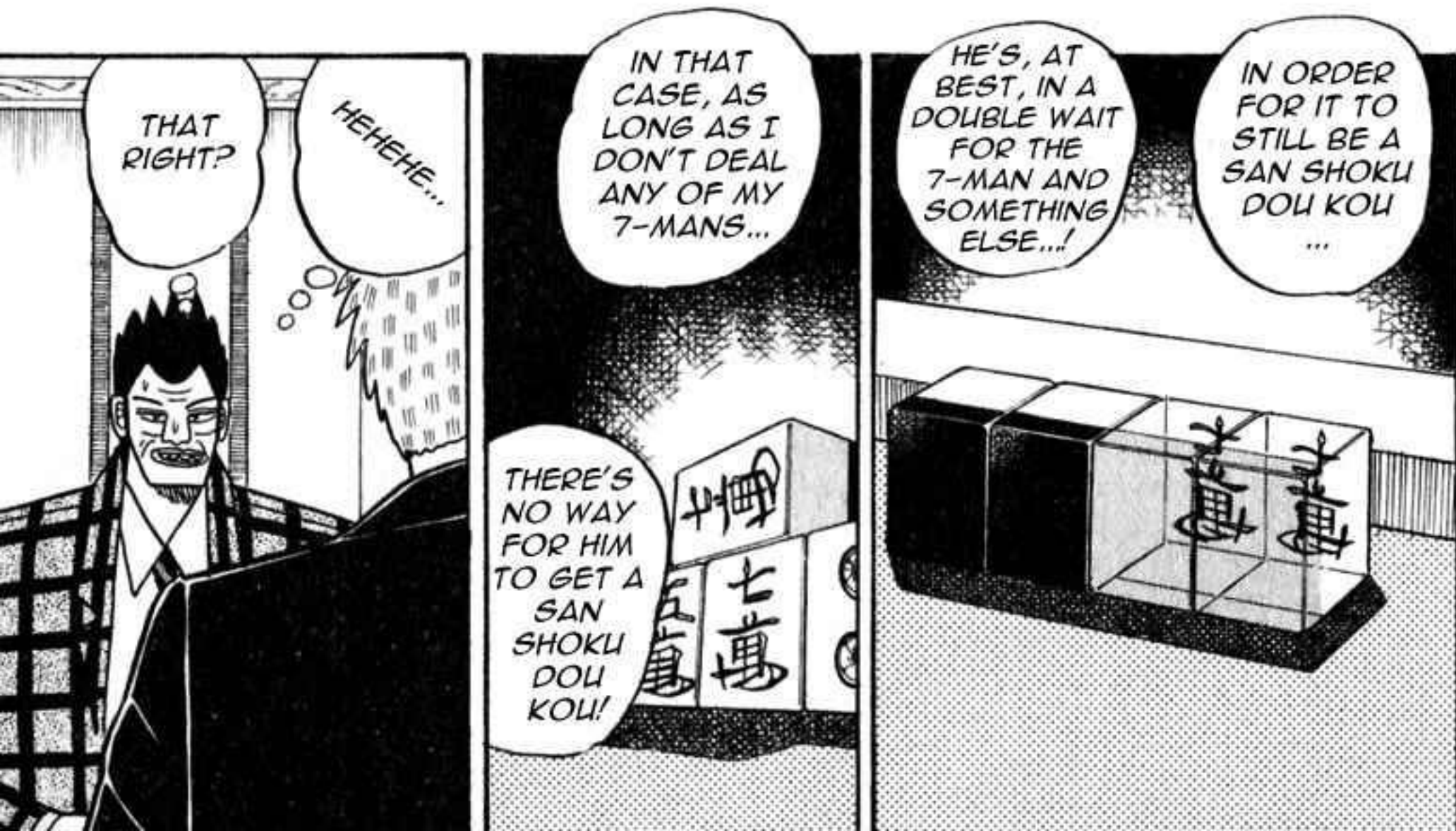


HUH
....?



7-
MAN
....?







IF YOU
WERE
TRYIN' TO
SCARE ME,
YOU DIDN'T
DO A VERY
GOOD
JOB!

SO
THAT'S
HOW
IT IS
...



THAT
KINDA
LUCK IS
ALL
YOU'VE
GOT
LEFT?

HEHE
HE
...



LOOKS
LIKE IT
WAS THE
DOU KOU
THAT GOT
AWAY!

WELL,
WHADDA
YA KNOW
...



IT'S
WEAR-
IN'
DOWN!

IT'S JUST LIKE
I THOUGHT...
THAT MON-
STEROUS LUCK
IS GETTIN'
WORN OUT!



NOW
I'M
REALLY
SAFE!



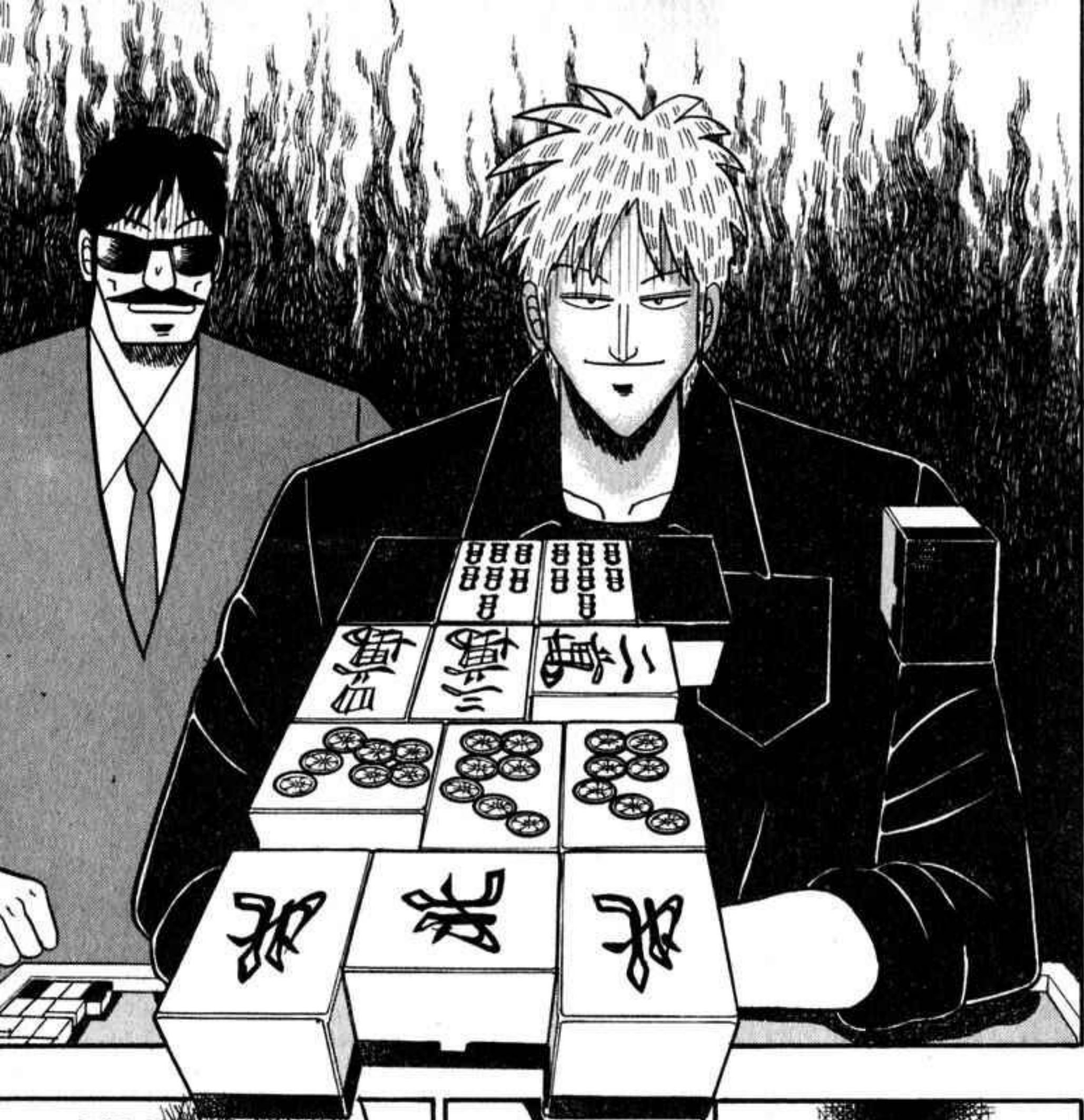
I JUST GOT
THIS ALL-RE-
VEALING 7-MAN
OUTTA NO-
WHERE!

LOOKS
LIKE I'M
THE ONE
WITH THE
LUCK,
NOW!

HEHE
HE
...

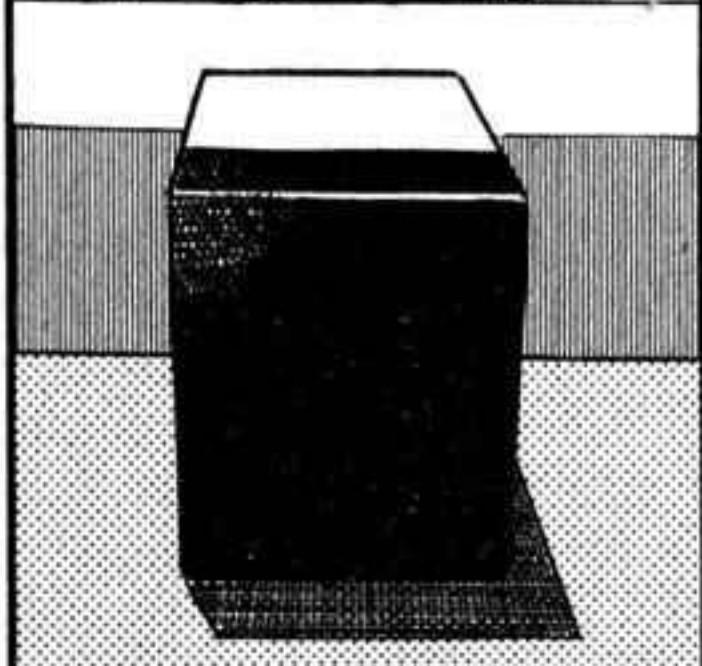


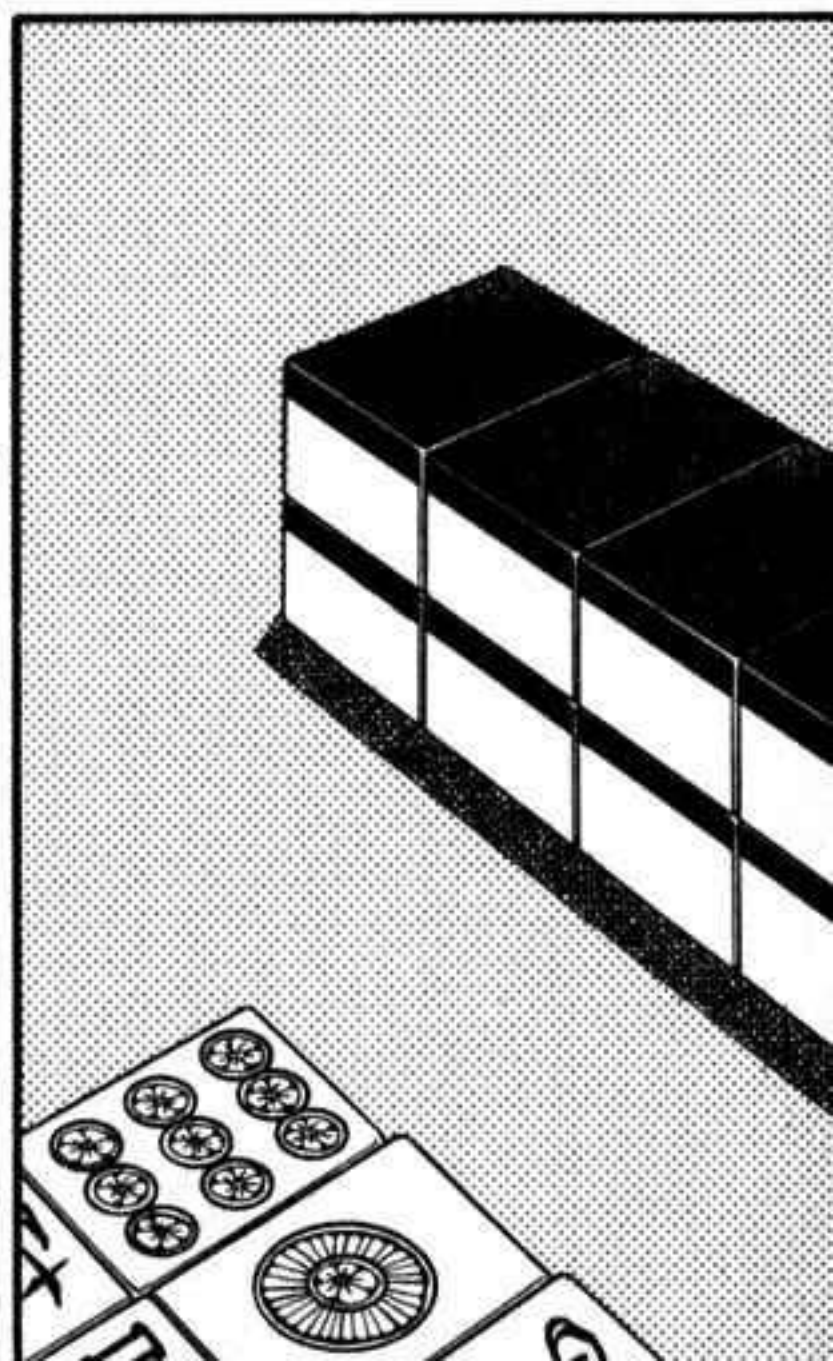
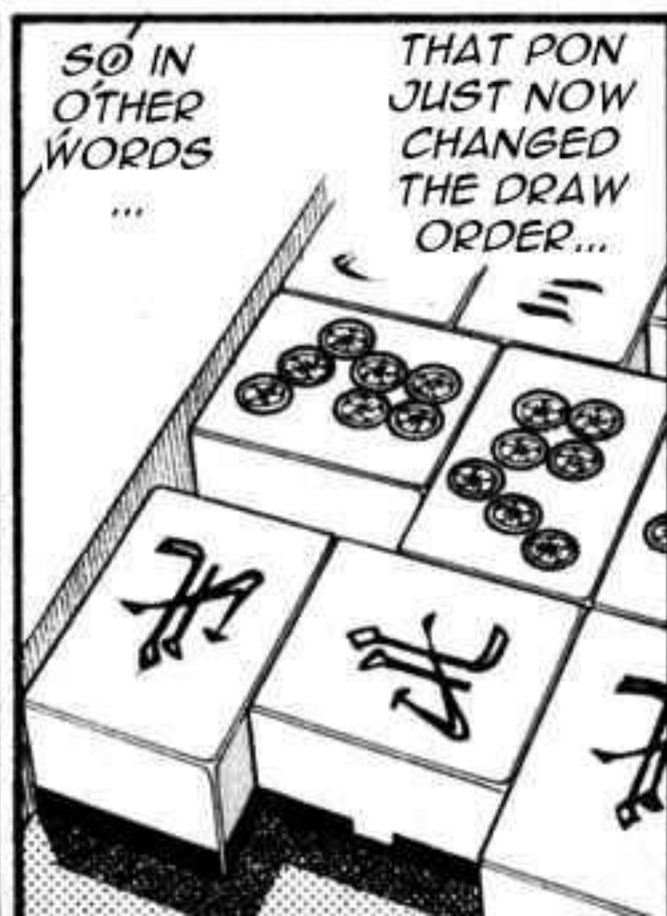




WITH AN
UNMIS-
TAKABLE
SINGLE
WAIT...!

AKAGI
IS NOW
IN
TENPAI
...





WHICH
MEANS
THAT I'LL
HAVE THE
LAST
DRAW....!

THE
DEAD
WALL
MOVED
OVER
ONE,
TOO...

AND
SINCE
THERE'S
BEEN A
KAN...

HE'LL RON
OFF OF
THE LAST
DISCARD
....?

SO IF
THAT'S
WHAT
HE
MEANT
TO DO
...

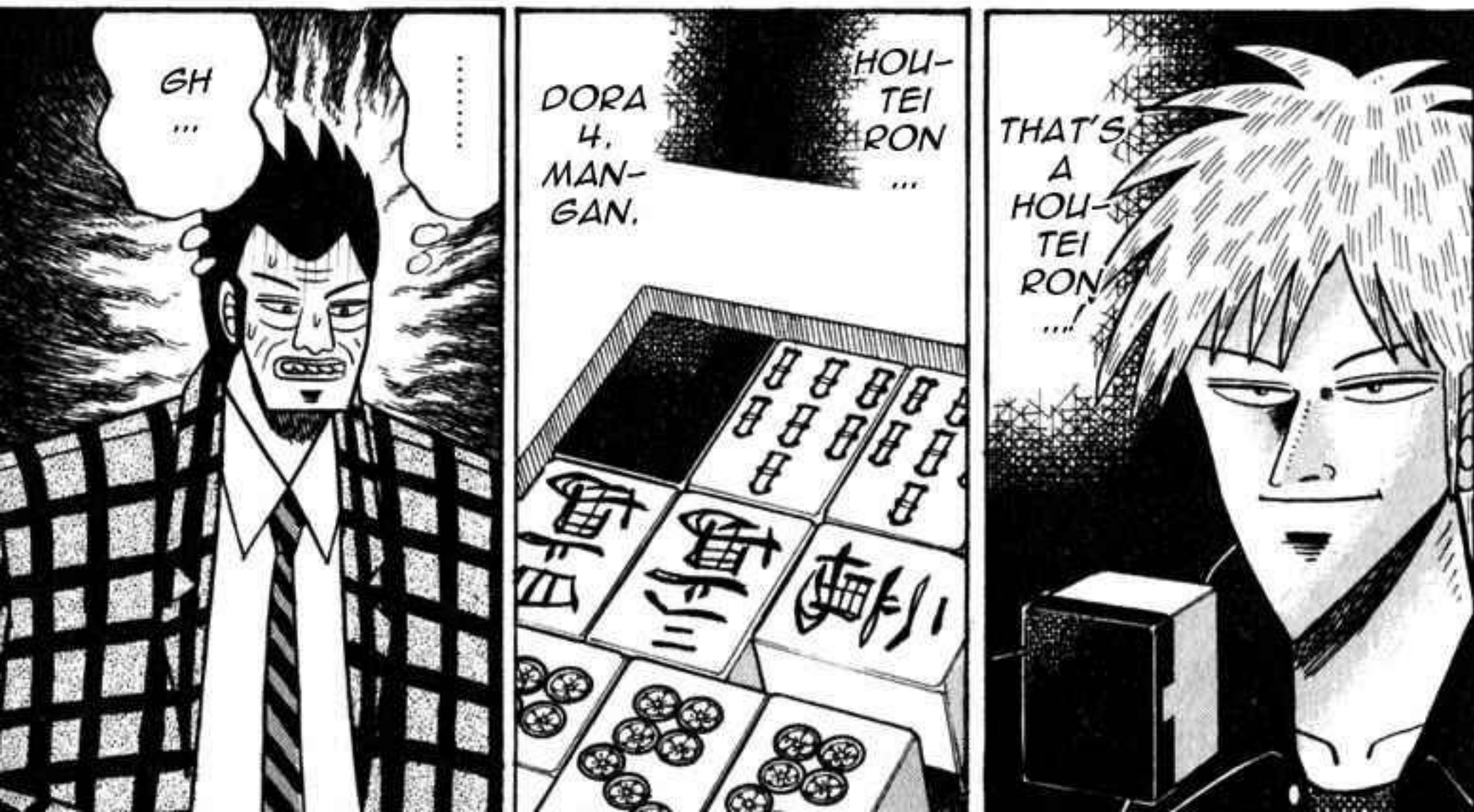


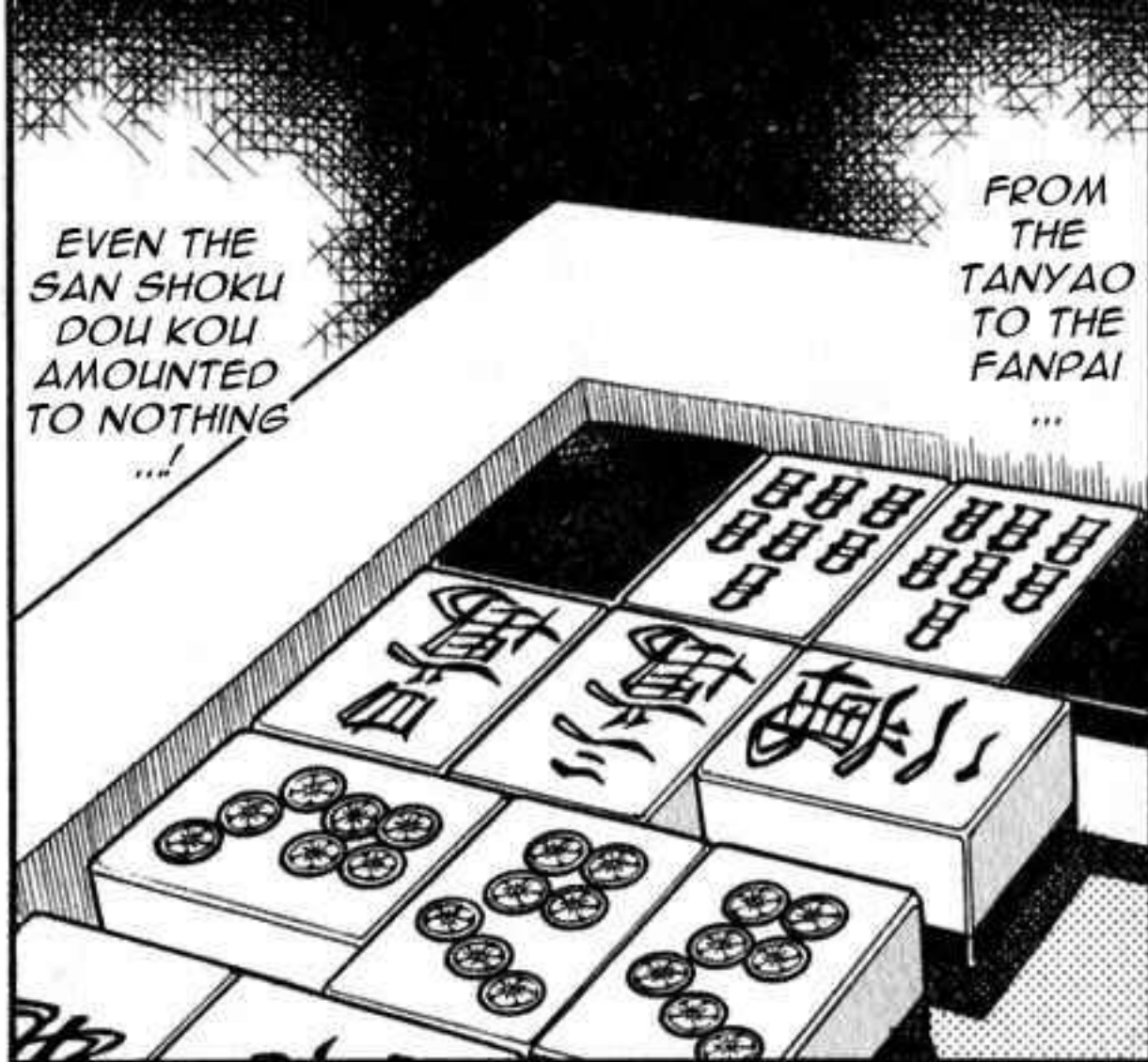
GH
...

DORA
4,
MAN-
GAN.

HOU-
TEI
RON
...

THAT'S
A
HOU-
TEI
RON
....!





EVEN THE
SAN SHOKU
DOU KOU
AMOUNTED
TO NOTHING
...!

FROM
THE
TANYAO
TO THE
FANPAI
...



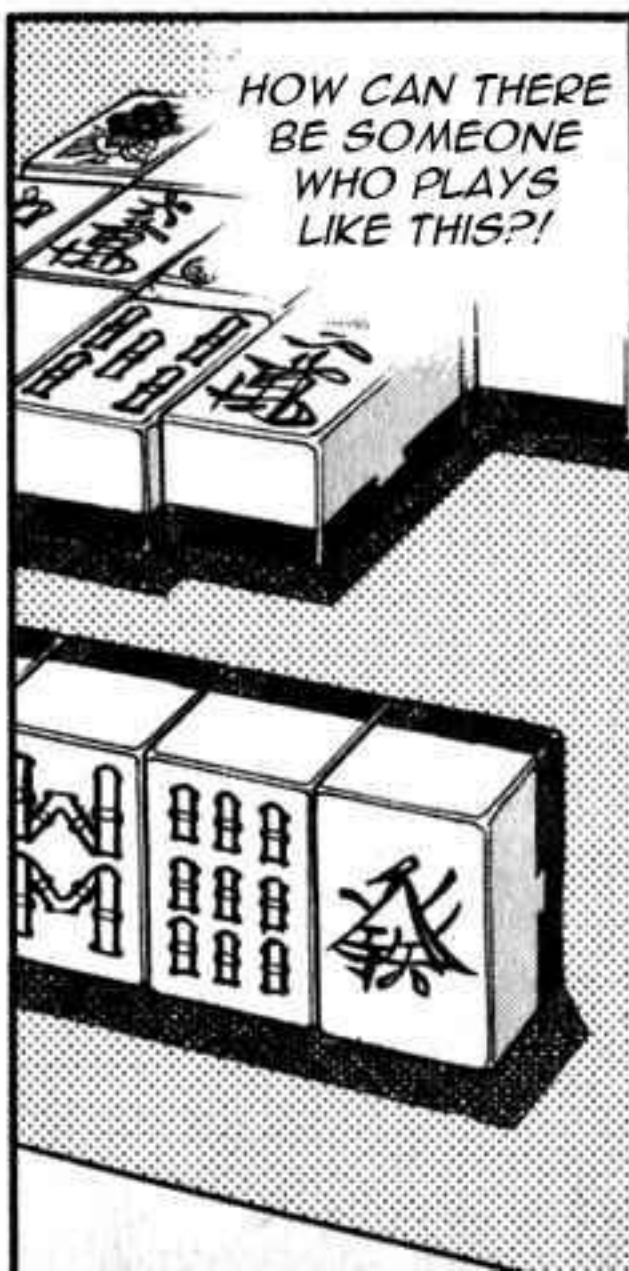
THAT'S
WHAT
HE WAS
GOING
FOR
...!

SO
IT'S
TRUE
...



IT WAS
ALL
JUST A
GIANT
BLUFF
...!

EVERYTHING
HE DID
THROUGH
THE WHOLE
MATCH...



HOW CAN THERE
BE SOMEONE
WHO PLAYS
LIKE THIS?!

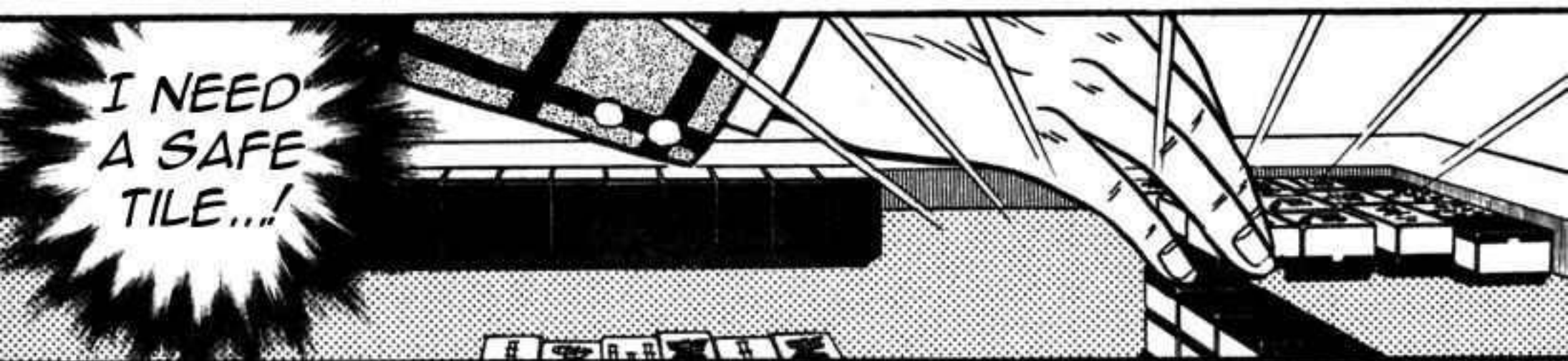


IMPOSSIBLE!

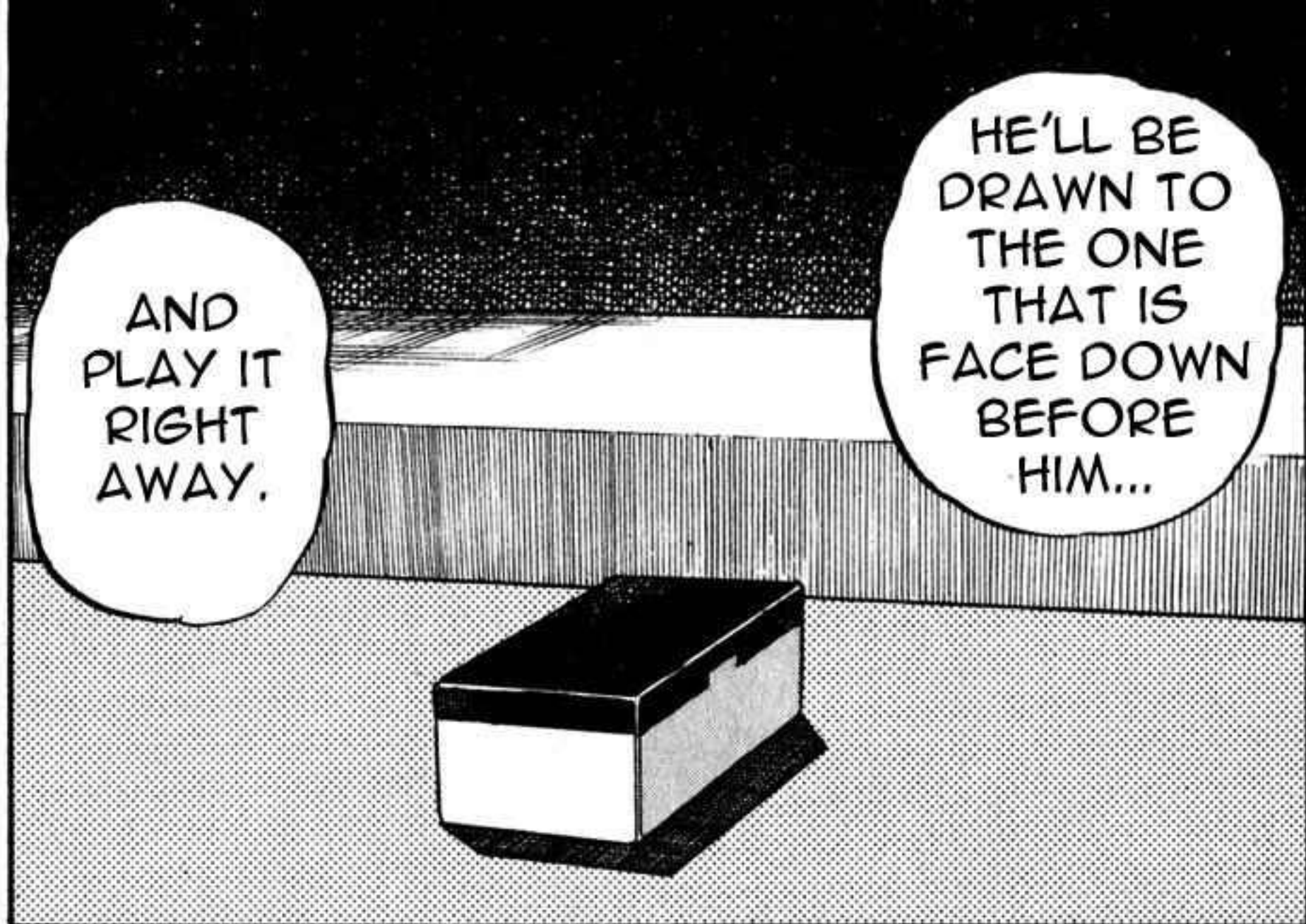


HE HAD
ME RUN-
NING
AROUND
IN CIR-
CLES
...!

I WAS
JUST BEING
LED AROUND
BY THIS
KID...







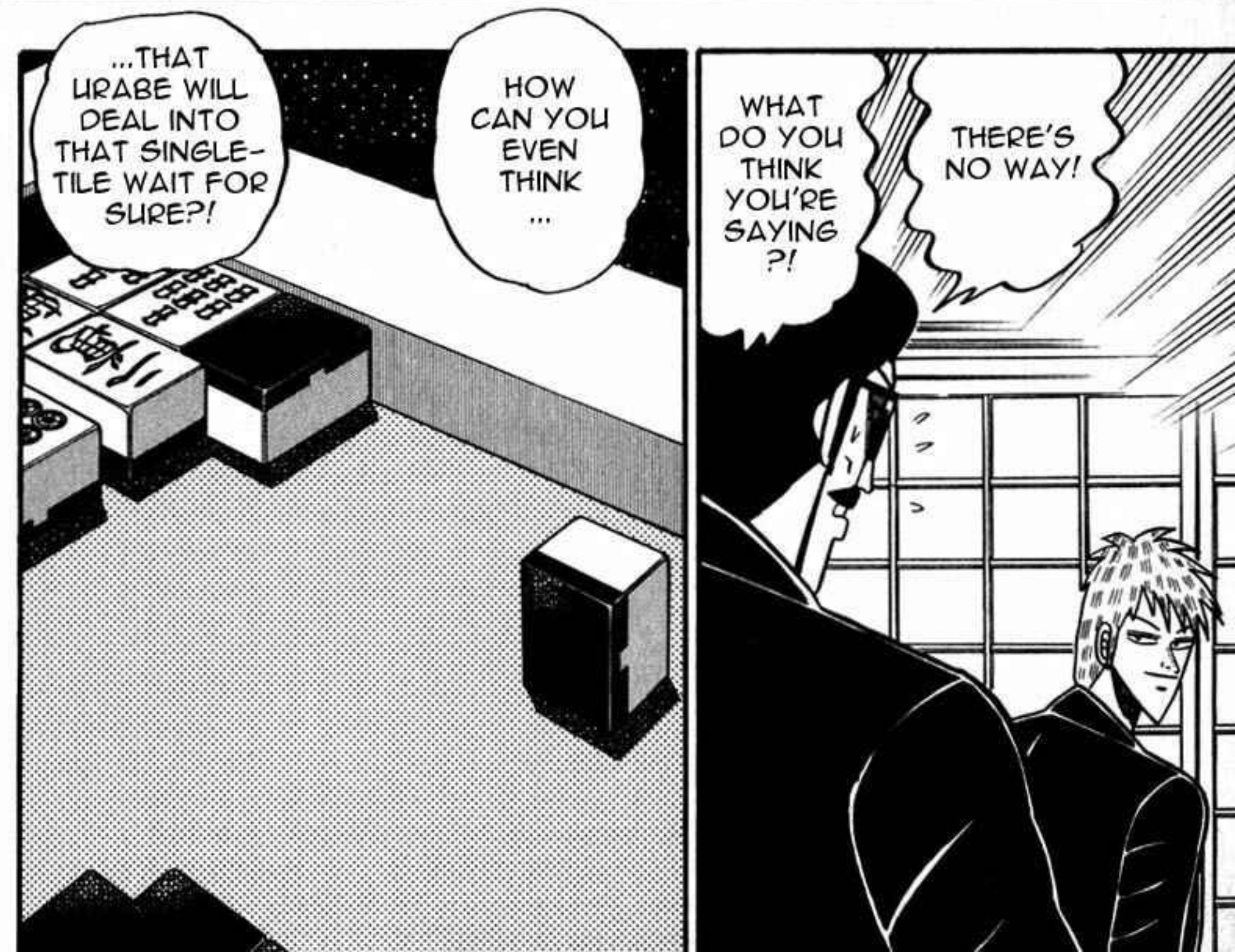


第48話

CHAPTER 48

本物

- GENUINE





THAT'S
RIGHT
...

.....
oo



I
DON'T
CARE
HOW
SURE
YOU
ARE!

THERE'S NO
WAY I'LL LET
YOU JUST UP
AND LEAVE US
RIGHT NOW!!



THIS
ISHIKAWA
GUY KNOWS
WHAT HE'S
TALKIN'
'BOLT' AT
LEAST...



ALL THIS
TALK ABOUT
MAGIC AND
SORCERY
...

THIS
HOUTEI
DORA 4
TENPAI...

THIS IS AS
FAR AS IT
CAN TAKE
HIM. **JAP**



IT'S
GOTTA
BE A
BLUFF!



THERE'S
NO
WAY.

WHAT'S THIS
CRAP ABOUT
IT BEING A
SURE THING
THAT I'LL
DEAL IN?



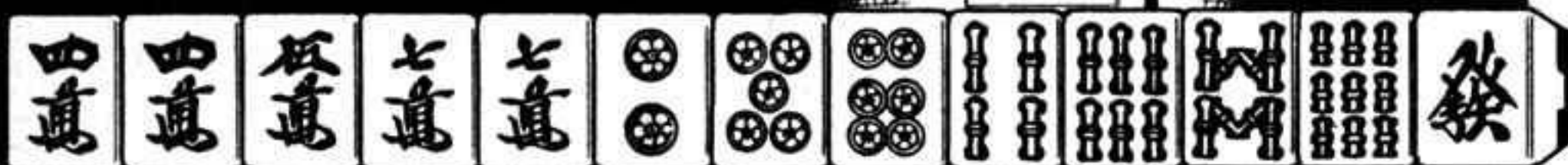
I'VE
GOT
GREAT
ODDS!

SO I
CAN DO
THIS!

THAT'S
ALL IT
CAN BE
...

I CAN PLAY
ANY OF 'EM
THAT I FEEL
IS SAFE!

I'VE GOT 14
TILES HERE...
12 DIFFERENT
KINDS TO
CHOOSE
FROM.



WITH ALL'A
THAT BEHIND
ME, YOU STILL
THINK I'LL JUST
GIVE YOU THE
ONE YOU
WANT?

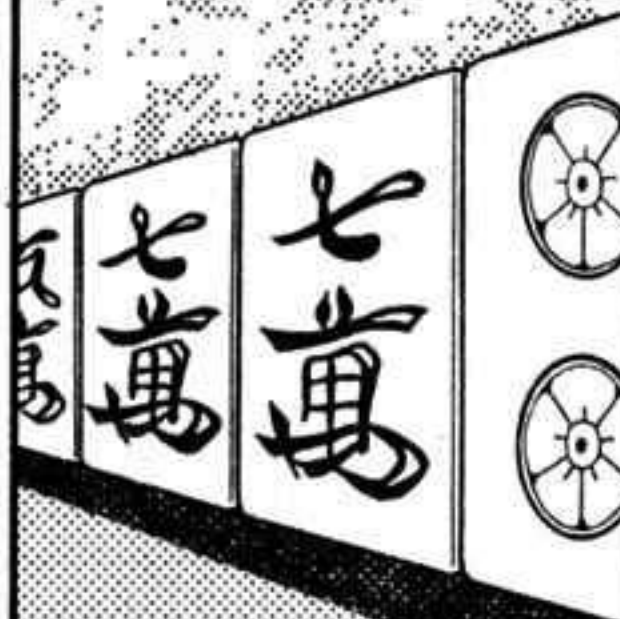
IT'S
PLAIN
DUMB TO
THINK
OTHER-
WISE...

GIMME
A FUC-
KIN'
BREAK.

HIS WINNING TILE MIGHT
NOT EVEN BE IN MY
HAND, BUT EVEN IF IT IS,
THERE'S STILL JUST
A 1/12 CHANCE THAT
I'LL PICK IT!

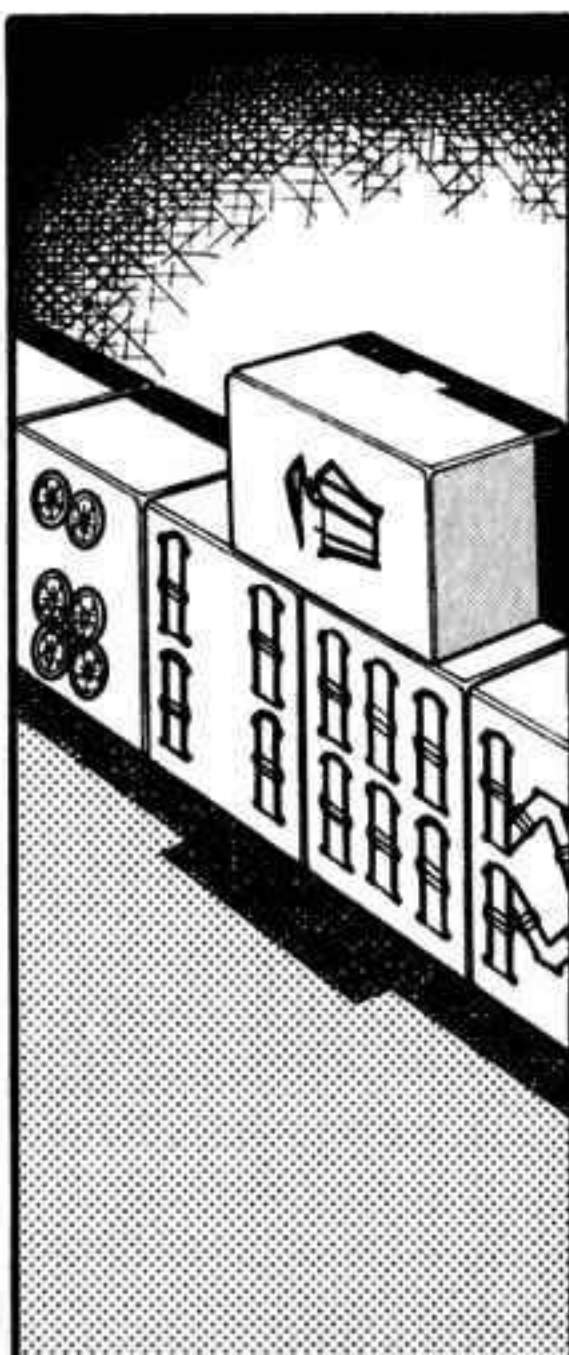
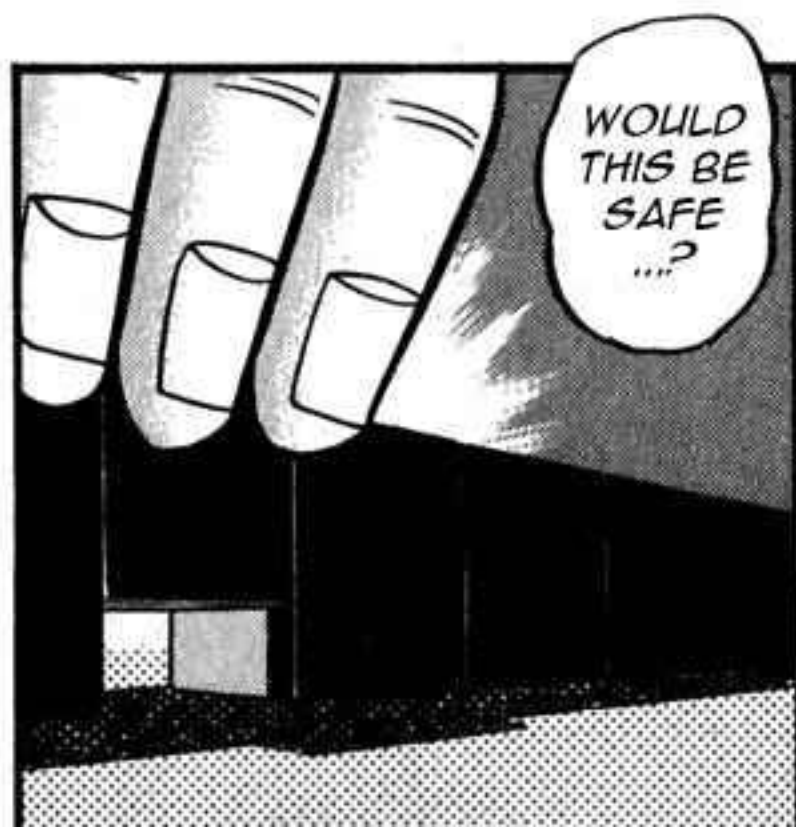
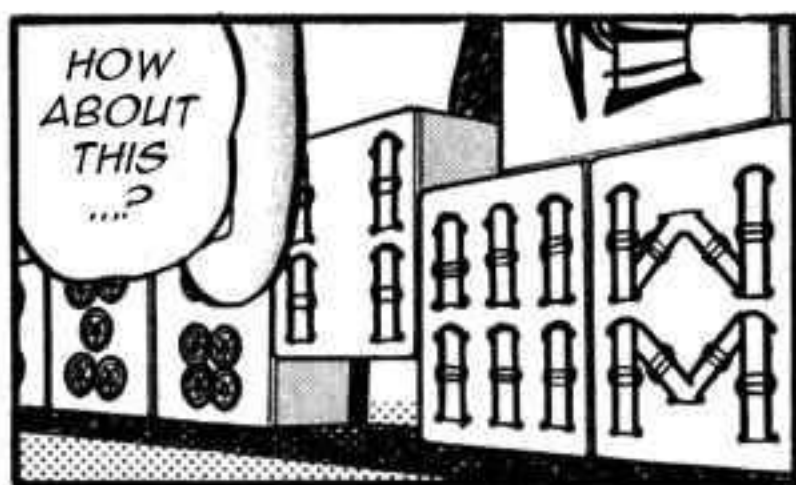
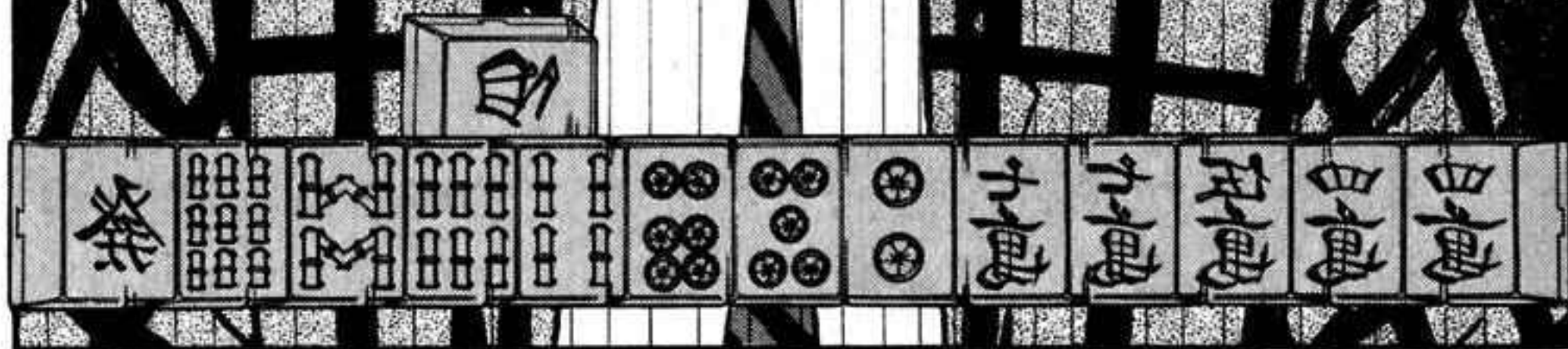
I GET TO
CHOOSE
FOR MY-
SELF!

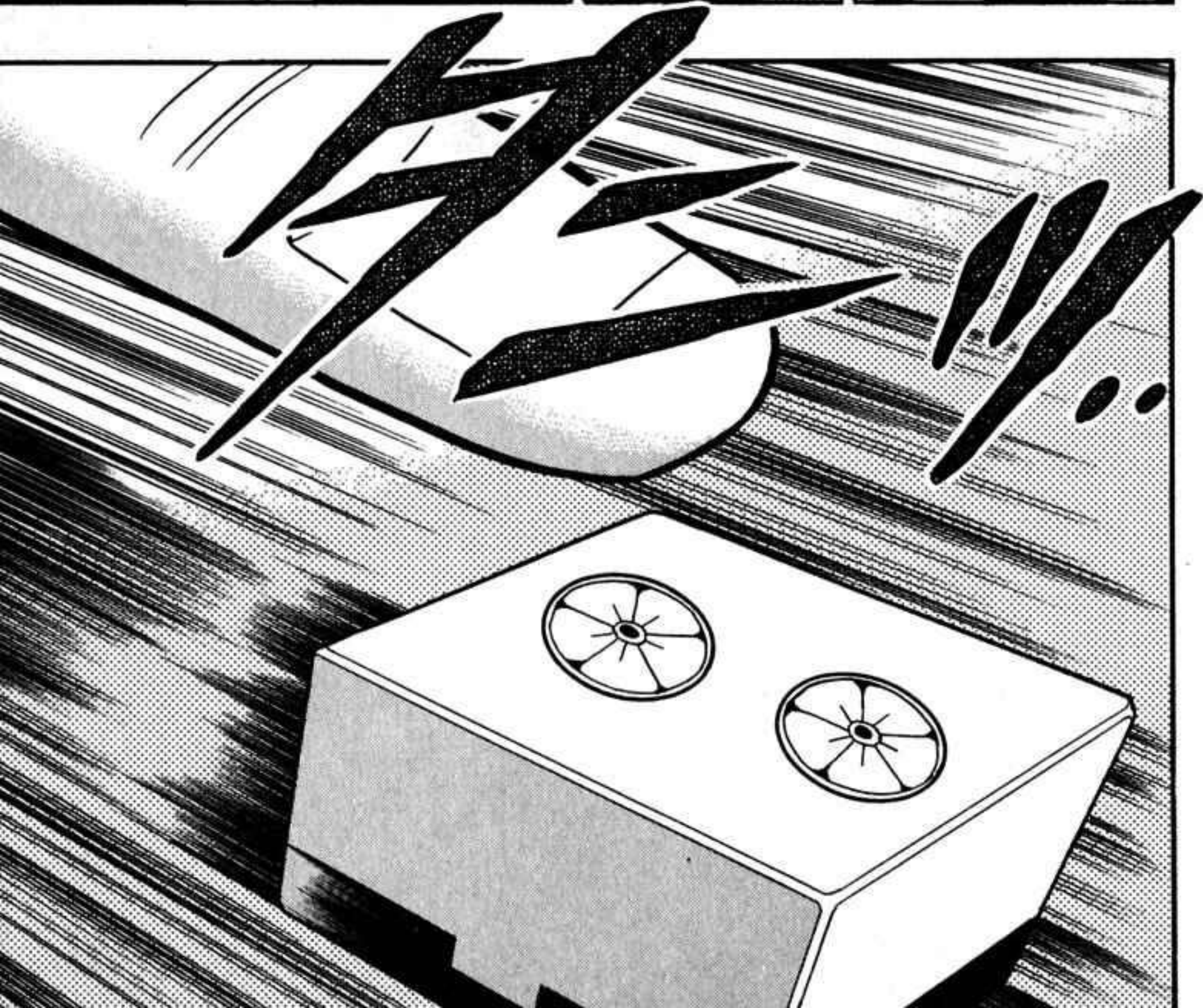
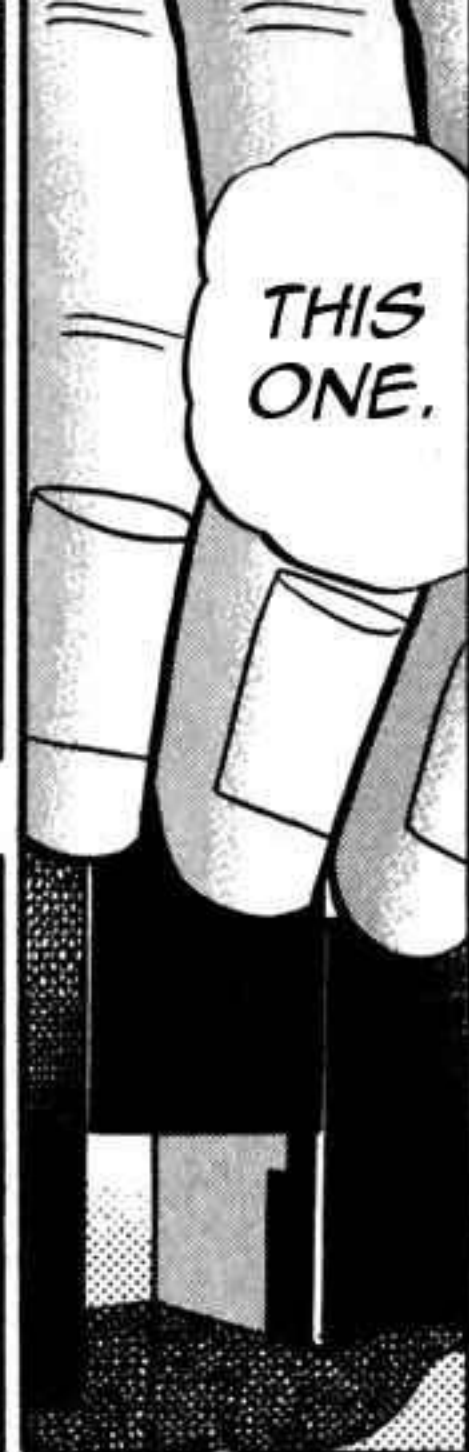
HE CAN'T
PICK MY
TILE FOR
ME...



FOR
SURE.

I'LL GET
AROUND
IT.







THIS 2-PIN
IS THE ONLY
TILE I'VE GOT
THAT'S REALLY
SAFE...

IT'LL
PASS.

THERE'S
NO WAY
THAT CAN
BE THE
ONE YOU
GOT...



WHAT
DO YA
SAY TO
THAT?

HEHE
HE...



CAN IT
REALLY
BE
TRUE
...?!



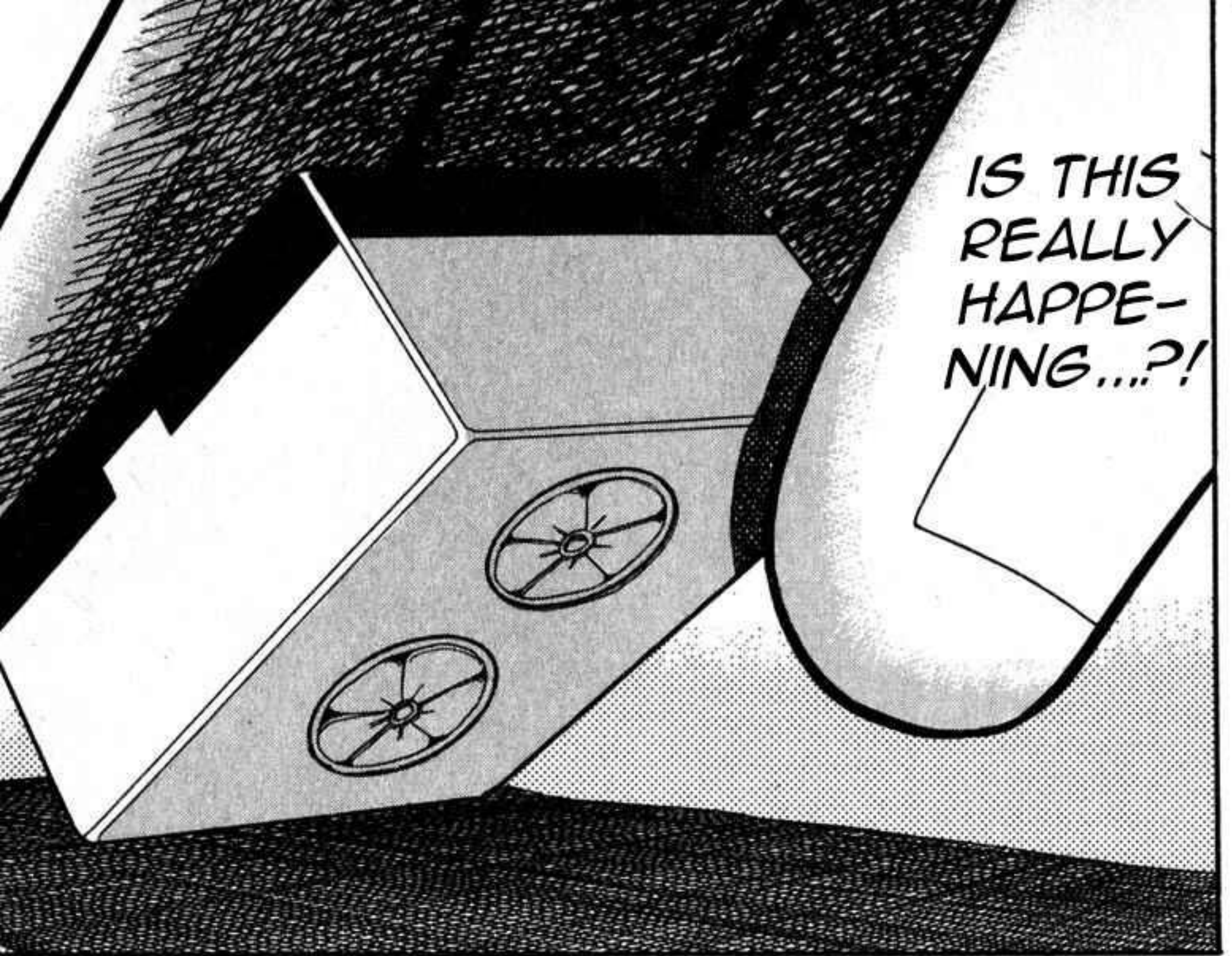
IS THIS A
DREAM
...?!

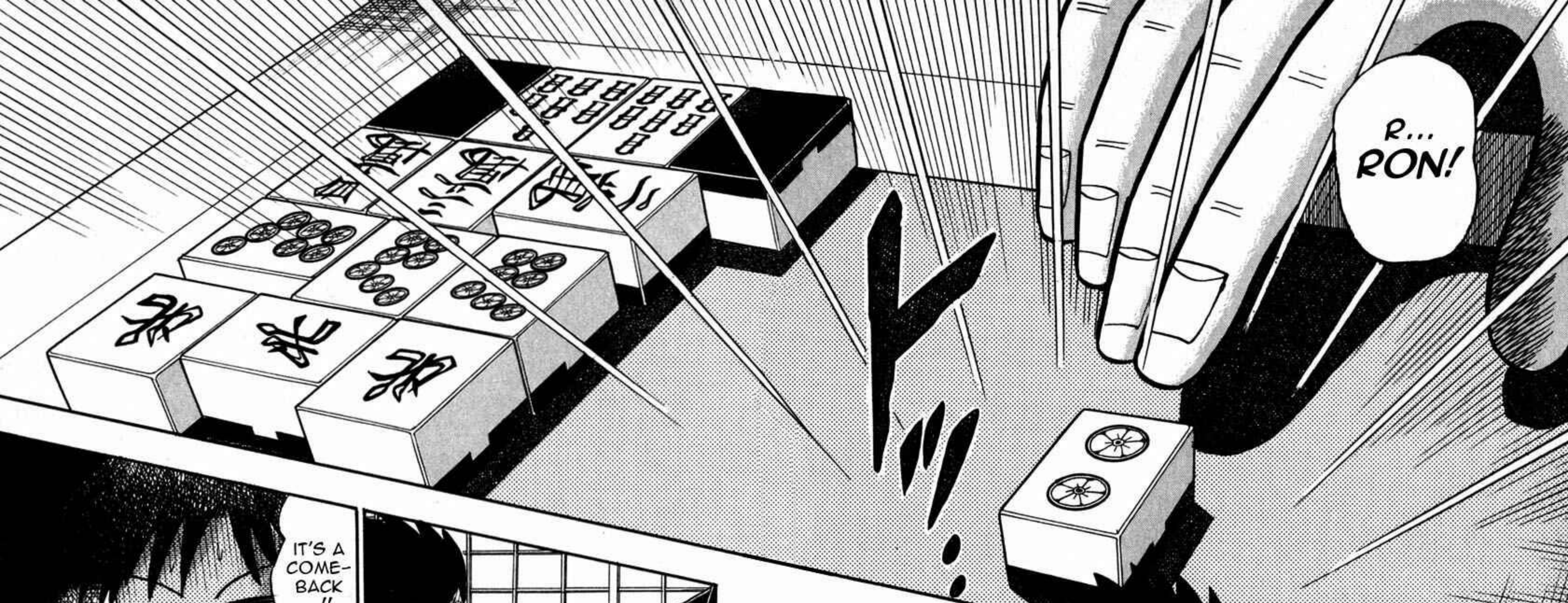
OR
SOME
KIND
OF
ILLU-
SION
...?!



URGH
...?!

NO WAY...



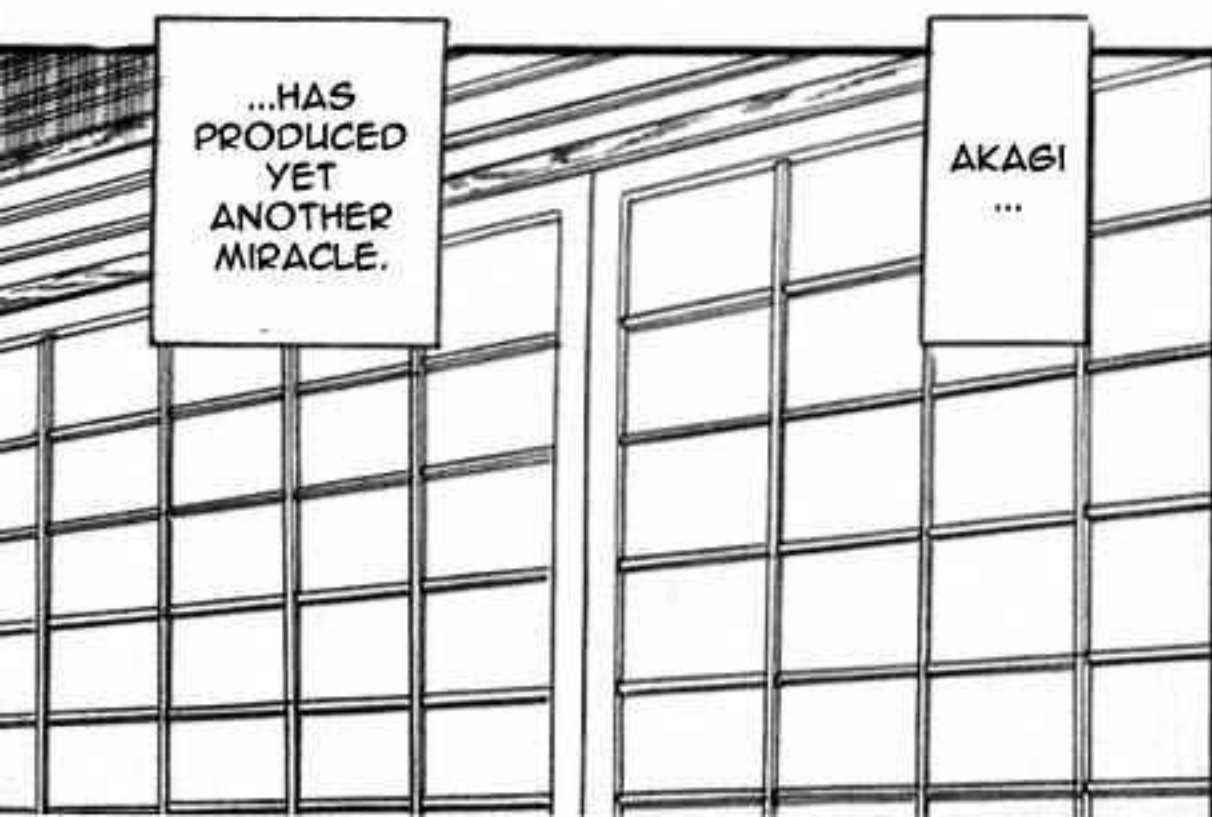






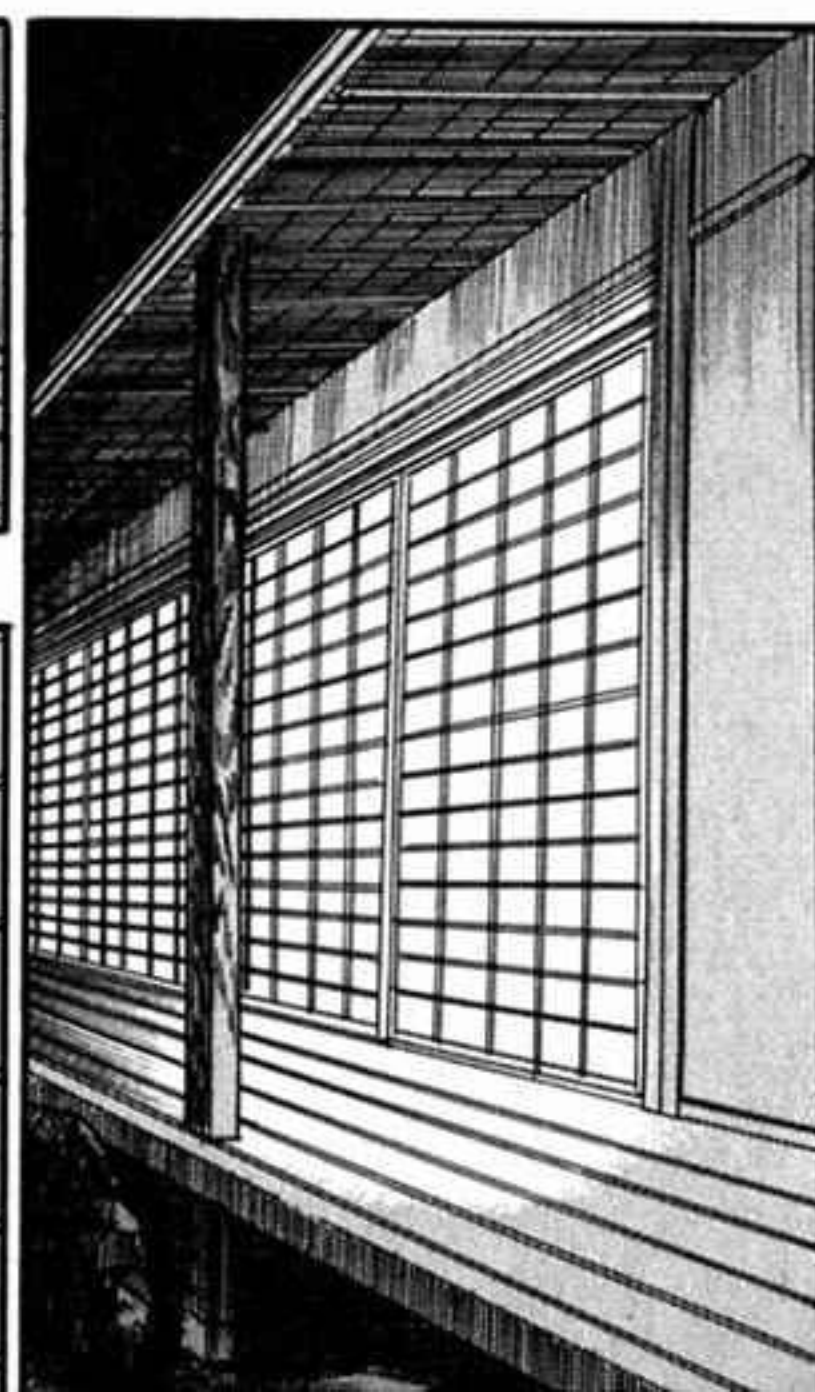
...HAS
COME
TO AN
END.

THE
ULTIMATE
DEATH-
MATCH
BETWEEN
AKAGI AND
URABE...



...HAS
PRODUCED
YET
ANOTHER
MIRACLE.

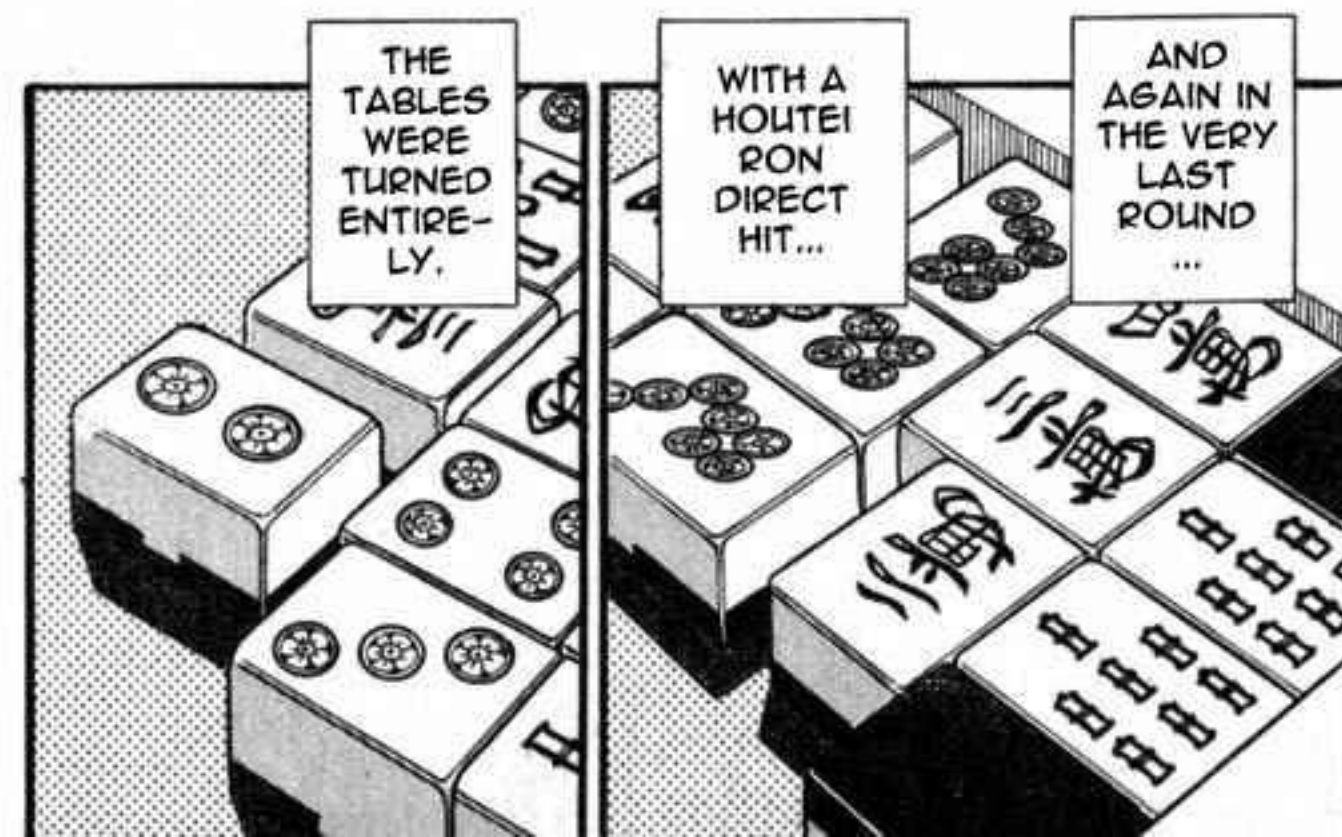
AKAGI
...



WITH
AKAGI'S
COINCIDEN-
TAL SINGLE
PEI WAIT
...

BUT,
STARTING
IN THE
SOUTH
THIRD
ROUND
...

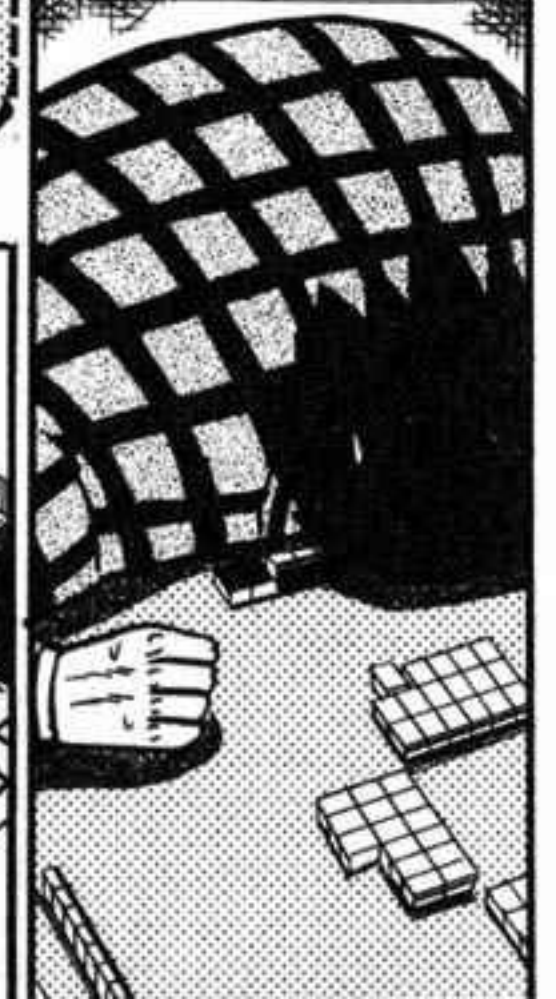
AT ONE POINT,
THE POINT
DIFFERENCE
URABE HAD
OVER AKAGI
HAD REACHED
UPWARDS OF
70,000
POINTS...



THE
TABLES
WERE
TURNED
ENTIRE-
LY,

WITH A
HOUTEI
RON
DIRECT
HIT...

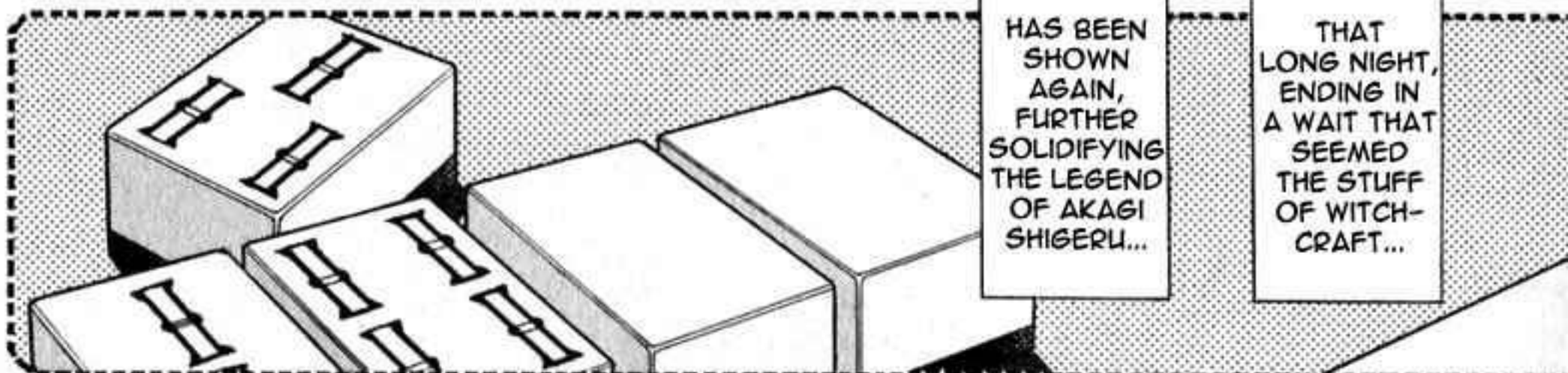
AND
AGAIN IN
THE VERY
LAST
ROUND
...





AKAGI, A
MERE BEGINNER,
MANAGED TO
SPECTACULARLY
BRING DOWN THE
BLIND MAHJONG
MASTER,
ICHIKAWA.

SIX
YEARS
AGO
...



HAS BEEN
SHOWN
AGAIN,
FURTHER
SOLIDIFYING
THE LEGEND
OF AKAGI
SHIGERU...

THAT
LONG NIGHT,
ENDING IN
A WAIT THAT
SEEMED
THE STUFF
OF WITCH-
CRAFT...











HMM?

DID THE
GAME GET
PUT AWAY
ALREADY?



SIGH
...



I
KNEW
TO DO
THAT
MUCH!

NO
PROB-
LEMS
THERE!



AH,
YES,
YES!

I'M AS-
KING IF
THE GAME
WAS LEFT
ALONE.



I CAN
SPARE 5
MINUTES.

GOOD,
GOOD
...!!

LET'S
GO
THERE,
THEN.



KAY.

I THOUGHT
YOU MIGHT
BE ABLE
TO USE IT
TO EX-
PLAIN!

THE TABLE
WAS LEFT
AS IT WAS
WHEN YOU
LEFT!

THE OTHERS
ARE ALREADY
GONE, BUT
...



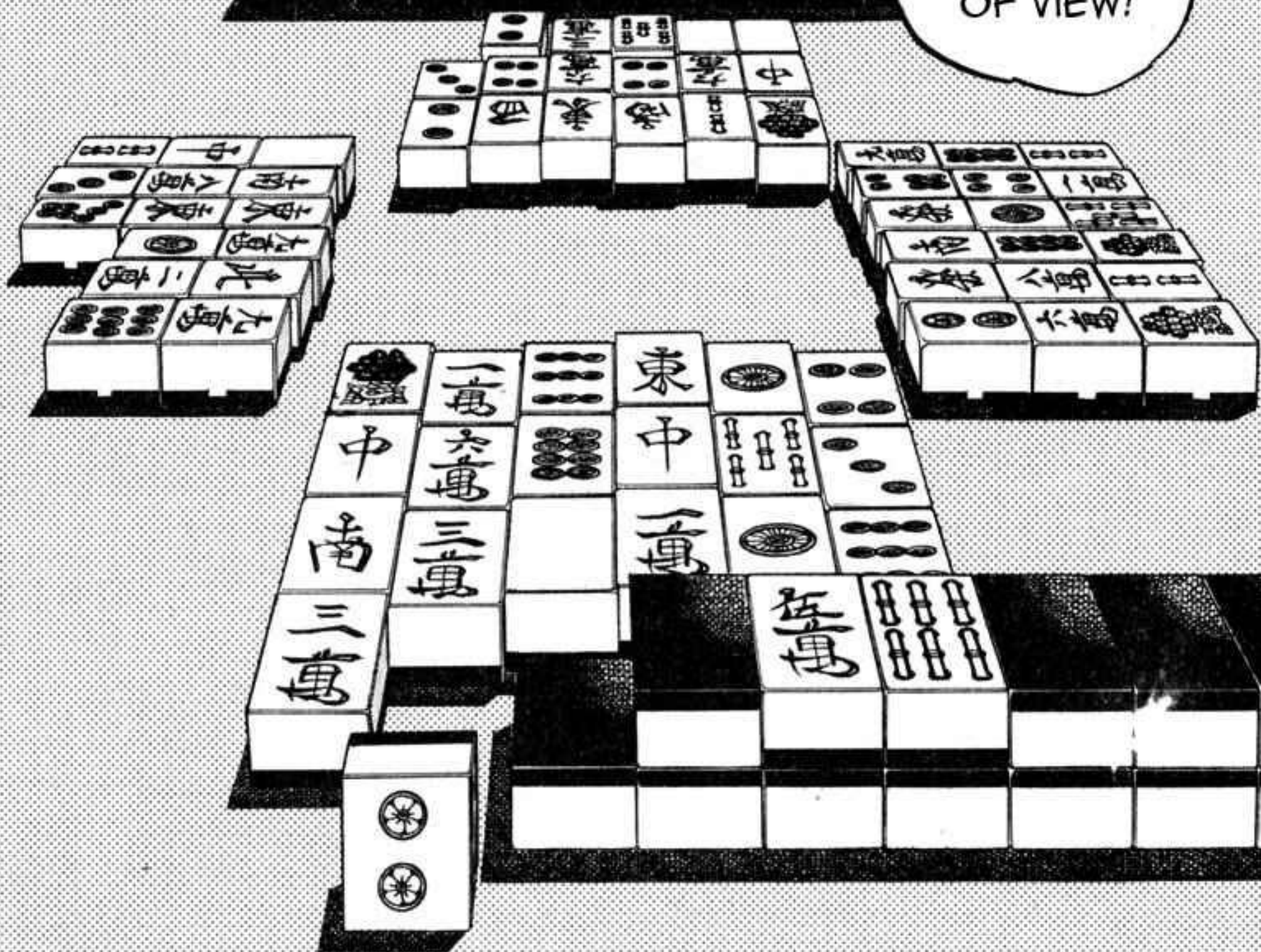
BACK IN
YOUR
ROUND AS
DEALER
...

THAT'S
RIGHT
...

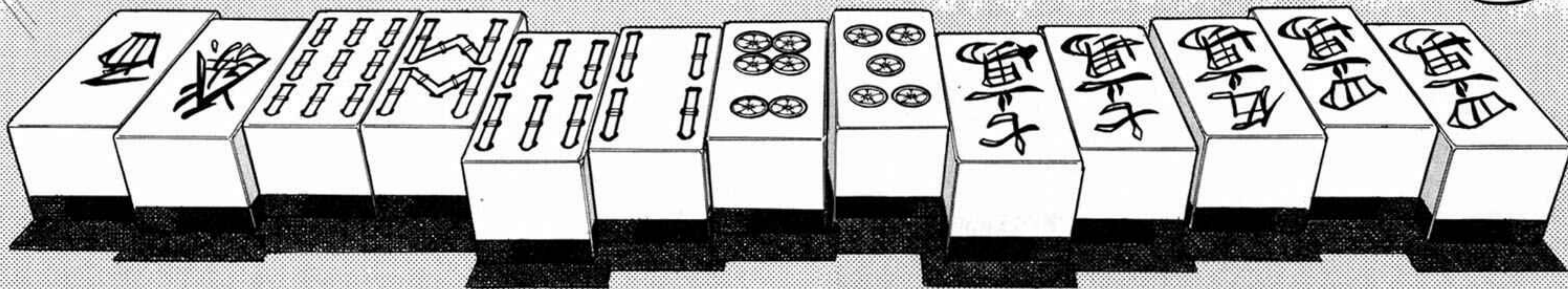
THIS
IS JUST
HOW IT
WAS.



IT LOOKED
JUST LIKE
THIS FROM
YOUR POINT
OF VIEW!



AT THE TIME HE WAS CHOOSING A TILE TO PLAY, HIS HAND WAS IN THIS SHAPE.



SO I'LL START AT THE VERY BOTTOM AND WORK UPWARDS.

IF I EXPLAINED THE STORY STARTING AT THE BOTTOM, YOU WOULDN'T END... KNOW HOW I GOT THERE.

AND THOSE ARE JUST THE ONES ON TOP.

I WAS BUILDING A TOWER OF BLOCKS OVER THE MATCH ...



BEFORE EVEN THAT ...

WELL, NO ...

SO, EVEN KNOWING WHAT ALL OF HIS TILES WERE, HOW WOULD YOU KNOW HE'D PLAY THE 2-PIN FROM AMONG THEM?

...AS YOU CAN SEE, HE HAD A RATHER WIDE VARIETY OF TILES TO CHOOSE FROM.

THERE WEREN'T ANY SAFE TILES, BUT...

MMM.

THE BOTTOM, YOU SAY?

HIS NATURAL THOUGHT PROCESSES AND UNDERSTANDING OF LUCK AND FLOW...

EXACTLY WHAT MAKES THE OPPONENT THINK THE WAY THAT HE THINKS...

THAT IS THE ONLY WAY TO TRULY WIN.

YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND ...

IN ORDER TO WIN IN MAH-JONG ...

TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART.

WE HAVE TO DIVE BELOW THE SURFACE...

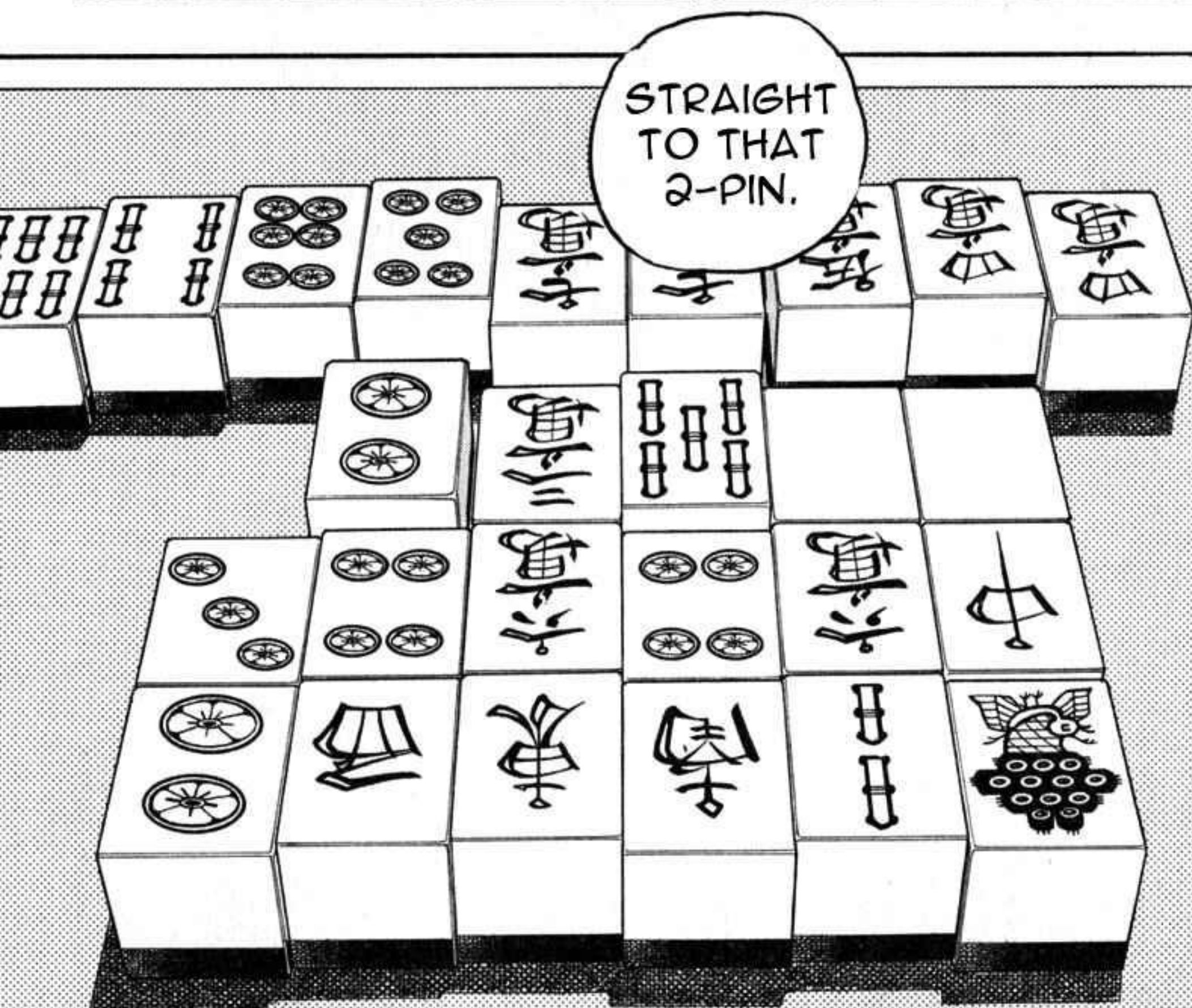
...HOW I KNEW THAT HE WOULD PLAY THE 2-PIN OUT OF ALL OF THOSE 14 TILES...

AND MORE-OVER ...

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW I KNEW THAT HE HAD A 2-PIN...

KUMI-CHOU ...

HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT HE EVEN HAD A 2-PIN IN HIS HAND TO BEGIN WITH?





...THEIR
TRUE NATURES
TEND TO SHOW
THEMSELVES.

WHENEVER
PEOPLE ARE
CONFRONTED
WITH DANGER
...



...WILL
THEY
STAND
STILL AND
WAIT?

OR
PER-
HAPS
...

OR INSTEAD,
WILL THEY FACE
THEIR FEAR
HEAD ON?

WHEN
THEY BEGIN
TO FEEL
FEARFUL,
WILL THEY
RUN AWAY?



TRYING TO
WIN A BATTLE
OF THIS SCALE
AGAINST HIM
WOULD BE
SIMPLY OUT
OF THE
QUESTION.

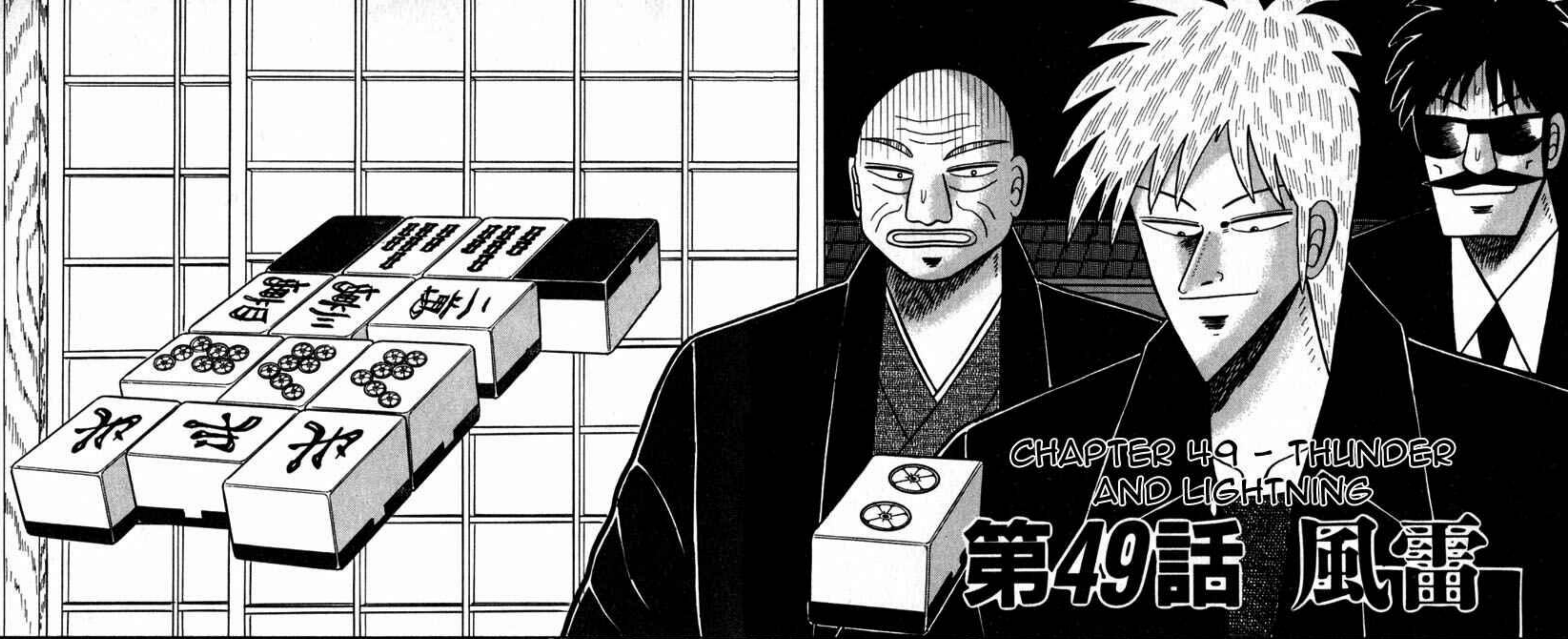
WITHOUT
ASCE-
RTAINING
WHAT LIES
BENEATH
THE SUR-
FACE,

I HAD TO
PLACE HIM
INTO A
SITUATION
WHERE THE
DATA
WOULD BE
ACCURATE
...

IN ORDER TO
ACCURATELY
MEASURE
WHAT HIS
NATURAL
TENDENCY
IS...

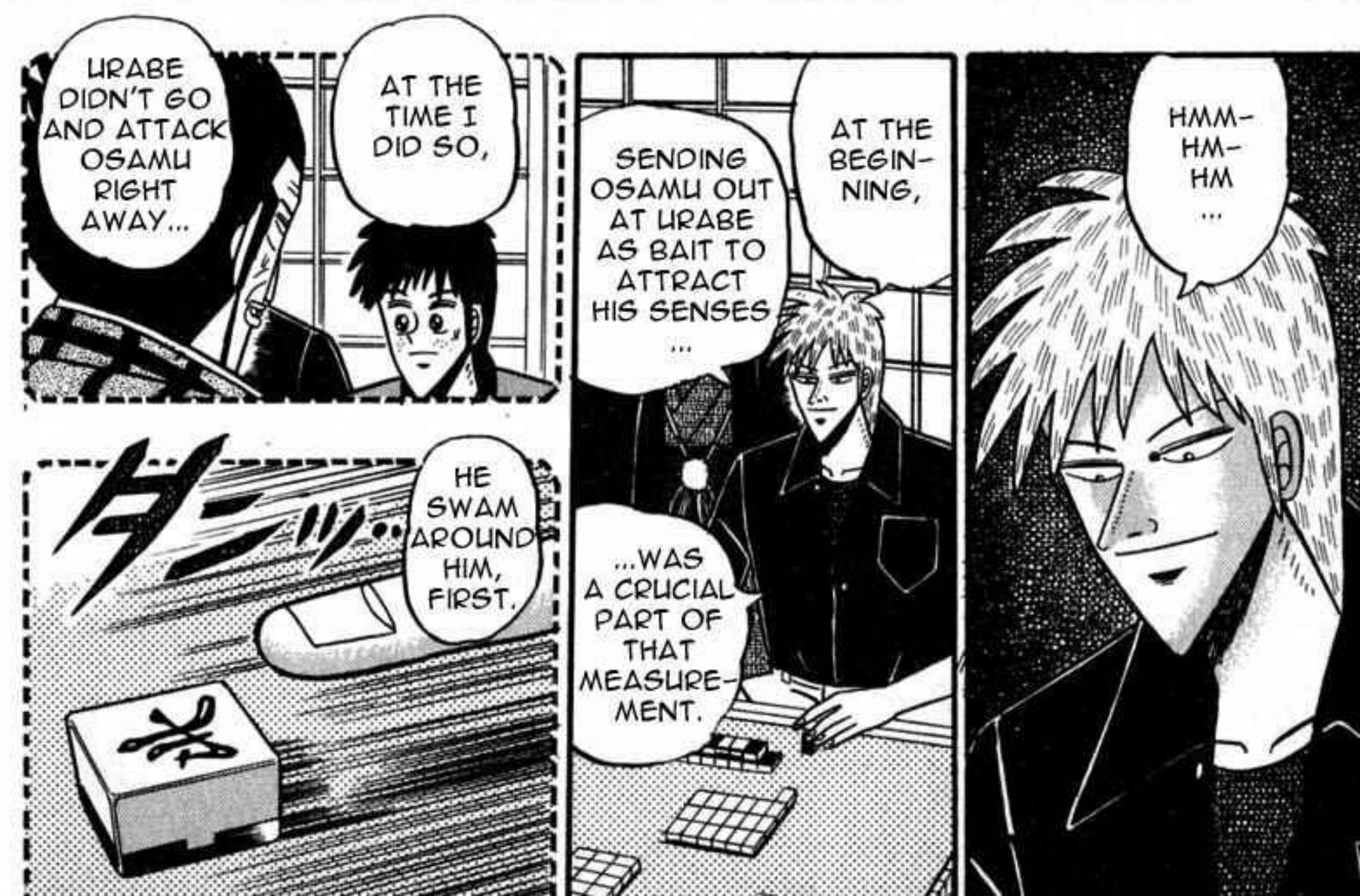
IT WAS
CRITICAL TO
GET THOSE
MEASURE-
MENTS AT
THE VERY
BEGINNING
OF MY TIME
PLAYING.

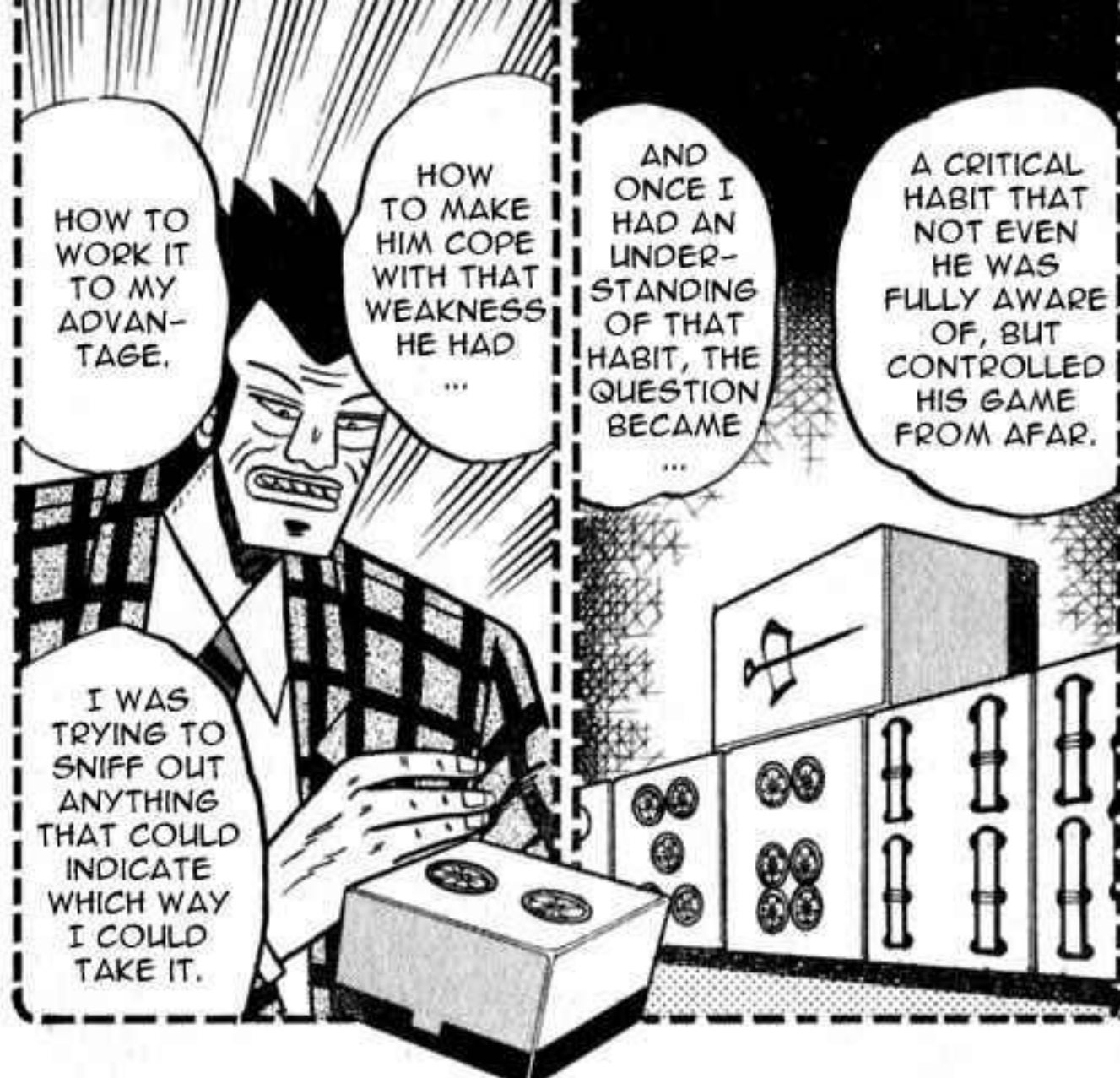
WITHOUT
DISCERNING
THAT MUCH,
THERE WOULD
BE NO WAY
FOR ME TO
ADVANCE.



CHAPTER 49 - THUNDER
AND LIGHTNING

第49話 風雷





HOW TO WORK IT TO MY ADVANTAGE.

HOW TO MAKE HIM COPE WITH THAT WEAKNESS HE HAD ...

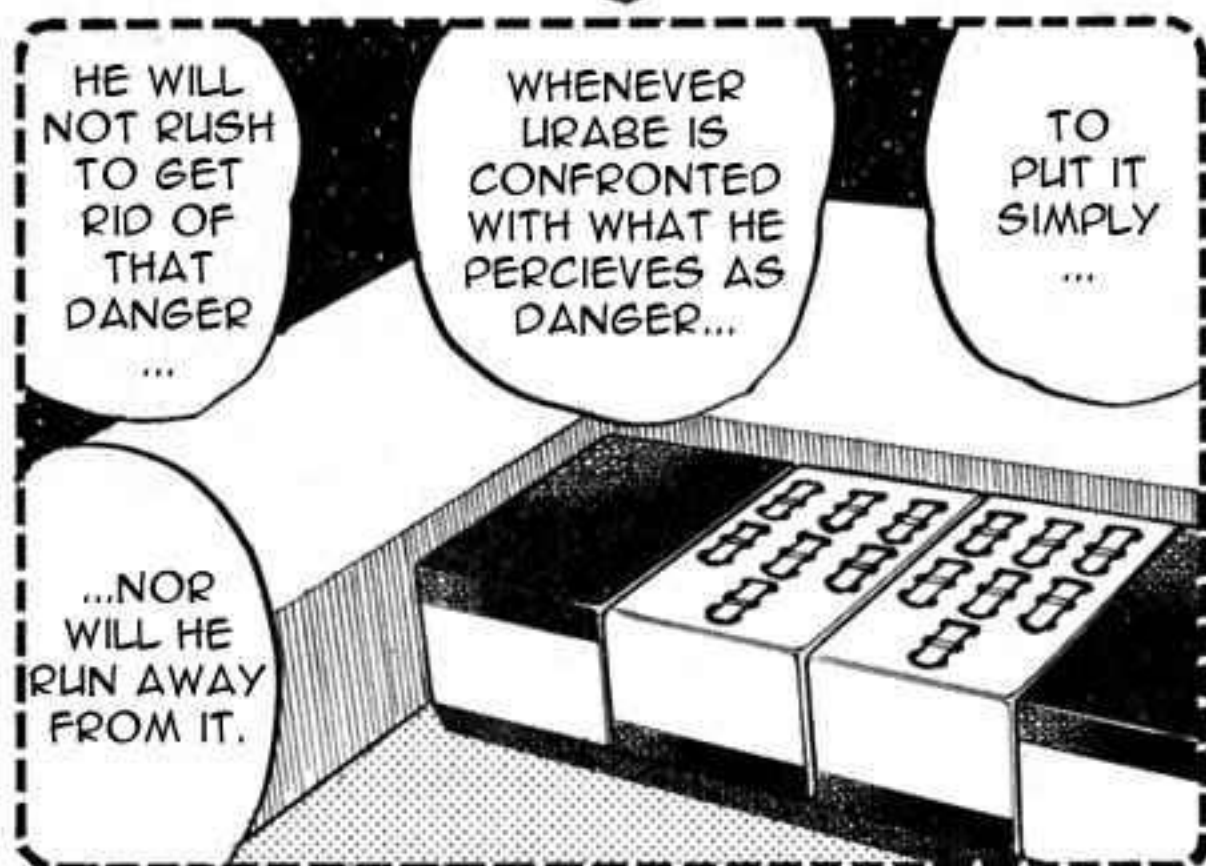
AND ONCE I HAD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THAT HABIT, THE QUESTION BECAME ...

A CRITICAL HABIT THAT NOT EVEN HE WAS FULLY AWARE OF, BUT CONTROLLED HIS GAME FROM AFAR.

I WAS TRYING TO SNIFF OUT ANYTHING THAT COULD INDICATE WHICH WAY I COULD TAKE IT.



A SUB-CONSCIOUS HABIT OF HIS.



HE WILL NOT RUSH TO GET RID OF THAT DANGER ...

WHENEVER URABE IS CONFRONTED WITH WHAT HE PERCEIVES AS DANGER...

TO PUT IT SIMPLY ...

...NOR WILL HE RUN AWAY FROM IT.



HMM-HM...

?



THAT'S WHY HE STARTED OUT SIMPLY OBSERVING OSAMU...

HE TENDS TO WAIT AND SEE HOW THINGS WILL TURN OUT.

THE WAY URABE LIKES TO PLAY MAHJONG IS THROUGH A CONTROLLED USE OF POSTPONEMENT...



BUT HE IS PRONE TO SIMPLY STANDING STILL.

IT'S NOT EXACTLY A BAD THING ...





...WAS THE TRUTH BEHIND HIS GAMEPLAY, AND HOW HE TENDED TO PLAY DEFENSIVELY WHEN CONFRONTED WITH DANGER.

IN THE END, WHAT HE ACTUALLY ENDED UP LOSING BY CALLING THAT WIN ...

ALL OF THAT, JUST BY SHOWING HIS HAND TO ME.



BY LETTING HIM MAKE HIS OWN CHOICES.

I WAS ABLE TO CONTROL EVERY ASPECT OF THE END GAME...



...USING THAT CRITICAL SET OF INFORMATION ...

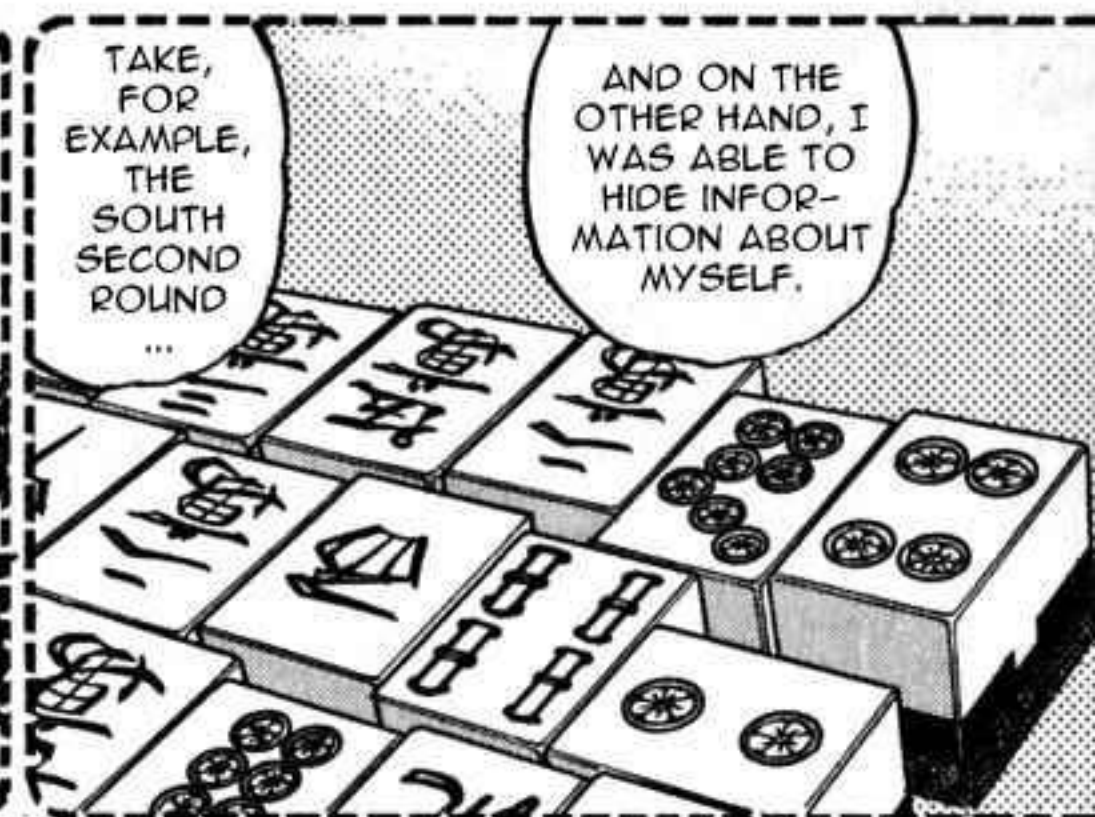
AND NOT TOO LONG AFTER ...



I DIDN'T CARE ABOUT THE 8000 POINTS I HAD TO GIVE UP...

I CLAIMED THAT I WAS IN NOTEN DESPITE HAVING DECLARED RIICHI JUST A BIT BEFORE...

JUST SO LONG AS HE DIDN'T SEE MY HAND.



TAKE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE SOUTH SECOND ROUND ...

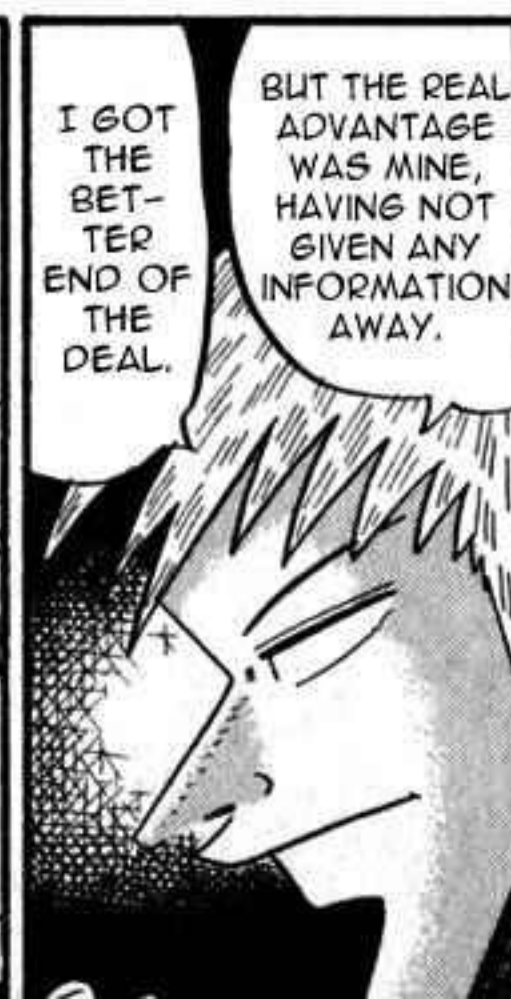
AND ON THE OTHER HAND, I WAS ABLE TO HIDE INFORMATION ABOUT MYSELF.



BUT IT FELL FLAT ON ITS FACE WHEN HE HAD NOTHING TO WORK WITH.

HE PLAYED WITH HIS STYLE OF RESERVATION IN ORDER TO TRY AND GET SOME INFORMATION ON HIS OPPONENT ...

IN ORDER TO BRING THAT SITUATION ABOUT ...



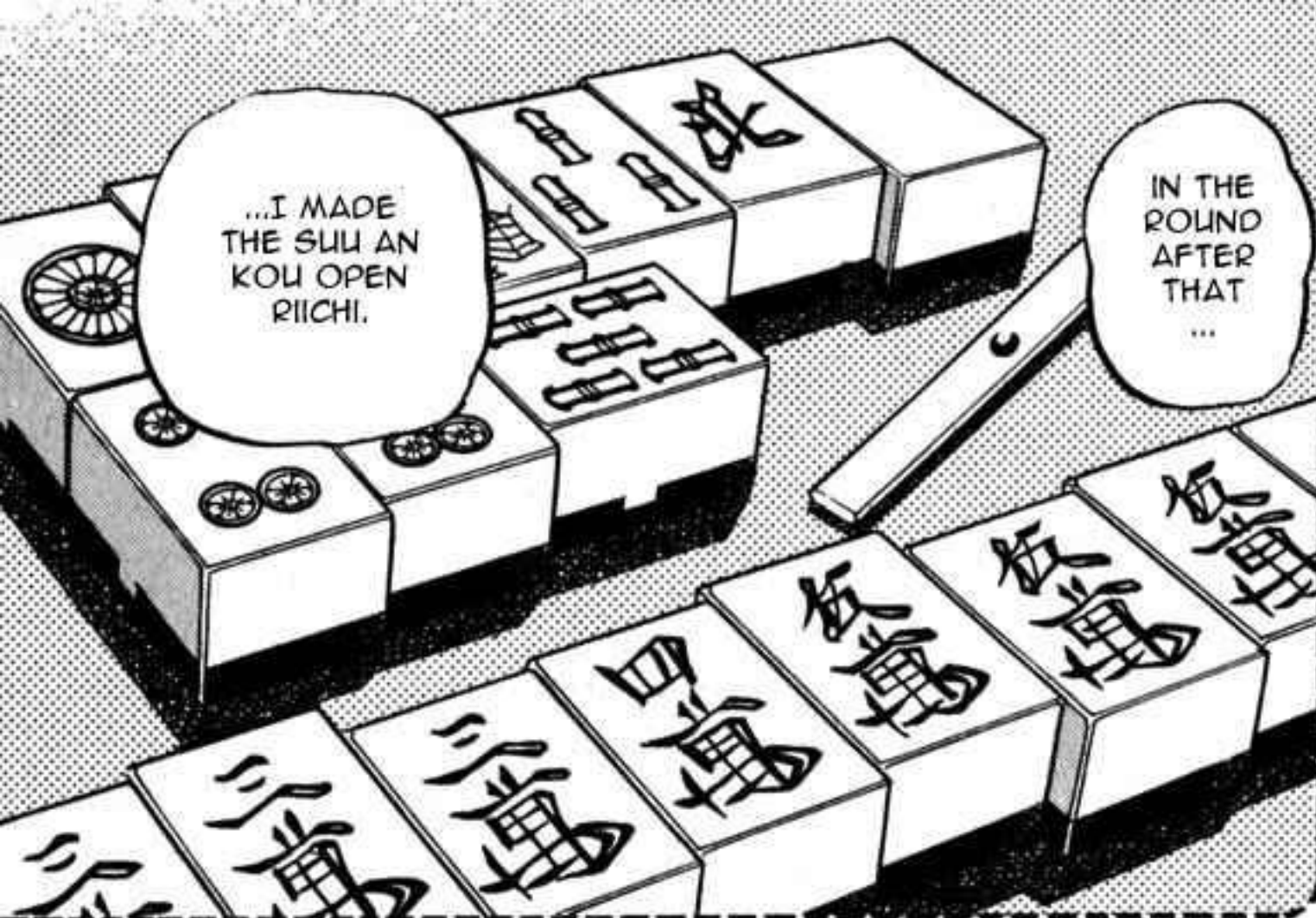
I GOT THE BETTER END OF THE DEAL.

BUT THE REAL ADVANTAGE WAS MINE, HAVING NOT GIVEN ANY INFORMATION AWAY.



URABE GOT THE APPARENT ADVANTAGE BY SECURING AN EXTRA 8000 POINTS OVER ME...

WHEN THAT HAPPENED ...



...I MADE
THE SUU AN
KOU OPEN
RIICHI.

IN THE
ROUND
AFTER
THAT
...



IT WAS
A PRE-
REQUI-
SITE.

I HAD
TO PLAY
THE WAY
I DID
...



I WOULD
NOT PER-
MIT ANYTHING
SHORT OF
A SUU AN
KOU
...

SOME-
THING THAT
HE WAS
UNABLE TO
UNDER-
STAND.



A 2ND,
AND
THEN
A 3RD
...

I LET
MANY
OF MY
WINNING
TILES
GO BY
...



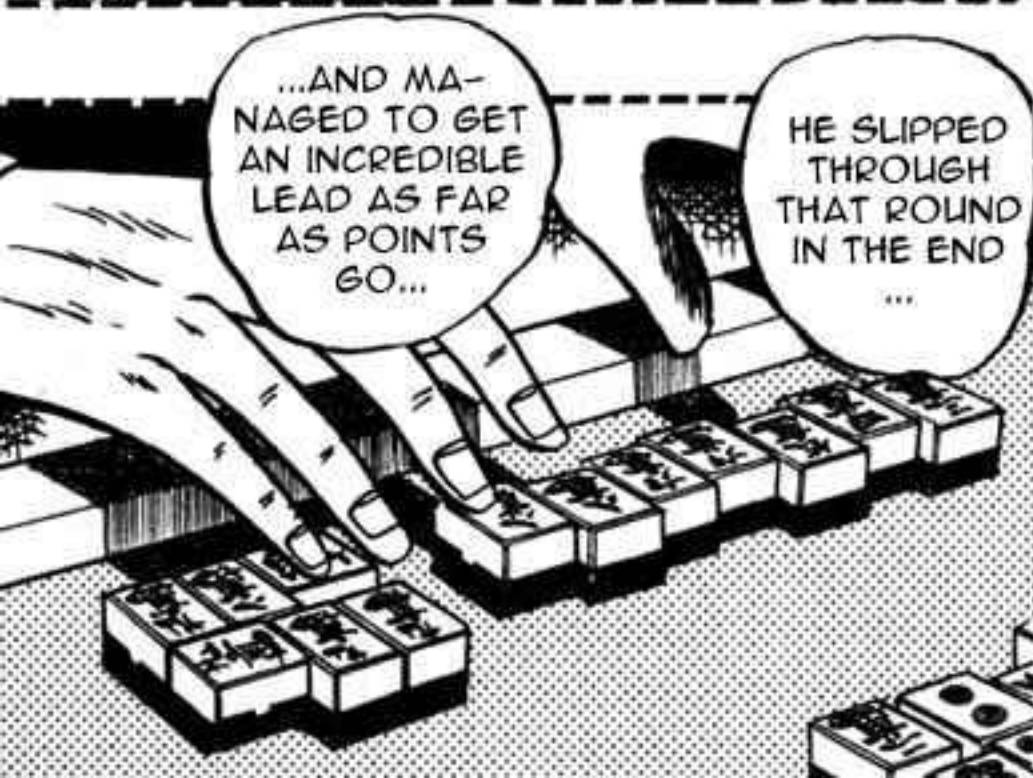
AND
WHAT
WAS
MORE
...



THAT
DEALING
SIMPLY
DEFIED
ALL OF
HIS
ANALYSIS.

BEFORE,
IT HAD
SEEMED
IMPOS-
SIBLE...

HE WAS
COMPLETELY
STUMPED
AS TO WHAT
MY INTEN-
TIONS
WERE...



...AND MA-
NAGED TO GET
AN INCREDIBLE
LEAD AS FAR
AS POINTS
GO...

HE SLIPPED
THROUGH
THAT ROUND
IN THE END
...



AFTER THAT G-MAN,
URABE'S LOGIC AND
REASON WOULD
NO LONGER DO HIM
ANY GOOD.



WHA
...?!

IN THE FIRST
HONBA OF THE
SOUTH SECOND
ROUND, IT WAS
A MONSTROUS
70,000
POINTS OVER
ME.

BUT
HE WAS
ABLE TO
REST
MORE
EASILY
WITH HIS
LEAD...

AND
THAT IM-
PRESSION
WOULD NOT
DISAPPEAR
SO EASILY.

BUT HIS
IMPRESSION OF
ME GOT EVEN
MORE FOGGY
...

...HE
BEGAN
TO RUN
AWAY.

IN ORDER
TO PRE-
SERVE HIS
LEAD OVER
ME
...

WITH
THAT
THOUGHT
IN MIND
...

中 中 八萬

ALL I
DID
WAS
AT-
TACK
WHILE
HE
WAS
RUN-
NING!

疾

HUH
...?!

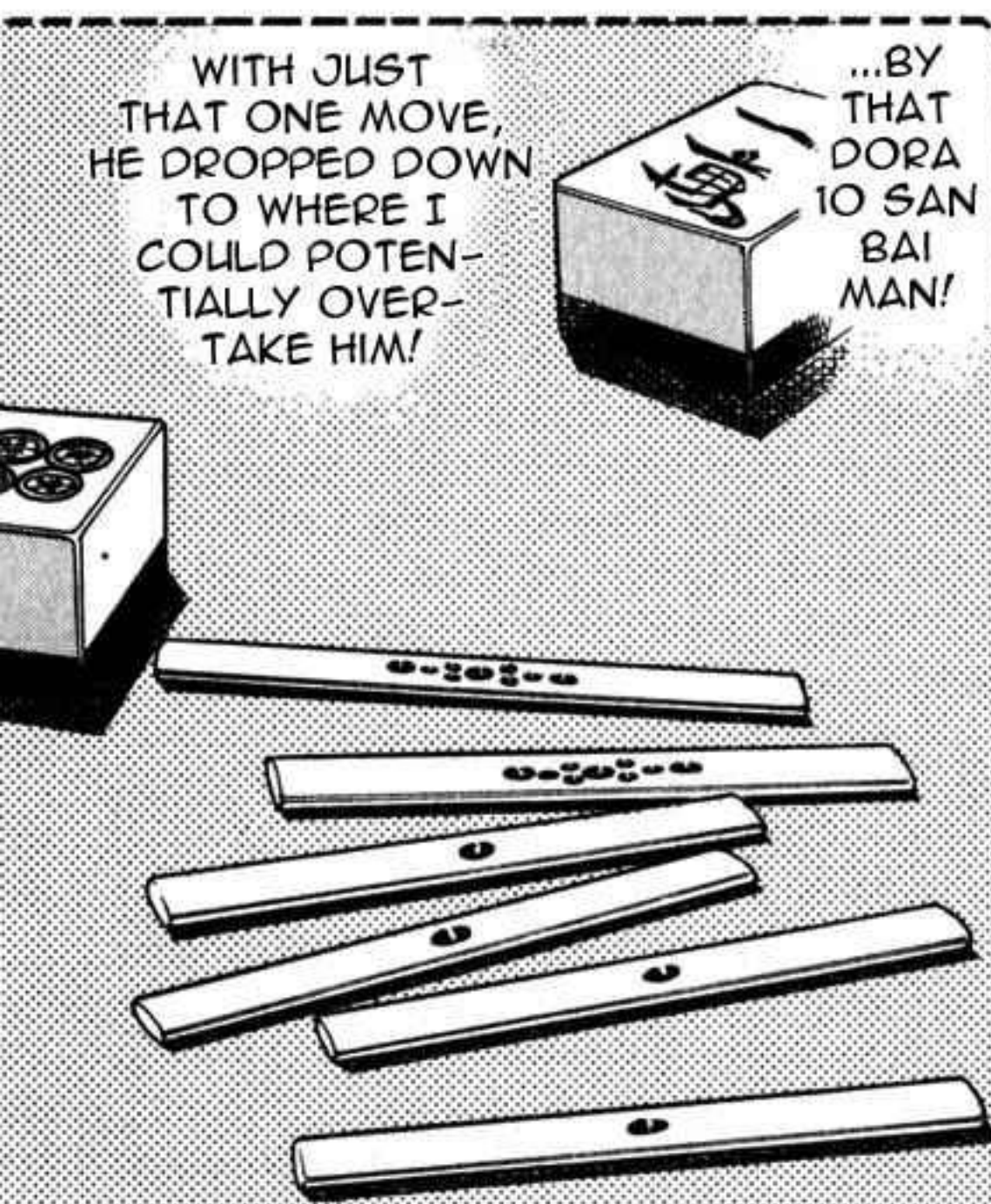
RON.



TO A
NORMAL
PERSON
...



WITH
THAT
COIN-
CIDENT-
TAL
PEI
SINGLE
WAIT!



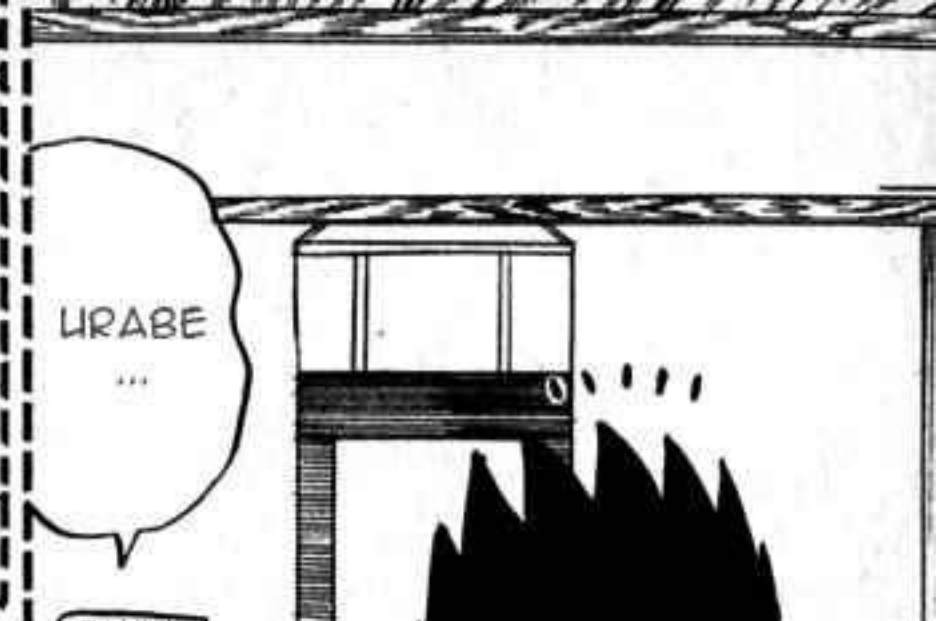
WITH JUST
THAT ONE MOVE,
HE DROPPED DOWN
TO WHERE I
COULD POTEN-
TIALY OVER-
TAKE HIM!

...BY
THAT
DORA
TO SAN
BAI
MAN!



AND WHAT'S
MORE, THE BETTER
PART OF HIS LEAD
WAS TAKEN AWAY
...

THAT
WAIT
WOULD
BE IN-
FATHOM-
ABLE!





HE COULD NO LONGER THINK STRAIGHT ...

HIS LEGS WERE BEING STOLEN OUT FROM BENEATH HIM ...

OF TERROR ...

HIS MIND WAS BEGINNING TO BE SUFFOCATED BY FEELINGS OF OPPRESSION AND DREAD ...

THE FEAR PUSHED HIS COLD SWEAT FROM EVERY PORE ...

FROM THE DARKEST CHASMS OF HIS MIND...



Huhh ...

Huhh ...



HE HAD TO MAKE IT TO THE NEXT ROUND ...



HE HAD TO MAKE IT TO THE OPPOSITE SHORE!

SOMEHOW OR ANOTHER ...

AND YET ...



THE MORE HE MOVED, IT SEEMED, THE FASTER HE WOULD SINK...

HIS WHOLE BODY WAS GRADUALLY SINKING INTO THE SWAMP THAT HE FELL INTO...



HIS FIELD OF VISION DID NOT GO FAR ENOUGH ...

EVEN STRAINING HIS EYES AS BEST HE COULD ...



"WHERE IN THE WORLD WAS IT?!"

"WHICH WAY WAS IT...?"

"WHERE WAS THE SHORE?!"



"BUT WAIT", HE THOUGHT ... "HOLD ON...!"

HE FRANTICALLY PUSHED HIS LIMBS TO TRY AND GET TO SHORE...

HE
BECAME
PARA-
LYZED
WITH
FEAR.

HE COULD
NOT TELL
WHICH WAY
HE CAME
FROM...
EVERY
DIRECTION
LOOKED
THE SAME
...



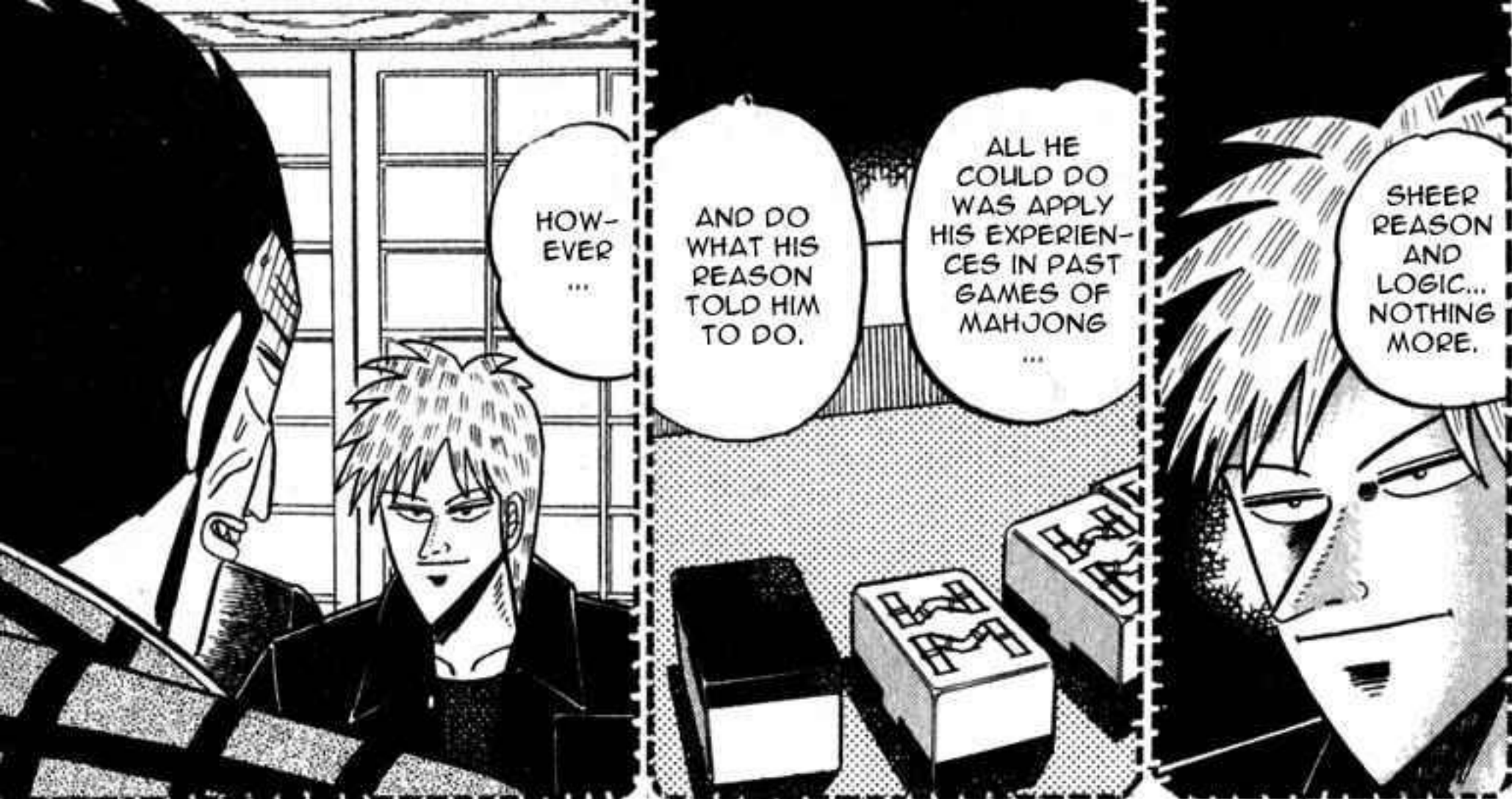
FACED
WITH THAT,
THE ONLY
THING HE
COULD
DO...

HMM-
HM-
HM
...

FLICK
...

IN THE
END, HE
HAD TO
RELY ON
WHAT HE
KNEW.





HOW-
EVER
...

AND DO
WHAT HIS
REASON
TOLD HIM
TO DO.

ALL HE
COULD DO
WAS APPLY
HIS EXPERI-
ENCES IN PAST
GAMES OF
MAHJONG
...

SHEER
REASON
AND
LOGIC...
NOTHING
MORE.



...CAN BE
TAKEN
ADVANTAGE
OF, IN AND
OF ITSELF!

THAT VERY
RATIONAL
MINDSET
...



...HE COULD
DO NOTHING
BUT BECOME
MY PREY!

ONCE I
HAD HIM
THINKING
LIKE
THAT...

THAT
WAS ALL
THAT I
HAD TO
DO...

GETTING
HIM IN THAT
MINDSET
WAS MY
GOAL FROM
THE OUT-
SET.

SINCE I
WAS THE
ONE
CHASING
AFTER
HIM
...

ミヤレ...

カシヤッ



THE FINAL
ROUND, THE
SOUTH
FOURTH
ROUND.

AND
THEN, AT
THE VERY
END...



IF I COULD
GET A DEALER
HANEMAN
TSUMO OR A
DIRECT HIT OFF
OF HIM...

I WOULD
HAVE MADE
MY COME-
BACK.

...REACHED
22,500
POINTS.

THE MATCH
IN WHICH THE
POINT DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN URABE
AND I...



HIS ONLY
MOTIVATION
IN DOING SO
...

HE DID
INDEED
... BUT
EVEN
SO...

HE BEGAN
TO GET
MUCH MORE
AGGRESSIVE.

RIGHT
FROM THE
START OF
THAT
ROUND
...

HOW-
EVER
...

UP UNTIL
THAT MOMENT,
URABE WAS
SIMPLY BIDDING
HIS TIME AND
WAITING IT
OUT...

...WAS
THE LOGIC
THAT
HE WAS
FORCED TO
RELY
ON.

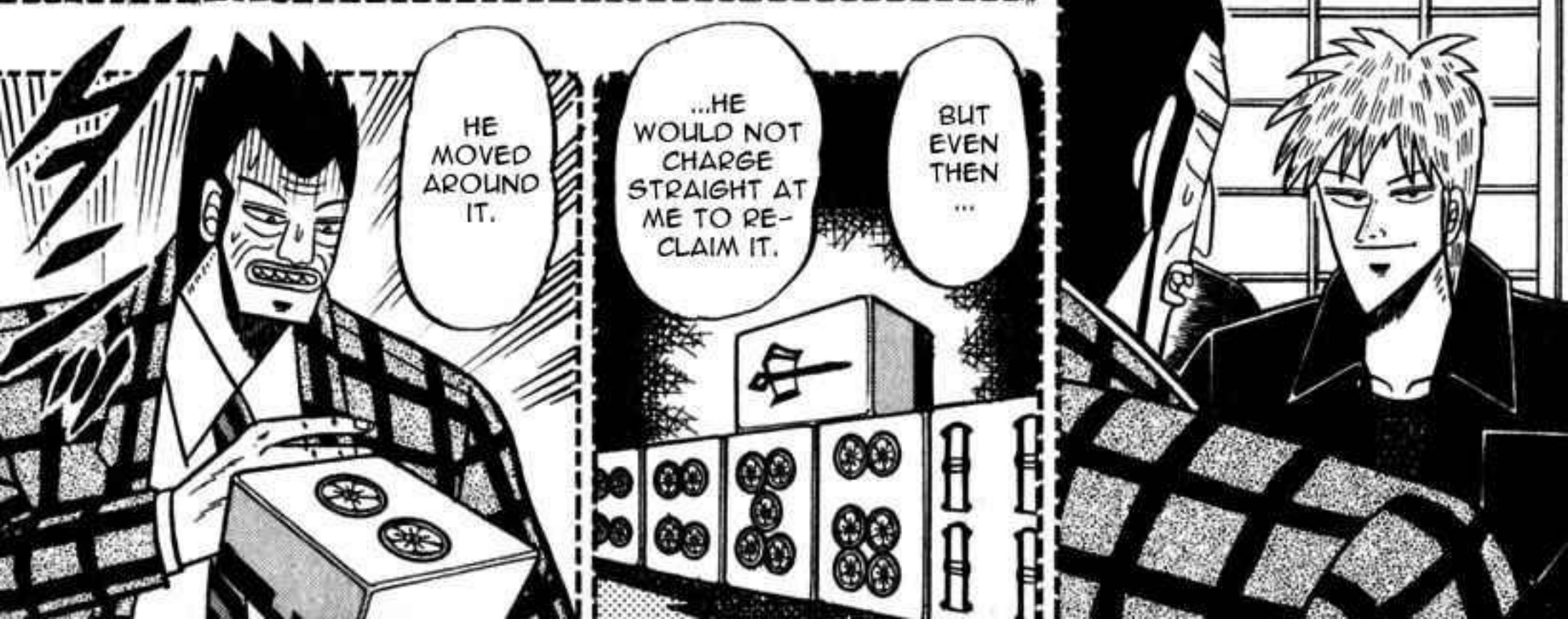
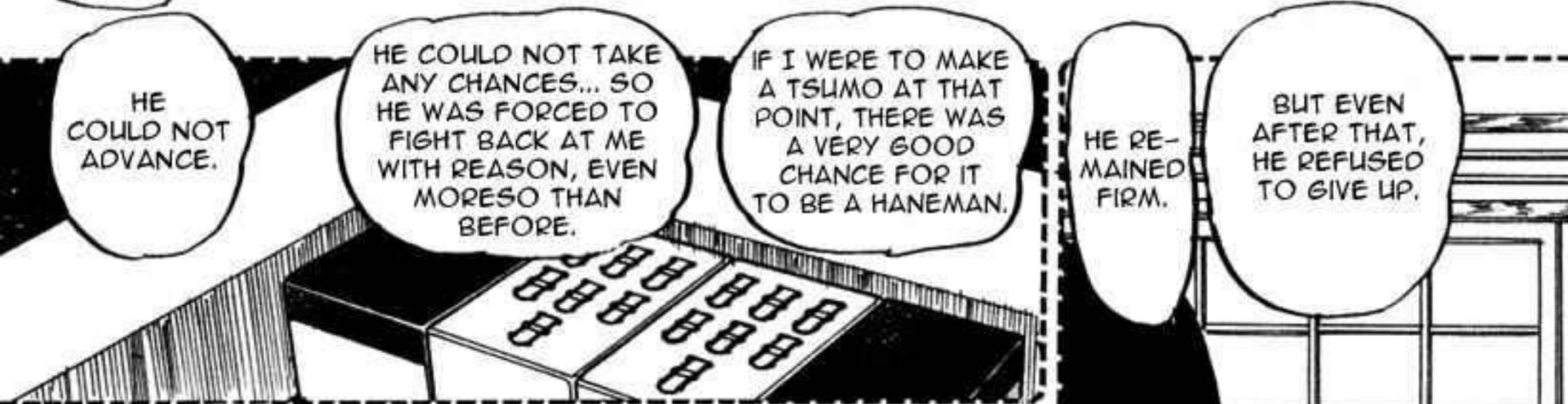
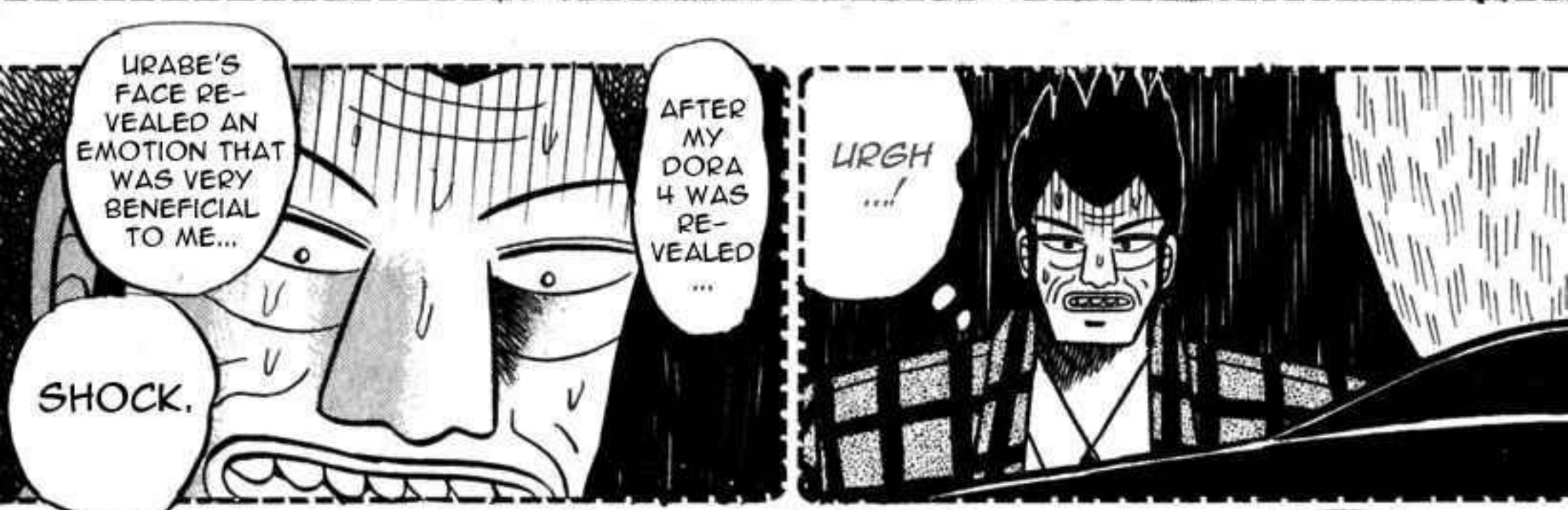


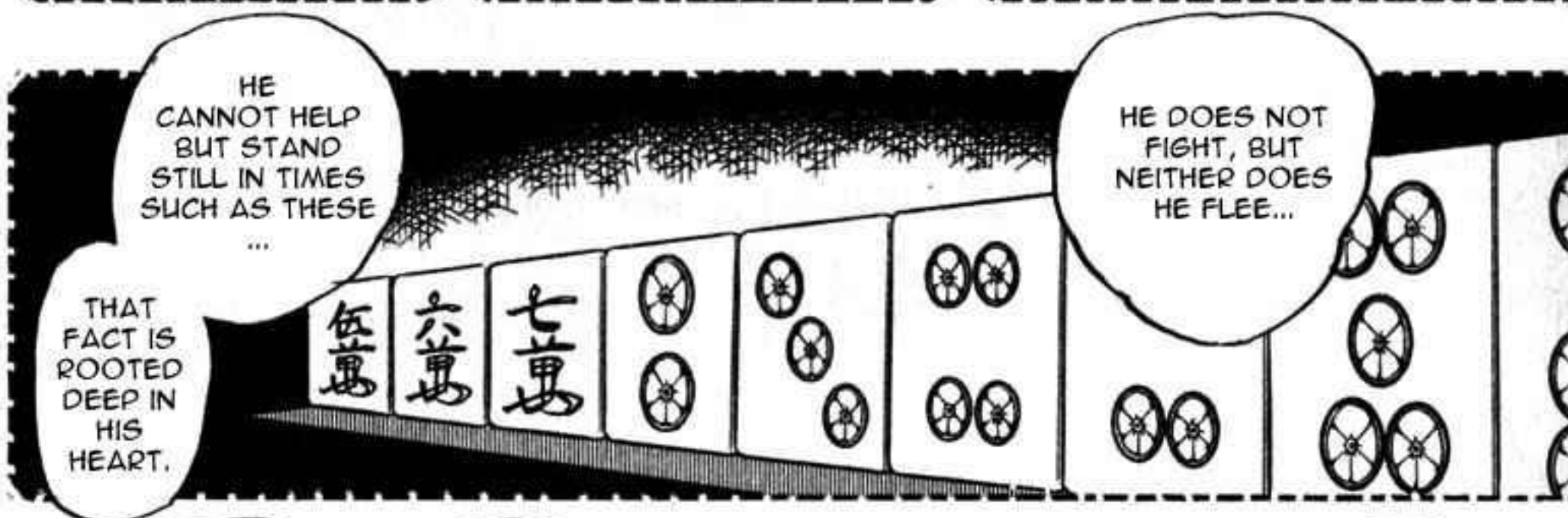
...IF
THE SIT-
UATION
CALLS
FOR IT.

...CAN
BE TURNED
RIGHT
BACK AT
THE AG-
GRESSOR
...

FALSE
AGGRESSION
LIKE THAT
...

THAT WAS NOT
THE KIND OF
MOTIVATION THAT
COULD TAKE
HIM TO A WIN
...





SO ALL HE NEEDED TO LOOK OUT FOR WAS A DIRECT HIT MANGAN.

IT COULD NO LONGER REACH A HANEMAN TSUMO ...

MY HAND WAS LIMITED DOWN TO TANYAO OR FANPAI, DORA 4.

SO IN OTHER WORDS ...

AND NOT LONG AFTER, HE WAS ABLE TO SEE WHERE ALL OF THE DORA TILES WERE...



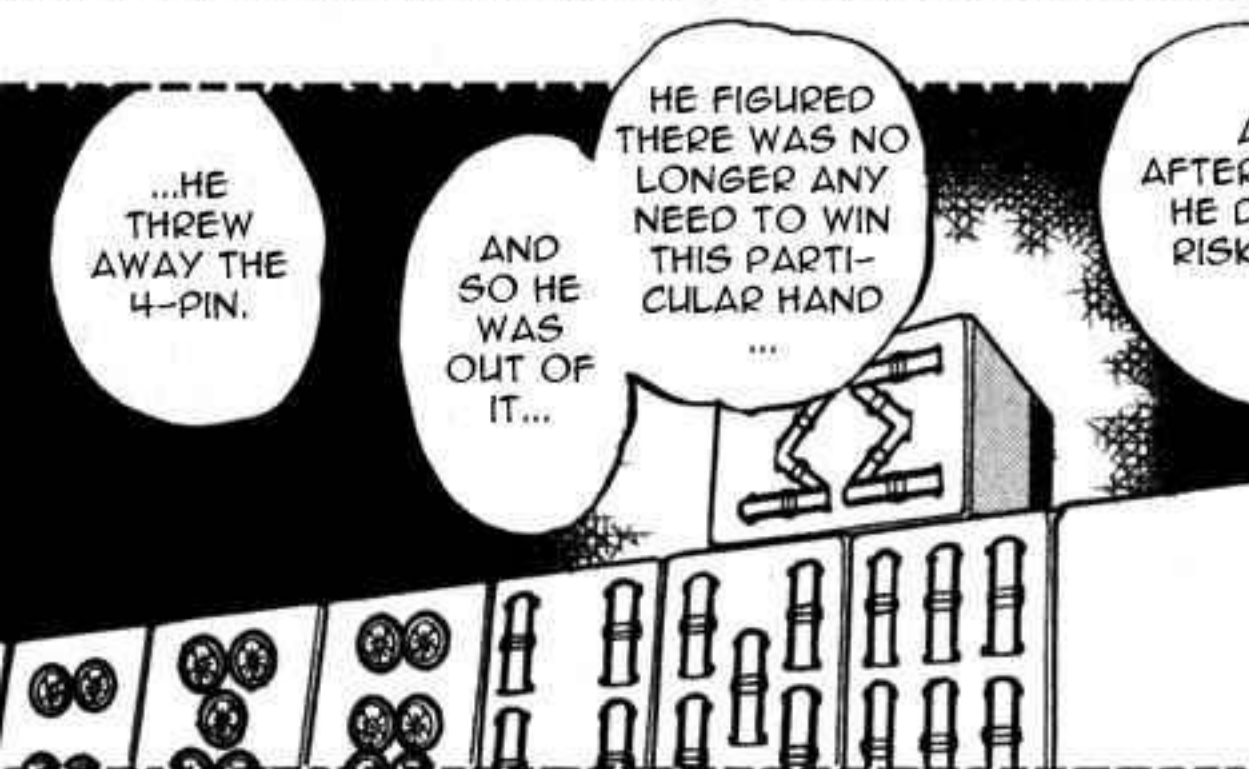
...HE THREW AWAY THE 4-PIN.

AND SO HE WAS OUT OF IT...

HE FIGURED THERE WAS NO LONGER ANY NEED TO WIN THIS PARTICULAR HAND ...

AND AFTERWARDS, HE DREW A RISKY TILE.

THERE WAS NOTHING ELSE ON HIS MIND AT THAT MOMENT.



NO MATTER WHAT, HE HAD TO SAVE FACE...

IT BECAME PAINFUL FOR HIM ...

HE COULD ONLY THINK OF DELAYING IT UNTIL THE NEXT GAME, SO HE COULD WIN THERE ...

HE NO LONGER HAD ANY INTENTION OF GOING AT ME DIRECTLY AND TAKING THE GAME BACK BY FORCE...

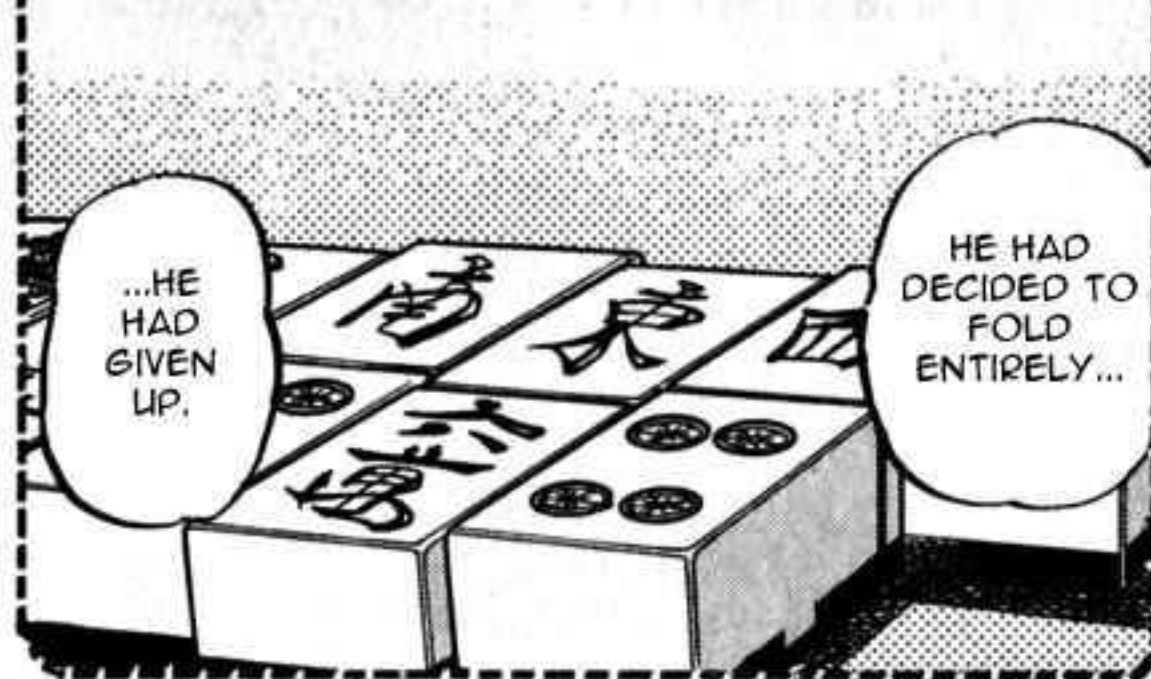
...WAS A SIGN OF HIM STANDING STILL AND OBSERVING.

THIS 4-PIN, AS WELL ...

HE RAN FROM ME IN THE NAME OF PRESERVATION.

IT COULD BE CALLED A BAD HABIT THAT HE EXHIBITED.





...HE
HAD
GIVEN
UP.

HE HAD
DECIDED TO
FOLD
ENTIRELY...

...HIS
DISCARDS
WERE OF
NOTHING
BUT SAFE
TILE AFTER
SAFE TILE.

AND, JUST
LIKE I
THOUGHT,
ONCE HE
LET THAT
4-PIN GO
...



WHEN IT
CAME RIGHT
DOWN TO
IT, HE COULD
DO NOTHING
BUT TUCK HIS
TAIL BETWEEN
HIS LEGS
AND RUN.

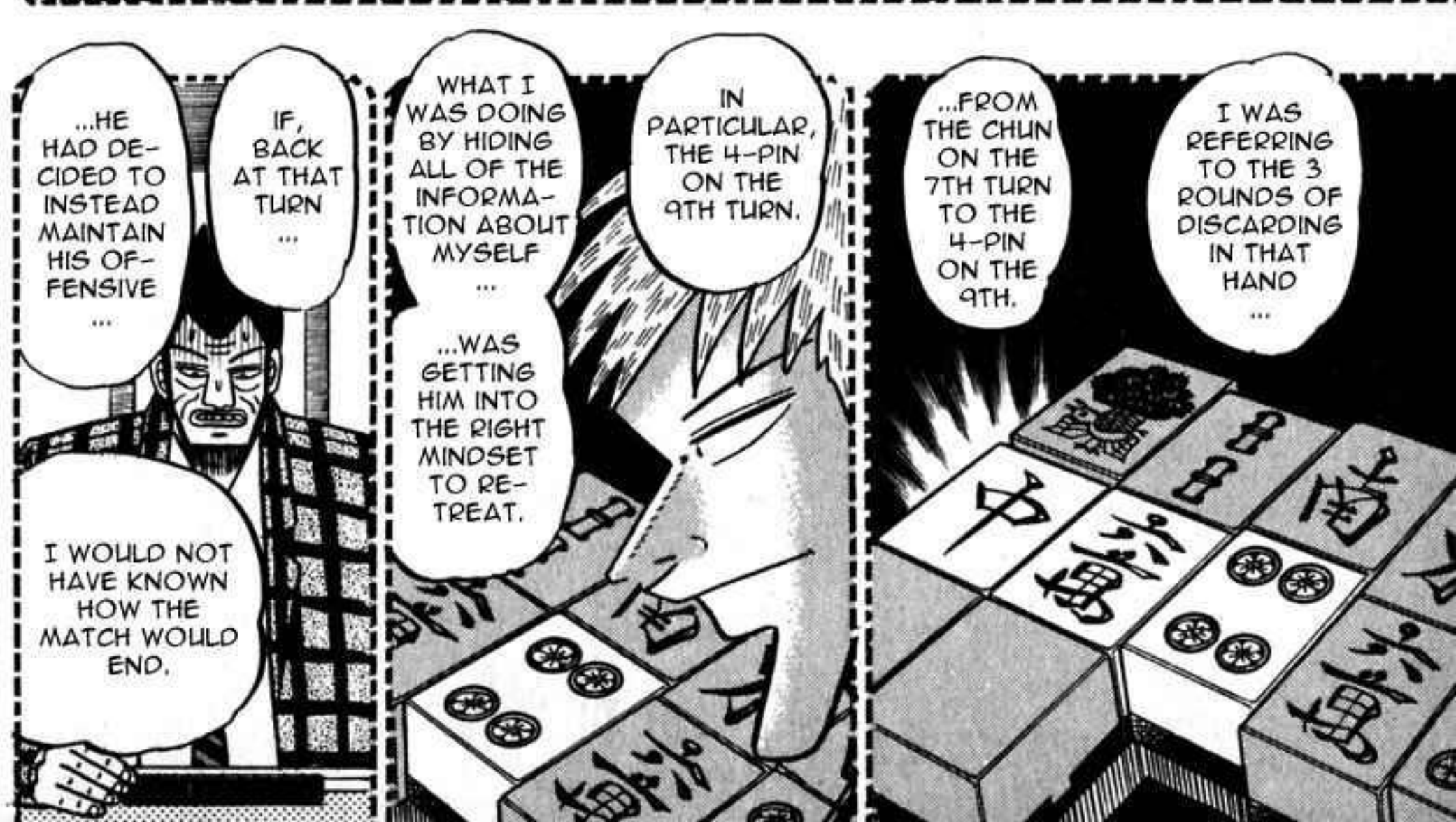
AND WITH THAT,
ANY CHANCE HE
HAD OF WINNING
THAT GAME
VANISHED OFF
THE FACE OF
THE EARTH...



...AND
SAID THAT
I WAS
PURCHASING
THE
COMING
3 ROUNDS
...

WHEN I
PAID 8000
POINTS FOR
THE CHOMBO
PENALTY...

IN THE
SOUTH
SECOND
ROUND,



...HE
HAD DE-
CIDED TO
INSTEAD
MAINTAIN
HIS OF-
FENSIVE
...

IF,
BACK
AT THAT
TURN
...

WHAT I
WAS DOING
BY HIDING
ALL OF THE
INFORMA-
TION ABOUT
MYSELF
...

...WAS
GETTING
HIM INTO
THE RIGHT
MINDSET
TO RE-
TREAT.

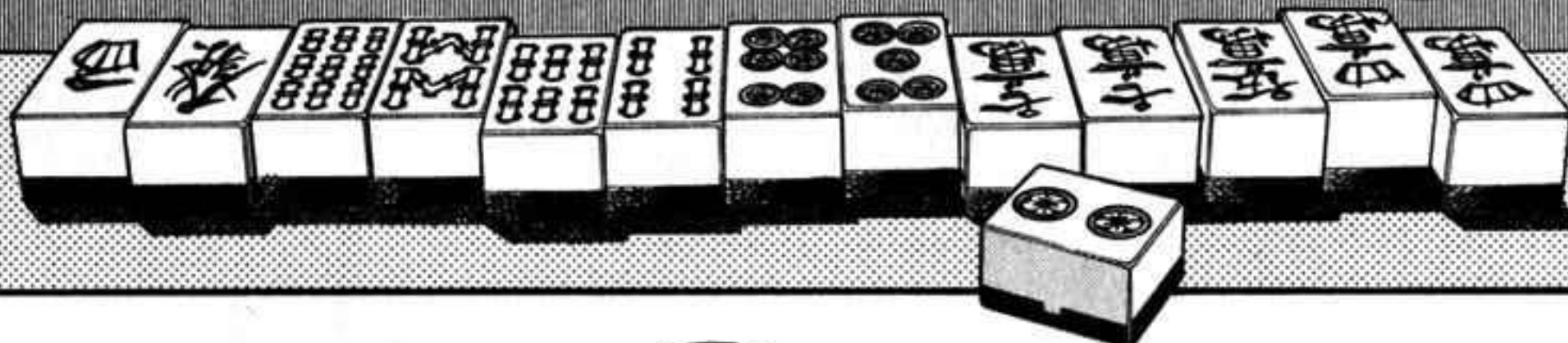
IN
PARTICULAR,
THE 4-PIN
ON THE
9TH TURN.

...FROM
THE CHUN
ON THE
7TH TURN
TO THE
4-PIN
ON THE
9TH.

I WAS
REFERRING
TO THE 3
ROUNDS OF
DISCARDING
IN THAT
HAND
...

I WOULD NOT
HAVE KNOWN
HOW THE
MATCH WOULD
END.

SINCE HIS FINAL
HAND ENDED UP
AS THIS...

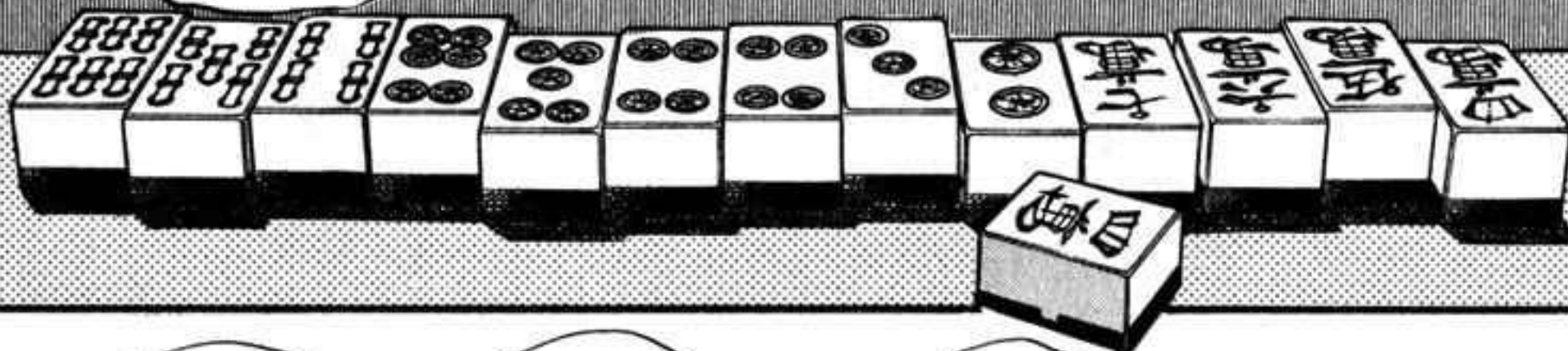


FOR
EXAMPLE
...

THERE ARE
MANY WAYS
THAT HE COULD
HAVE WON.

LOOKING
AT WHAT
HE CHOSE
TO DIS-
CARD,

HE COULD
HAVE TAKEN
THIS SHAPE TO
A WIN.



WE COULD
SIT AROUND
ALL DAY PUTTING
TOGETHER
WINNING HANDS
IF WE REALLY
WANTED TO.

SO WHAT
COULD HAVE
HAPPENED
NORMALLY
ISN'T REALLY
IMPORTANT
...

HE NEVER
WOULD'VE
GOTTEN
THERE
ANYWAY
...

I PLAY
TO PRE-
VENT HIM
FROM SO
MUCH AS
FORMING
A HAND.

WELL
...
REALLY
...





IT TOOK
ALL OF THAT
DATA AND
GRADUALLY
WORKED
FROM THERE
...

IT WAS
LIKE A
LIVING
MODE OF
REASON.



AND THE
MENTALITY
HE HAD AT
THE TIME,
WHEN IT
WAS MOST
NEEDED.

IT
MEA-
SURED
URABE'S
PULSE
...

IT WAS
NOT
BASED
SOLELY
IN PRO-
BABILITY
...



THE WAY HE
SO EASILY
EXPLAINED
HOW HE
CONSTRUCTED
EVERY ASPECT
OF URABE'S
MIND...

AKAGI'S
CLEAR,
CONCISE
WAY OF
SPEAKING
...

IT
WAS
...

HE
SEEMED
AS IF HE
WAS ON
A HIGH-
ER PLANE
OF EX-
ISTANCE.

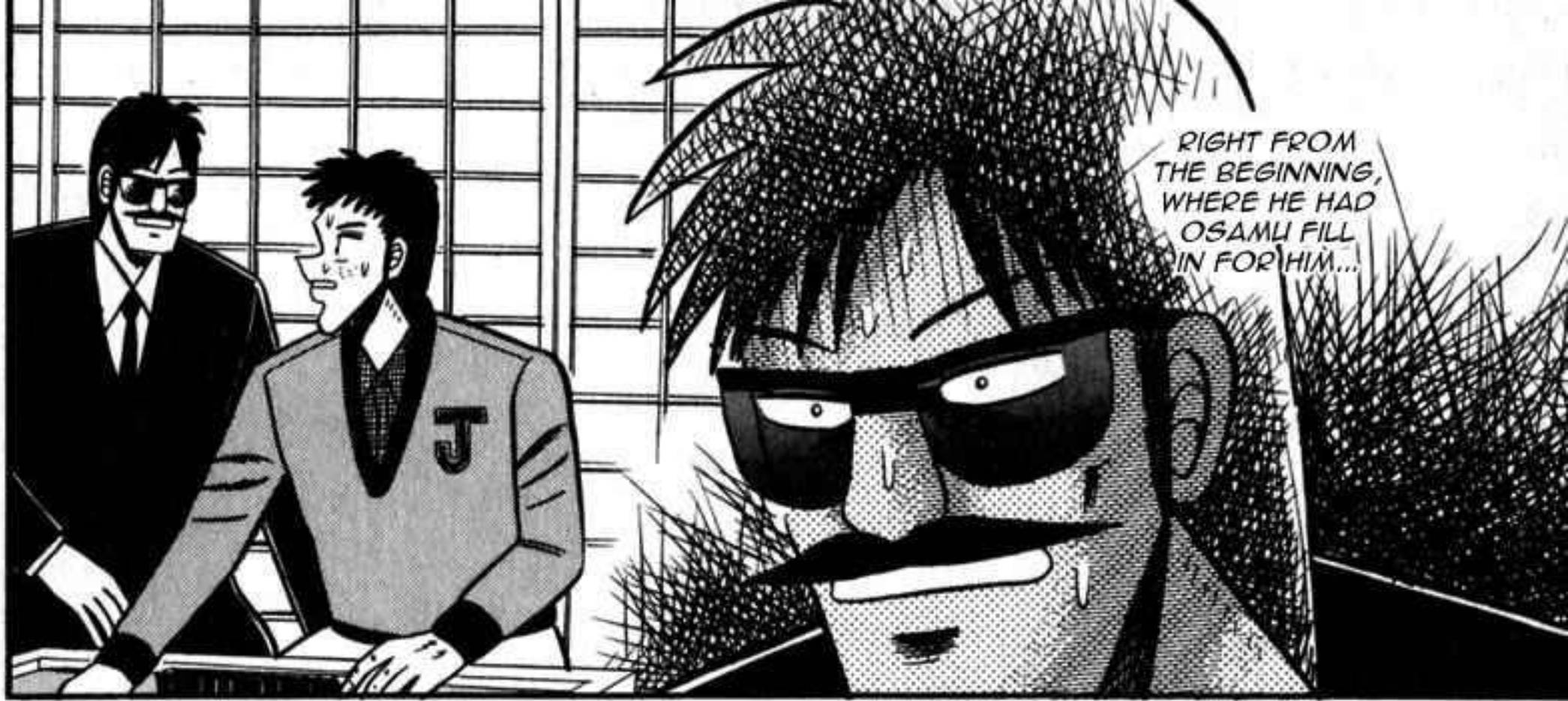


...WAS
ALL LIKE
PUTTING
HIS CHESS
PIECES IN
THE BEST
POSITION
TO WIN
...?

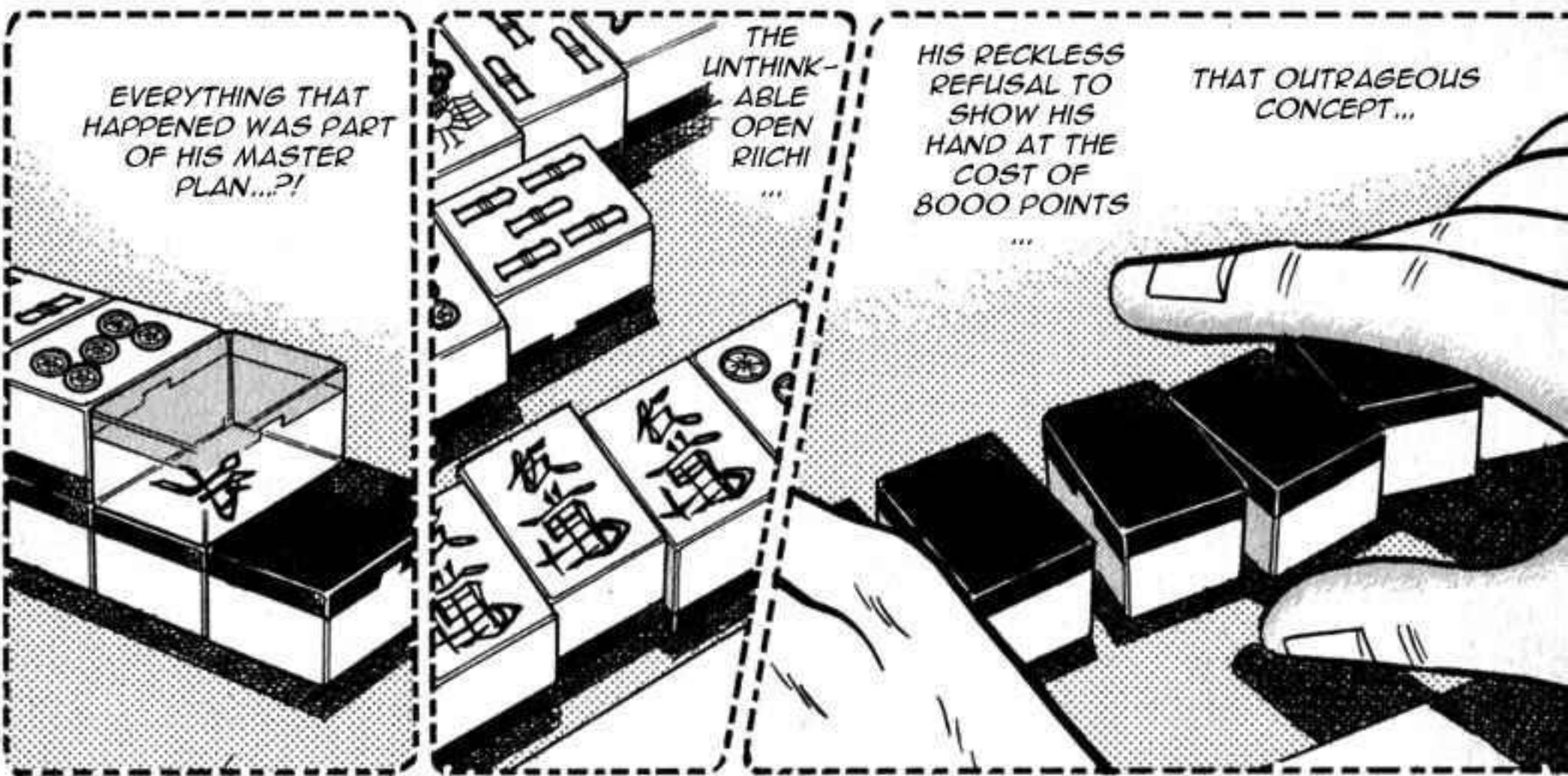
EVERYTHING HE DID...



....



RIGHT FROM
THE BEGINNING,
WHERE HE HAD
OSAMU FILL
IN FOR HIM...

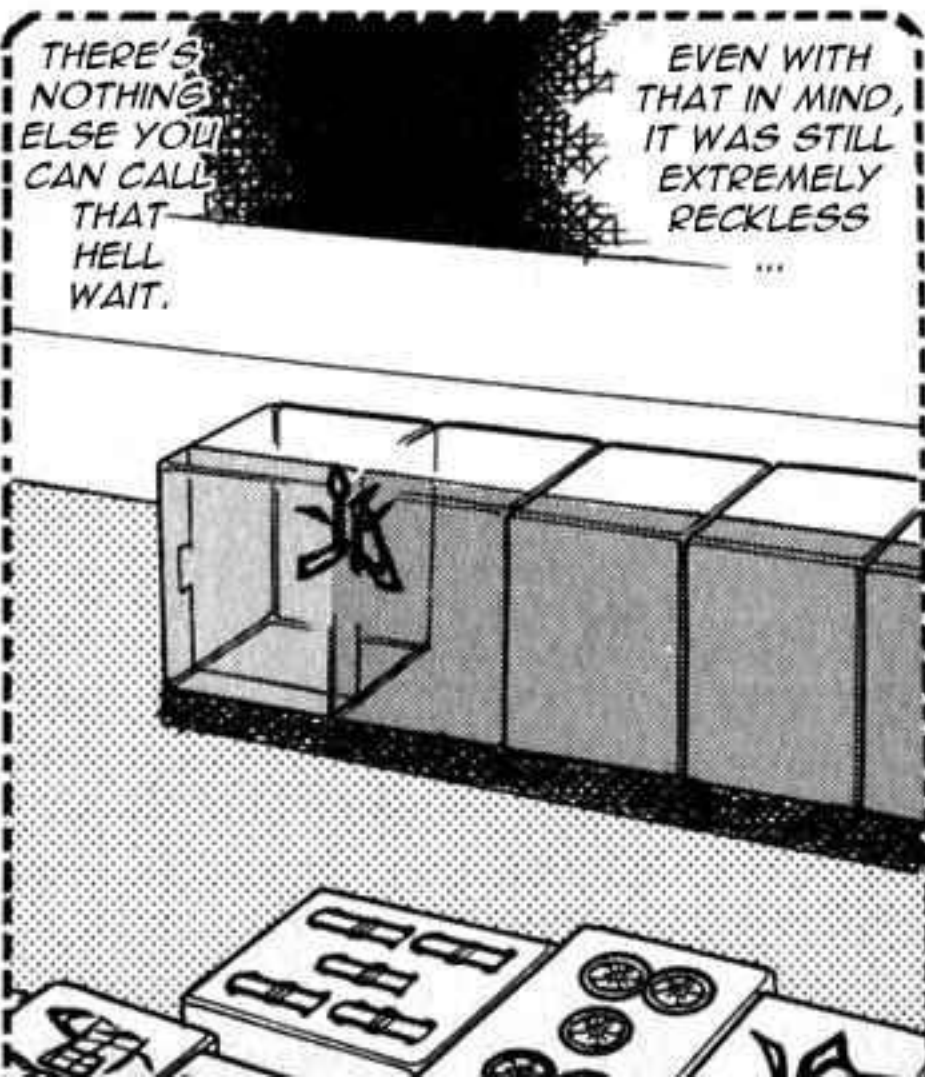


EVERYTHING THAT
HAPPENED WAS PART
OF HIS MASTER
PLAN...?!

THE
UNTHINK-
ABLE
OPEN
RIICHI
...

HIS RECKLESS
REFUSAL TO
SHOW HIS
HAND AT THE
COST OF
8000 POINTS
...

THAT OUTRAGEOUS
CONCEPT...



THERE'S
NOTHING
ELSE YOU
CAN CALL
THAT
HELL
WAIT.

EVEN WITH
THAT IN MIND,
IT WAS STILL
EXTREMELY
RECKLESS
...

IT WASN'T ALL
DUE TO HIS CAL-
CULATIONS...
THE MATERIALS
DIDN'T TAKE HIM
THE WHOLE WAY
...

...
NO
...





...IT
COULD NOT
HAVE TURNED
OUT BETTER
FOR HIM!

EVEN
THOUGH
HE WAS
VERY
RECKLESS
WITH THAT
WAIT...

...BUT
EVEN
SO
...



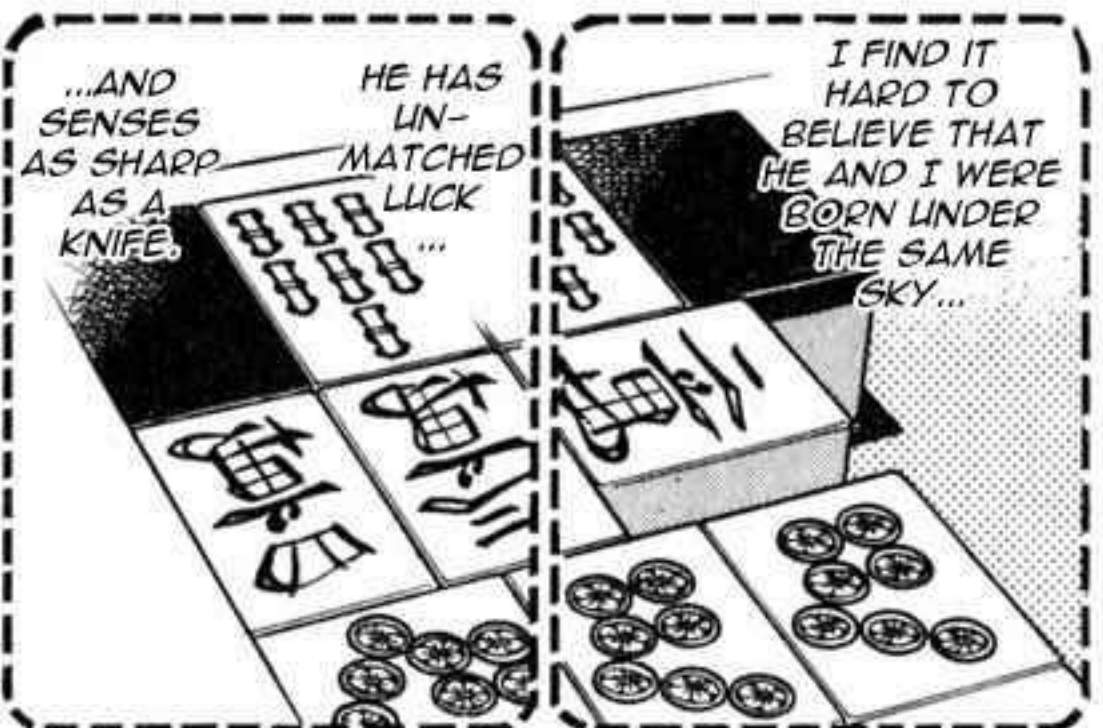
BUT
NEVER-
THELESS
...

I COULDN'T
EXPLAIN IT
IF YOU
ASKED ME
TO...



HIS MAHJONG
STYLE IS JUST
IMPOSSIBLE TO
READ!

HE CAN RESTRAIN
URABE LIKE
THAT, OR ANY-
ONE ELSE FOR
THAT MATTER
...



...AND
SENSES
AS SHARP
AS A
KNIFE.

HE HAS
UN-
MATCHED
LUCK

I FIND IT
HARD TO
BELIEVE THAT
HE AND I WERE
BORN UNDER
THE SAME
SKY...



...WAS
NO MATCH
FOR AKAGI!

FROM THE
VERY START,
URABE...



IT'S LIKE
TRYING TO
CHASE
THUNDER OR
CATCH
LIGHTNING...

THEY
CAN
NEVER
SEE IT
COMING
...



YOU
CAN'T
JUST
THINK
YOUR
WAY OUT
OF IT...

IT'S
INCON-
CEIVABLE
...



EVEN
NOW, WHERE
WE ARE
...

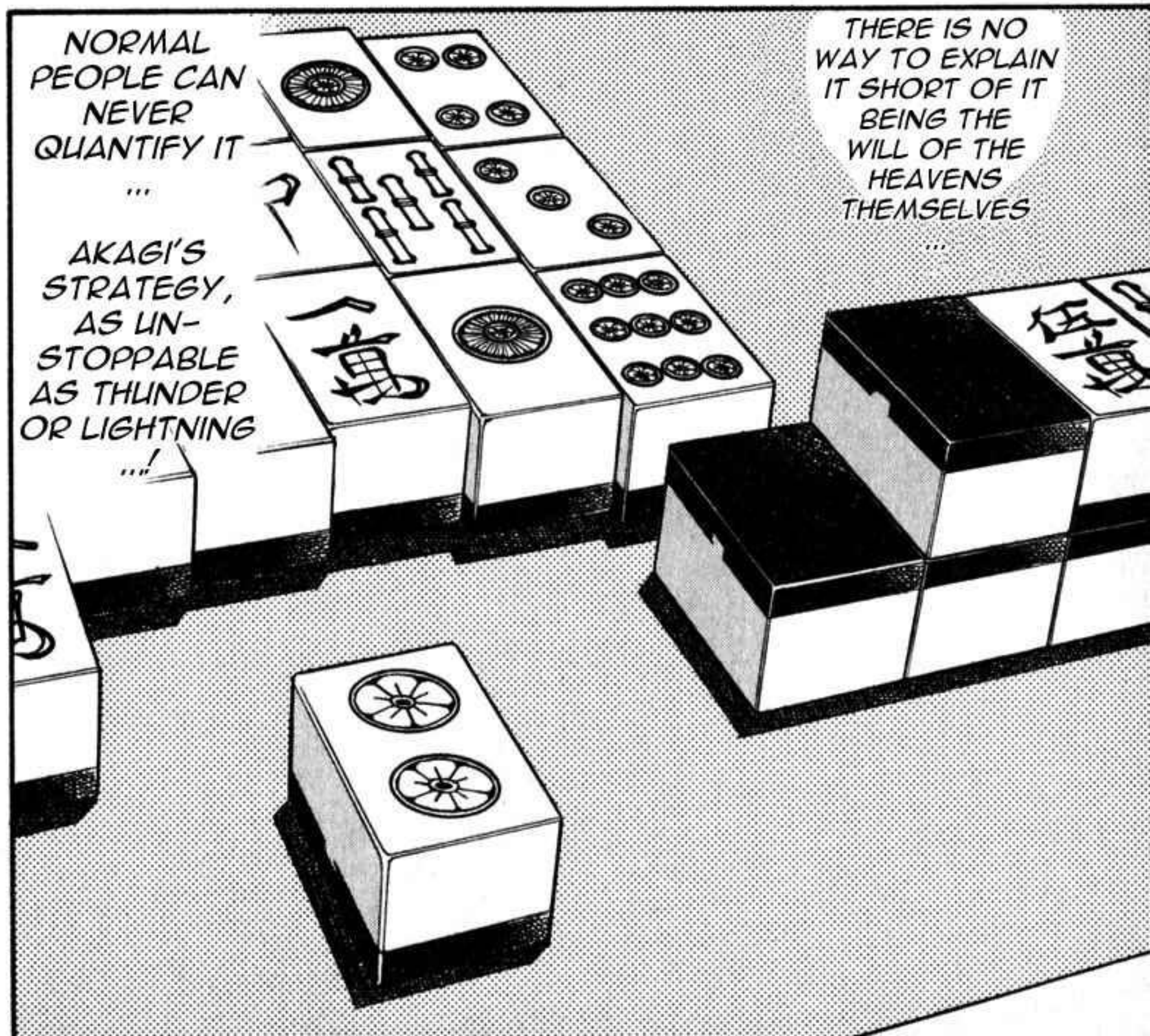


IT'S
SOMETHING
THAT DEFIES
ANALYSIS
...

HE
WAS
CON-
TROL-
LING
URABE
WITH
EVERY
MOVE
...!



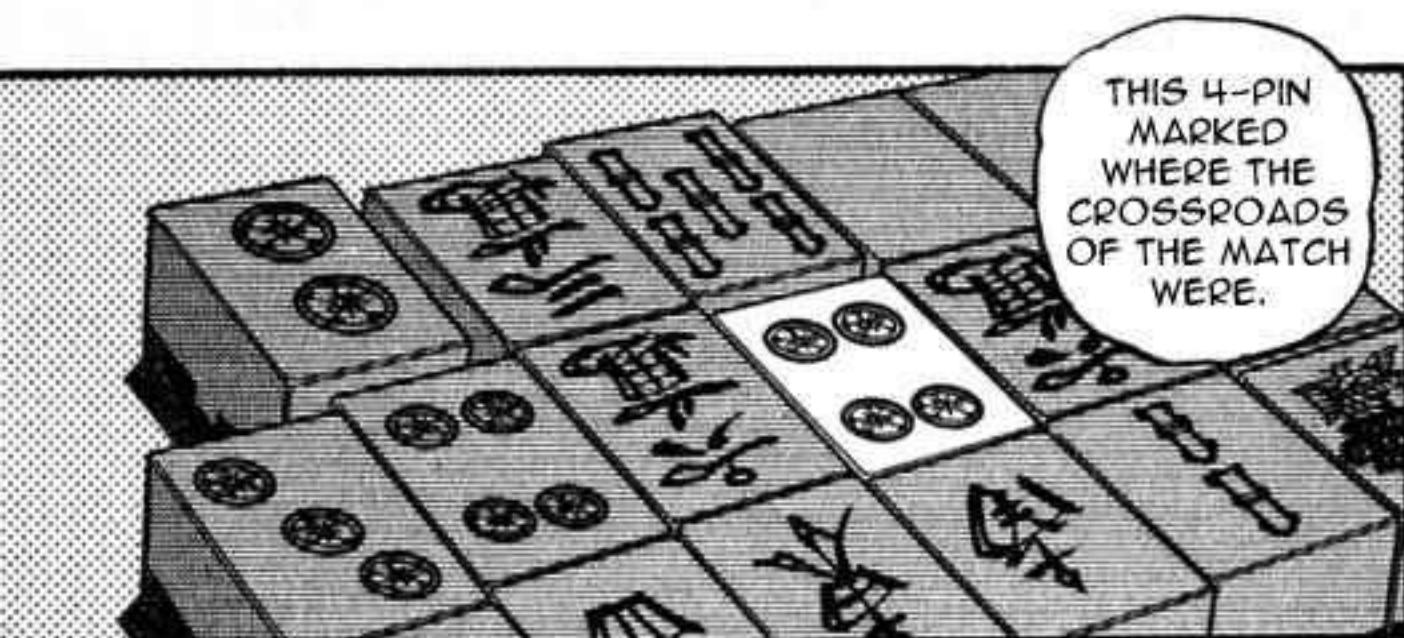
IT'S
AS THOUGH
...



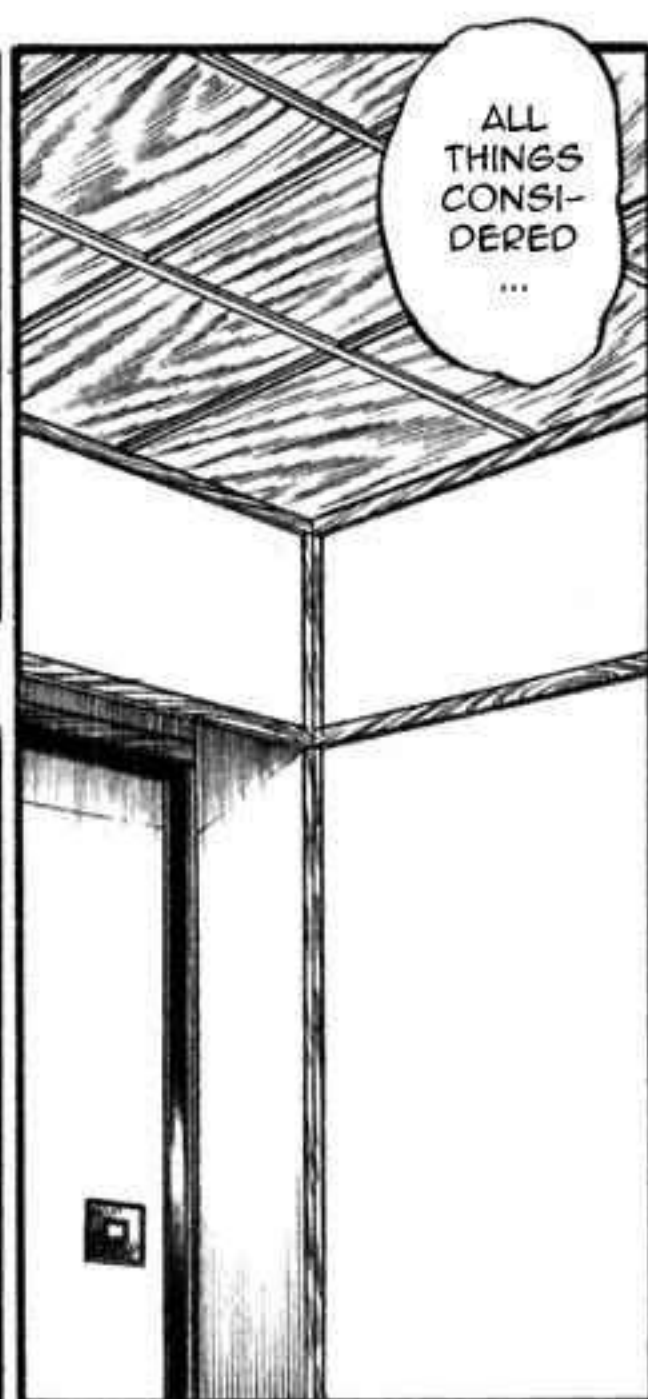
NORMAL
PEOPLE CAN
NEVER
QUANTIFY IT
...

AKAGI'S
STRATEGY,
AS UN-
STOPPABLE
AS THUNDER
OR LIGHTNING
...!

THERE IS NO
WAY TO EXPLAIN
IT SHORT OF IT
BEING THE
WILL OF THE
HEAVENS
THEMSELVES
...



THIS 4-PIN
MARKED
WHERE THE
CROSSROADS
OF THE MATCH
WERE.

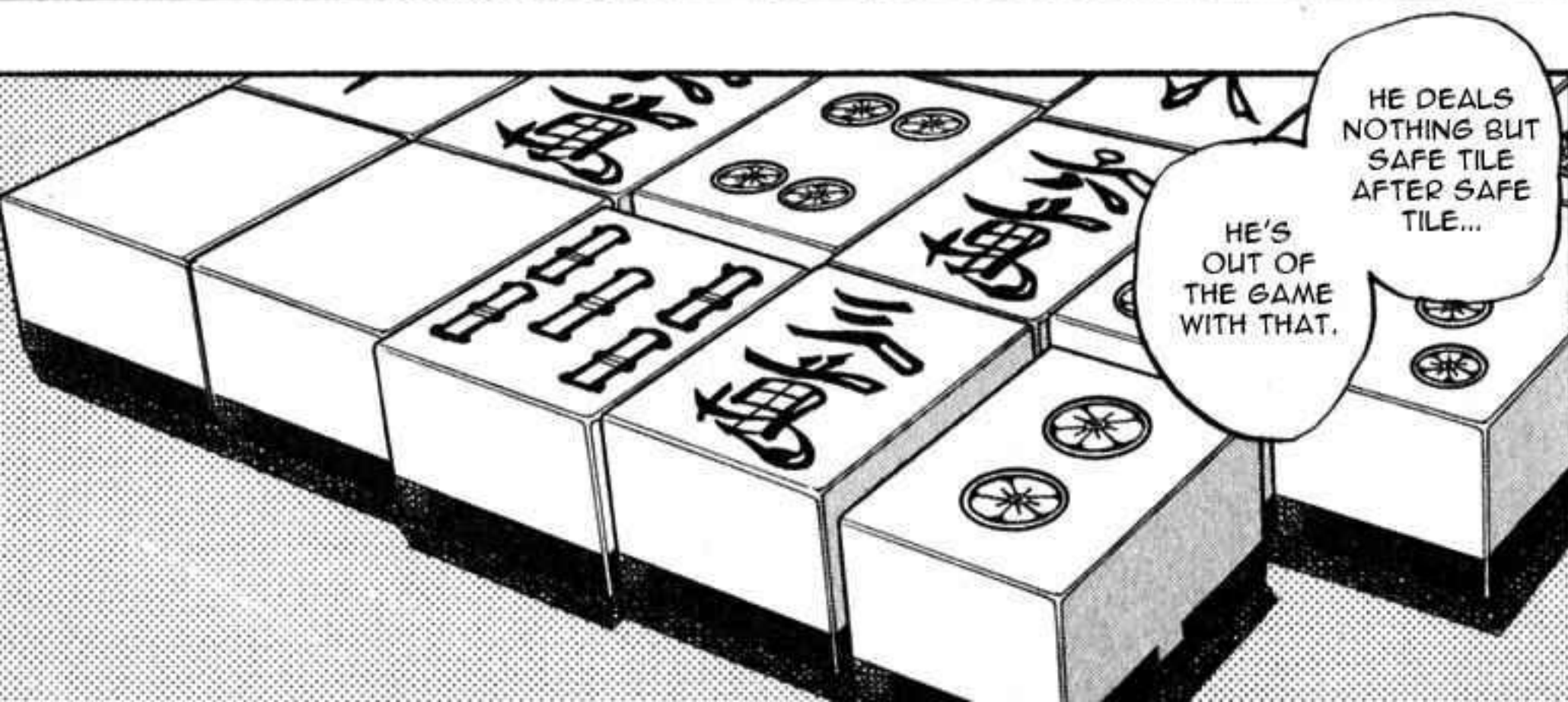


ALL
THINGS
CONSI-
DERED
...



URABE GOES
ON THE
DEFENSIVE
FROM HERE,
100%.

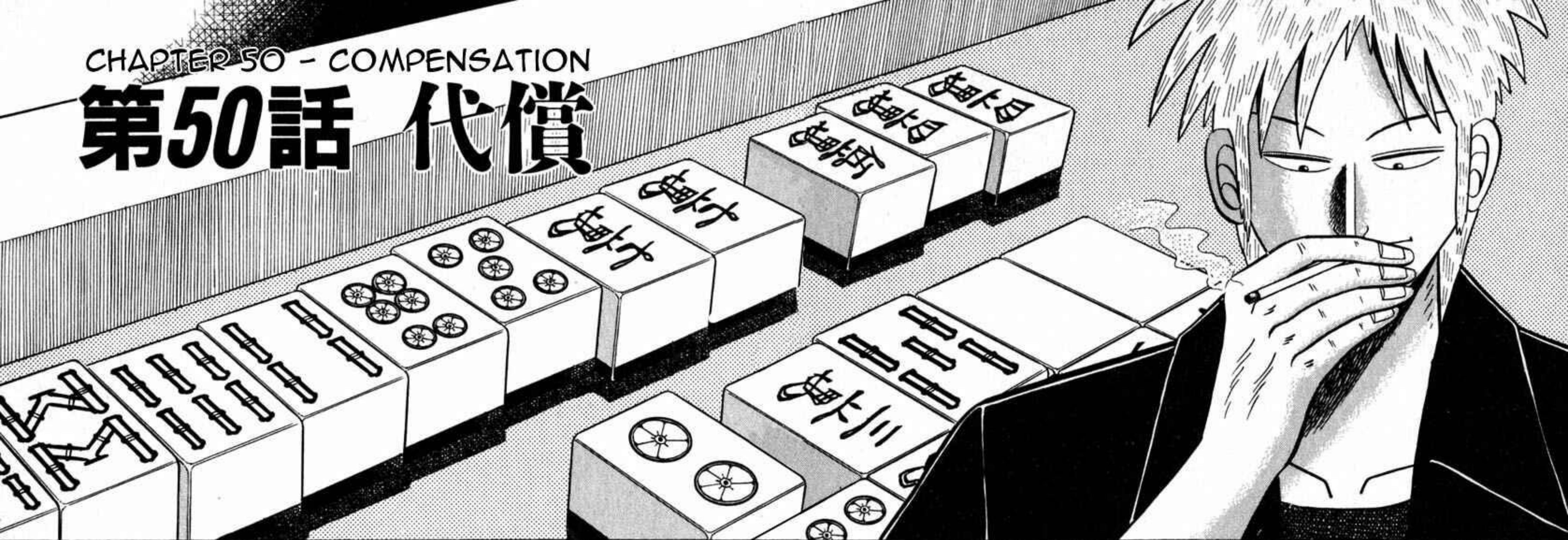
AFTER
THAT
DEAL...



HE'S
OUT OF
THE GAME
WITH THAT.

HE DEALS
NOTHING BUT
SAFE TILE
AFTER SAFE
TILE...

第50話 代償



...SEEMED TO HAVE A LARGE PROBABILITY OF BEING A TANYAO HAND.

AT THAT TIME, MY HAND ...

HE HAD TO ASSUME THAT I WAS IN TENPAI.

HE COULD NOT MAKE ANY ASSUMPTIONS.

NOT EVEN HIS LIFE WOULD BE WORTH 32 MILLION YEN.

URABE WAS BETTING A GIGANTIC SUM OF MONEY ...

...

THAT'S JUST A NATURAL REACTION TO WHAT I GAVE HIM.

IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT FROM HIS PERSPECTIVE ...

WELL, STILL ...

HE HAD TO PLAY HIS SAFE TILES AS SOON AS HE GOT THEM ...

...HE COULD DO NOTHING ELSE.

HE COULD NOT PLAY A SINGLE RISKY TILE...

IN ORDER TO AVOID LOSING RIGHT THERE AND THEN ...

AND SO ...

...THAT IT WAS A 2-3-4 SAN SHOKU HAND.

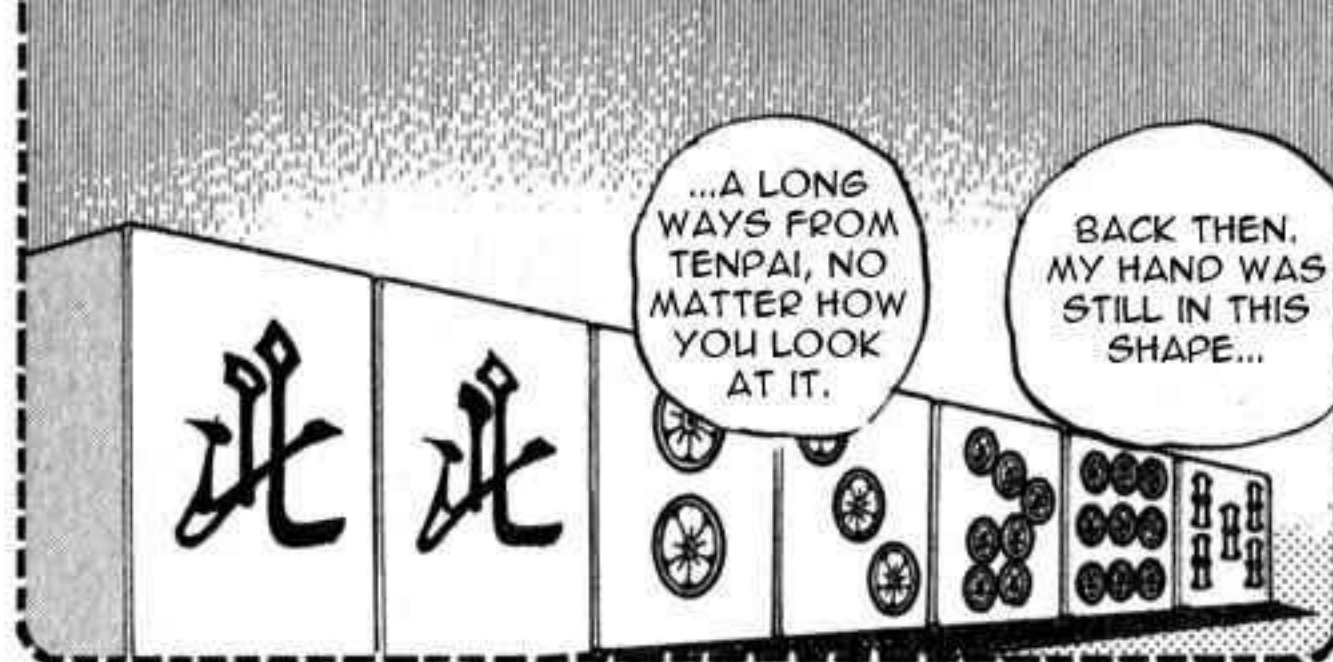
BUT THERE WAS STILL A SMALL CHANCE ...

AND BESIDES ...

HE MUST HAVE BEEN CONVINCED THAT I WAS IN TENPAI AFTER I MADE THAT GUTSY DECISION ...

AND IN THE SAME TURN AS THE SECOND CALL, I DEALT THE ONLY DORA I HAD.

TO THAT POINT, I HAD CALLED TO PROGRESS MY HAND TWICE ALREADY...



...A LONG
WAYS FROM
TENPAI, NO
MATTER HOW
YOU LOOK
AT IT.

BACK THEN,
MY HAND WAS
STILL IN THIS
SHAPE...

THAT VERY
LOGICAL
ASSUMP-
TION
OF HIS
...

HOWEVER
...



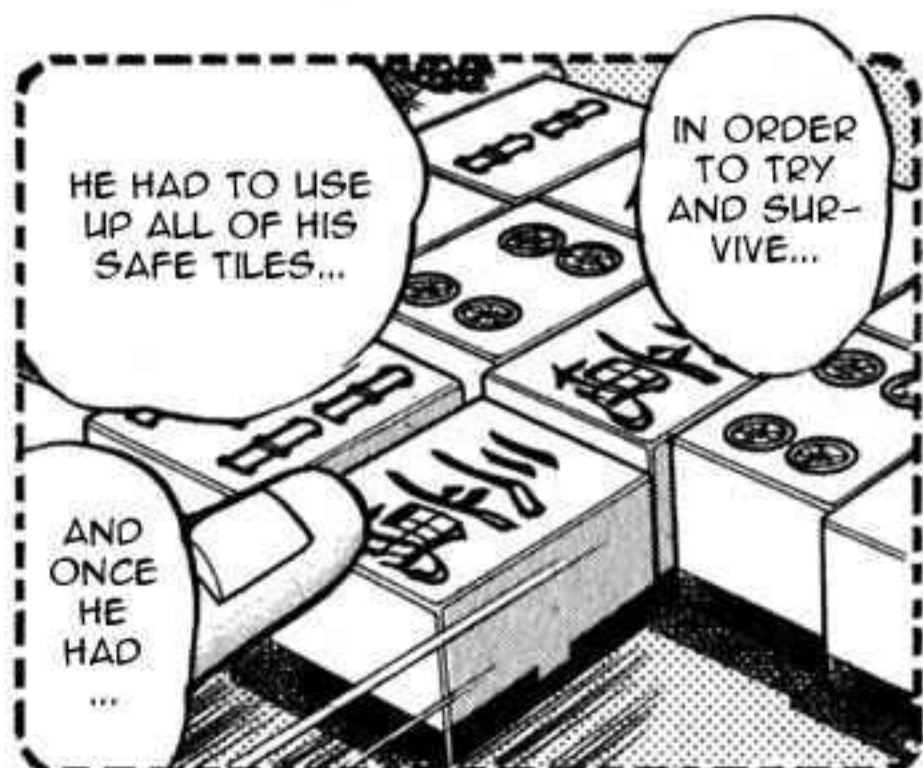
HE WAS
STILL
QUITE
AFRAID.



BUT HE WOULDN'T
LET HIMSELF SO
MUCH AS CON-
SIDER THAT
POSSIBILITY...



...WAS
ALSO HIS
BIGGEST
WEAKNESS.



HE HAD TO USE
UP ALL OF HIS
SAFE TILES...

IN ORDER
TO TRY
AND SUR-
VIVE...

AND
ONCE
HE
HAD
...



HE CONTINUED
TO PLAY SAFE
TILE AFTER
USELESS SAFE
TILE.

ALTHOUGH
THERE WAS
REALLY NEVER
ANY NEED
TO...



RIGHT AT
THE MO-
MENT HE
MADE HIS
FINAL
DRAW
...

AFTER
THAT
DRAW
HAD
BEEN
MADE
...



KH...!



...IN THE
FINAL
MOMENTS
OF THE
GAME.

HE RAN OUT
OF THINGS
THAT HE
COULD DEAL
EVEN
RELATIVELY
SAFELY...

...HE WAS
COMPLETELY OUT
OF SAFE TILES!

A hand of Mahjong tiles is shown. The tiles are arranged in a row: four green tiles with the character '四' (4), four green tiles with the character '七' (7), two red tiles with the character '五' (5), two red tiles with the character '六' (6), two red tiles with the character '八' (8), two red tiles with the character '九' (9), two red tiles with the character '十' (10), two red tiles with the character '十一' (11), two red tiles with the character '十二' (12), and two red tiles with the character '十三' (13). A white tile with the character '白' (White) is placed on top of the first green tile.

...THE GAME HAD ALREADY LONG SINCE SURPASSED HIS ABILITY TO READ ME, LET ALONE MY HAND.

THERE WAS NO-THING HE COULD DO TO TELL WHAT IT WAS...

THERE WAS NO-THING HE COULD DO TO TELL WHAT IT WAS...

A black and white manga-style illustration of a desk. On the desk, there are several small, dark, rectangular objects, possibly tiles or pieces of equipment, arranged in a row. A large, white, oval-shaped speech bubble is positioned above the desk, containing the text "MADE POSSIBLE BY MY SINGLE TILE WAIT." The background is a simple, light-colored surface with a dashed line indicating the edge of the scene.

MADE POSSIBLE BY MY SINGLE TILE WAIT.

THAT WAS MY SNEAK ATTACK

...

BUT IN
FACT, IN
ALL OF THE
GAME TO
THAT POINT,
THE ONLY
YAKU I HAD
AIMED FOR

...

WAS
HOUTEI
RON!

UP TO THAT
MOMENT, HE
HAD ASSUMED
THAT MY HAND
HAD TO BE A
TANYAO HAND
TO BE WORTH
ANYTHING...

WAS
HOLTEI
RON!

THAT WAS JUST
HOW FAR HIS
SUSPICIONS OF
ME HAD SPREAD.

HE WAS
UNABLE TO
BRING HIMSELF
TO DO THAT

...



BUT
ALAS
...

HE
COULD
HAVE
JUST
PLAYED
HIS XIA
...

SINCE
THAT WAS
HOW THE
GAME WAS
...



AT THAT TIME, EVERY TILE IN HIS HAND SEEMED LIKE A LAND-MINE TO HIM.

IT WAS AS IF HIS HEART ITSELF HAD BECOME INFECTED BY SUSPICION.

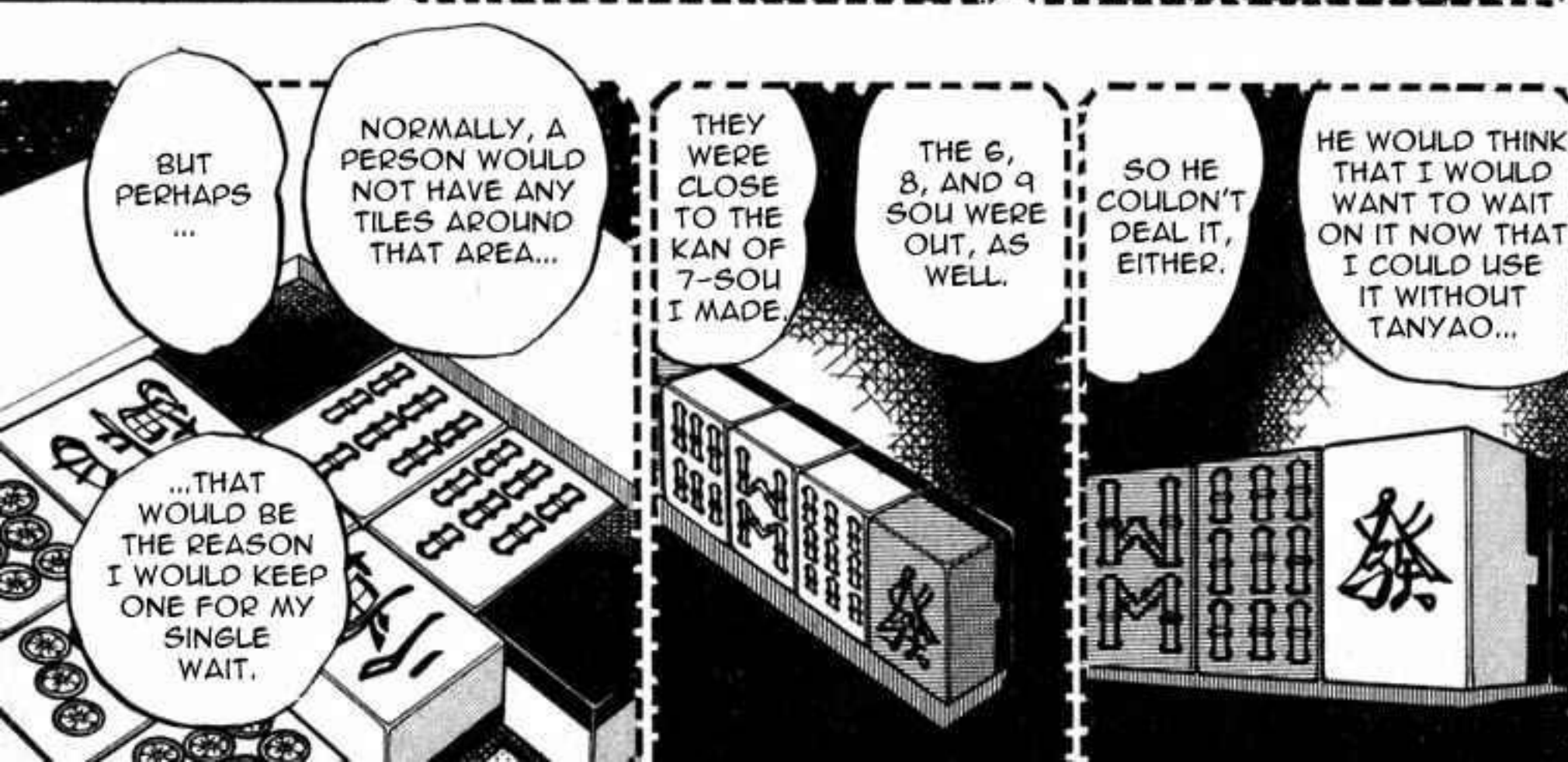
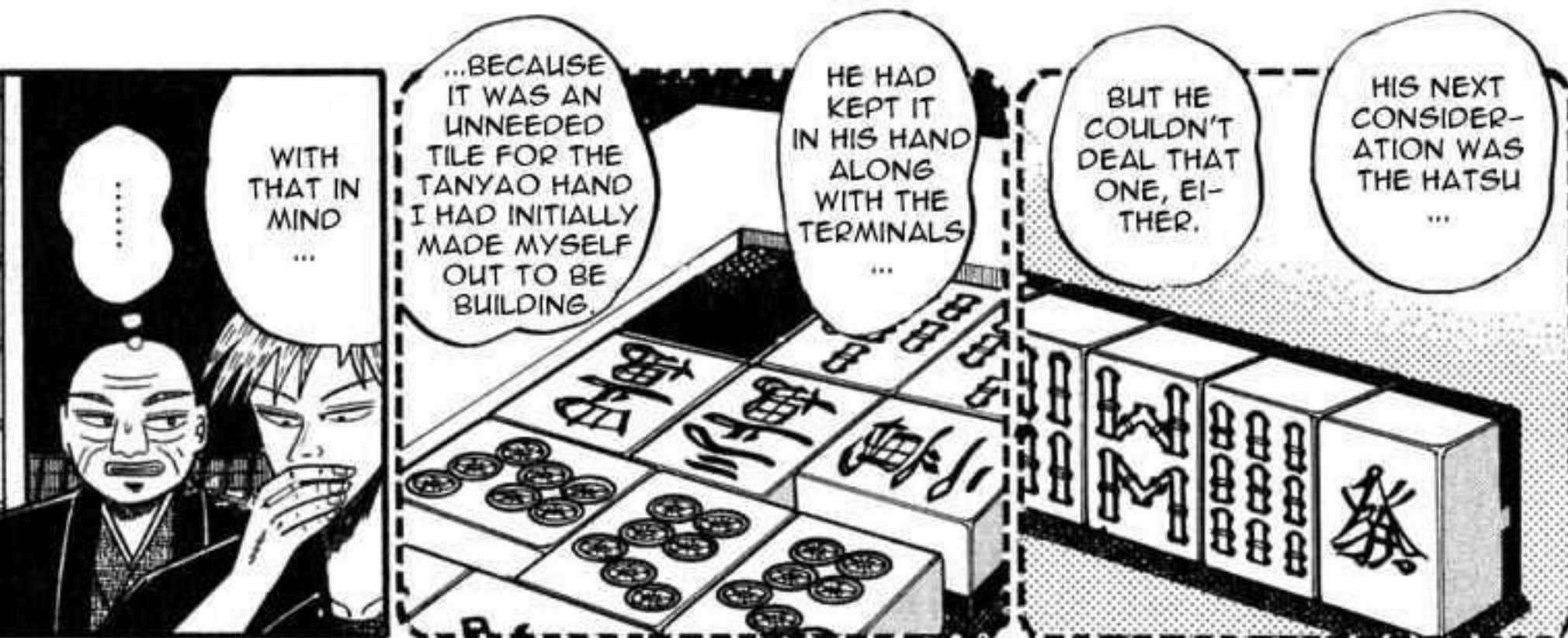
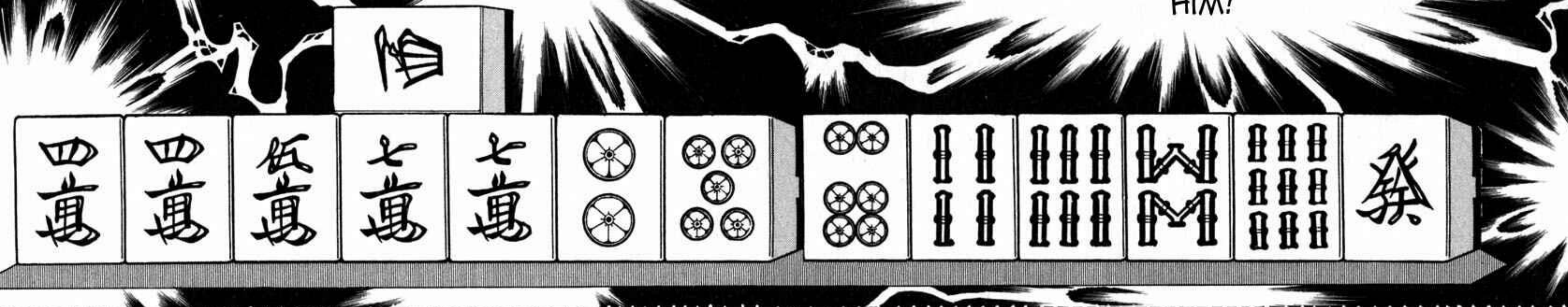


AT THAT
TIME, EVERY
TILE IN HIS
HAND SEEMED
LIKE A LAND-
MINE TO
HIM.

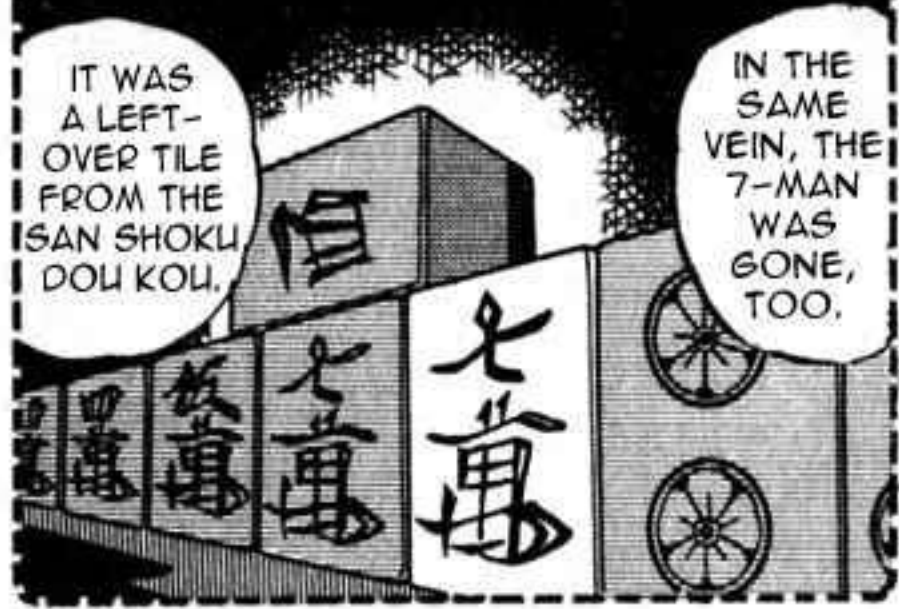


THAT WAS
THE ONLY
TRULY
RANDOM
VARIABLE
... I HAD NO
WAY OF
WORKING IT
INTO MY
TRAP.

THEY ALL SEEMED
EQUALLY RISKY TO
HIM!



IT WAS
A LEFT-
OVER TILE
FROM THE
SAN SHOKU
DOU KOU.



IN THE
SAME
VEIN, THE
7-MAN
WAS
GONE,
TOO.

ALSO
DIDN'T
FEEL
SAFE
TO
DEAL.

THE ONES
AROUND
THE 7-PIN
I CALLED
...

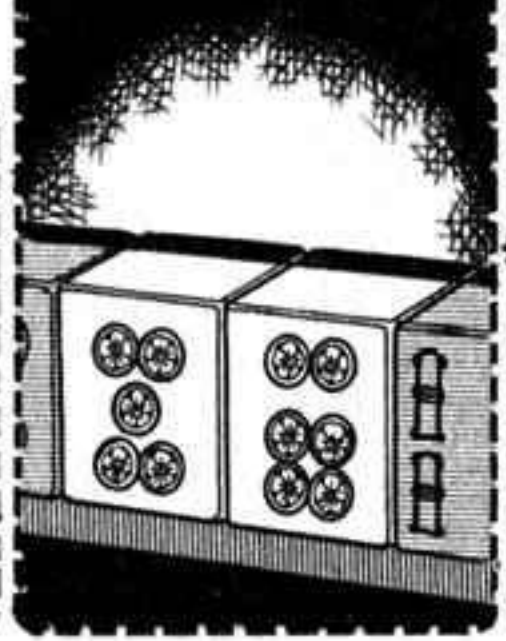
AND
FOR THE
SAME
REASON
AS THE
SOUZU
TILES
...

HE COULD
NOT FIND
ANY GOOD
REASON TO
DEAL IT
...



THERE WAS
A HIGH
CHANCE THAT
I'D HAVE A
LEFTOVER
TILE FROM
IT.

IF IT TURNED OUT
THAT I WAS, IN
FACT, GOING FOR
THE SAN SHOKU
DOU KOU BEFORE
...



SO
IN THE
END
...

OBVIOUSLY,
DEALING
THAT WOULD
BE UNTHINK-
ABLE.



THEY WERE
NEAR THE
3-MAN I'D
DEALT ON THE
TURN BEFORE.

AS FOR
THE 4
AND 5
MAN
...



SO THERE
WAS NO
WAY HE
COULD
PLAY THAT
ONE.



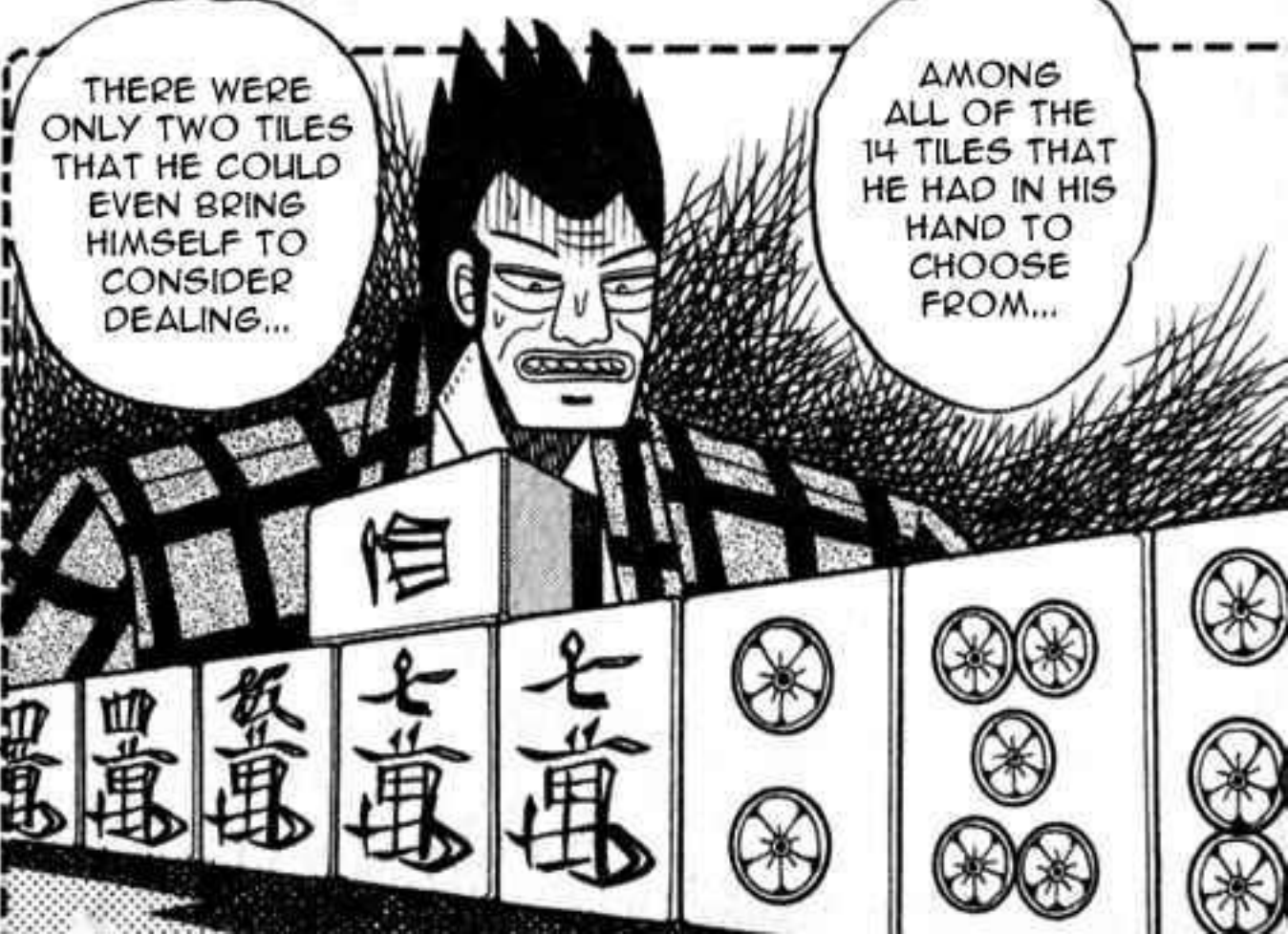
THE
2-PIN
AND
4-SOU
....!



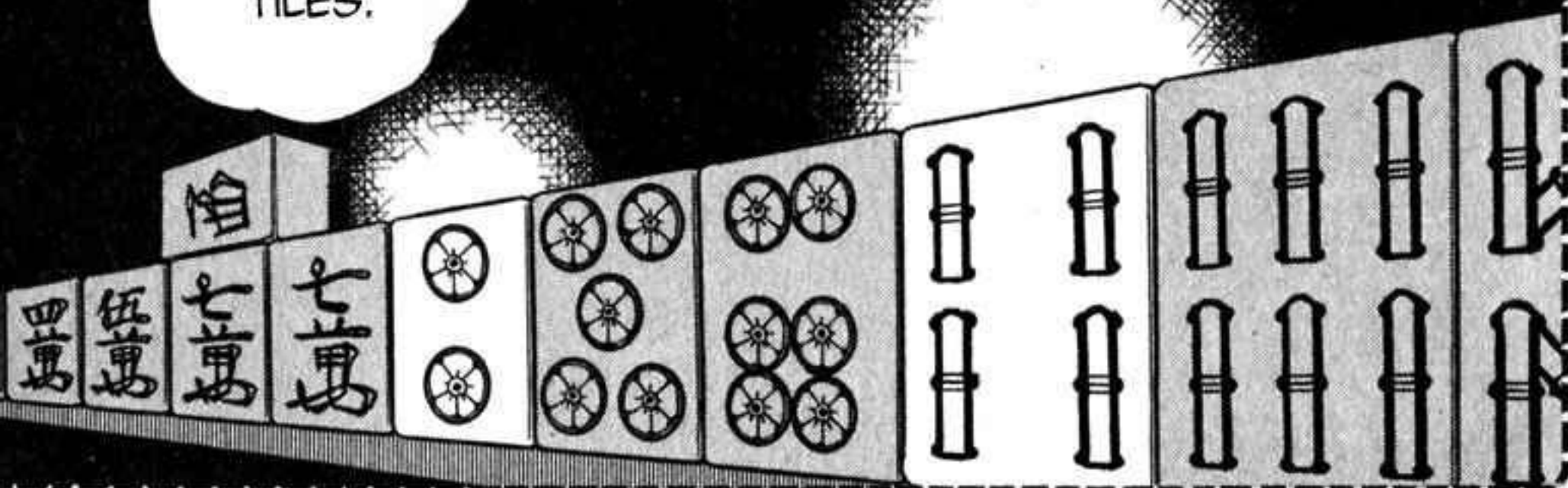
THERE WERE
ONLY TWO TILES
THAT HE COULD
EVEN BRING
HIMSELF TO
CONSIDER
DEALING...



AMONG
ALL OF THE
14 TILES THAT
HE HAD IN HIS
HAND TO
CHOOSE
FROM...



ONLY
THESE TWO
TILES.



...WAS
RIGHT A-
ROUND THE
5-SOU
...

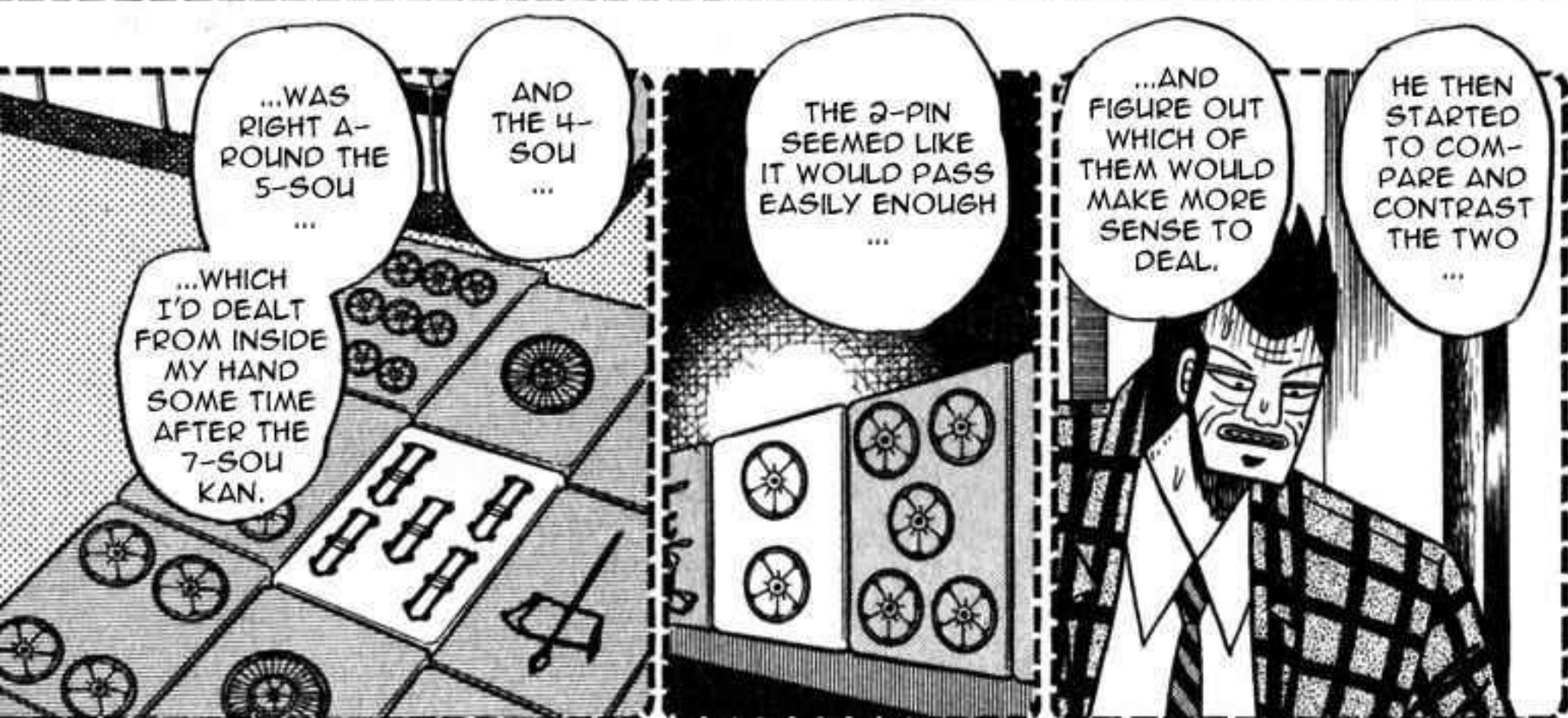
AND
THE 4-
SOU
...

THE 2-PIN
SEEMED LIKE
IT WOULD PASS
EASILY ENOUGH
...

...AND
FIGURE OUT
WHICH OF
THEM WOULD
MAKE MORE
SENSE TO
DEAL.

HE THEN
STARTED
TO COM-
PARE AND
CONTRAST
THE TWO
...

...WHICH
I'D DEALT
FROM INSIDE
MY HAND
SOME TIME
AFTER THE
7-SOU
KAN.



...HAD MANY
TILES AROUND
IT IN MY DIS-
CARDS...

IN
COMPA-
RISON,
THE 2-
PIN...

I COULD
HAVE MADE
A KAN...

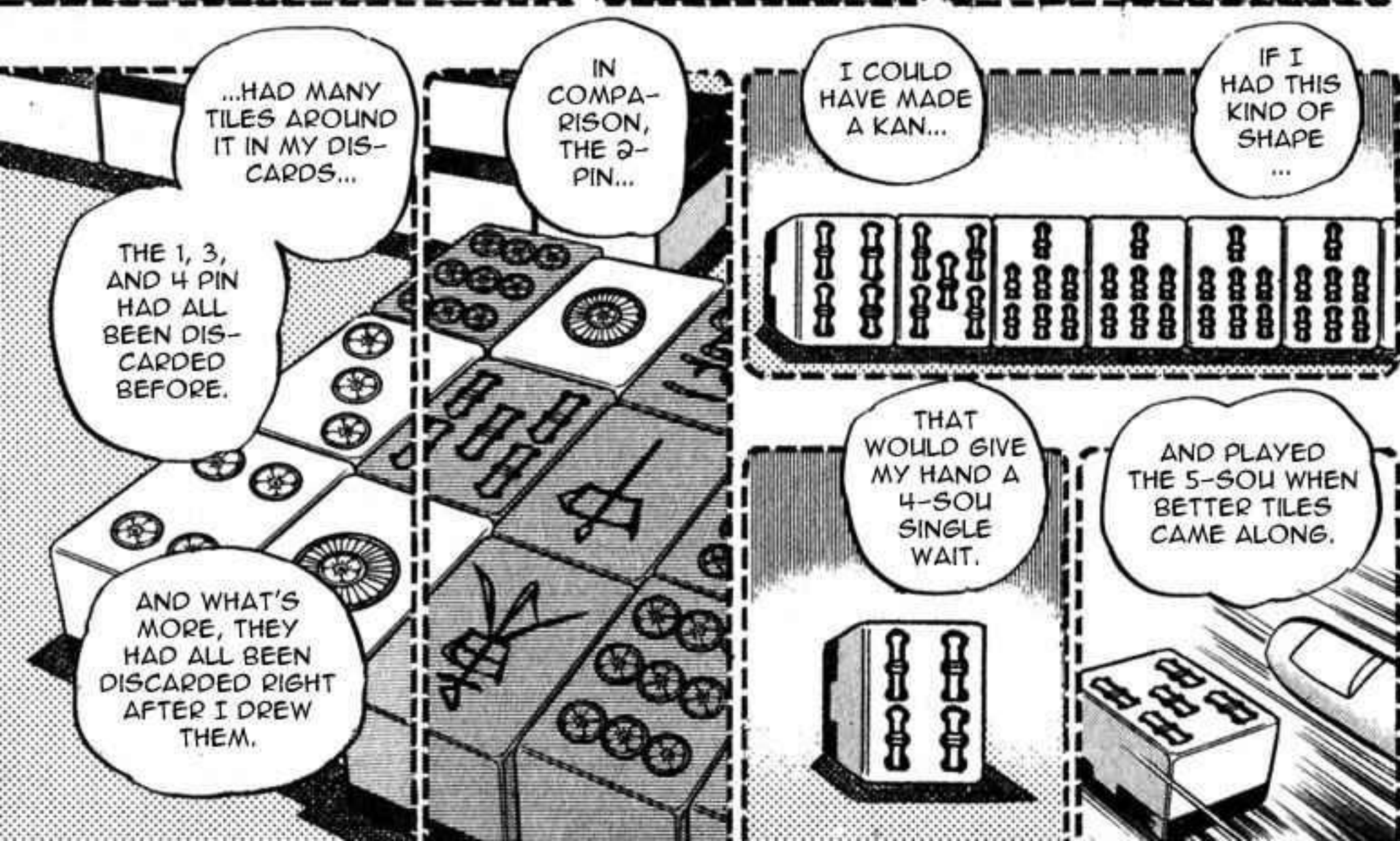
IF I
HAD THIS
KIND OF
SHAPE
...

THE 1, 3,
AND 4 PIN
HAD ALL
BEEN DIS-
CARDED
BEFORE.

AND WHAT'S
MORE, THEY
HAD ALL BEEN
DISCARDED RIGHT
AFTER I DREW
THEM.

THAT
WOULD GIVE
MY HAND A
4-SOU
SINGLE
WAIT.

AND PLAYED
THE 5-SOU WHEN
BETTER TILES
CAME ALONG.



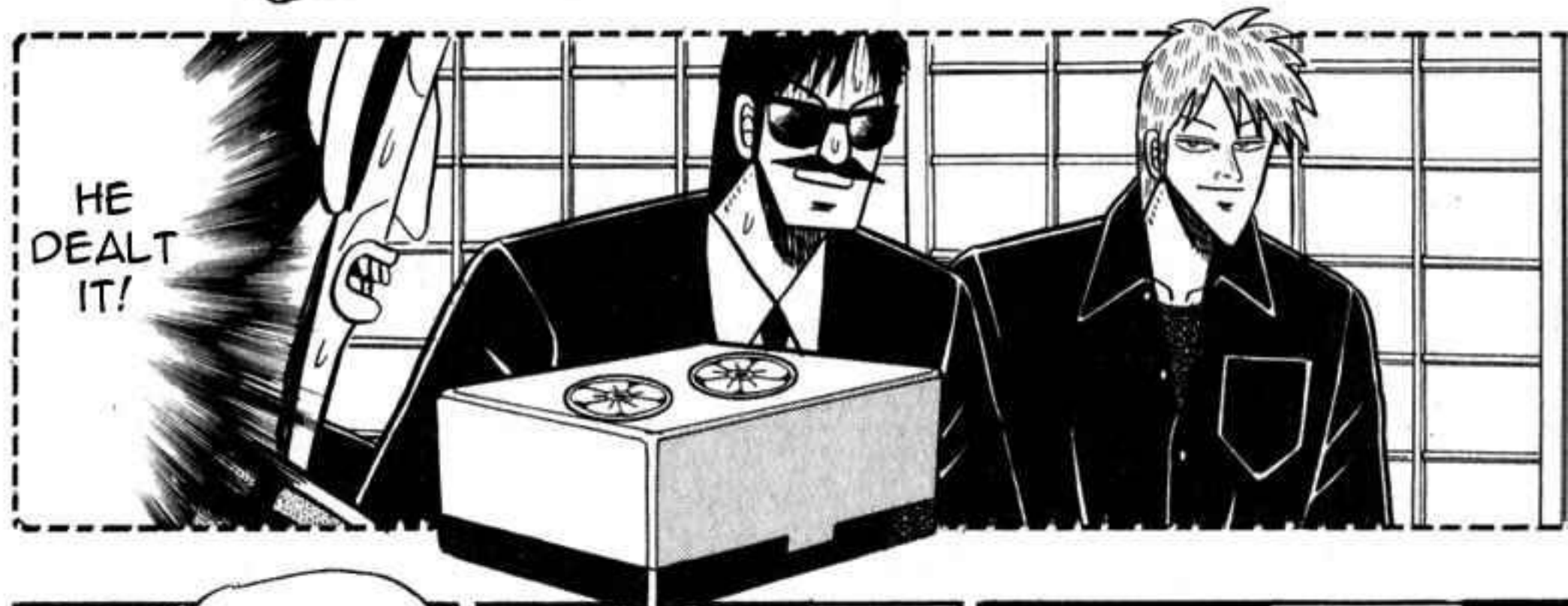


AND THINKING THINGS LIKE THAT,

IT HAD TO PASS!

IT WOULD PASS!

HE COULD NOT SEE ANY WAY THAT I WOULD STILL HAVE IT FOR MY SINGLE WAIT.



HE DEALT IT!



THE REASONS I JUST MENTIONED FOR THE 2-PIN BEING SAFE ...

EVERYTHING THAT HE WAS THINKING AT THE TIME ...

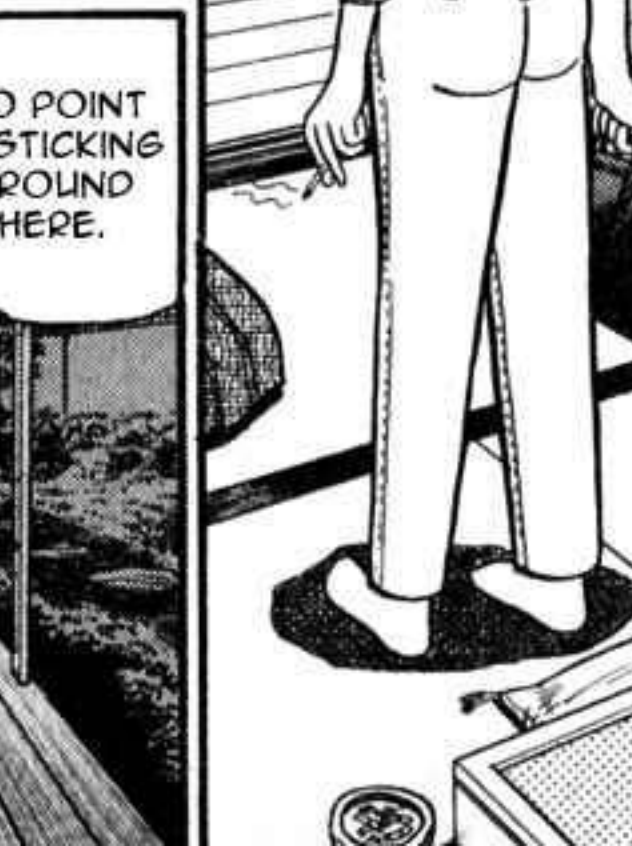
JUST BY USING THE 2-PIN AS MY WAIT ...

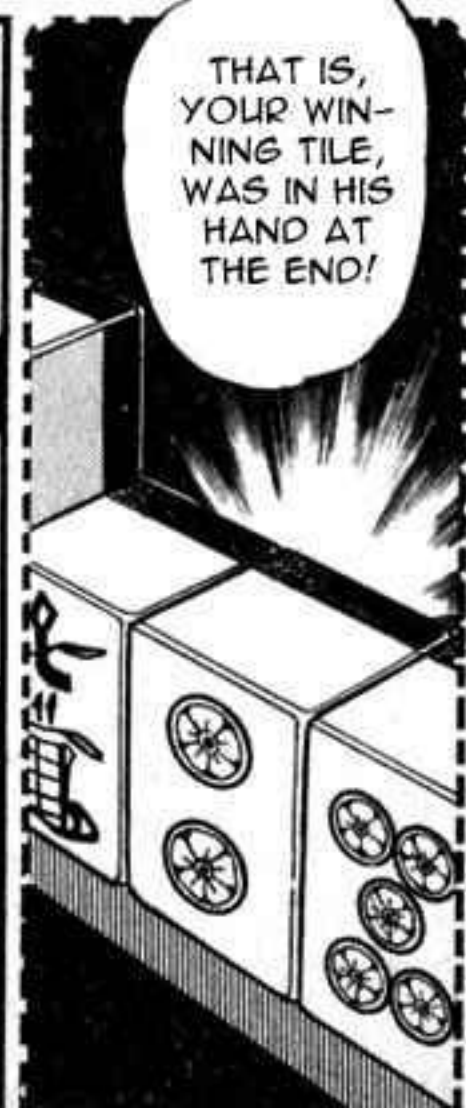
FOR THE PREDATOR WHO LAYS HIS TRAP ...

YOU SEE ...



HMM-HM-HM ...







I DEMAND
AN EX-
PLAINATION
...



I'M SURE
YOU CAN
FIGURE IT
OUT ALL
BY YOUR-
SELF.

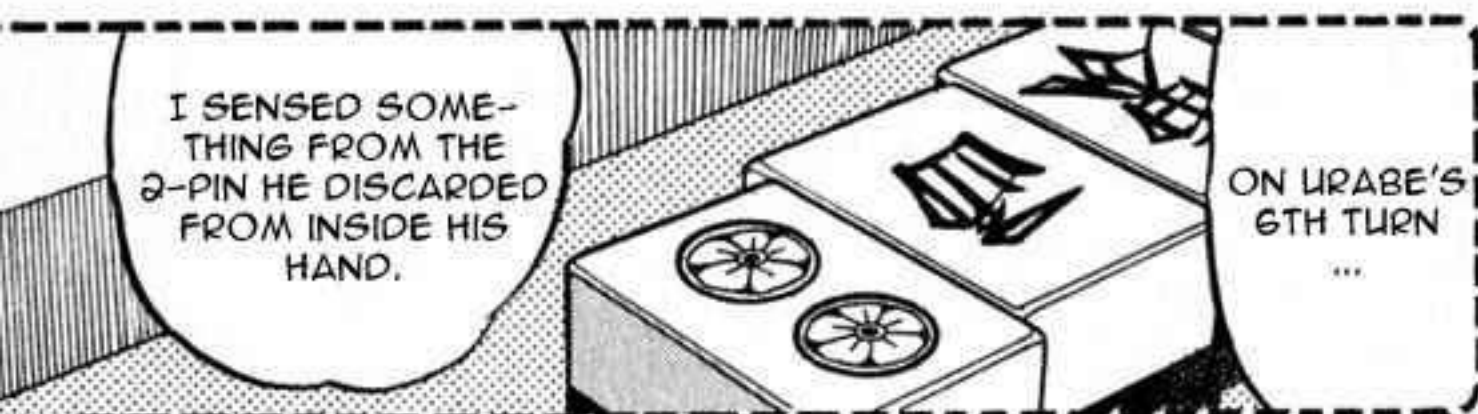


THEN
THERE'S
NOTHING
TO TELL.

IF YOU
UNDER-
STAND
HOW I
KNEW THAT
MUCH,
KUMICHOU
...



IN
SHORT
...



I SENSED SOME-
THING FROM THE
2-PIN HE DISCARDED
FROM INSIDE HIS
HAND.

ON URABE'S
6TH TURN
...



URABE WAS
STILL ON THE
OFFENSIVE.

UP UNTIL HE
DEALT THE
2-PIN ON THE
6TH TURN
...

HE STILL
HAD THAT
KIND OF
MINDSET.



YEAH.

YOU
SENSED
SOME-
THING
...?



I GOT THAT
2-PIN ON THE
7TH TURN OF
THE MATCH.

JUST
BEFORE
THAT
...

11

...THE VERY RISKY CHUN!

444

HE WAS
IN TENPAI.

100

AND IN ORDER TO DO SO, HE CHOSE TO DEAL
...

HE AVOIDED ME.

HE DIDN'T GIVE UP ON WINNING, JUST YET.

BUT EVEN SO,

HE KNEW THAT HE COULDN'T DEAL THAT CHUN.

AFTER TAKING ONE LOOK AT MY DORA 4 CALL,

CALL,

I SAW HIM DO
JUST THAT
MANY TIMES
BEFORE IN
OUR BATTLE.


...TO PICK
APART HIS
HAND,
STARTING
WITH HIS
PAIR...



...

HE HAD
A TEN-
DENCY
...

IN
TIMES
SUCH AS
THIS,



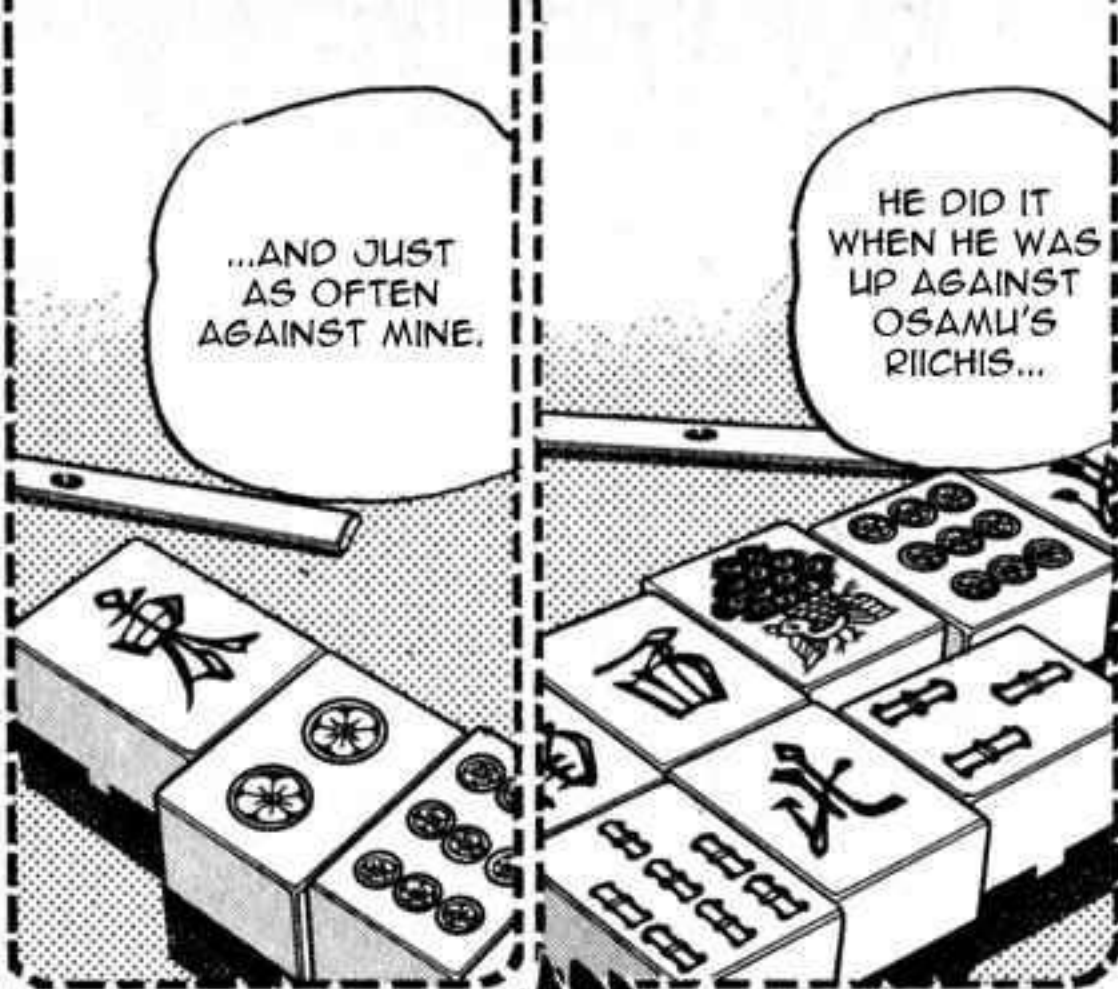
...THE
2-PIN,
PART OF
A PAIR.



IT WAS
ENGRAVED
DEEP INTO
HIS SUB-
CONSCIOUS.

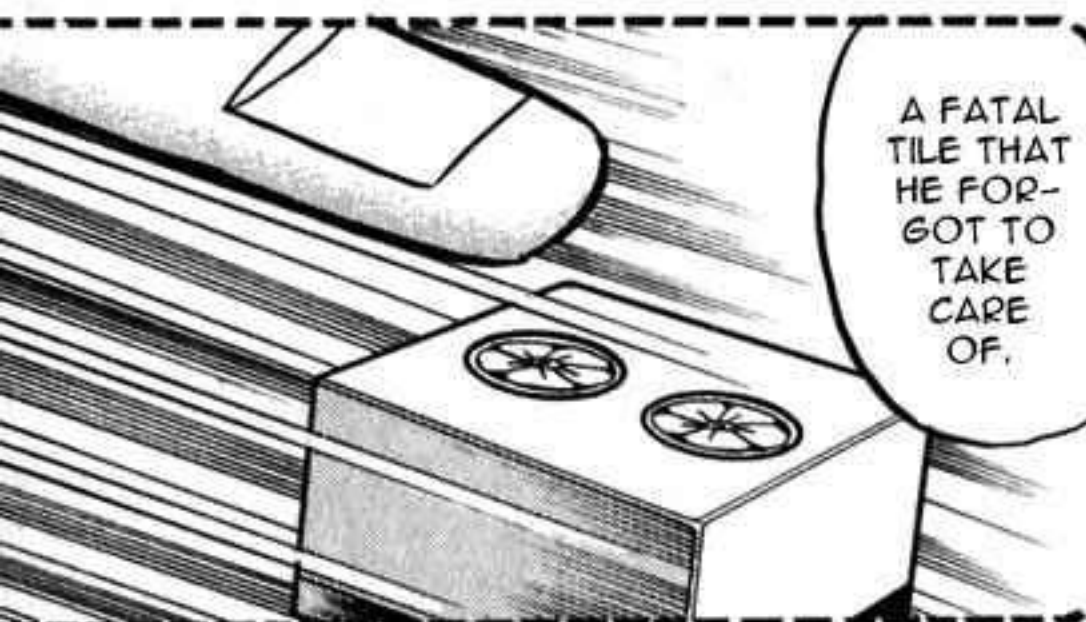
THAT
TENDENCY
WASN'T SOME-
THING THAT HE
COULD JUST
WILL AWAY.

IN
OTHER
WORDS
...



...AND JUST
AS OFTEN
AGAINST MINE.

HE DID IT
WHEN HE WAS
UP AGAINST
OSAMU'S
RIICHIS...



A FATAL
TILE THAT
HE FOR-
GOT TO
TAKE
CARE
OF.

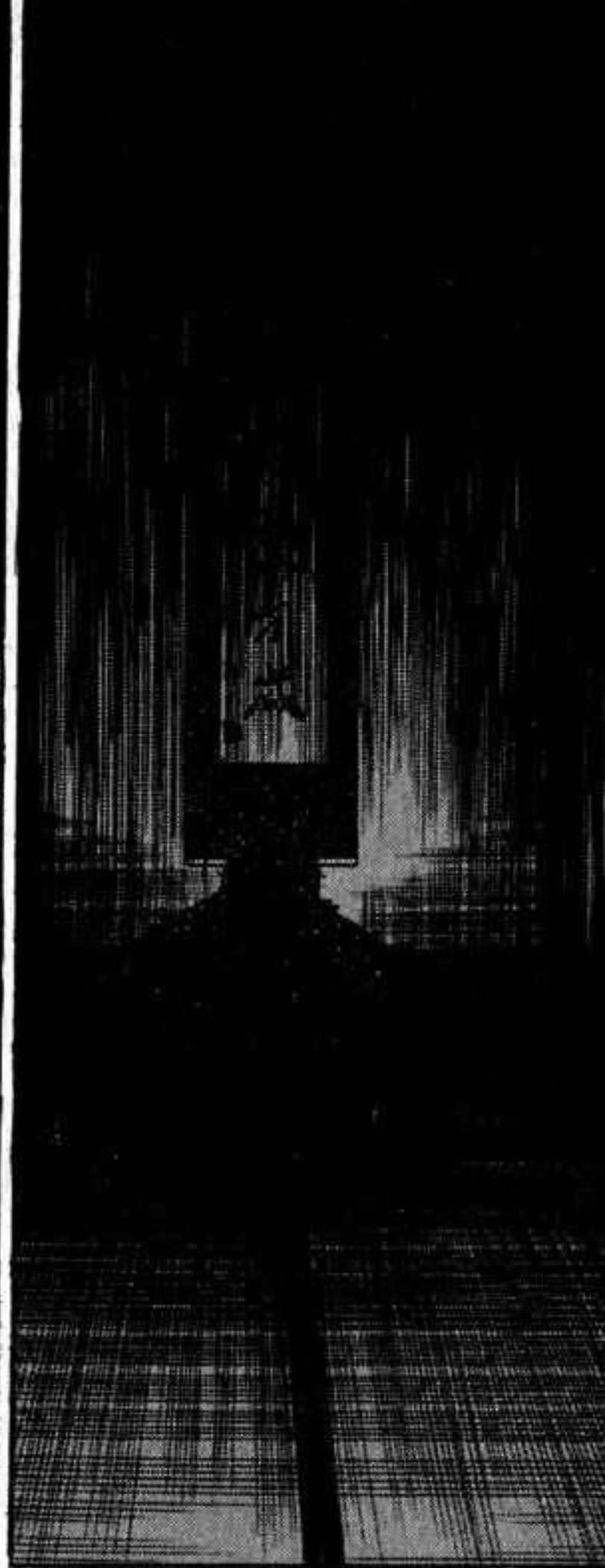
HE HAD
THAT 2-PIN
LEFT OVER
FROM THE
DECISION
HE MADE
ON THE
6TH
TURN.

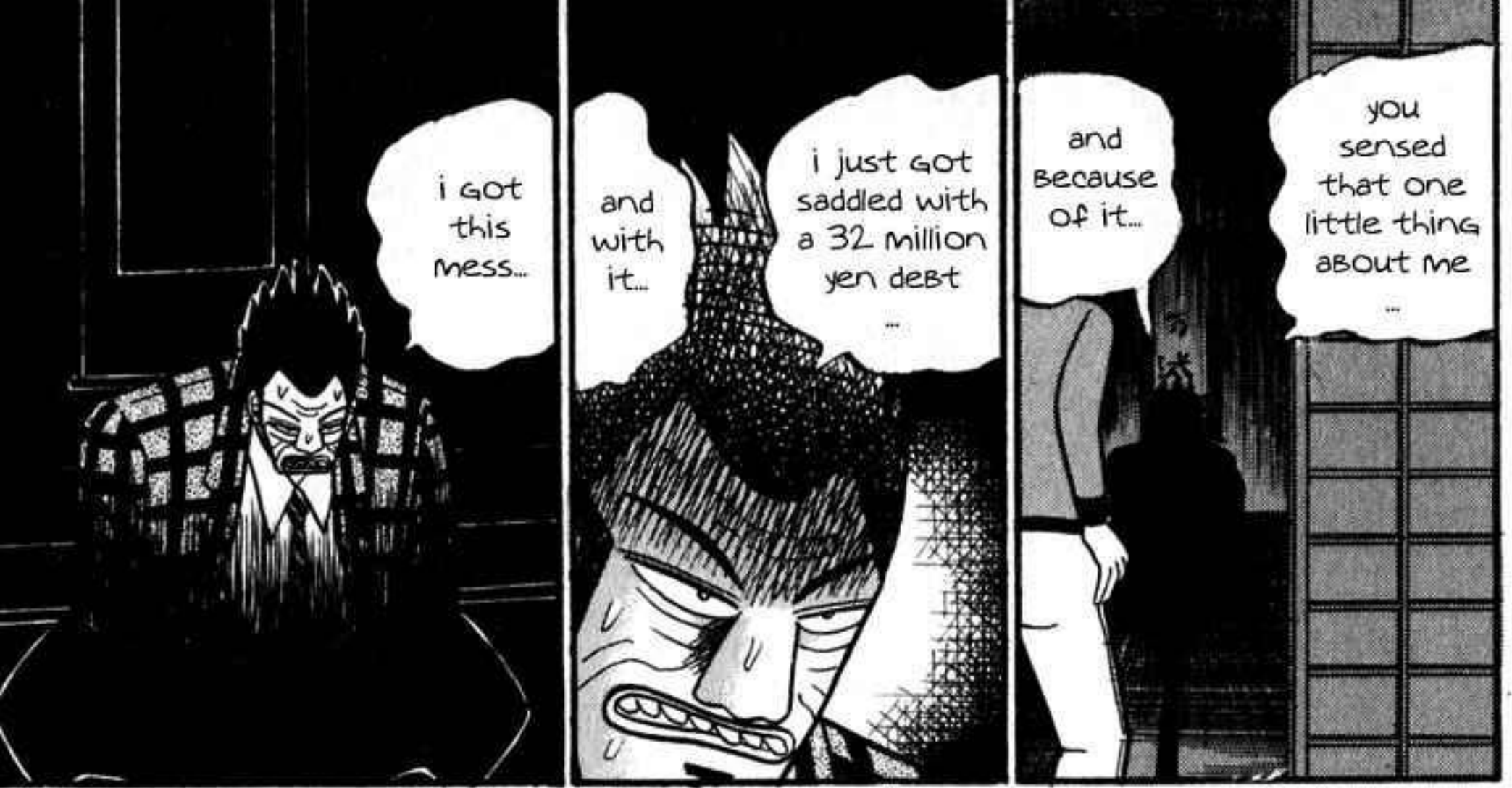
DURING HIS
VERY LAST
TURN TO
CHOOSE A
TILE TO PLAY
AGAINST ME
...



URGH
...











CHAPTER 51 - PURITY

第51話 純度





IT CAN
NEVER
COME
TRUE.

THAT,
SOME DAY,
YOU WILL
BRING ME
DOWN TO
YOUR
LEVEL...

NO MATTER
HOW MANY
TIMES YOU
SHOUT IT
AT ME...

LRABE
...

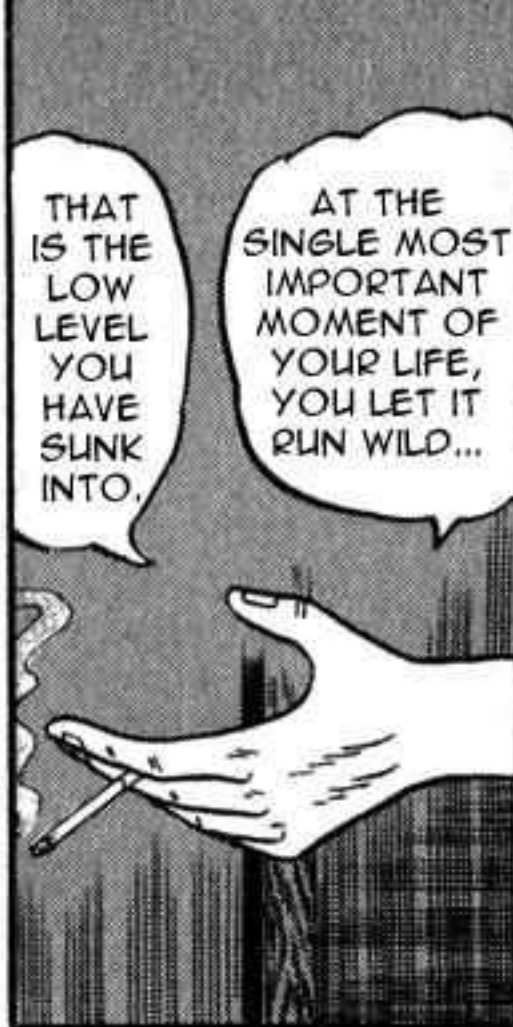




STAY AS GREEDY AS YOU ARE, AND YOUR SENSES WILL NEVER BE SHARP.

YOU'RE OVERLY PRIDEFUL, TO BOOT.

THAT HABIT OF YOURS JUST MAKES YOU DENSE.



THAT IS THE LOW LEVEL YOU HAVE SUNK INTO.

AT THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT MOMENT OF YOUR LIFE, YOU LET IT RUN WILD...



YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER SUCKER CONTROLLED BY HIS OWN GREED.

AT THE END OF IT ALL ...



I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU TRY.

I'LL FUCKING KILL YOU, SONNOVVA BITCH!!



You Bastard ...

I CAN SMELL WHAT YOU'RE PLANNING FROM A MILE AWAY.



IF YOU BEAT ME, I'LL SHOULDER ALL OF YOUR DEBT AND YOU CAN WALK AWAY WITH SOME MANGLED-UP HANDS.

ON THE OTHER HAND, IF I'M THE ONE WHO BEATS YOU...

IF YOU'RE BEING SINCERE, WE CAN PLAY ANOTHER HANCHAN NOW.



DON'T JUST TALK ABOUT THINGS SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE... STOP SAYING THINGS LIKE "SOME DAY".

I'M RIGHT HERE... WHAT'S WRONG WITH "RIGHT NOW"?



huh ...?



DOESN'T THAT SEEM LIKE A REASONABLE DEAL FOR YOU?

I'LL HAVE YOU CHOP OFF BOTH OF YOUR HANDS, AND YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO PLAY MAHJONG AGAIN.







AKAGI!

AKAGI-SAN...?!



HMM-HM-HM...

YOU DON'T GAIN ANYTHING, NO MATTER HOW IT TURNS OUT!



IT'S JUST STUPID!

STOP THIS DEAL AT ONCE!



THAT'S ALL THE BETTER.



THAT CUTS STRAIGHT TO THE HEART OF WHAT GAMBLING REALLY MEANS.

A LIFE-AND-DEATH BATTLE...

TO HAVE A MEANINGLESS DEATH.



WHOEVER LOSES WILL END UP WITH THEIR LIFE RUINED FOREVER... A FATE PERHAPS EVEN WORSE THAN DEATH.

THAT'S THE BEST KIND OF BATTLE, DON'T YOU AGREE?



...WHO MAKES BETS BASED ON WHAT I HAVE TO GAIN. I LEAVE THAT TO GUYS LIKE URABE.

I'VE NEVER BEEN THE TYPE...







THAT
THREAT
WAS
TOTALLY
FAKE.

BUT
ANY
WAY
YOU
LOOK
AT IT
...



THEN
AGAIN
...



...THAT
HE WAS
PUTTING
ON A
PERFOR-
MANCE,
HIMSELF.

HE
DIDN'T
EXACTLY
KNOW
...



LIKE HE
WAS PUT-
TING ON
A PLAY
OR SOME-
THING.



HE WAS
JUST TRYING
TO FOOL
HIMSELF.

THAT IS
TO SAY
...



HE HAD A
CHANCE TO
GET BACK AT
ME, BUT HE
LET IT ALL
GO.

ALL I
DID WAS
SHOW
THAT TO
HIM.



NOT ONE
WORD OF
WHAT HE
SAID WAS
REAL.



HE'S STILL AT
THE LEVEL
WHERE HE HAD
TO TAKE THE
PROS AND
CONS OF THAT
AGREEMENT
INTO AC-
COUNT.

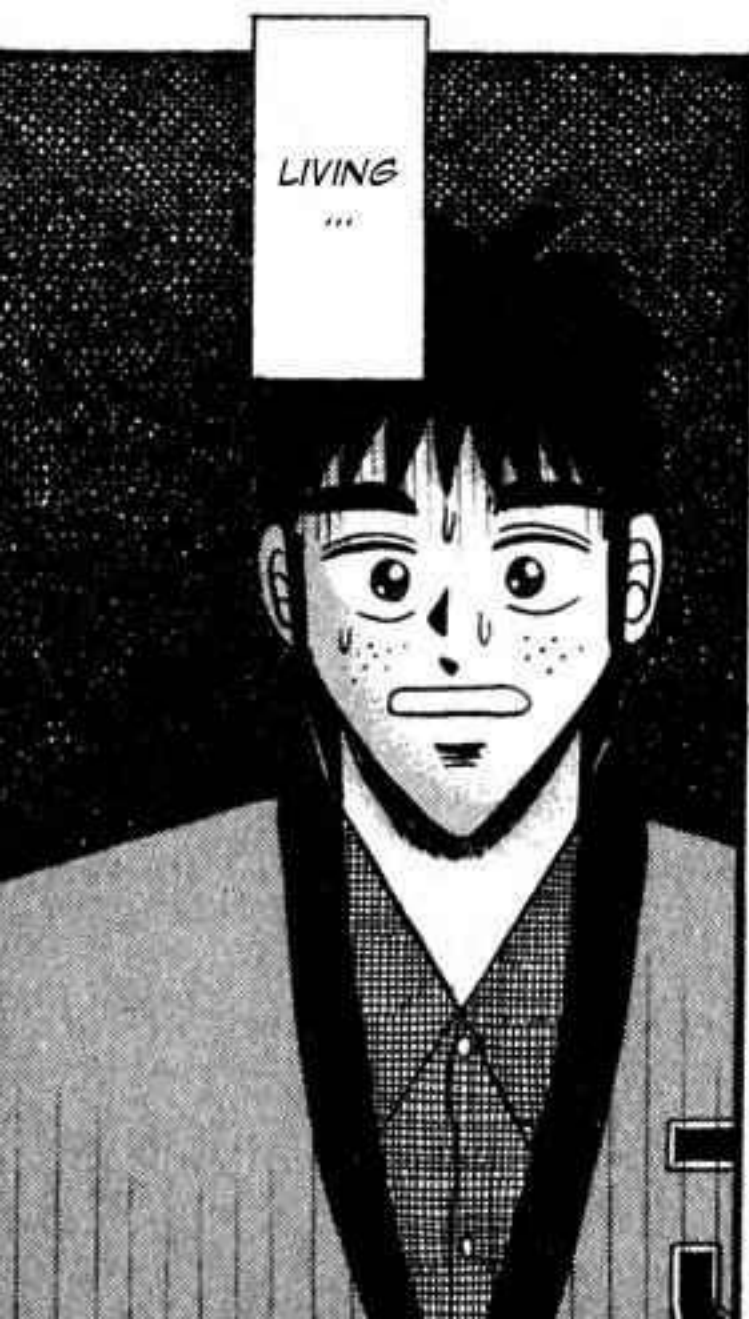
EVEN
WHILE
HE WAS
ANGRY.



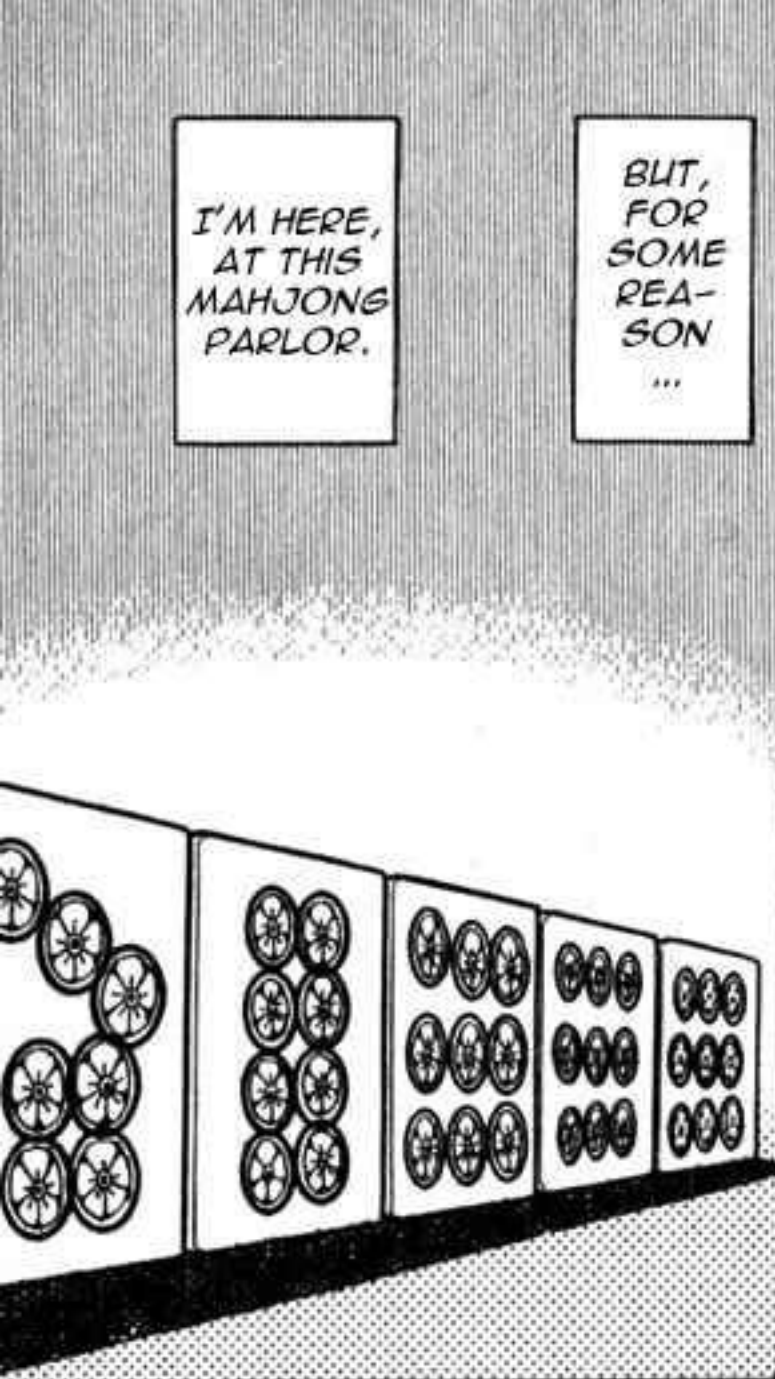
THAT'S
HOW LOW
OF A
LEVEL HE
FOUND
HIMSELF
AT...

HERE'S
WHAT
I'M
GETTING
AT...

HUH
...







I'M HERE,
AT THIS
MAHJONG
PARLOR.

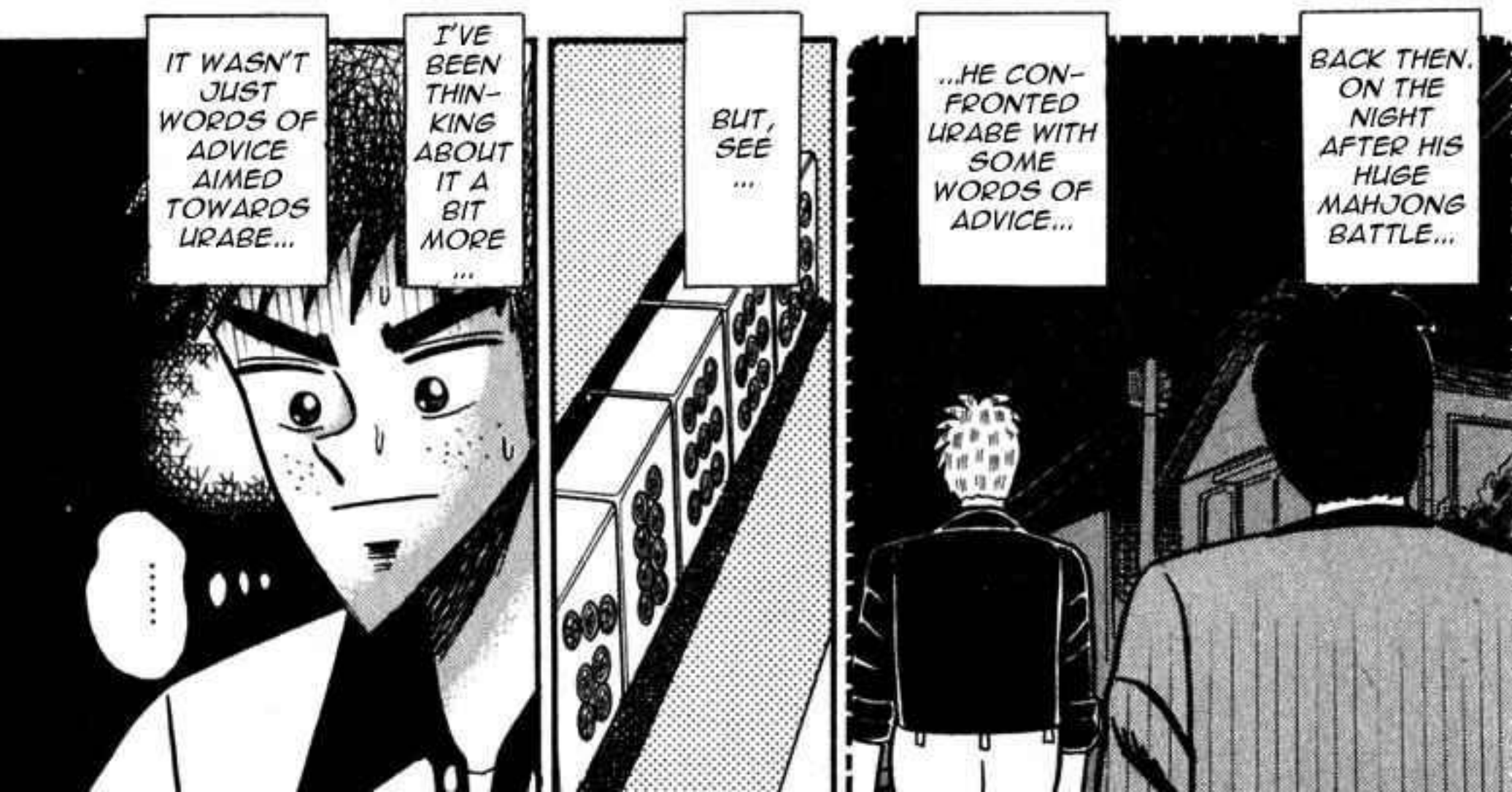
BUT,
FOR
SOME
REA-
SON
...



SOMETHING
THAT'S
BEEN
RUNNING
THROUGH MY
MIND, EVER
SINCE...

THAT
CALM,
RESERVED
SPEECH
OF HIS
...

YOU SEE,
BACK THEN,
AKAGI-
SAN SAID
SOMETHING
...



IT WASN'T
JUST
WORDS OF
ADVICE
AIMED
TOWARDS
URABE...

I'VE
BEEN
THIN-
KING
ABOUT
IT A
BIT
MORE
...

BUT,
SEE
...

...HE CON-
FRONTED
URABE WITH
SOME
WORDS OF
ADVICE...

BACK THEN,
ON THE
NIGHT
AFTER HIS
HUGE
MAHJONG
BATTLE...



GETTING
WHATEVER
HAND COMES
YOUR WAY
AT THE
TIME...



JUST
STANDING
STILL, WITH-
OUT FIGHTING
OR RETREAT-
ING...



THERE'S
SOMETHING
ABOUT IT
...



IT WAS
ALSO
FOR THE
REST OF
US WHO
WERE
THERE...



JUST FO-
CUSING ON
SURVIVING
FOR THE
MOMENT
...



DELAYING
A RESPONSE
UNTIL LATER
...



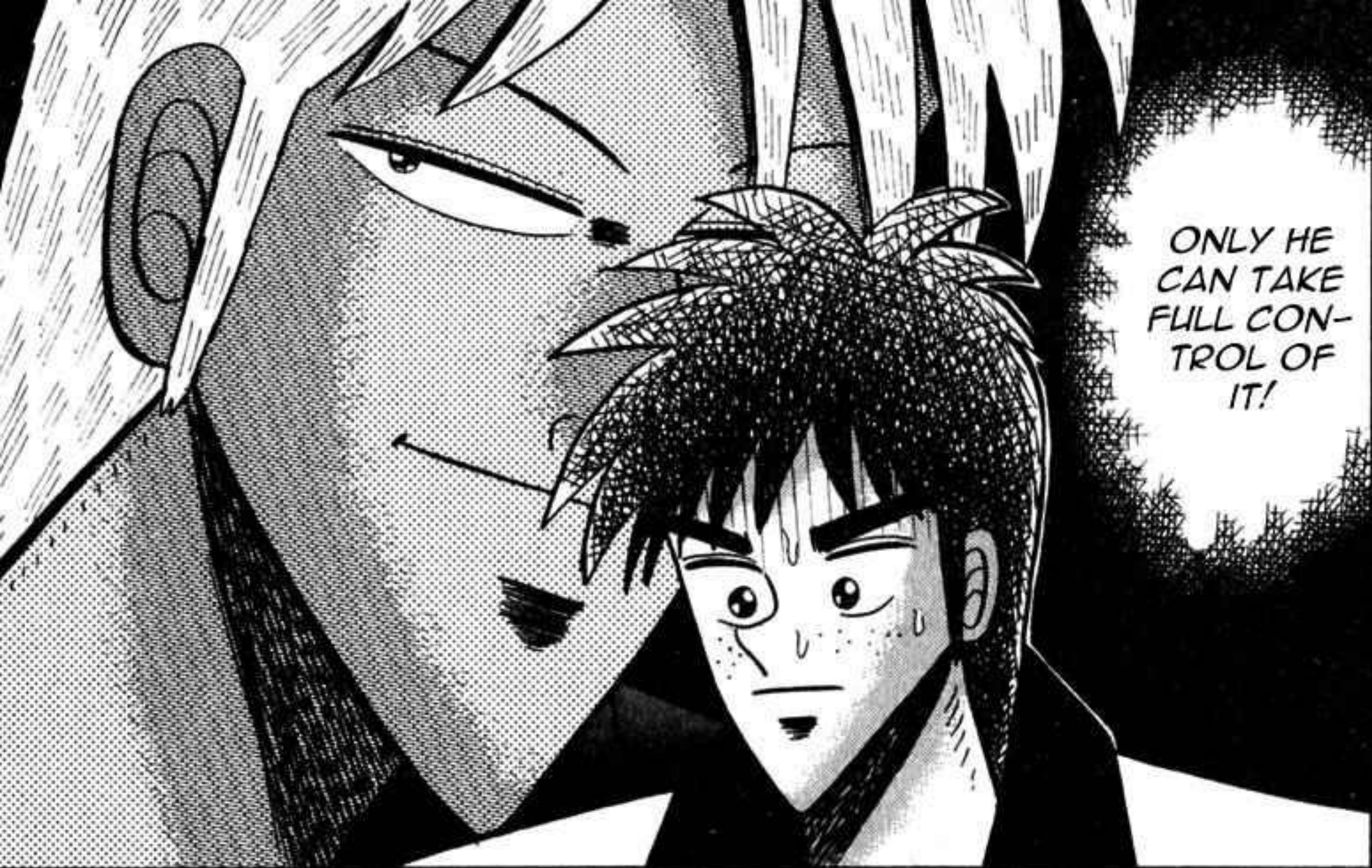
AKAGI-SAN
IS UNIQUE...
HE'S
TOTALLY
DIFFERENT!

WHEN IT
COMES
TO
THINGS
LIKE
THAT...

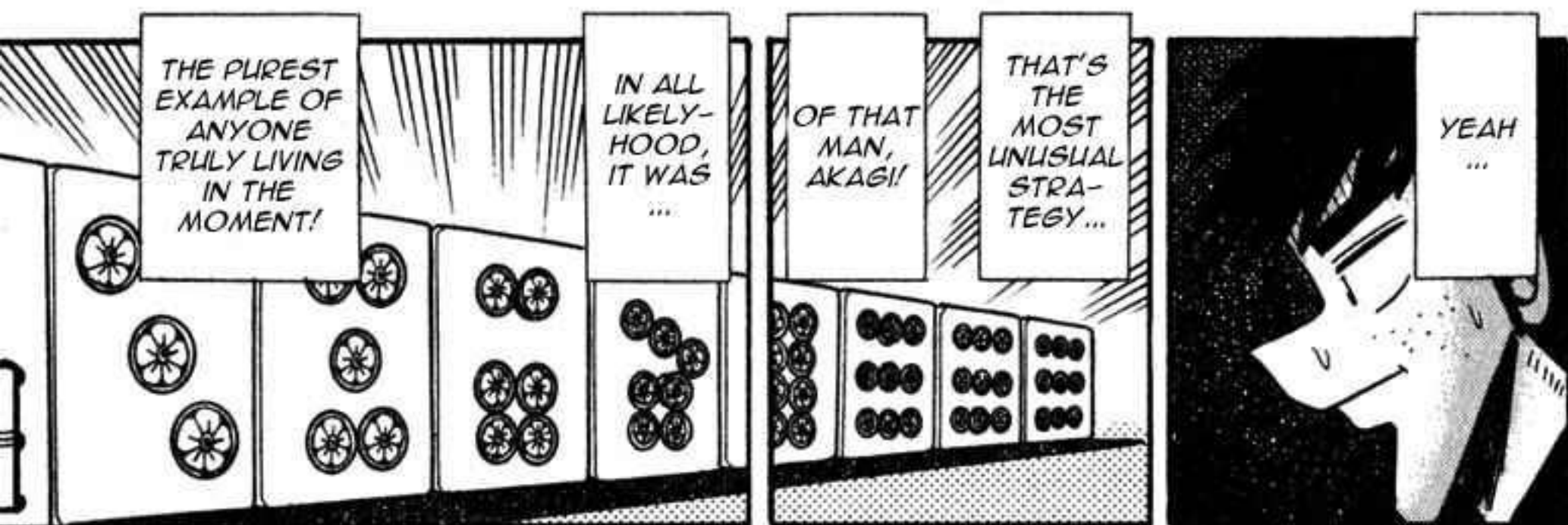


ONLY AKAGI-
SAN CAN
REALLY LIVE
IN THE MO-
MENT
...





ONLY HE
CAN TAKE
FULL CON-
TROL OF
IT!



THE PUREST
EXAMPLE OF
ANYONE
TRULY LIVING
IN THE
MOMENT!

IN ALL
LIKELY-
HOOD,
IT WAS
...

OF THAT
MAN,
AKAGI!

THAT'S
THE
MOST
UNUSUAL
STRA-
TEGY...

YEAH
...



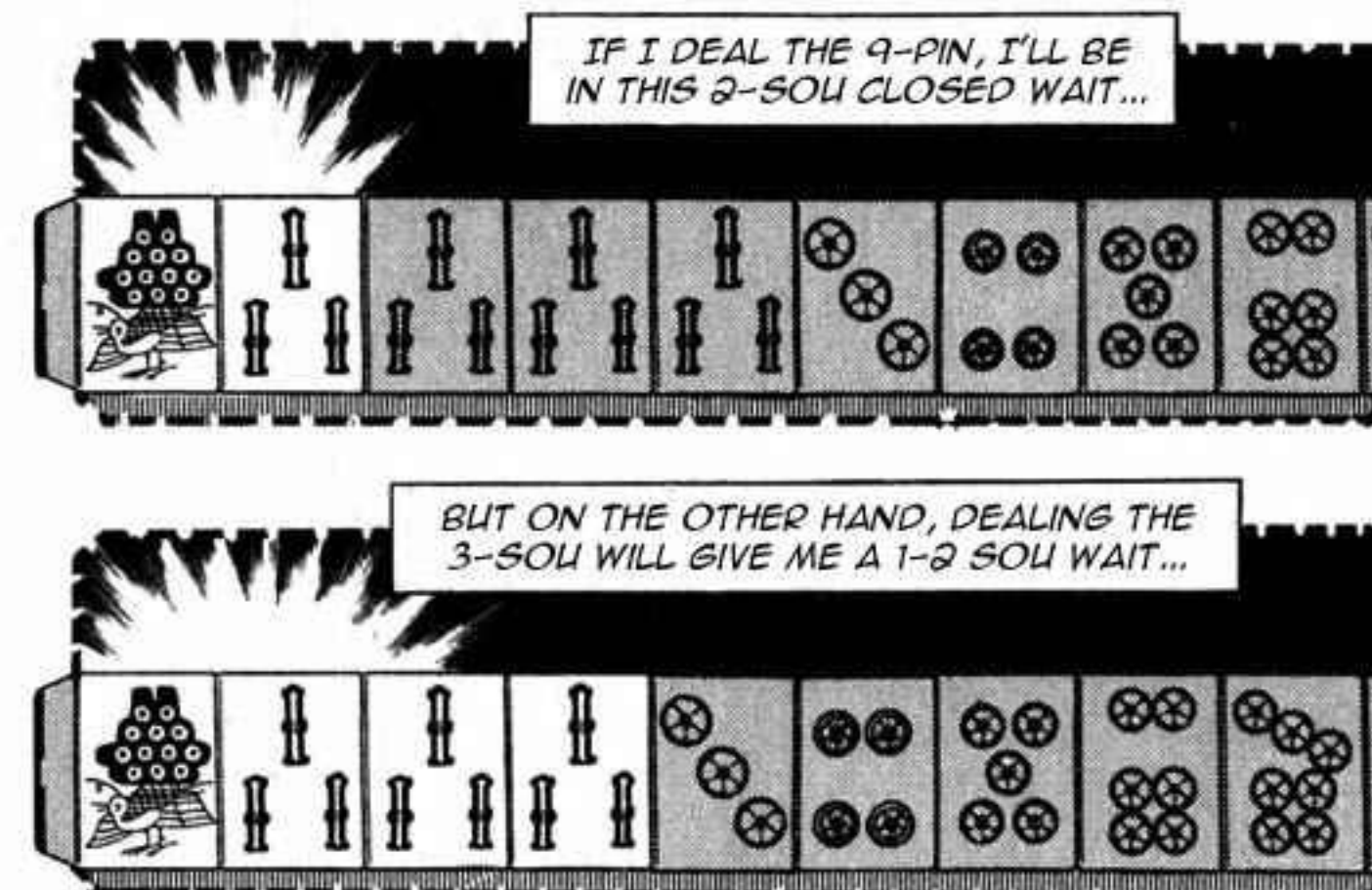
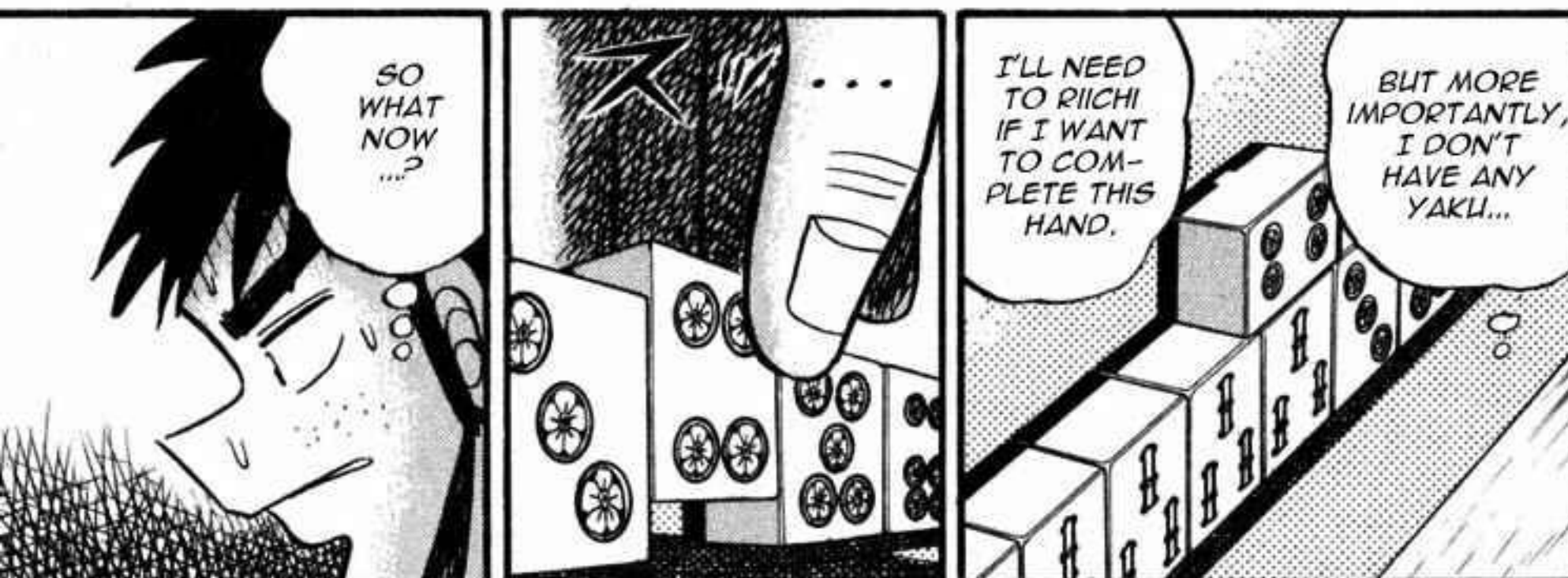
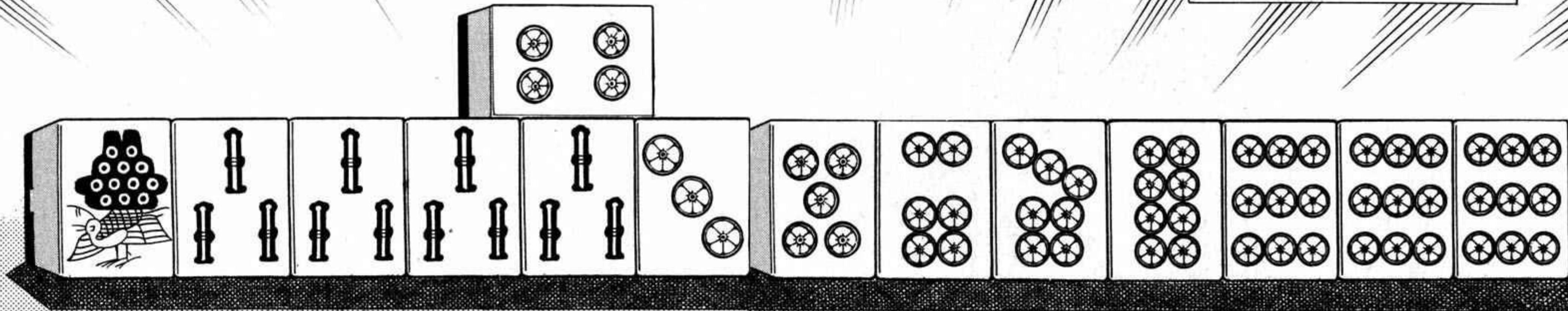
...IS SOME-
THING THAT
PEOPLE LIKE
ME CAN
NEVER DREAM
OF MIMICKING.

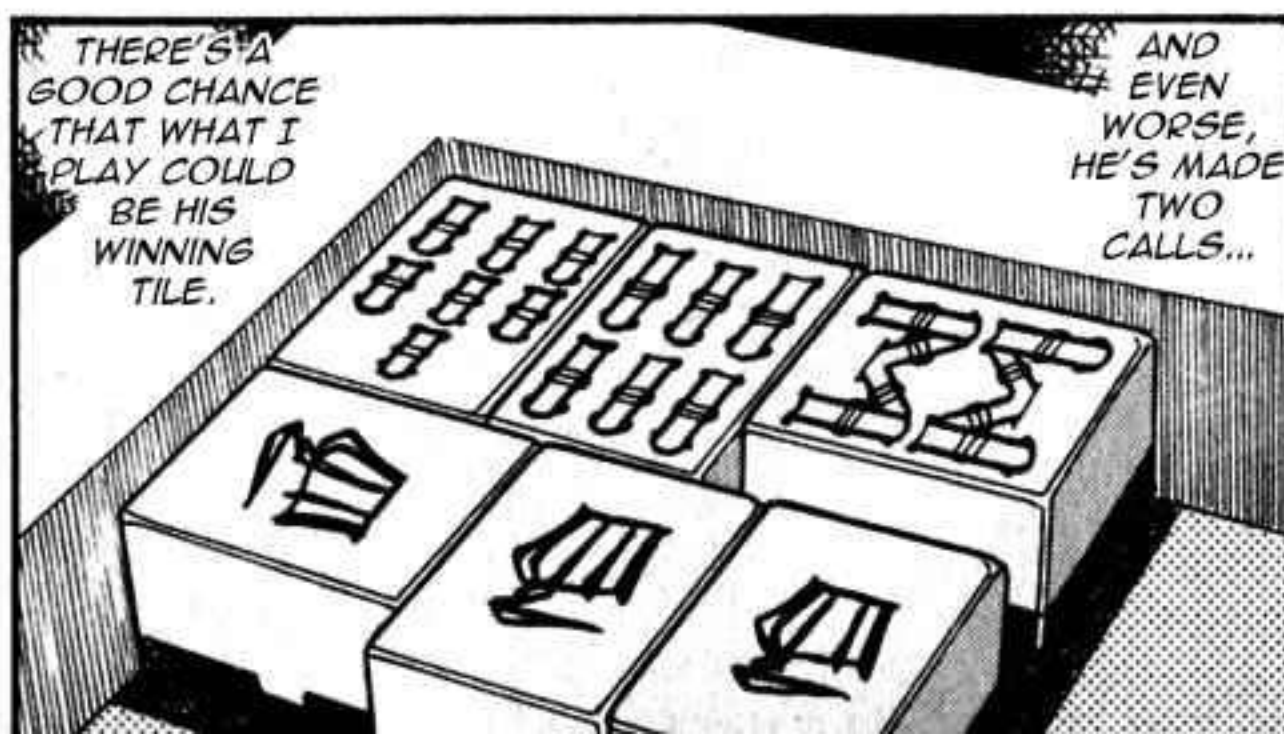
THAT
MOST
PURE
EXAM-
PLE OF
HIS
...

NO MATTER
HOW MUCH I
WANT TO,
I'LL NEVER
GET TO THAT
LEVEL.

ON OSAMU'S
11TH TURN...

...HE REACHES
TENPAI!







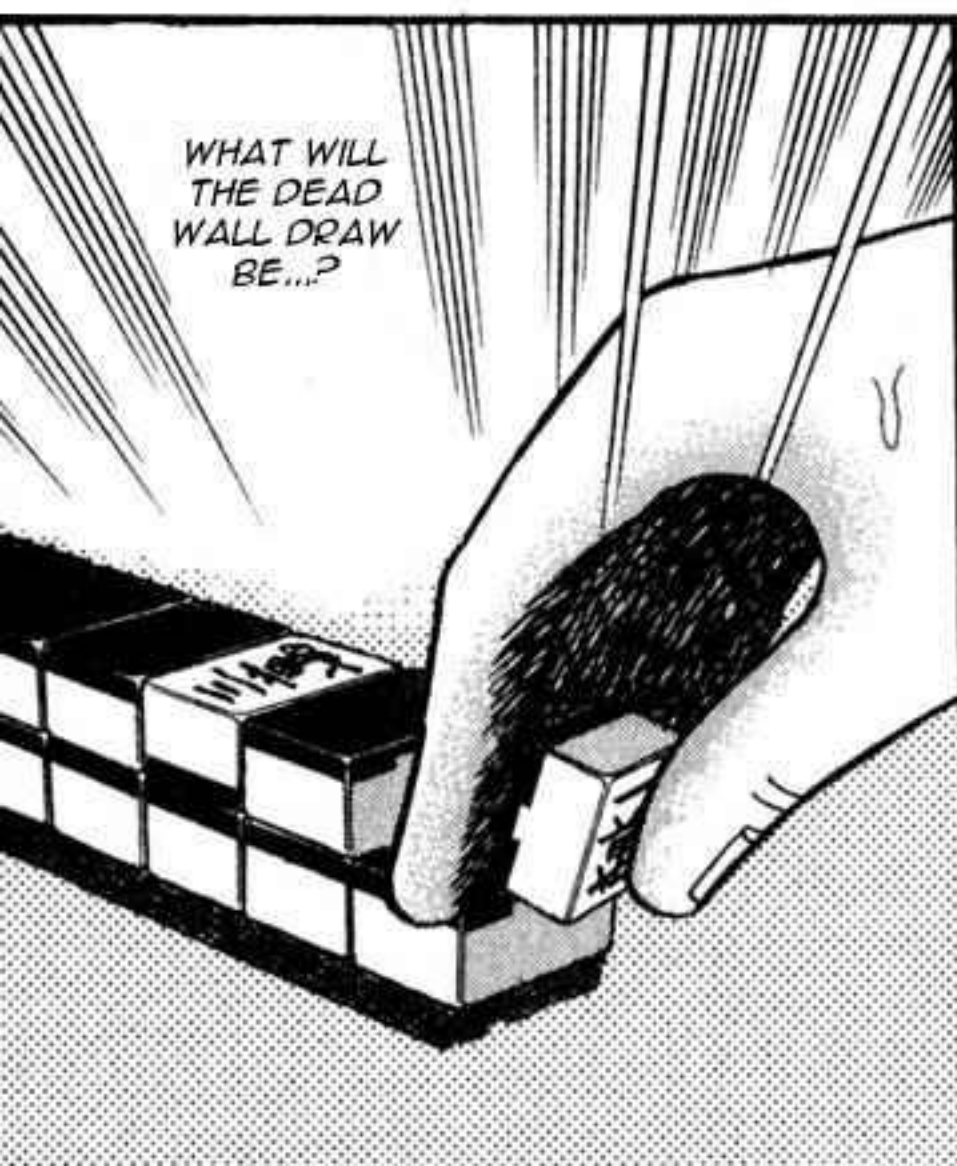
I
GUESS
THIS
IS THE
BEST
OPTION



IN
THAT
CASE



KAN!

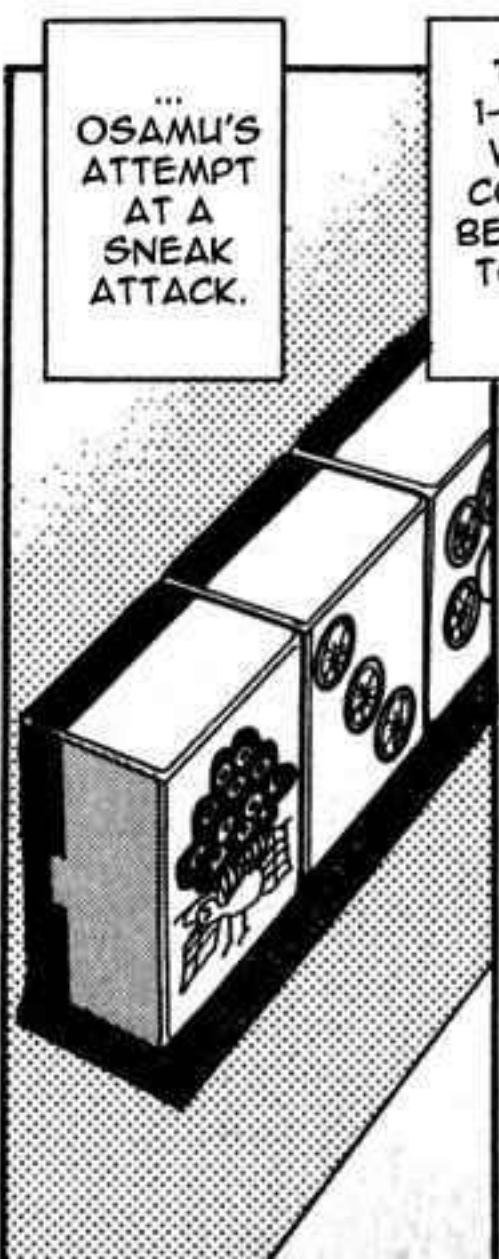
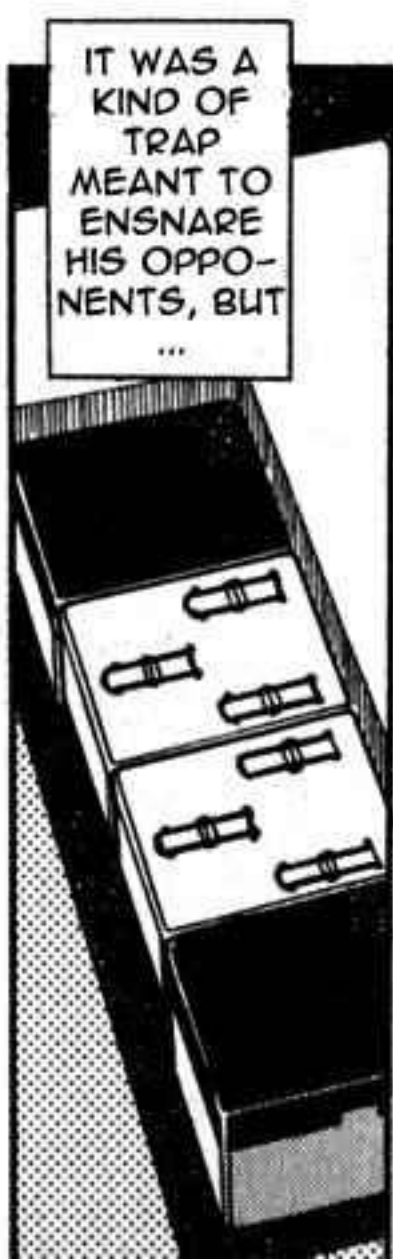
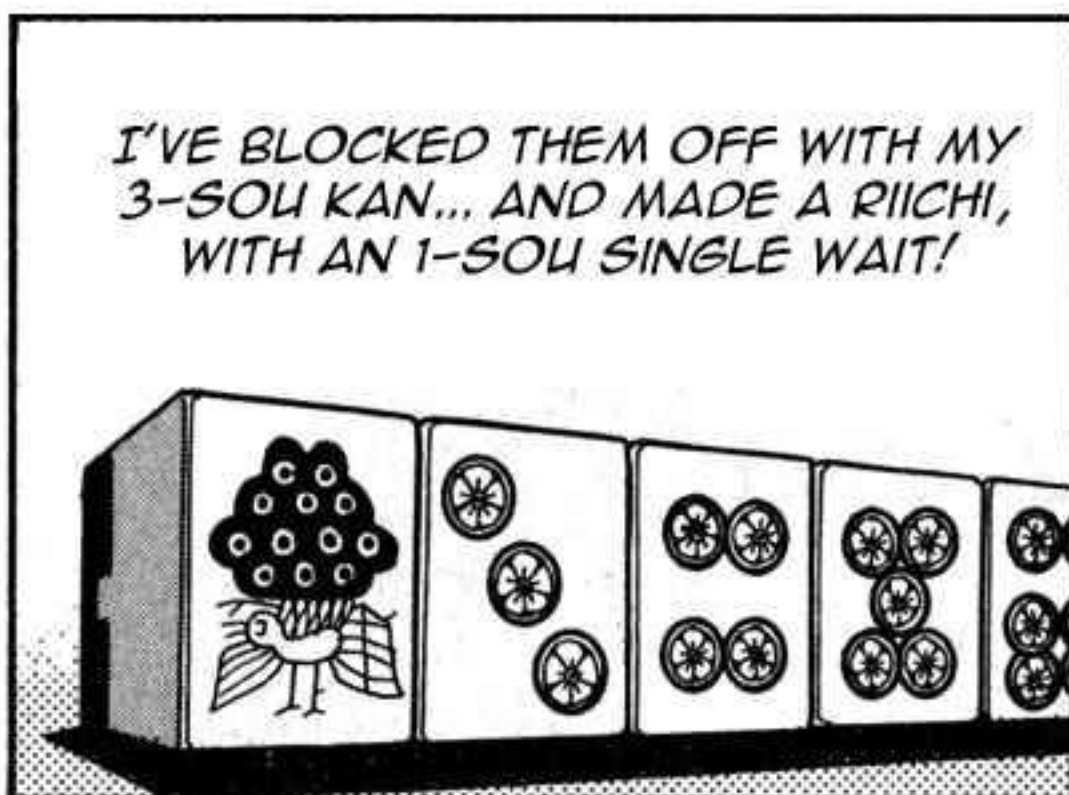


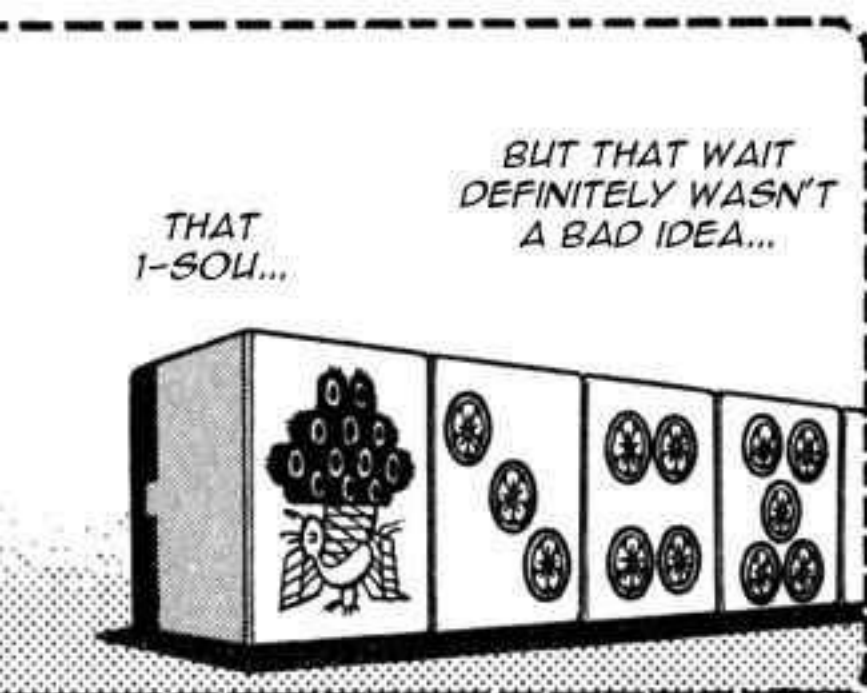
WHAT WILL
THE DEAD
WALL DRAW
BE...?



NOW THAT
I'VE MADE
MY 3-SOU
KAN...











DOES
YOUR
BOSS
PLAY LIKE
THAT,
TOOP?



WHAT DO
YOU WANT
FROM ME?!







CHAPTER 52 - CALLING

第52話 生業





THERE'D BE A LOT OF GOOD BEIN' DONE, ANSAN...



HNN-
HN-
HN
...

T/N: "ANSAN" IS A VERY FAMILIAR WAY OF SAYING "ANATA", OR "YOU" IN THE KANSAI DIALECT. IT HAS A SIMILAR EFFECT TO "BUDDY" OR "PAL".



I'VE GOT TO CHALLENGE HIM TO A MAHJONG BATTLE!



THAT SOUNDS LIKE IT'D BE REAL FUN TO PLAY AGAINST.



HE'S USIN' SOME KINDA SLEIGHT OF HAND TRICK THAT NOBODY NOTICES, AND MAKIN' IT LOOK LIKE A REALLY FLASHY GAME O' MAHJONG.



IF THE RUMORS ARE TRUE ABOUT THIS AKAGI SHMUCK...

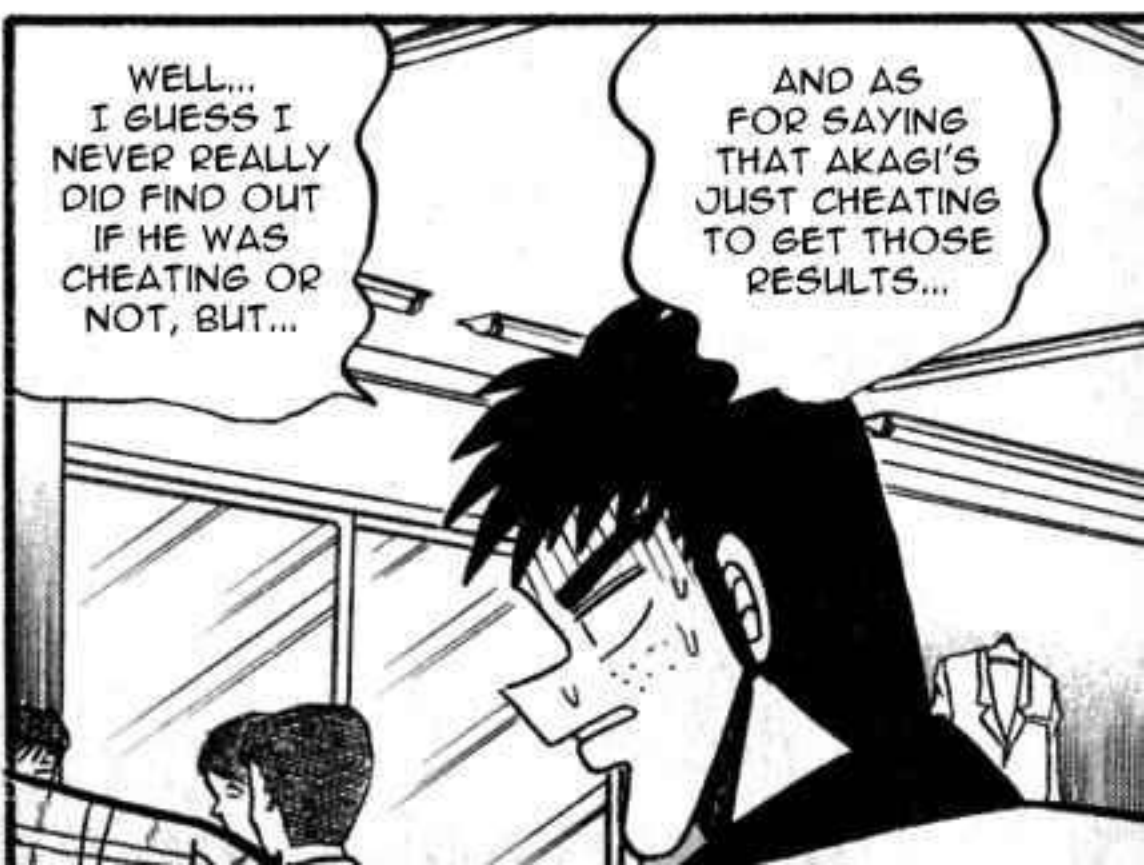


I'VE GOT 'IM ALL FIGURED OUT.



THE GUY PEOPLE'RE MAKIN' A HUGE FUSS OVER IS REALLY JUST A CHEATER!

I'D BET MY RIGHT ARM ON IT...







LEMME
SHOW YOU
SOMETHIN'.



I'LL USE THAT
LAST GAME
YOU PLAYED

...

...TO
SHOW HOW
LITTE YOU
REALLY
KNOW.

THAT 3-SOU
KAN YOU MADE
IS A PERFECT
EXAMPLE OF
WHAT I JUST
SAID...



LEMME
JUST
SHOW
YOU
NOW.

YOU'LL FIND
OUT EVEN-
TUALY.



HNN-
HN-
HN
...

...
WHY...?



IF HE
MADE A
WIN, HE'D
TAKE THE
LEAD BACK
FROM YA
FOR SURE.

THAT 2ND-PLACE
GUY WAS THE
FIRST ONE AT
THE TABLE TO
GET HIS RIICHI
DOWN...

THEN,
ON YOUR
11TH TURN
...



BUT THE PROBLEM
WAS THAT THE GUY
IN SECOND WAS
CATCHIN' UP TO YOU...
HE ONLY HAD 800
POINTS TO GO FOR
A COMEBACK.



YOU WERE
IN THE
LEAD.

GOIN' BACK TO
THE ROUND I'M
TALKIN' 'BOUT,
ANSAN, IT
WAS THE
LAST ROUND
OF THE
MATCH.

YOU WENT
INTO TENPAI
WITH THIS
KINDA SHAPE.

YOU
MADE A
3-SOU
KAN...

GOIN' ON
FROM
THERE
...

GIVIN' YOU
A 1-SOU
SINGLE
WAIT,

AND ONCE
YOU MADE YOUR
DEAD WALL DRAW,
YOU GAVE IT A
RIICHI, PLAYIN' THE
TILE YOU JUST
DREW...

SO THE
1-SOU COULD
LIKELY HAVE
BEEN HIS
WINNIN' TILE
...

THE GUY TO
YOUR RIGHT HAD
BEEN CALLIN' UP
HON ITSU TILES
THE WHOLE TIME
...

YOU WERE
PRO'LLY THINKIN'
OF SOME WAY
IT COULD GET
PLAYED FOR YOU
... BUT, ANSAN
...

WHEN YOU
MADE THAT
3-SOU
KAN...

...YOU
WERE RIGHT
ABOUT
THAT MUCH.

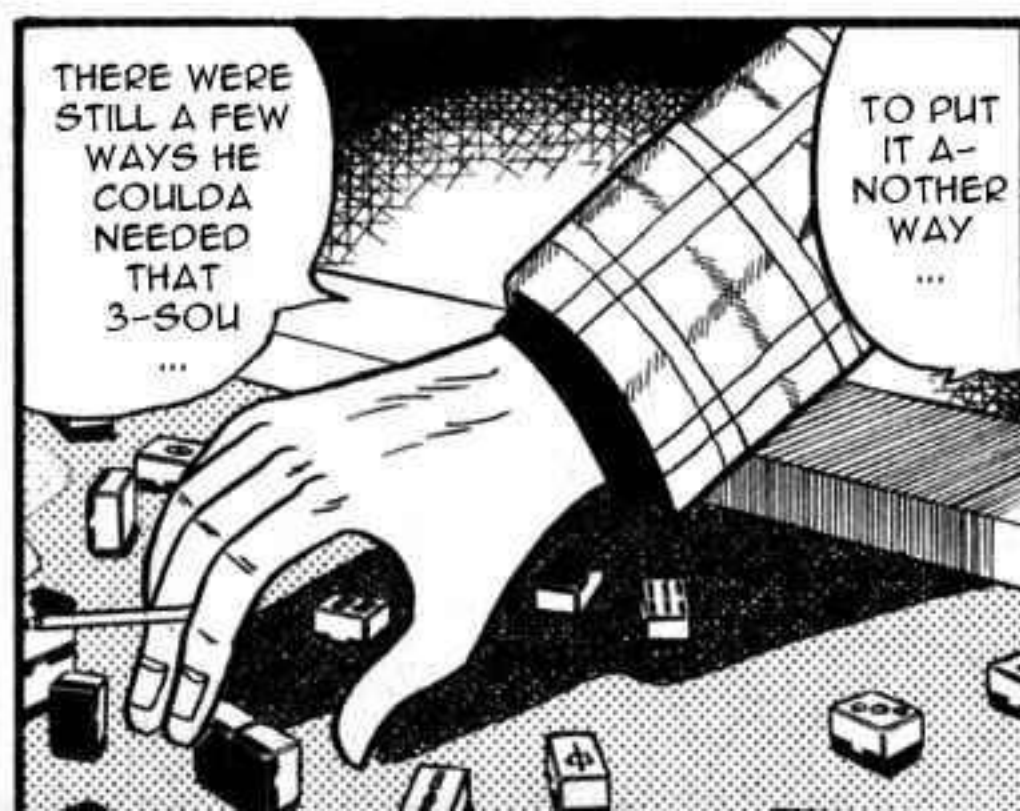
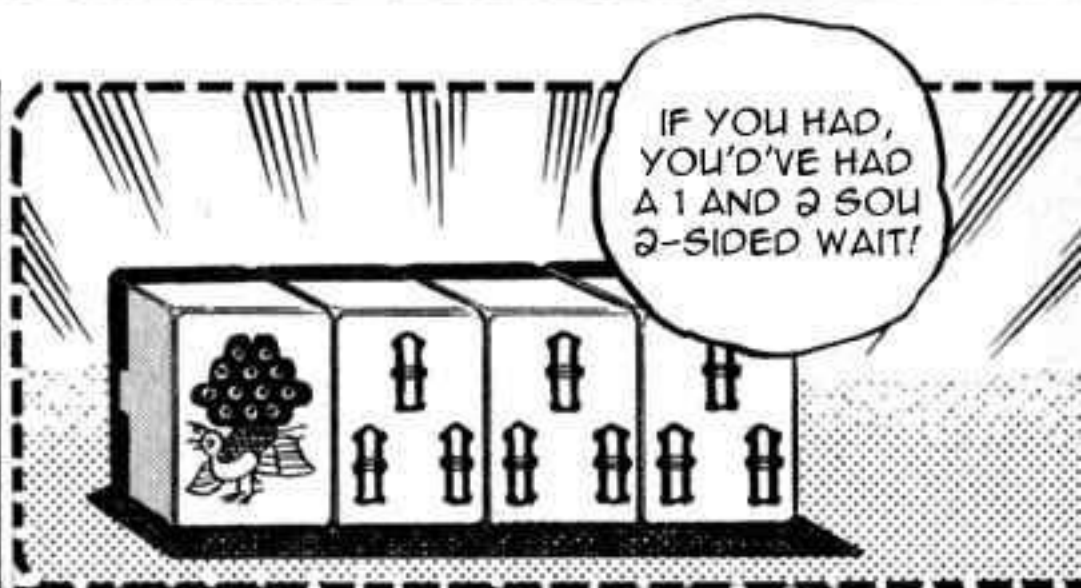
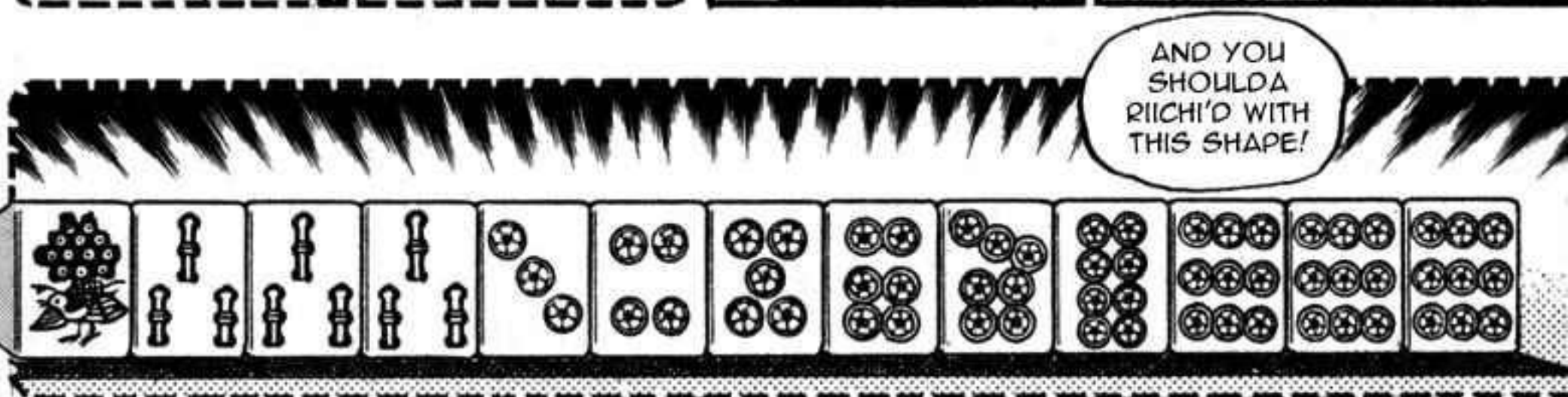
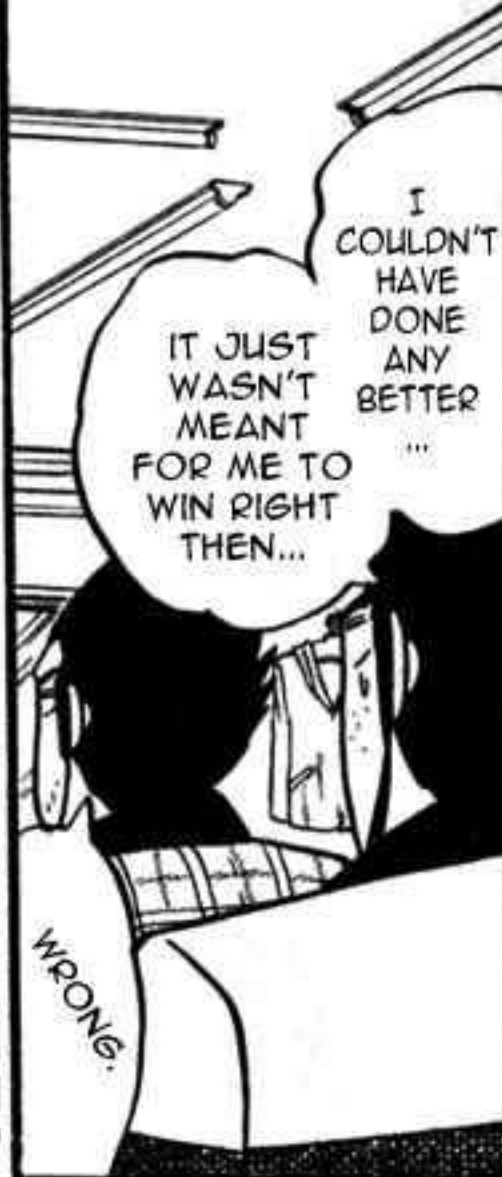
THAT'S A
REALLY
NAÏVE
WAY TO
THINK.

HE MADE
A COME-
BACK.

YOU LOST
THE VERY
SMALL LEAD
YOU HAD
'FORE
THEN...

THE GUY IN
SECOND PLACE
MANAGED TO
GET THE TILE
HE NEEDED TO
COMPLETE HIS
RIICHI WITH A
TSUMO...

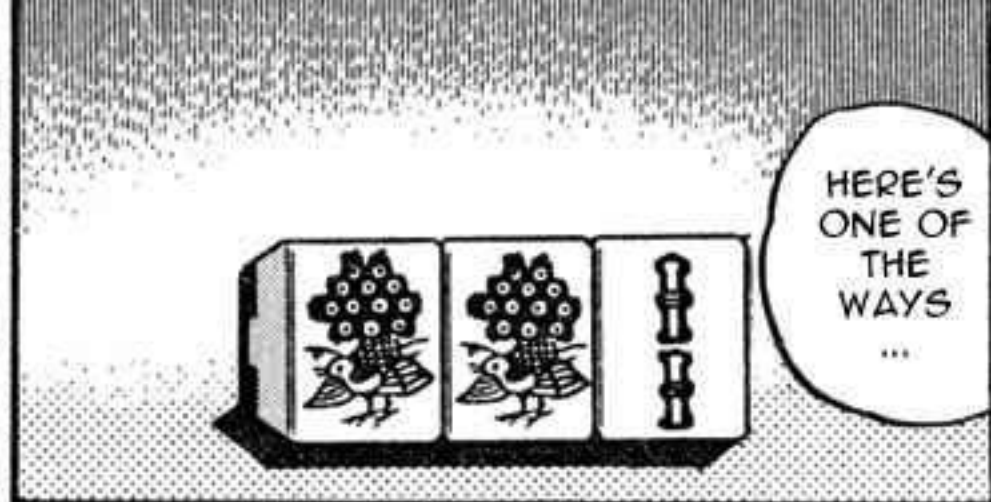
BUT YOUR
SO-CALLED
TRAP ENDED
NOT TOO
LONG AFTER
THAT...



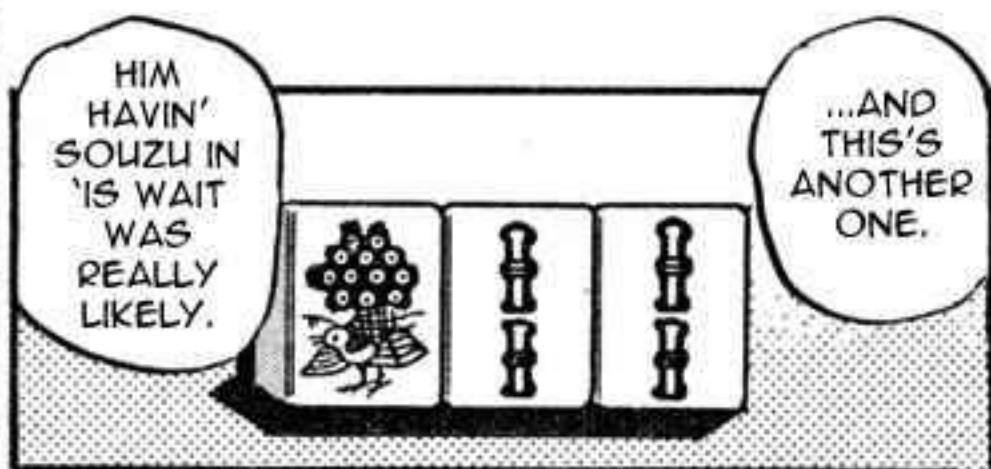


...THE 1-SOU
OR 2-SOU WOULD
OVERFLOWED
DEPENDIN' ON
WHICH OF THOSE
SHAPES HIS HAND
WAS IN!

BUT THE
THING IS, IF
HE'D MADE
A CHI WITH
YOUR 3-SOU
...



HERE'S
ONE OF
THE
WAYS
...



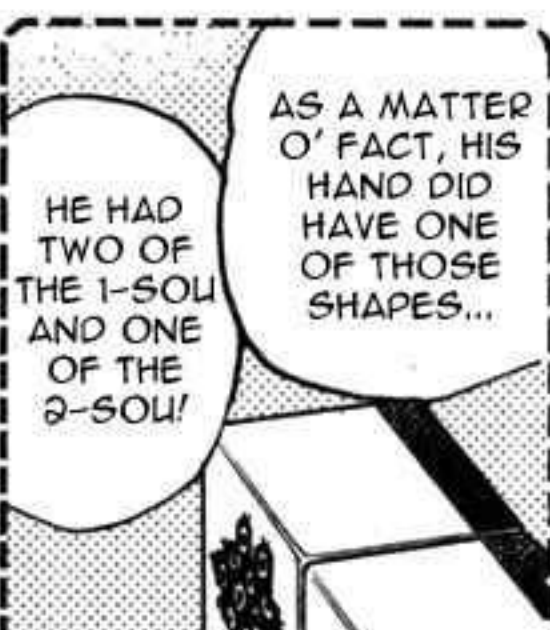
HIM
HAVIN'
SOUZU IN
'IS WAIT
WAS
REALLY
LIKELY.

...AND
THIS'S
ANOTHER
ONE.



THE PLAYER
TO YOUR
RIGHT
WOULDA
CALLED CHI
ON IT...

ASSUMIN' YOU
MADE YOUR
RIICHI BY
PLAYIN' THAT
3-SOU...



HE HAD
TWO OF
THE 1-SOU
AND ONE
OF THE
2-SOU!

AS A MATTER
O' FACT, HIS
HAND DID
HAVE ONE
OF THOSE
SHAPES...



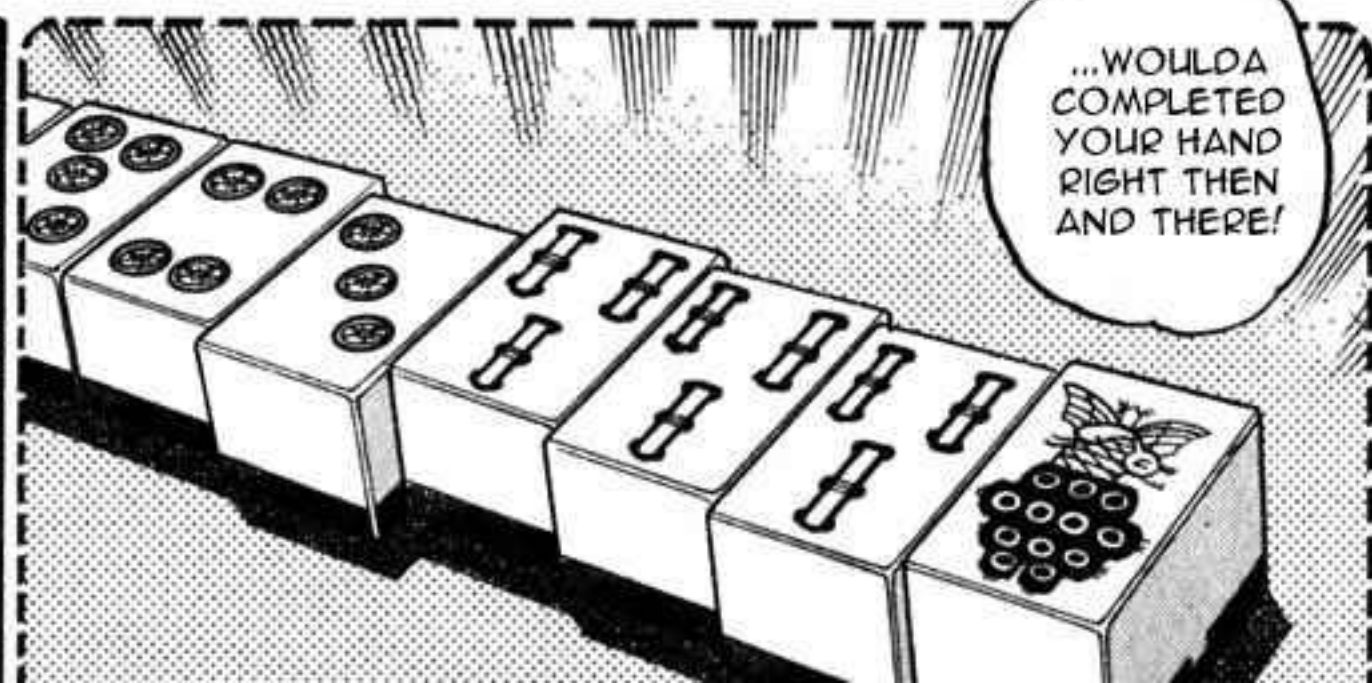
AND
Y'SEE,
ANSAN,
THAT
1-SOU...



AND THEN,
HE'D'A
PLAYED
HIS 1-SOU
RIGHT
AFTER!



YOU
WOULDA
STAYED
IN FIRST
PLACE.



...WOULDA
COMPLETED
YOUR HAND
RIGHT THEN
AND THERE!





...WOULDN'T
REALLY MATTER
IN THE GRAND
SCHEME OF
THINGS.

WHETHER
OR NOT HE
ENDED UP
RONNIN' ON
THAT...



HNN-
HN-
HN
...

WHA...?



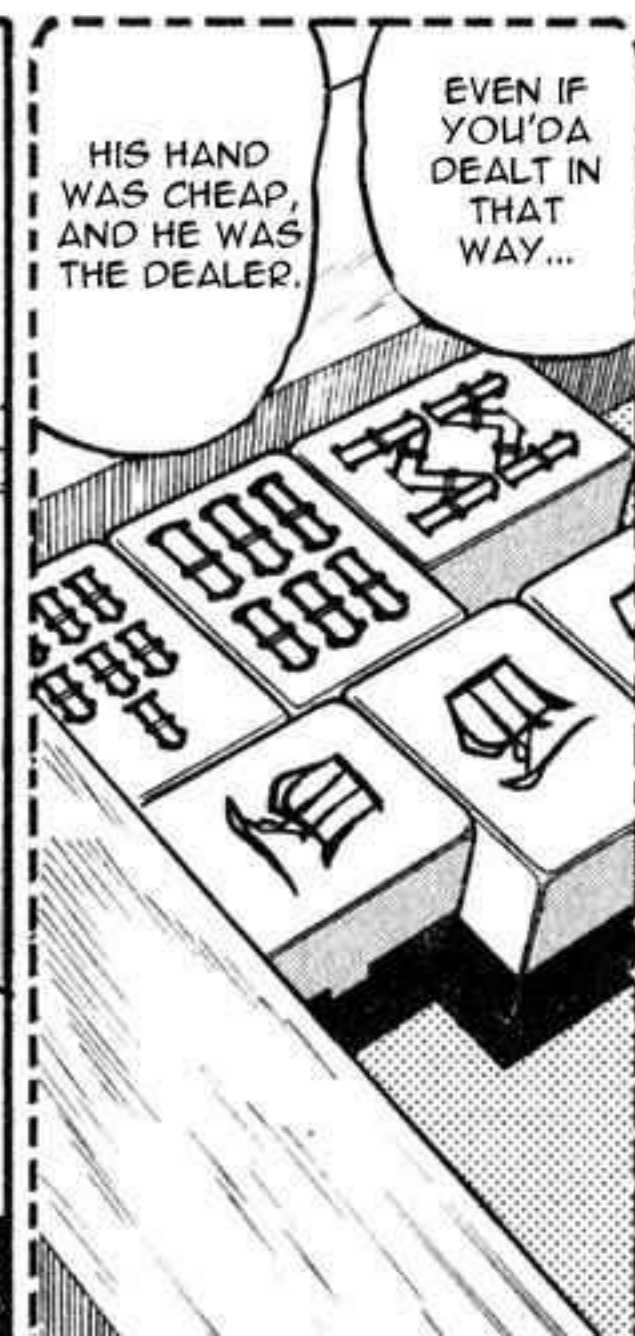
...THAT'S
NOT A LOT
OF POINTS
TO MAKE
UP... YOU
GET ME,
ANSAN?

IT'D BE 2900
POINTS, TOPS
... YOUR RIICHI
WOULD MAKE
IT 3900, BUT
EVEN STILL
...

HIS HAND
WAS CHEAP,
AND HE WAS
THE DEALER.

EVEN IF
YOU'DA
DEALT IN
THAT
WAY...

WELL,
JUST THINK
ABOUT IT
FOR A
MINUTE.

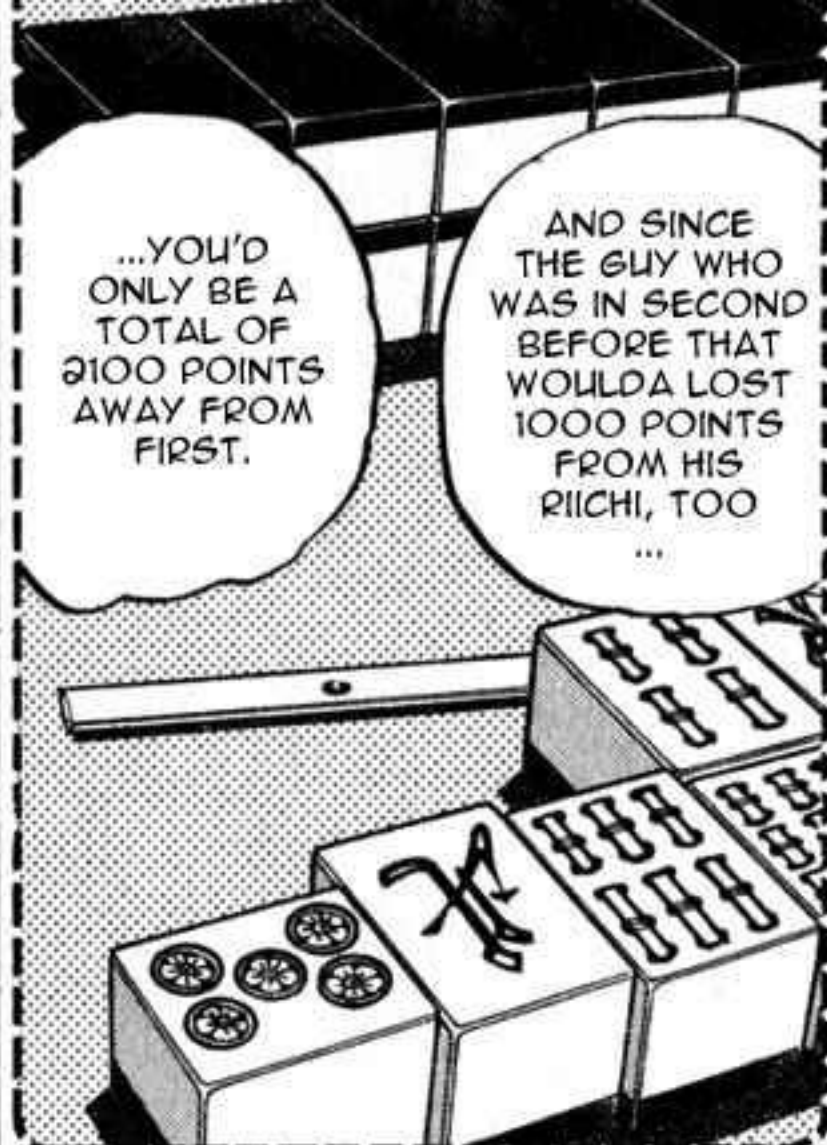




THAT
2100-POINT
DIFFERENCE
FROM
FIRST...

SINCE YOU
WERE ONLY
IN THE LEAD
BY 800
POINTS TO
BEGIN WITH
...

...WOULD-
N'T'VE BEEN
A HUGE
SETBACK.



...YOU'D
ONLY BE A
TOTAL OF
2100 POINTS
AWAY FROM
FIRST.

AND SINCE
THE GUY WHO
WAS IN SECOND
BEFORE THAT
WOULDA LOST
1000 POINTS
FROM HIS
RIICHI, TOO
...



YOU'D ONLY
HAVETA GIVE UP
THAT 3900
TEMPORARILY.



HE'D
OBVIOUSLY
EXTEND THE
GAME FOR
ONE MORE.

SINCE YOU
WOULDA DEALT
INTO THE
DEALER'S HAND
FOR THE ROUND
...



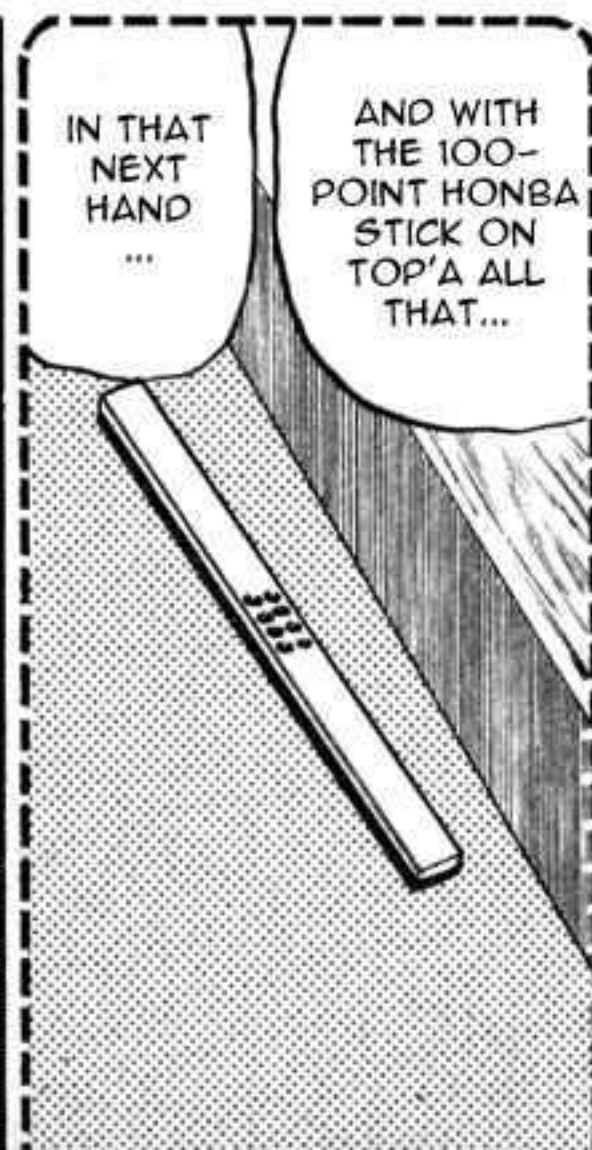
YOU'D GET
A WHOLE
'NOTHER
HONBA TO
MAKE IT
BACK.

AND ON
TOP OF
THAT
...



THEN
YOU'D
HAVE
MADE
YOUR
COME-
BACK.

ALL YOU'D
NEED TO DO
WOULD BE
TO GET
YOUR HAND
TO 2000
POINTS OR
BETTER...



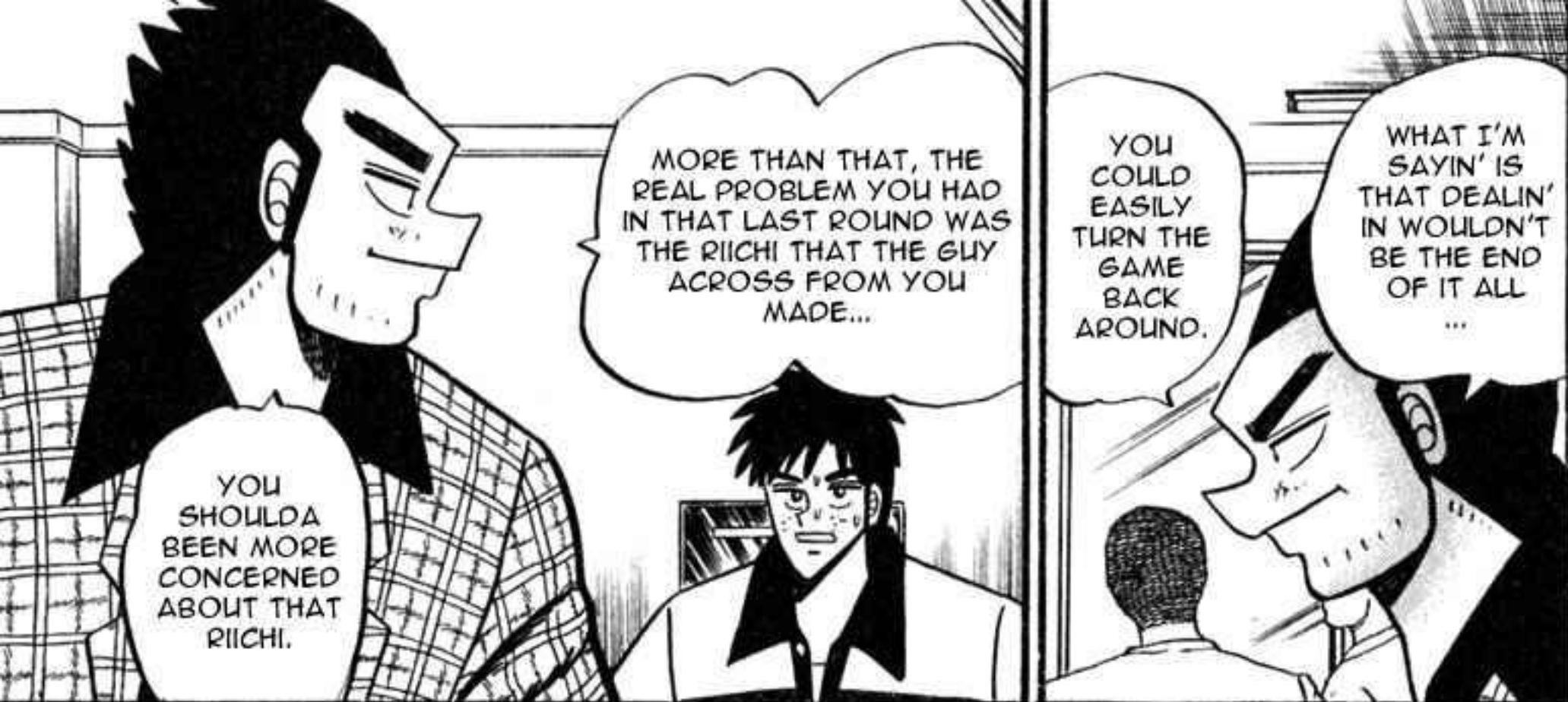
IN THAT
NEXT
HAND
...

AND WITH
THE 100-
POINT HONBA
STICK ON
TOP'A ALL
THAT...



...IT'D
STILL BE
SAVE-
ABLE, NO
DOUBT
ABOUT
IT.

YOU'D BE
GIVEN A
CHANCE TO
CLIMB BACK
UP IN THE
FINAL
ROUND
...





YOU'D
BE IN A
GOOD
SPOT.

YEAH
...

WHICHEVER
WAY IT
ENDED UP
GOIN'...



THIS
GUY
...



RIGHT?

AH...





LEMME
MEET THIS
AKAGI
GUY.

SO
WHADDA
YA SAY,
HUH?



IF YOU'LL
INTRODUCE ME
TO THE GUY
NICE AND
QUIETLY, I'LL
MAKE IT WELL
WORTH YOUR
WHILE,
ANSAN...

NOW,
NOW,
DON'T
GET ALL
WORKED
UP.



HNN-
HN-
HN
...

HOW CAN YOU
MAKE SUCH HUGE
ASSUMPTIONS
ABOUT HIM
WITHOUT EVEN
MEETING HIM?!



WHA-
...!



HERE.

I'M
COUNTING
ON YOU,
MAN!



IT'S
USE-
LESS!!

IT DOESN'T
MATTER
HOW MUCH
YOU GIVE
ME!!

I CAN'T
INTRO-
DUCE
YOU TO
HIM!



DON'T FLICK
WITH ME!

AIN'T A
BETTER WAY
ON THE PLANET
TO GET PEOPLE
TO DO WHAT
YOU WANT THAN
TO GREASE
THEIR PALMS,
AM I RIGHT?



IT'S A
TIP, O'
COURSE!

WHAT THE
HELL IS
THIS?!





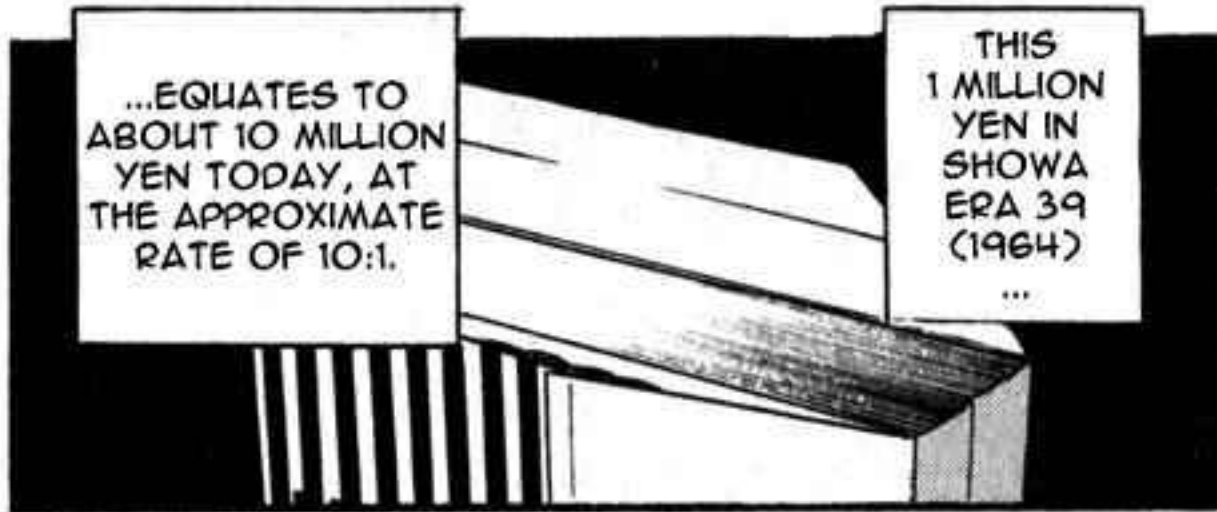






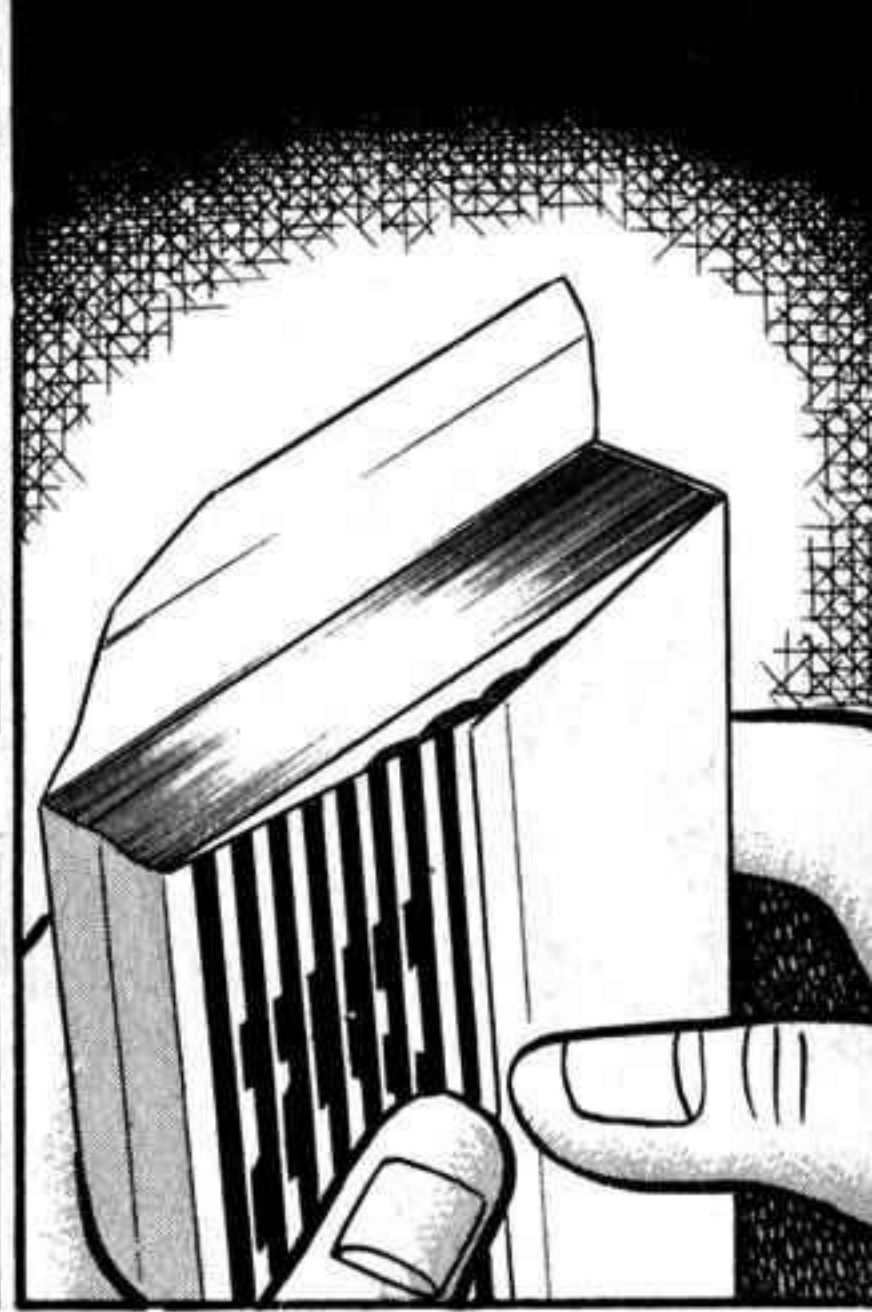
THIS
ENVELOPE IS
STUFFED...
WHAT IS IT,
1 MILLION...?!
1 AND A HALF
MILLION...?!

WHOA
....!



...EQUATES TO
ABOUT 10 MILLION
YEN TODAY, AT
THE APPROXIMATE
RATE OF 10:1.

THIS
1 MILLION
YEN IN
SHOWA
ERA 39
(1964)
...



WITH
THE CRAPPY
WAGES WE WERE
GETTING AT THAT
PART-TIME JOB
...

...THAT
MONEY
WON'T LAST
FOREVER.

YOU KNOW, IF
I WERE YOU, I'D
INVEST THAT
MONEY IN THE
STOCK MARKET
OR SOMETHING
LIKE THAT...



YEAH,
WELL...
IT'S YOURS
NOW.

WHOA, THIS
IS... A LOT
OF MONEY
...!



WH... WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN, "SEE
YA"...?!
WHERE ARE
YOU GOING
...?!

WHO
KNOWS.

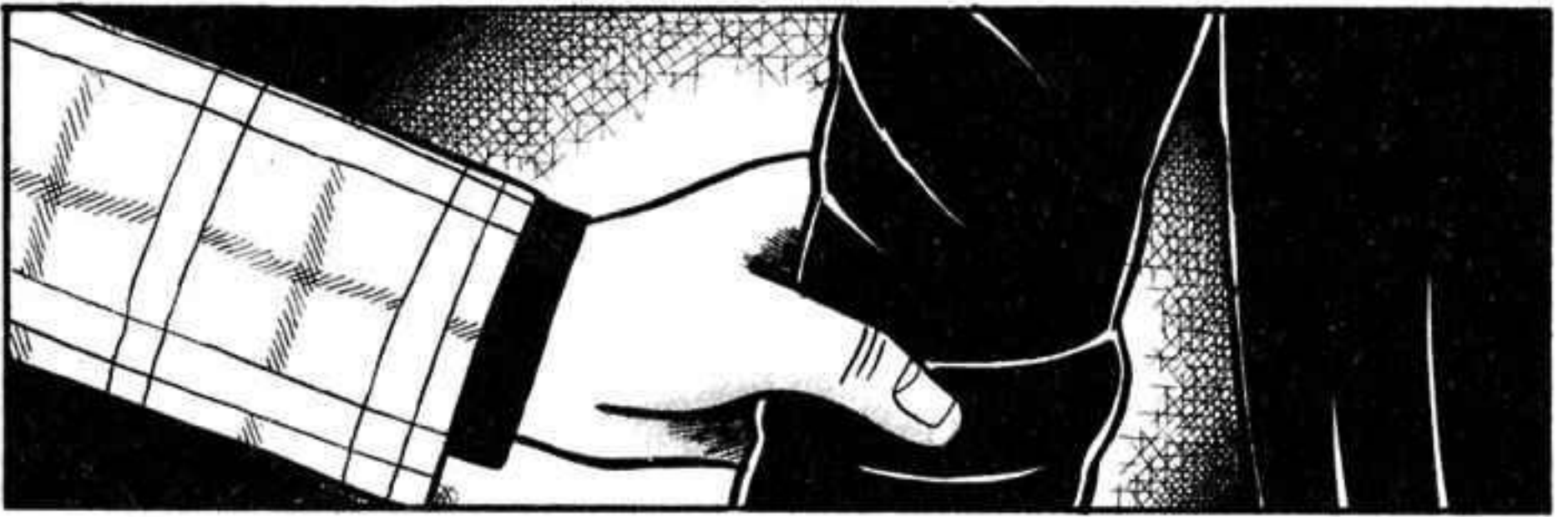


HUH?!

WELL,
SEE YA.



YEAH
...





UNTIL THE DAY YOU HAVE A BATTLE WITH ME...





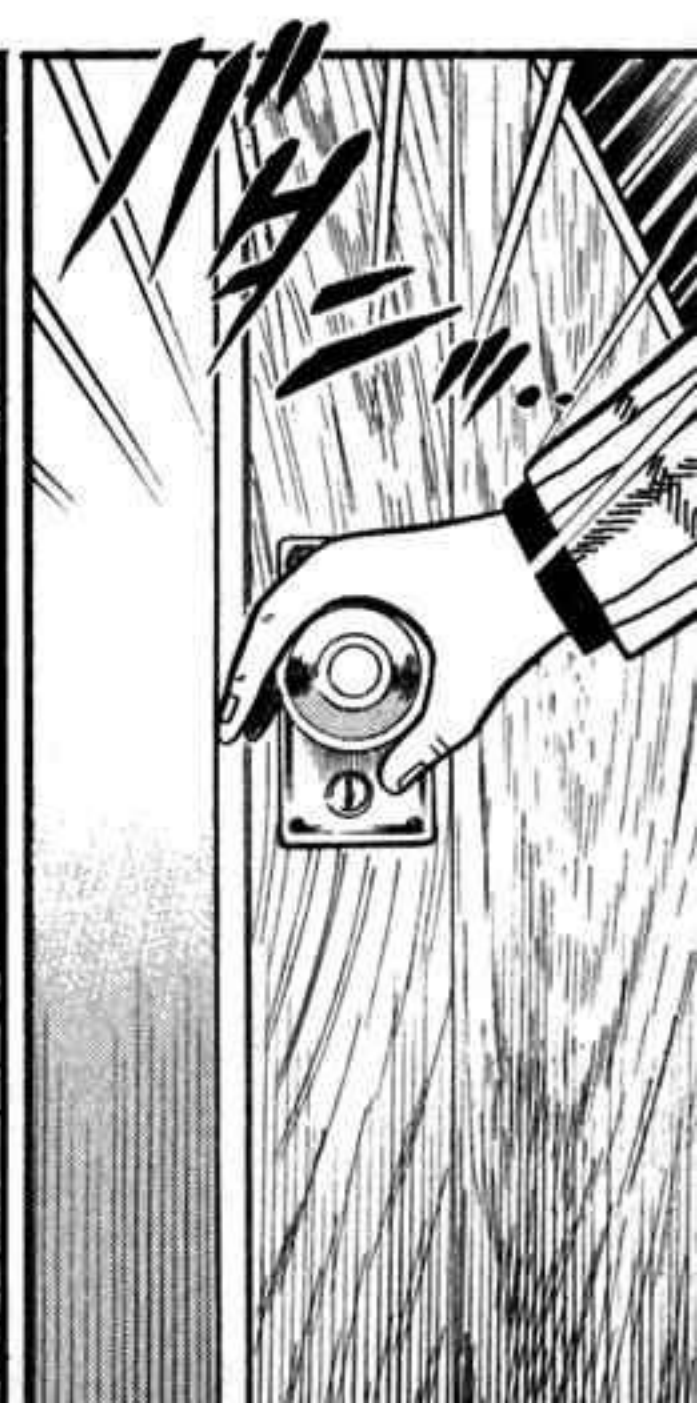


CHAPTER 53 - AT HAND

第53話

有り金







IN THE
END, ALL
WE CAN
DO NOW
...

SO,
ANYWAY
...

TO CUT
STRAIGHT
TO THE
CHASE
...



Y'SEE?

THAT'S
JUST A
FACT OF
HOW
THINGS
ARE!



...IS
BET OUR
MONEY!



OR
ELSE
...

...AGAINST
ALL'A MINE!
A WINNER-
TAKES-ALL
GAMBLE!



SO NOW,
WE'LL
WAGER
THAT
MONEY...

IF THAT'S
HOW IT IS,
YOU'RE SURE
TO HAVE A
LOT MORE
ON YA!



THAT
OSAMU
KID OVER
THERE...

THAT
MUCH IS
DECIDED,
ALREADY!

...GOT A
PRETTY BIG
SUM O'
CASH FROM
YOU,
DIDN'T HE?



OSAMU

IT'LL
BE TWO
AGAINST
ONE! YOU'VE
GOT THE
ODDS!



RIGHT
HERE, IN
FRONT'A
EVERY-
ONE?

WOULDJA
LIKE IT
BETTER IF
WE FOUGHT
WITH OUR
FISTS,
INSTEAD?



AKAGI-
SAAAAAN!!!

WE'RE GONNA
HAVE TO
KNOCK THIS
GUY OUT.



DON'T MAKE
ME DO THAT!!
I'M NO GOOD
AT FIGHTING!!



HUH
?!?!?

WHA?!



HUHHHHH...





PAPER
...?



IT'S
JUST A
BUNCH
OF
PAPER.

I THREW
IT ALL
OUT
PLAYING
GAMES
OVER A
FEW
DAYS...



'COURSE
HE DID.

DIDN'T
KAWADA-
KUMICHO
GIVE YOU THE
MONEY AFTER
THAT MATCH
LAST WEEK?!

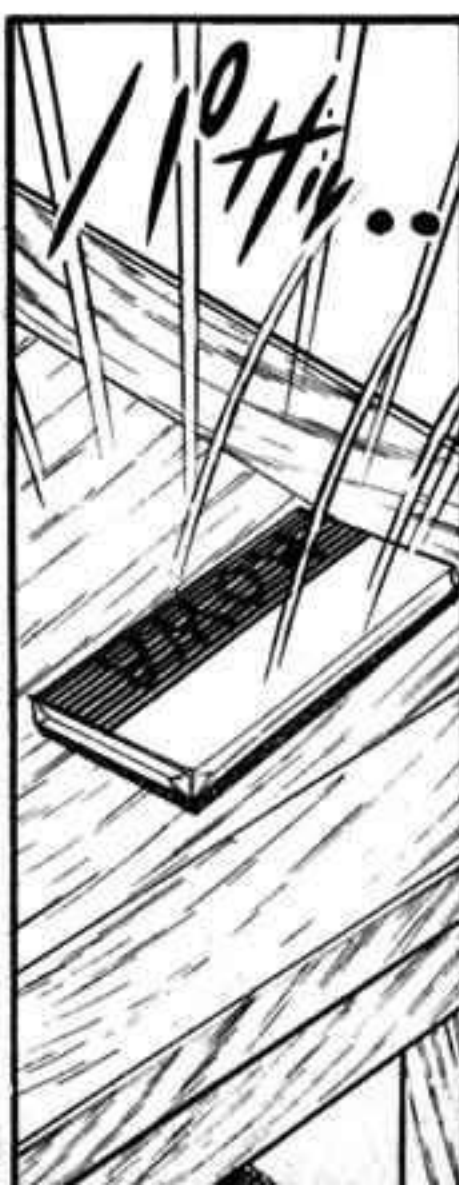


NO WAY
...!



EVEN IF IT'S 2 OR
4 MILLION YEN OVER
A FEW DAYS, IT'S
STILL JUST PAPER?!

PAPER
...?!



AND MOREOVER,
WHAT KIND OF
GAMES WERE HE
PLAYING TO LOSE
THAT KIND OF
MONEY SO
FAST?!

I DIDN'T
EVEN KNOW
HE COULD
LOSE MONEY
GAMBLING
...!

AKAGI-
SAN...!















I FIGURED YOU'D SAY SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT.

YEAH ...



HNN-HN-HN ...

AKAGI-SAN WOULD NEVER DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT!!!



IF I HAVE THE TINIEST AMOUNT O' SUSPICION THAT WE CAN DO SOMETHIN' ABOUT BEFORE WE START, THEN WE GOTTA DO IT.



THIS'S BIG MONEY ON THE LINE, HERE.

BUT, YA SEE ...

IT'S SMALL, BUT ...



I DON'T THINK AKAGI COULDA DONE THAT VERY EASILY, EITHER.



'KAY, THEN ...



IT'S SOMETHIN' THAT MAHJONG PROS LIKE US HAVE TO DO TO ENSURE A GOOD GAME.

BUT AKAGI-HAN SHOULD HAVE SOME IDEA OF WHERE I'M COMIN' FROM.



I WOULDN'T'VE EXPECTED YOU TO GET WHAT I'M SAYIN', OSAMU-HAN...

WELL ...



OSAMU
AND
NAKAI
FOLLOWED
BEHIND
HIM.

HE PICKED
ONE OF
THEM, AND
PROMPTLY
CLIMBED
UP ITS
STEPS.

...SAW
3 MAHJONG
PARLORS
IN HIS
IMMEDIATE
VICINITY.

AKAGI
...



INSIDE ...



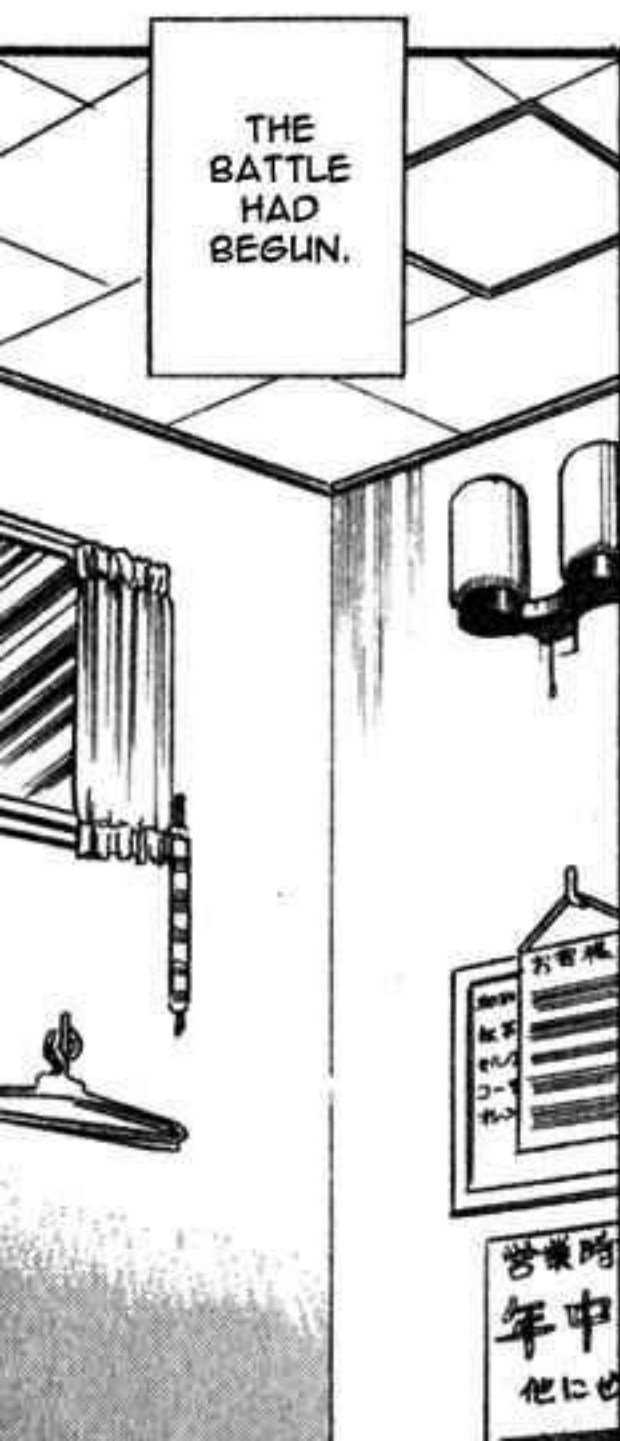
午後 午前 ます、ま ざかし ちと 協 申



IT WAS A RATHER INACTIVE DAY.



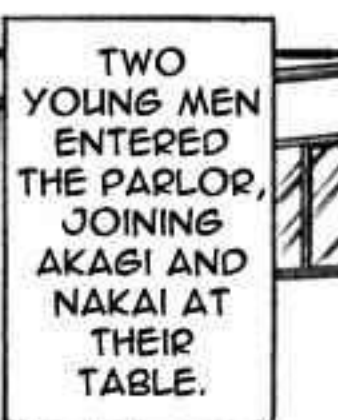
ONLY ONE TABLE HAD PEOPLE PLAYING...



THE BATTLE HAD BEGUN.



THIS MADE FOR 4 PEOPLE, A COMPLETE TABLE.



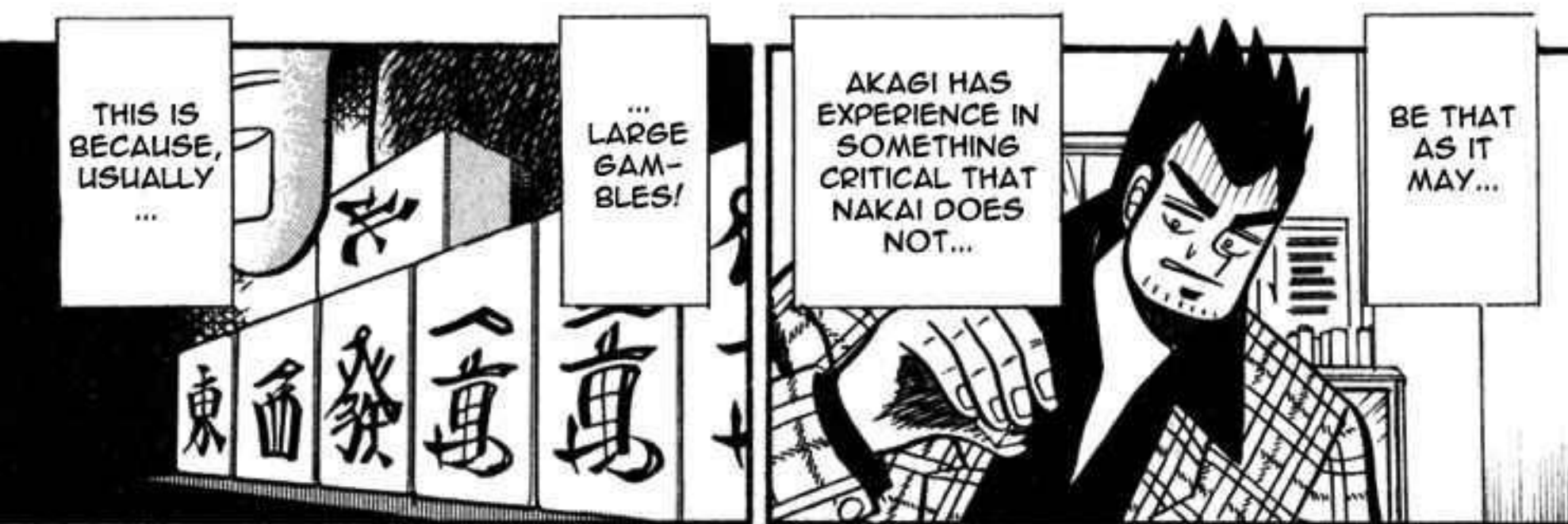
TWO YOUNG MEN ENTERED THE PARLOR, JOINING AKAGI AND NAKAI AT THEIR TABLE.



AKAGI AND THE OTHERS WAITED AT A TABLE FOR A SHORT WHILE...



AND AFTER 5 MINUTES ...





THIS NER-
VOUSNESS
IS ACTUALLY
VERY REA-
SONABLE!

AND IF
ONE THINKS
ABOUT THE
SITUATION
HE IS IN...



...MORE OR LESS
AMOUNTED TO
NAKAI'S WAY
OF COPING WITH
HIS NERVOUS-
NESS!

THE
CHANGE OF
LOCATION
AND
OTHER
SUCH
THINGS...



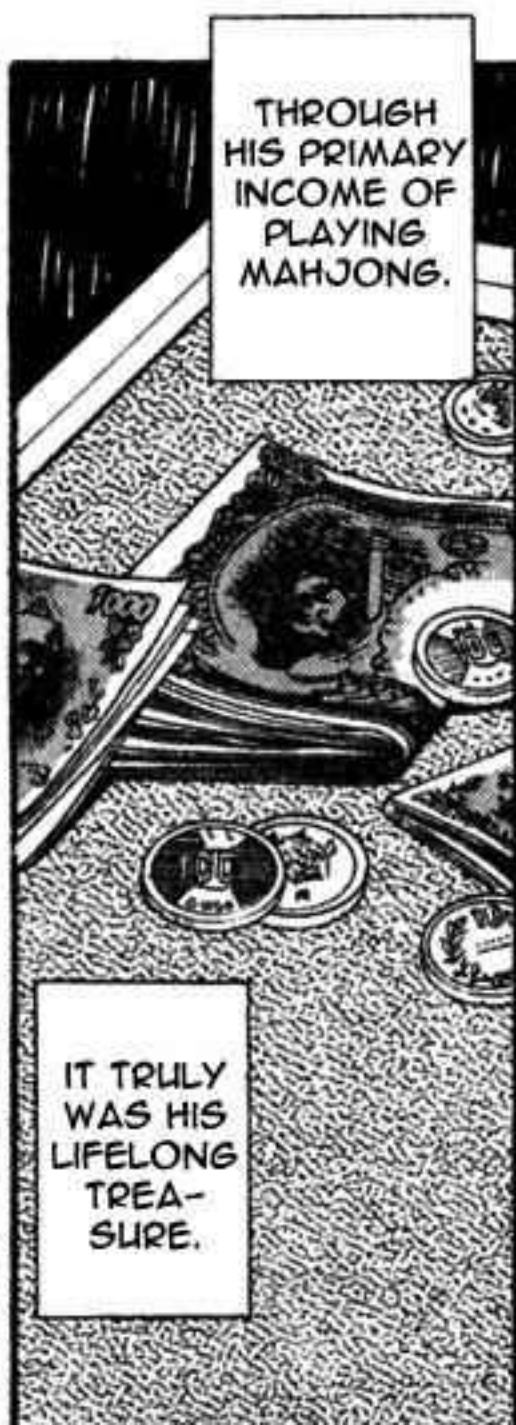
THIS
300,000
YEN THAT HE
GATHERED
BY HIMSELF
...

NAKAI IS
STICKING HIS
NECK OUT
FAR FOR THIS
MATCH...



THAT
MONEY
WOULD NOT
COME
BACK TO
HIM SO
EASILY.

IF HE WERE
TO LOSE
NOW...



THROUGH
HIS PRIMARY
INCOME OF
PLAYING
MAHJONG.

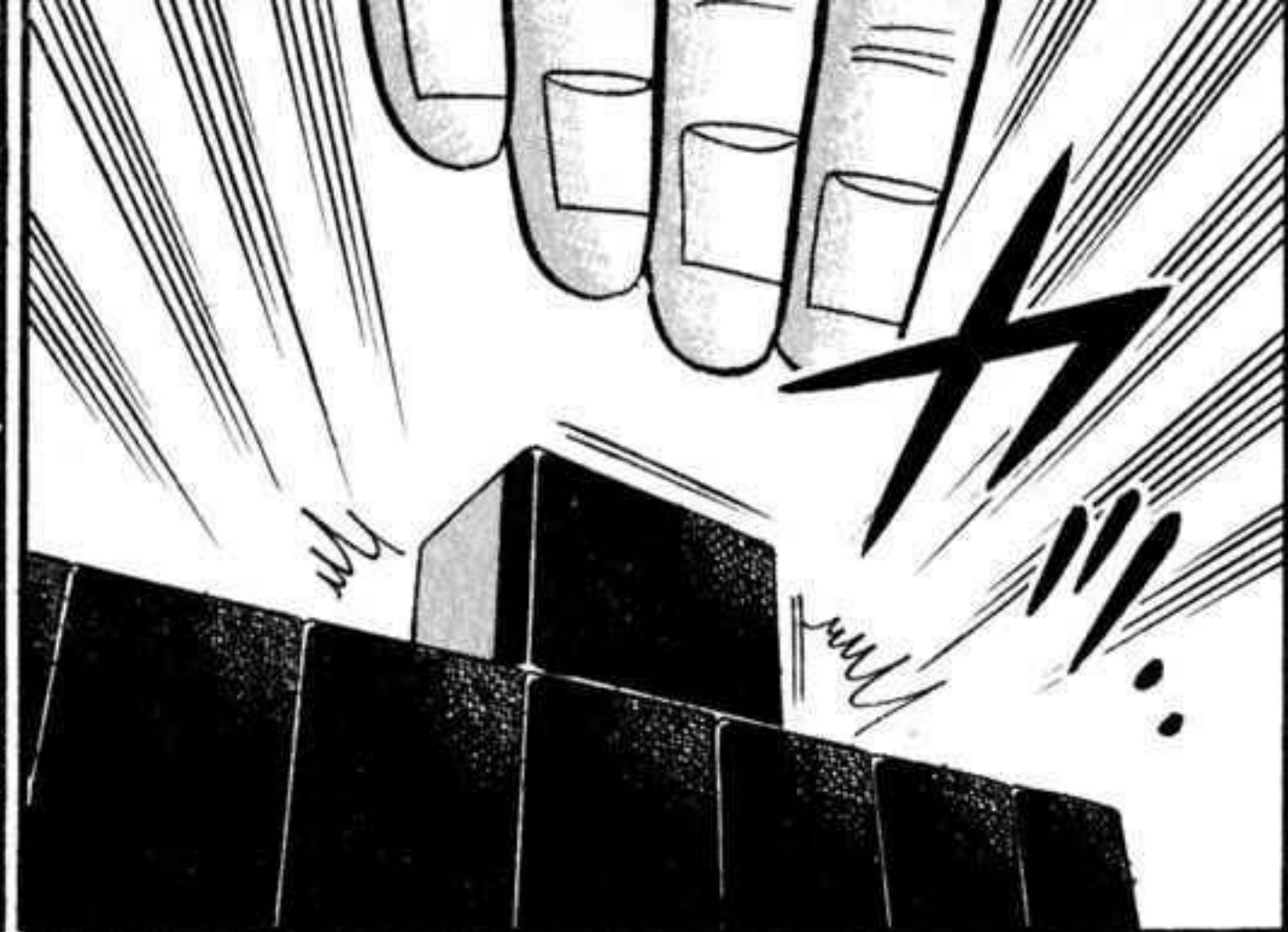
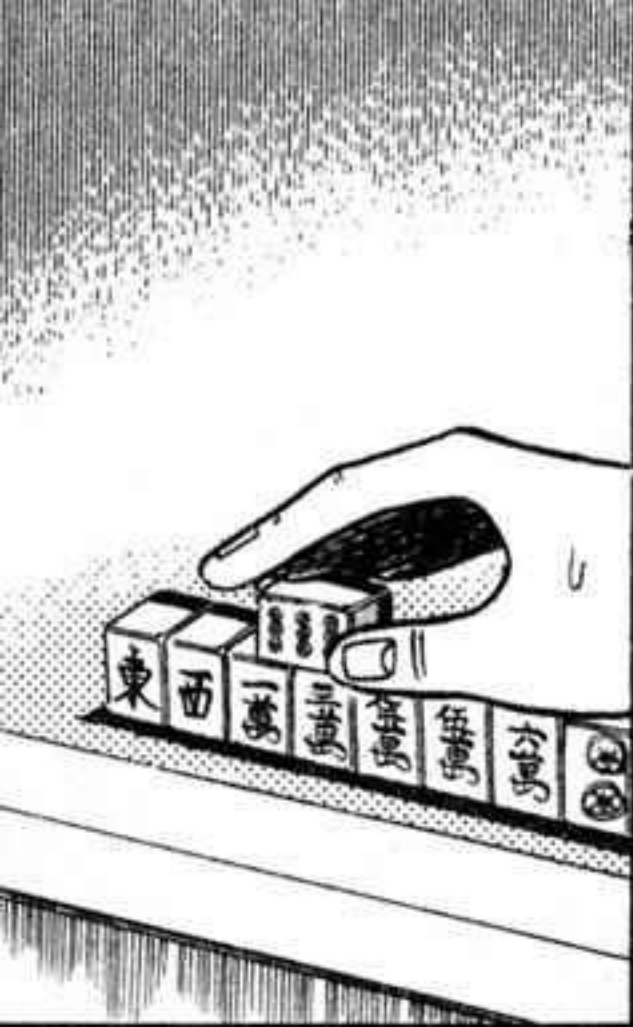
IT TRULY
WAS HIS
LIFELONG
TREA-
SURE.



GRADUALLY
STORED UP,
BIT BY BIT
...



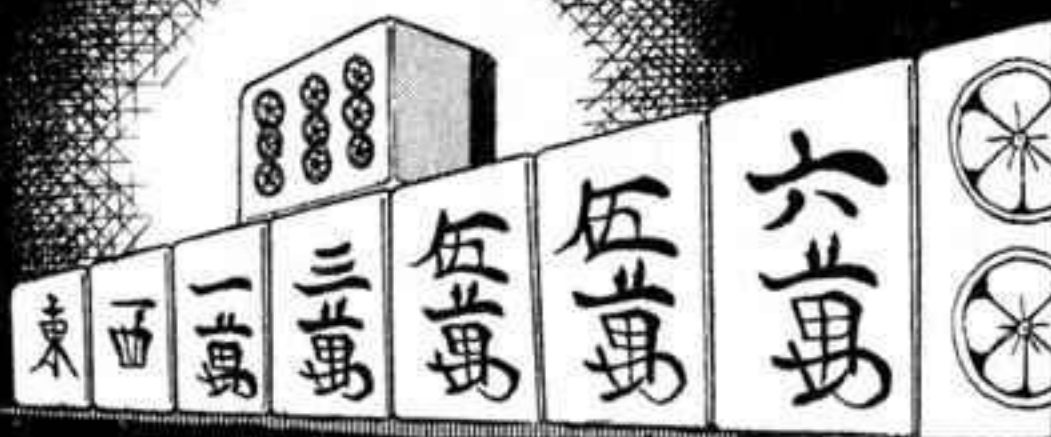
WAS, IN
FACT,
OVER
THE
COURSE
OF 1 OR
2 YEARS
...



BUT,
CONTRARY
TO HIS
HOPES FOR
THE GAME
...

THE ONE
WHO MOST
WANTED
TO WIN
WAS NAKAI
...

IN THIS
SHOW-
DOWN
...



AND
WHILE THAT
WAS GOING
ON...

...BUT EVEN
SO, HIS
HAND ENDED
UP WITH MANY
TILES THAT IT
COULD
NOT USE.

HE HAD
SWITCHED
OUT 6
TILES OVER
THE COURSE
OF THE
GAME...

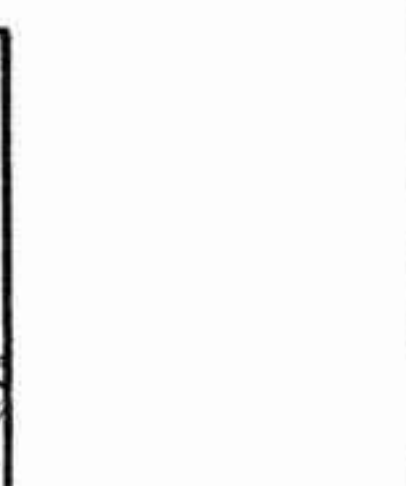
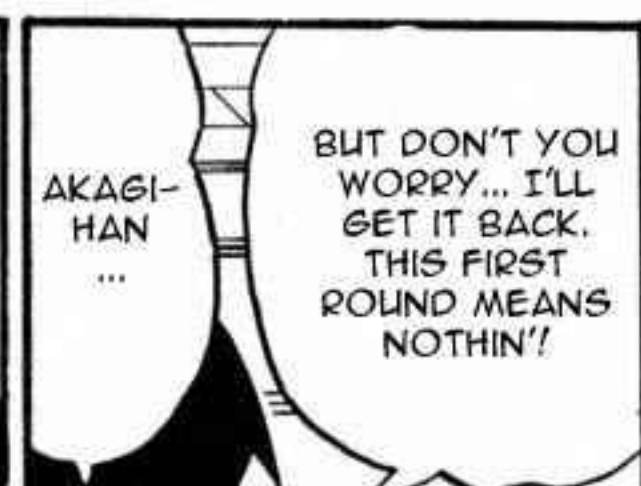
AND HIS
OVERALL
HAND WAS
VERY BAD.

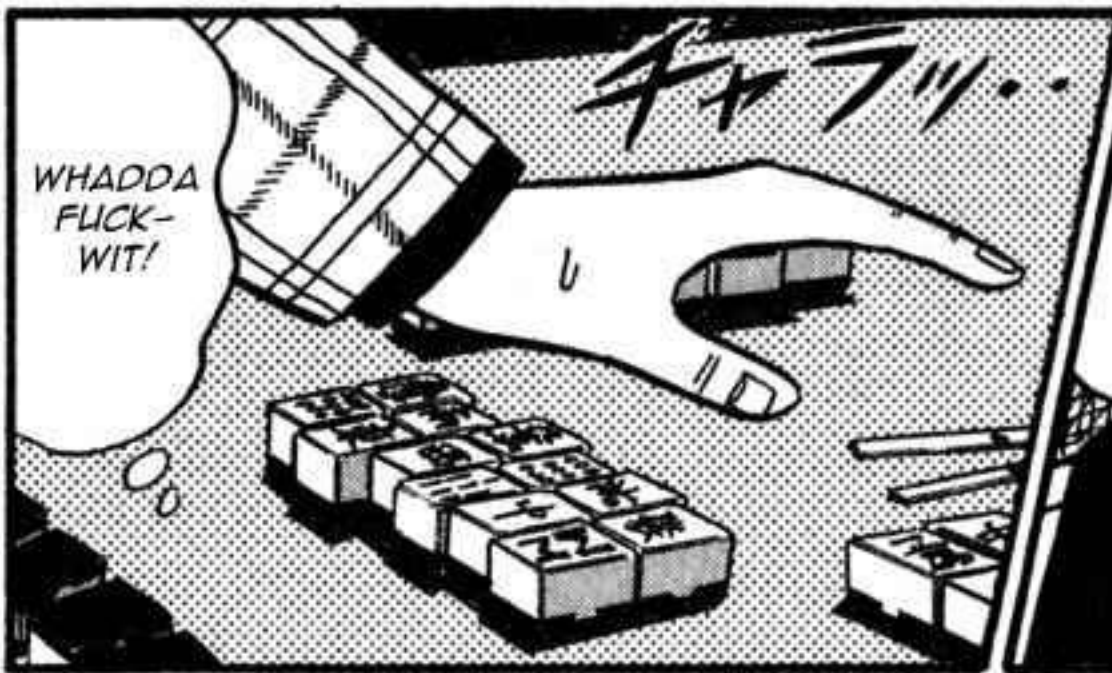
ALL OF
THE TILES
HE DREW
...



HE WAS
TRULY IN
A DES-
PERATE
SITUATION.









CHAPTER 54 - COORDINATION

第54話 連携





NAKAI HAD
REACHED
HIS WIT'S
END...

FROM THE
VERY START
OF THE
MATCH, AKAGI
WAS ON A
WINNING
STREAK...

THINGS
CONTINUED
TO DEFY
NAKAI'S
EXPECT-
TATIONS.

2100
FROM
EVERY-
ONE.

TANYAO,
MENZEN
TSUMO, WITH
1 DORA.

EVEN NOW,
HIS POINTS
MERELY
CONTINUED
TO DE-
CREASE.

THAT TOOK
UP THE
VAST
MAJORITY
OF HIS
THOUGHTS
AT THE
TIME.

THERE WAS
MOST
CERTAINLY
A WAY FOR
HIM TO
MAKE A
COMEBACK,
STILL.

IN THIS
STAGE OF
THE BATTLE
...

SHIT
...

WHAT
THE FUCK
... IS
GOIN'
ON...?!

OF
COURSE
...



HE WAS ENTIRELY FOCUSED ON HOW TO BRING THE MATCH AROUND BACK TO HIS FAVOR.

NO, EVEN CLOSER TO 100% ...

90% ...



HE HAD TO BE READY FOR ANY-THING.

IN ORDER TO WIN, HE HAD TO PREPARE A STRA-TEGY...



FOR AKAGI HAD ALREADY WON.

IT WAS TOO SOON FOR THERE TO EMERGE A CHANCE FOR HIM...



BUT STILL ...



HLIH ...?!

RON.



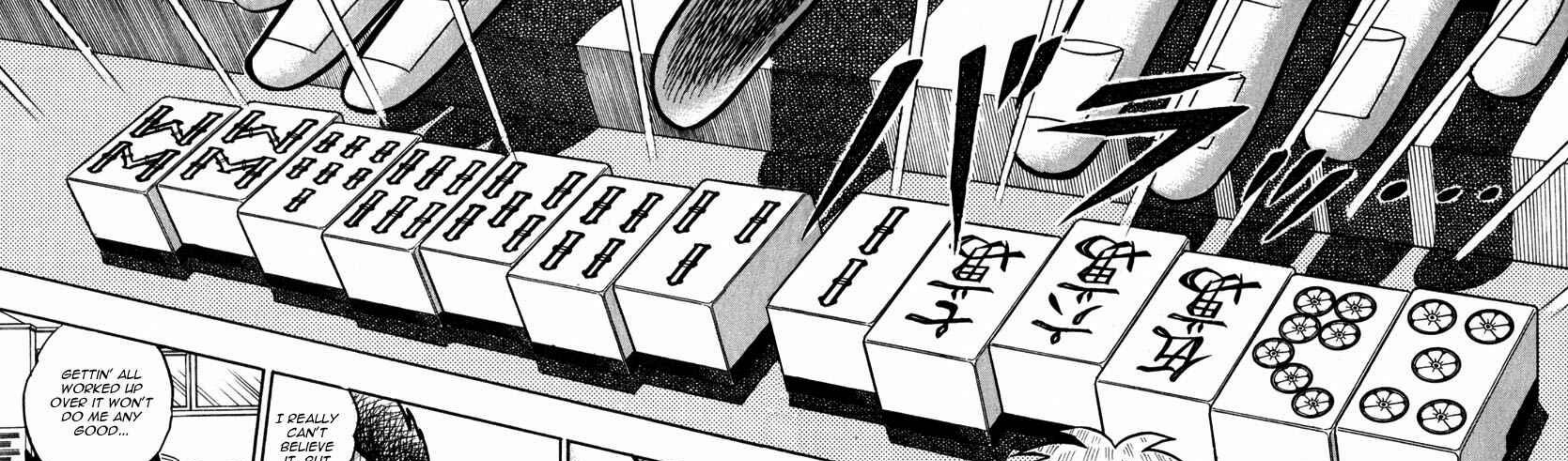
IT'S ONLY THE FOURTH TURN!!

THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE ...!!



SHIT ...!

UNEX-PECTED-LY QUICKLY ...



GETTIN' ALL WORKED UP OVER IT WON'T DO ME ANY GOOD...

I REALLY CAN'T BELIEVE IT, BUT ...

I'VE ONLY GOT 8600 POINTS LEFT.

THE WAY THINGS ARE...

BUT NOW AIN'T THE TIME TO COMPLAIN.

I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FIGHT BACK AT ALL...

IT'S STILL THE EAST FIRST ROUND, AND HE'S STILL THE DEALER.

IT'S UNBELIEVABLE, BUT ...

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!!!

IT'S A DEALER MANGAN. 12,600.

TANYAO, SAN SHOKU, WITH ONE DORA.

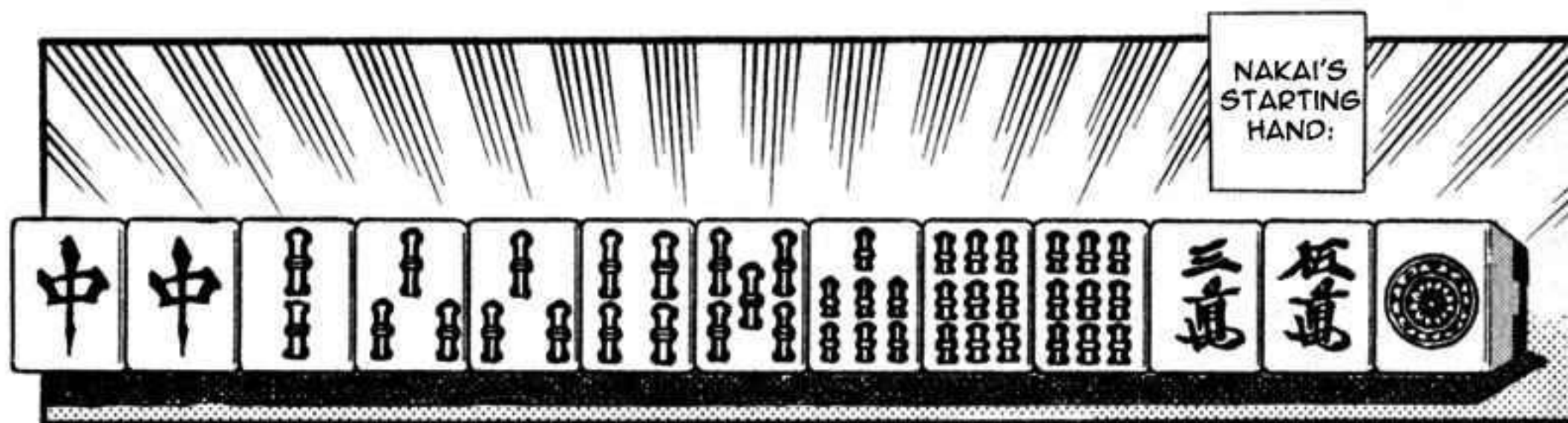
...WAS A SAN SHOKU?!

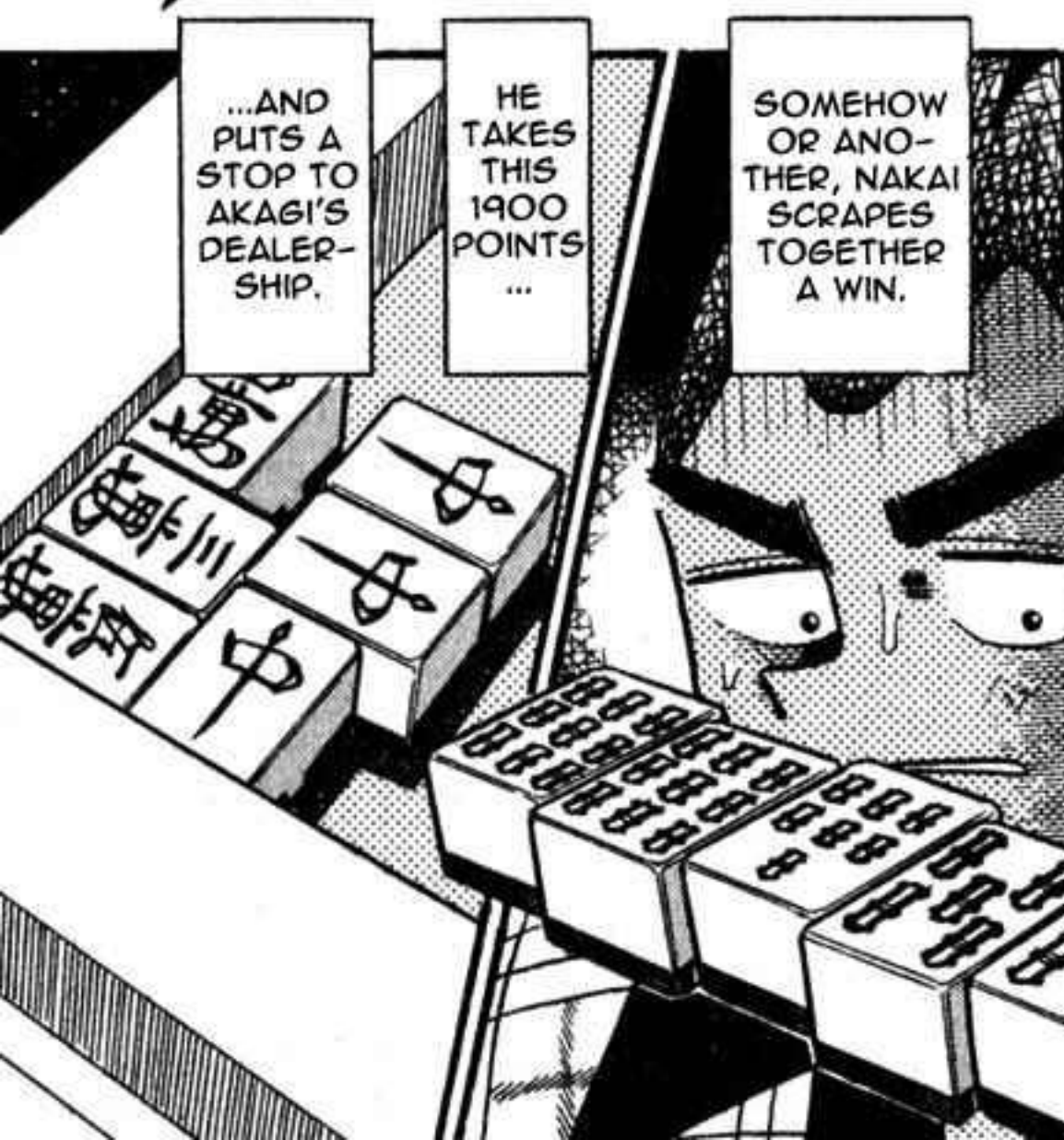
THAT INCONCEIVABLY FAST HAND ...

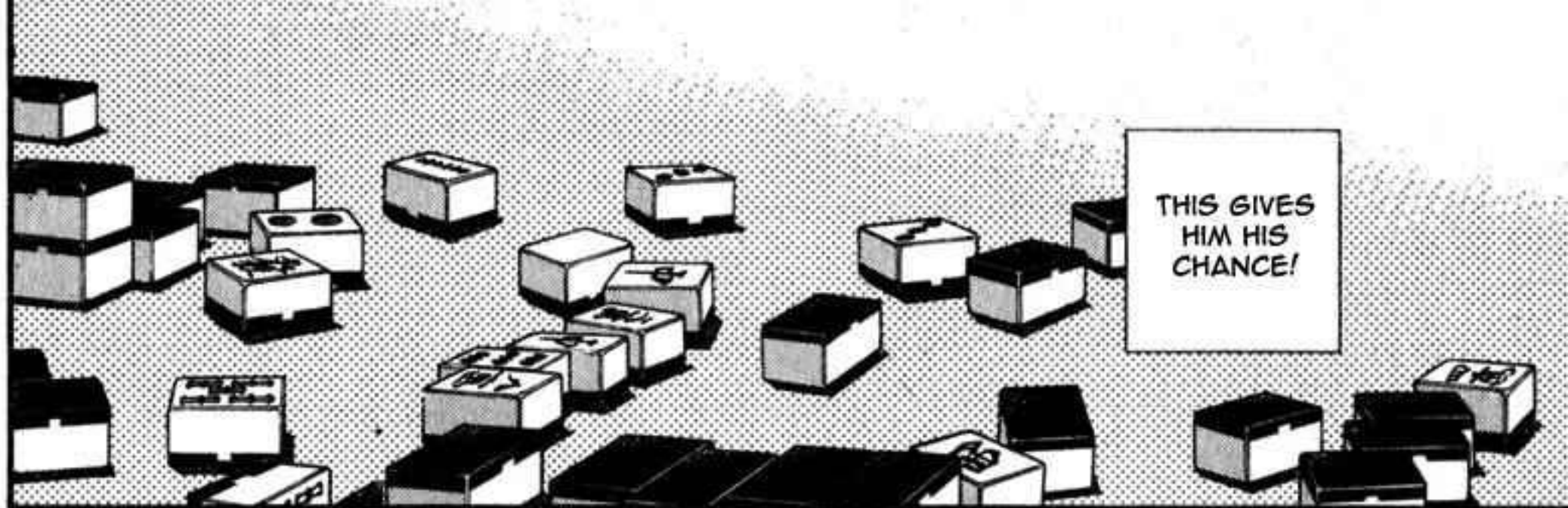
WHAT'S THIS... "SHIT S'WHAM WHAT IS THIS?!"

URGH ...!!!

Illustration of a character looking down at a small box containing four tiles.







THIS GIVES HIM HIS CHANCE!



NAKAI'S DEALER TURN.

WHICH BRINGS US TO THE EAST 3RD ROUND ...

NAKAI WINS ONCE AGAIN.

IN THE NEXT ROUND, THE EAST 2ND...



AND ONCE HE DOES SO...

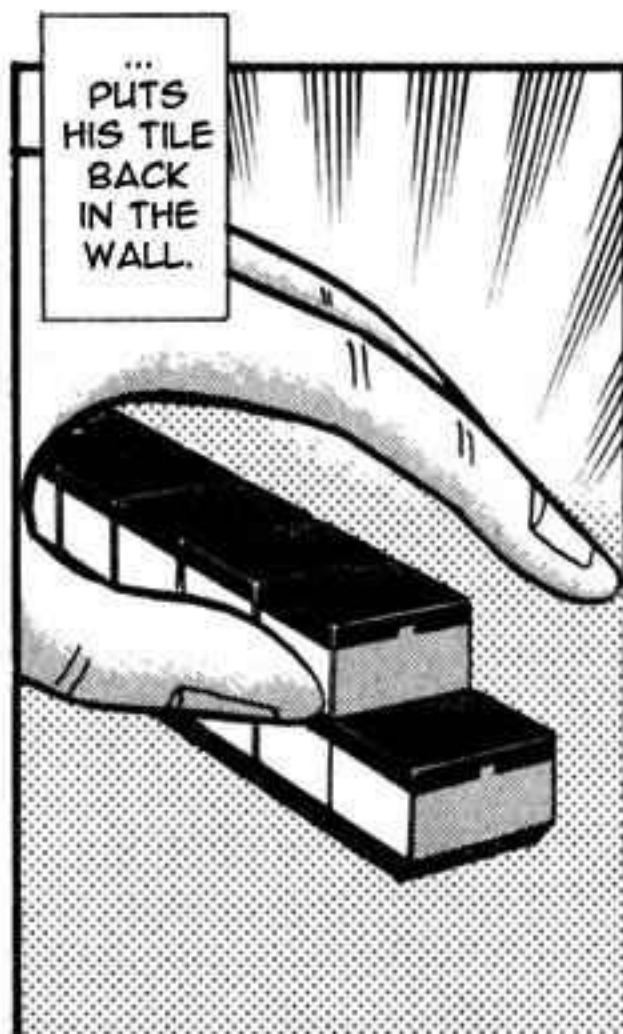
PON!

UPON SEEING HIS RIICHI, THE NORTH PLAYER REACTS BY CALLING.



NAKAI IS THE FIRST PLAYER TO CALL RIICHI.

RIICHI!!



... PUTS HIS TILE BACK IN THE WALL.

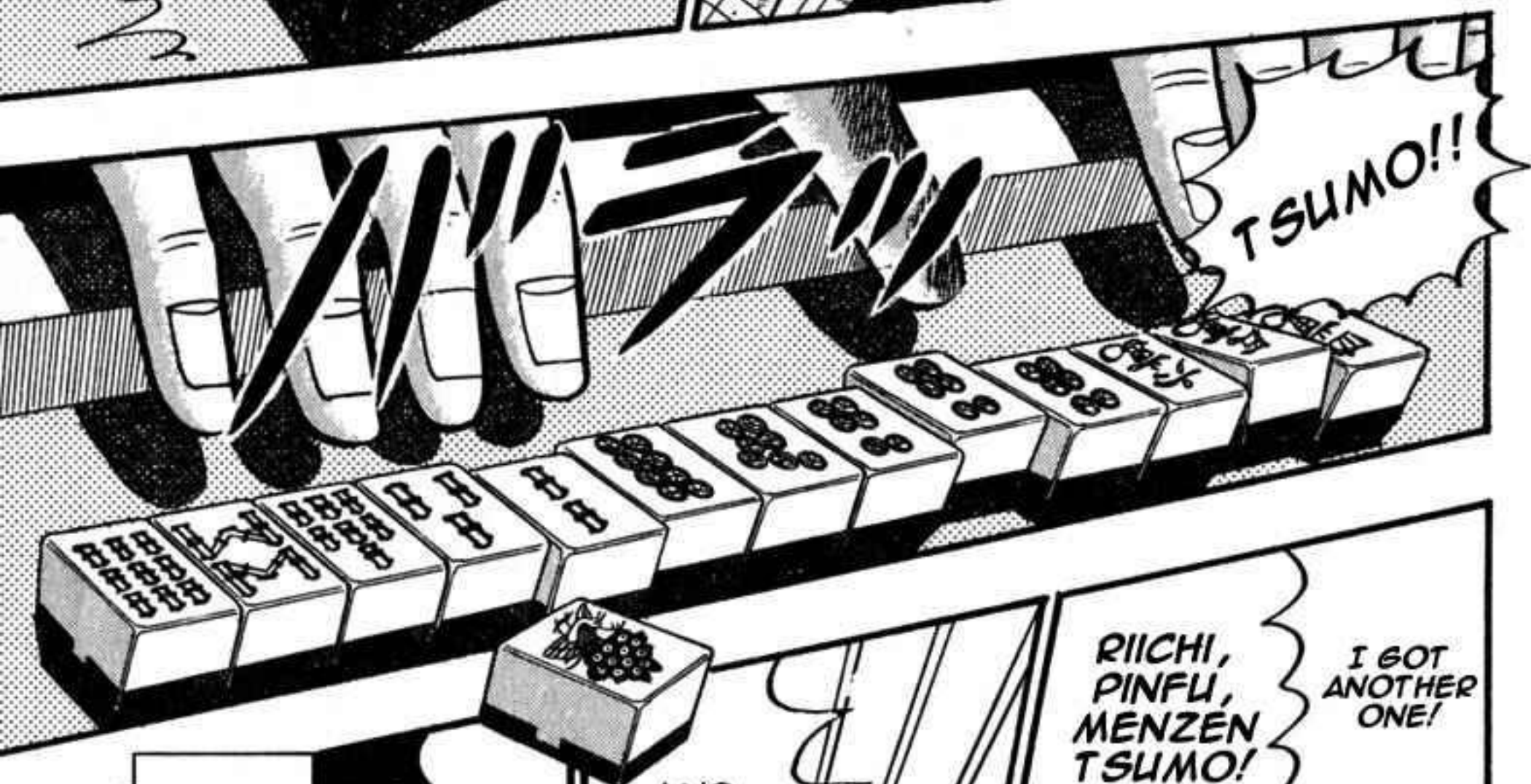


THE SOUTH PLAYER, WHO HAD ALREADY TAKEN HIS DRAW...



DRAW-
ING
THAT
TILE
...

AND
SOON
AFTER
...



TSUMO!!



RIICHI,
PINFU,
MENZEN
TSUMO!

I GOT
ANOTHER
ONE!

HOWEVER,
THIS GIVES
NAKAI HIS
THIRD
STRAIGHT
WIN!

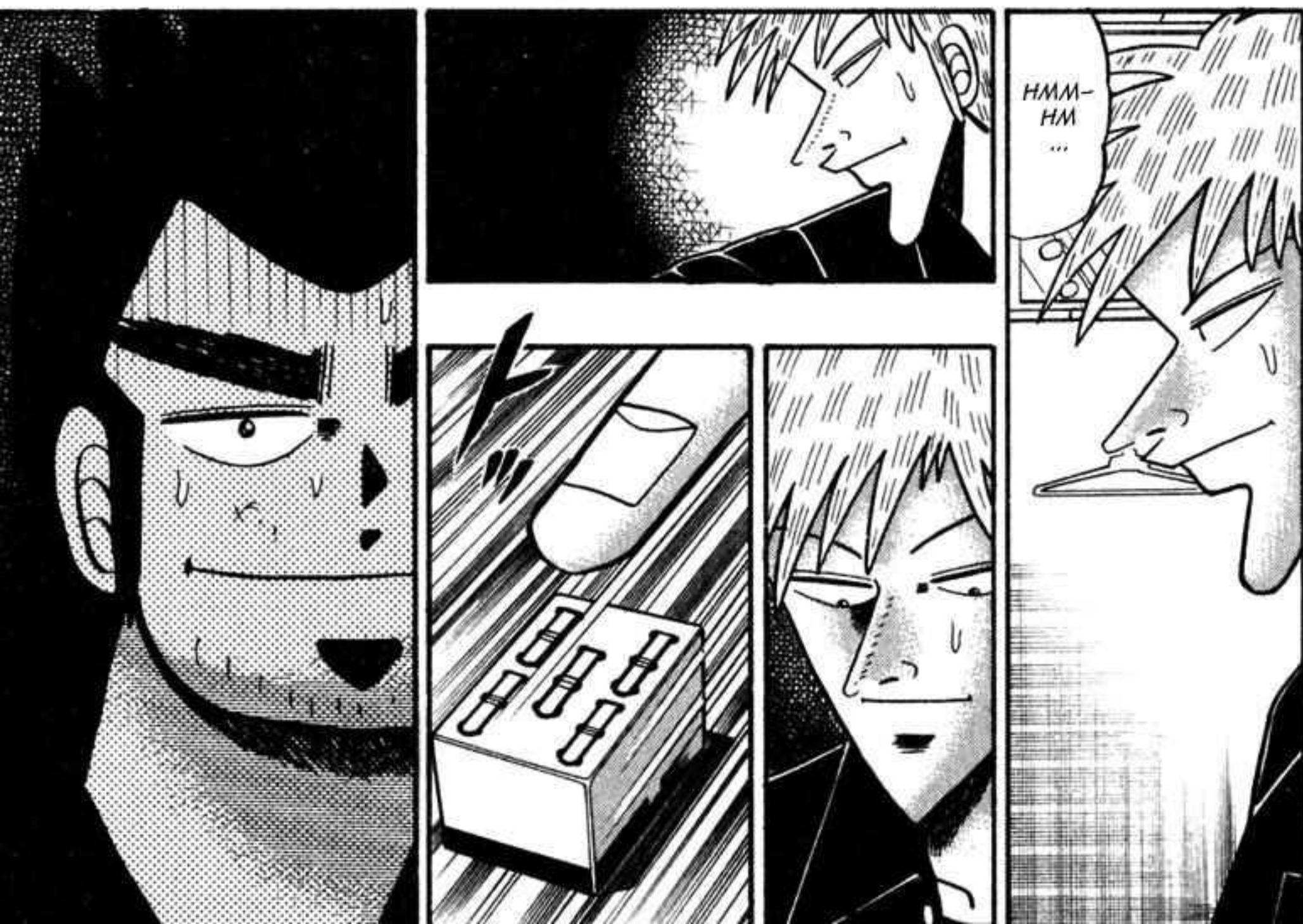
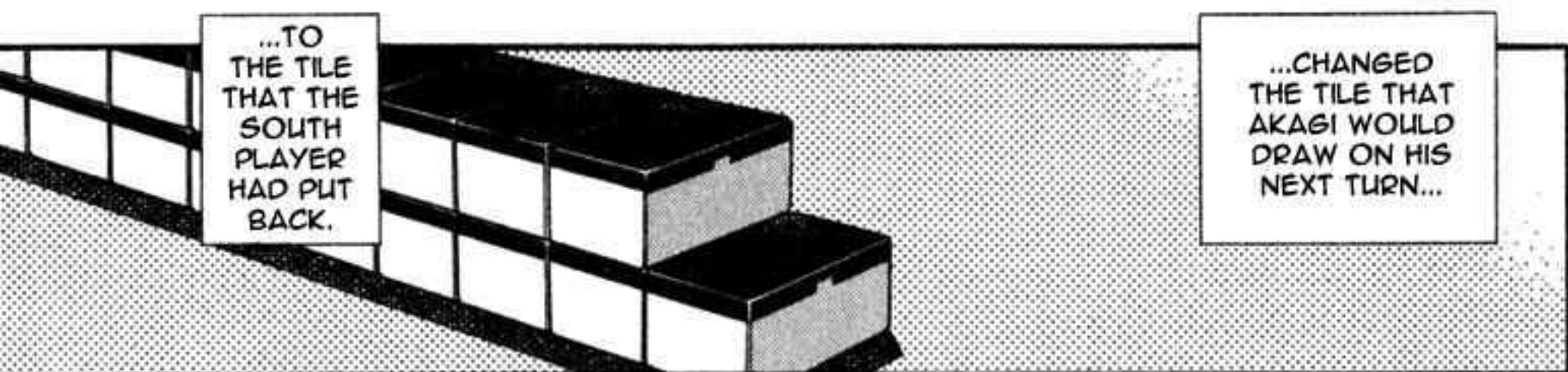
DIDN'T
GET
ANY
OF
'EM...

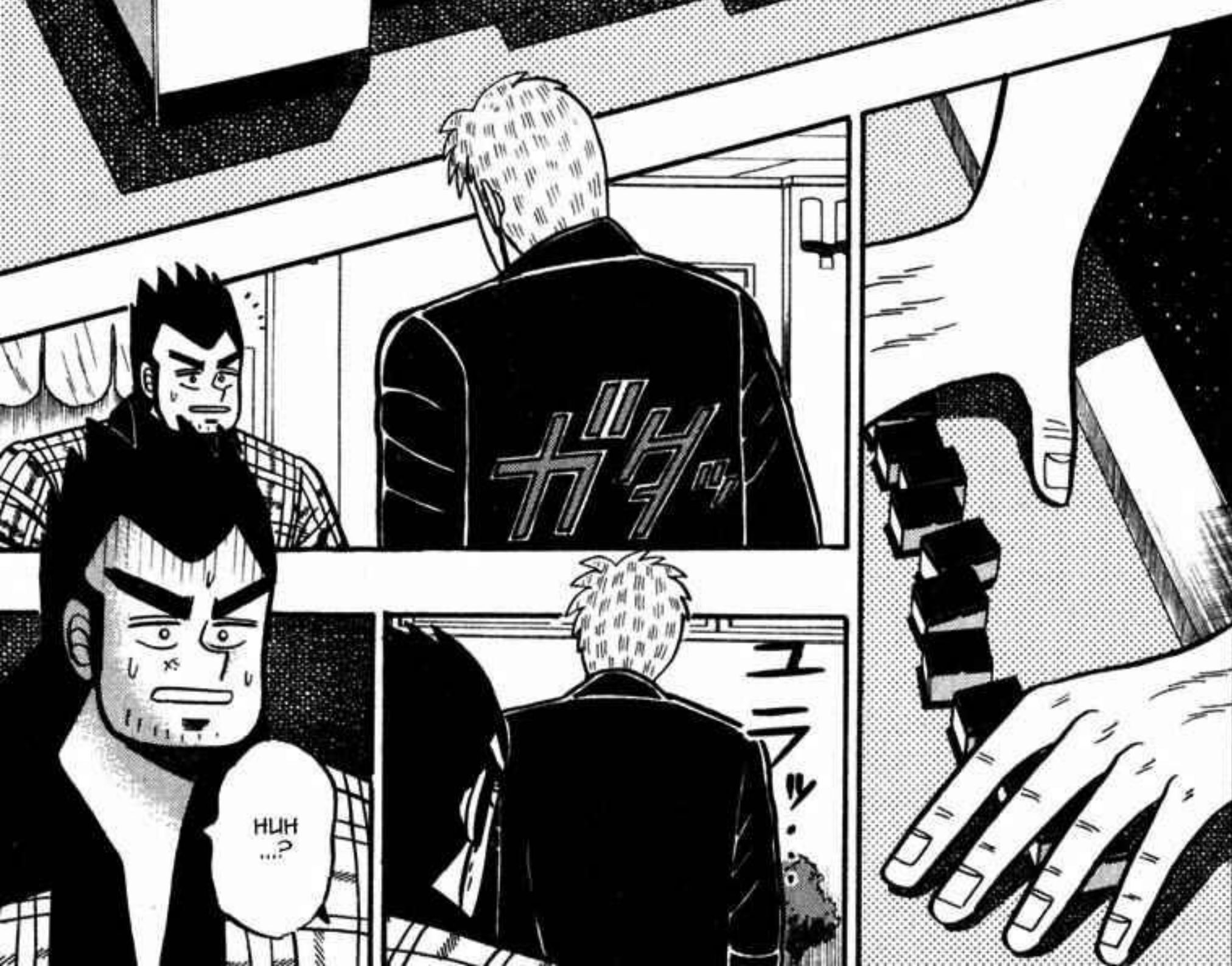
K'AHHHHHH...

AND
NOW,
THE URA
DORA....!

HE
GATHERS
HIS
STRENGTH!















IF HE
COULDN'T
GET US
TO LEAVE
THAT
PARLOR
...

AS FAR AS
THAT GOES,
FOR ALL OF THE
EXAGGERATED
FUSS HE WAS
MAKING ABOUT
NEEDING TO
BATTLE WITH
ME...

ALL THAT
HE WAS
PLANNING
ON DOING
WAS TO
GET US
TO HIS
GANG'S
HOME
TURF.

FROM THE
BEGINNING,
WHEN HE
SAID HE WAS
GOING TO
TAKE US TO
ANOTHER
PARLOR...

HMM-
HM
...

HOW COULD
HE HAVE
CALLED FOR
HIS PARTNERS
ON SUCH
SHORT NOTICE
WITHOUT
DOING THAT
...?

...HE
MIGHT NOT
HAVE BEEN AS
ANXIOUS TO
BATTLE WITH ME
AS HE SAID HE
WAS.



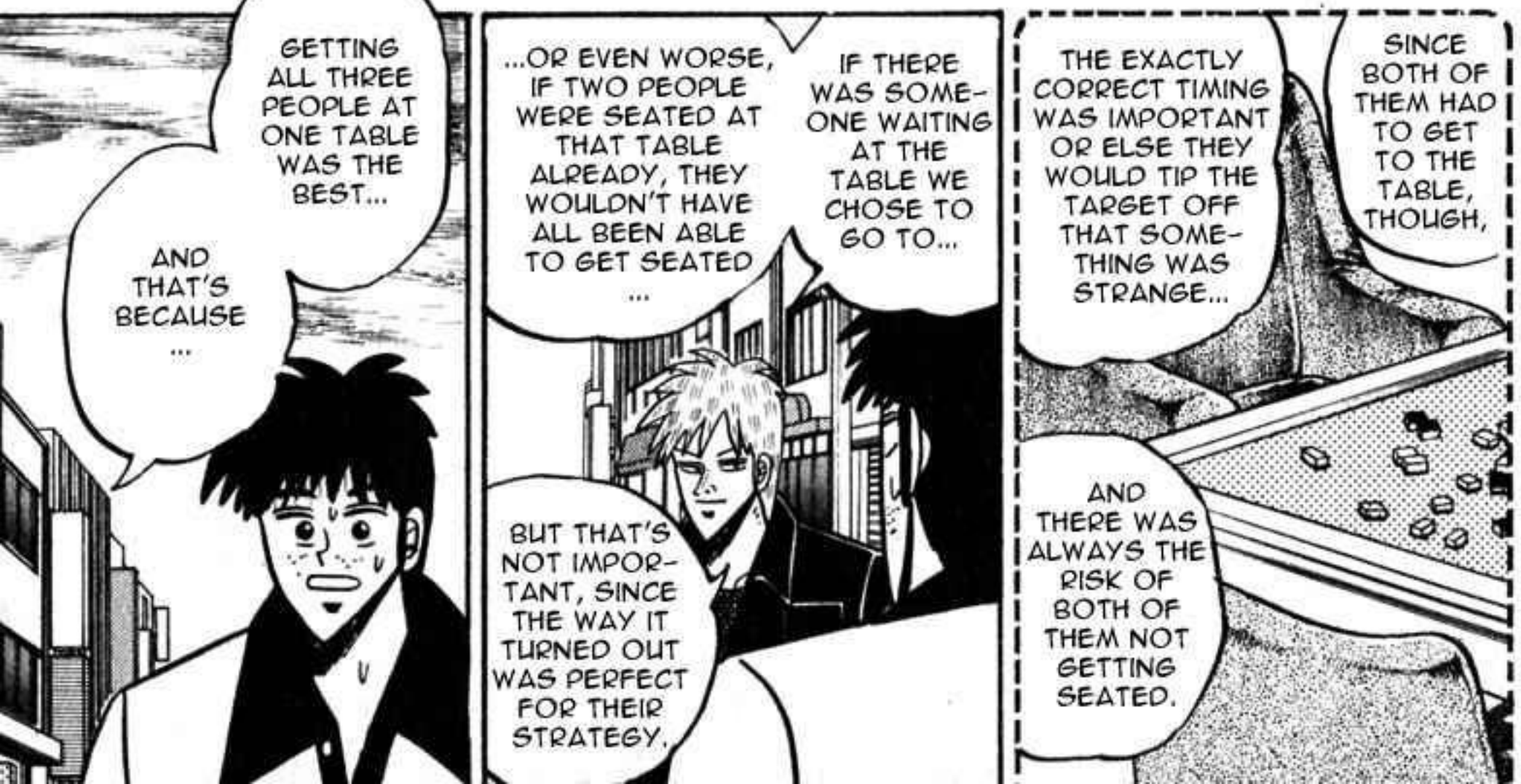
THEY COULD
PRETEND TO
JUST BE
AIMLESSLY
WANDERING
AROUND...

AFTER
SEEING THAT
SOMEONE
WAS FOL-
LOWING
NAKAI...

THOSE MEMBERS
OF HIS GANG
WERE READY AND
WAITING FOR
NAKAI TO BRING
SOMEONE FOR
THEM TO PLAY
AGAINST...

WITHIN
THE BOUN-
DRIES OF
HIS TURF
...

...AND JOIN
WHICHEVER
TABLE WE
ENDED UP
GOING TO...
THAT MUCH
IS EASY.



GETTING
ALL THREE
PEOPLE AT
ONE TABLE
WAS THE
BEST...

AND
THAT'S
BECAUSE
...

...OR EVEN WORSE,
IF TWO PEOPLE
WERE SEATED AT
THAT TABLE
ALREADY, THEY
WOULDN'T HAVE
ALL BEEN ABLE
TO GET SEATED
...

IF THERE
WAS SOME-
ONE WAITING
AT THE
TABLE WE
CHOSE TO
GO TO...

THE EXACTLY
CORRECT TIMING
WAS IMPORTANT
OR ELSE THEY
WOULD TIP THE
TARGET OFF
THAT SOME-
THING WAS
STRANGE...

SINCE
BOTH OF
THEM HAD
TO GET
TO THE
TABLE,
THOUGH,

BUT THAT'S
NOT IMPOR-
TANT, SINCE
THE WAY IT
TURNED OUT
WAS PERFECT
FOR THEIR
STRATEGY.

AND
THERE WAS
ALWAYS THE
RISK OF
BOTH OF
THEM NOT
GETTING
SEATED.



AND IN THE GAME JUST NOW, NAKAI AND HIS TWO COMRADES USED THAT PRACTICE AND PREPARATION TO THEIR ADVANTAGE.

HUH ...



THEY WERE JUST USED TO DOING THIS KIND OF THING.

EVEN BEFORE THIS BATTLE BEGAN, THOSE THREE GUYS WERE ALWAYS READY TO DO COMBINATION PLAYS... BOTH THE SETUP AND IN THE ACTUAL GAME.



PARTNERS AS SKILLED AS NAKAI AND HIS FRIENDS CAN USE NONVERBAL SIGNALS TO COMMUNICATE TO EACH OTHER.

THEY WERE USING SIGNALS.



HMM-HM ...

DID THEY REALLY DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT ...?



THAT'S RIGHT.

SIGNALS ...?



HMM ...

WAS THE HAND WHERE I LOST MY DEALERSHIP... WHERE HE MADE THE QUICK, OPEN CHUN-ONLY HAND.

THE FIRST TIME THAT THEY USED THOSE SIGNALS ...



I SEE
...



IT DEFINITELY INVOKES THE
THOUGHT THAT
THERE MIGHT
BE SOME
CHEATING
GOING ON
...

WHEN
YOU SEE
SOME-
THING
LIKE THAT
...

GETTING
THAT FAR
IS EASY
ENOUGH.



WHERE YOU'D
BEEN GETTING
DEALER WIN
AFTER DEALER
WIN FOR 3
STRAIGHT
HANDS...

THEY'D
OBVIOUSLY
WANT TO GET
YOUR DEALER
POSITION AWAY
FROM YOU, SO
...

GIVEN
THE
SETTING,
AKAGI-
SAN
...



IT DID SEEM
LIKE THOSE THREE
WERE CALLING OFF
OF EACH OTHER
AN AWFUL LOT
...

N...
NOW
THAT YOU
MENTION
IT...

BUT
STILL
...



WHAT I
WAS
TALKING
ABOUT
...

...DIDN'T
HAVE TO
DO WITH
THAT
TACTIC.

LOOKS
LIKE YOU
DON'T
QUITE
HAVE IT,
YET...



WATCH.



...YOU CAN'T
SAY FOR SURE
IF THEY'RE
CHEATING OR
NOT!

ALL I'M SAYING
IS THAT JUST
WITH THAT
PRETTY ORDI-
NARY TACTIC
BY ITSELF...

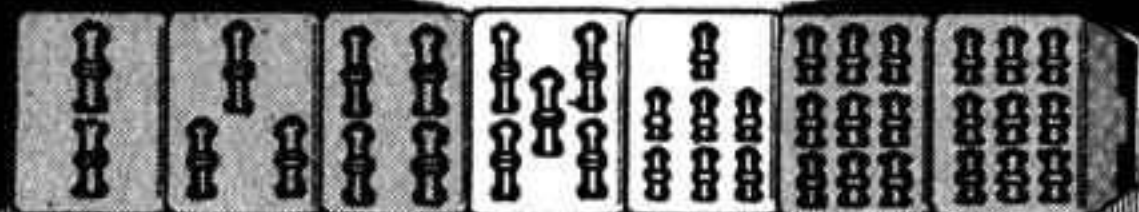
HMM-
HM
...



THEY
MIGHT
EVEN
HELP
EACH
OTHER
TO GET
THERE!

ANYONE
WOULD
HAVE GONE
FOR A CHEAP,
QUICK HAND
...

HE SPECIFICALLY CHOSE TO TAKE THE LESS LIKELY 6-SOU CLOSED WAIT.



HE DEFINITELY DID THAT ON PURPOSE...

THAT IS THE ONLY WAY.

HE KNEW FOR A FACT THAT HIS 6-SOU CLOSED WAIT WOULD COME TO FRUITION ON THE VERY NEXT TURN... THAT SOMEONE WOULD DEAL INTO HIS HAND WITH IT.

THEN IT CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING.

IF HE CHOSE THAT WAIT FIRST ...

HE HAD BEEN BLENDING IN WELL ENOUGH UP TO THERE, BUT HE WAS BEYOND THE POINT WHERE HE STILL SAFELY COULD.

BUT NAKAI ONLY HAD 8600 POINTS LEFT TO LOSE... HE WAS GETTING PRETTY DESPERATE.

WELL, THOSE GUYS HAD DONE A PRETTY GOOD JOB OF LAYING LOW UP UNTIL THAT POINT ...

HUH ...

HE WAS PLAYING IN A MATCH WORTH MORE MONEY THAN HE COULD REALLY COMPREHEND ...

IF HE'D WANTED TO KEEP THEIR COVER, HE WOULD HAVE CHOSEN THAT 1-4 WAIT.

FOR INSTANCE ...

THEIR SIGNALS AND COMBINATION PLAYS WERE OUT IN THE OPEN.

AND AFTER HE MADE THAT MOVE, THE GLOVES WERE OFF.

IT WOULD BE ABSURD TO STAY WORRIED ABOUT APPEARANCES AT SUCH A CRITICAL MOMENT.



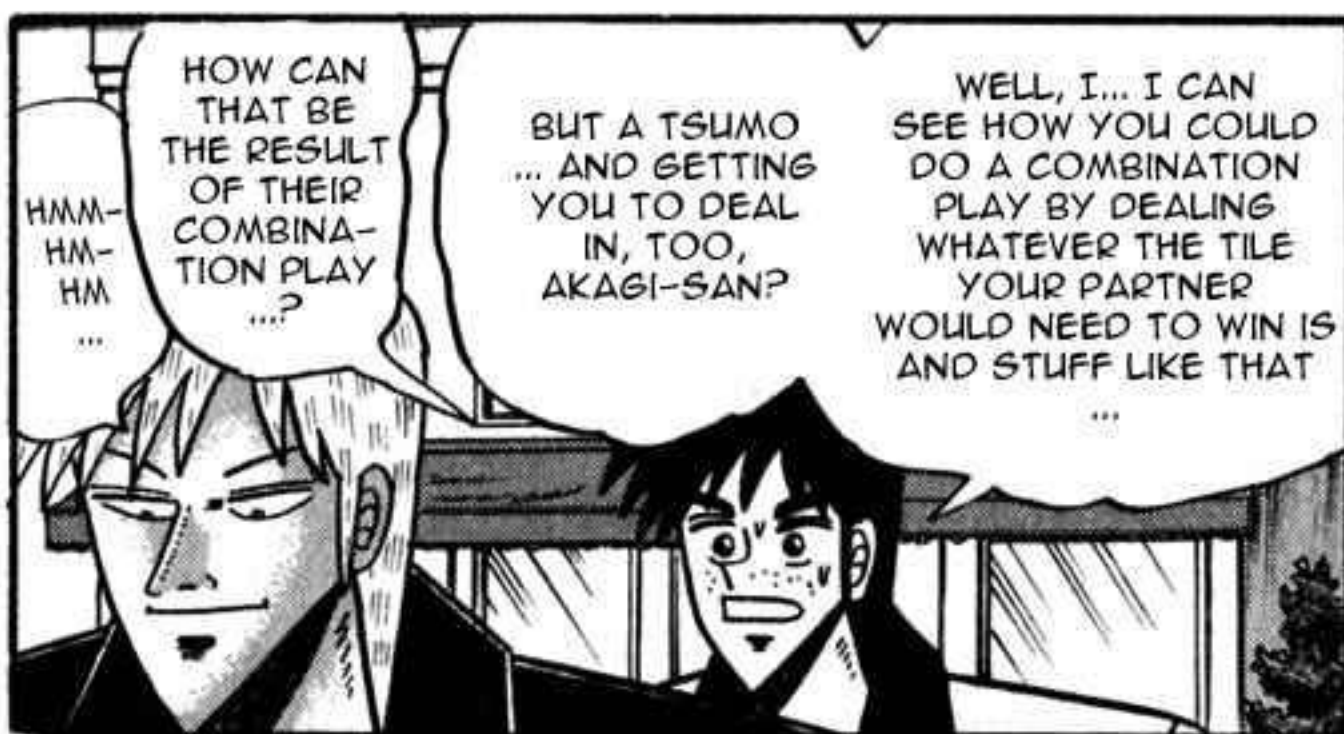
HUH
...?

ALL OF IT
WAS A
RESULT OF
THEIR COM-
BINATION
PLAY.



AS WELL
AS THAT
TIME I
DEALT IN
...

THE
TSUMO THAT
HE MADE
...

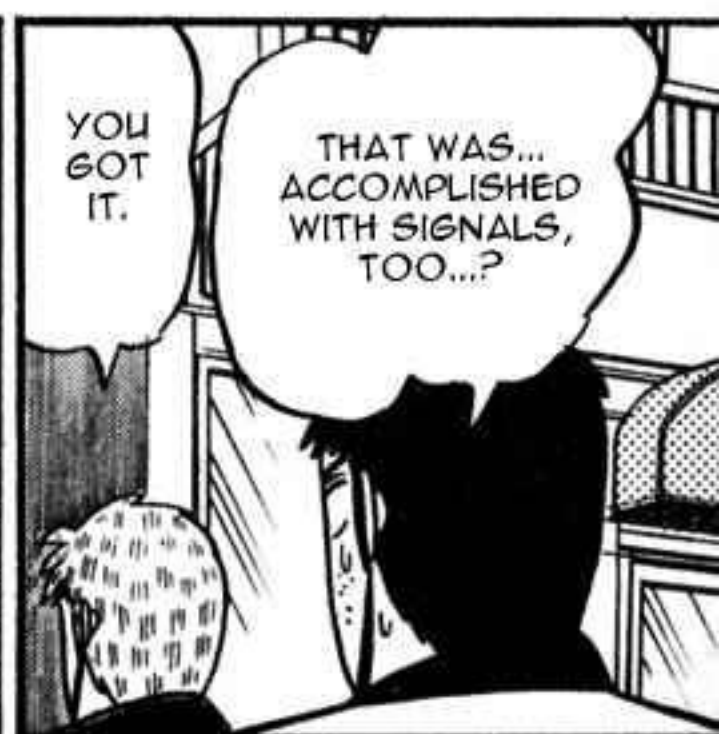


HMM-
HM-
HM
...

HOW CAN
THAT BE
THE RESULT
OF THEIR COMBINA-
TION PLAY
...?

BUT A TSUMO
... AND GETTING
YOU TO DEAL
IN, TOO,
AKAGI-SAN?

WELL, I... I CAN
SEE HOW YOU COULD
DO A COMBINATION
PLAY BY DEALING
WHATEVER THE TILE
YOUR PARTNER
WOULD NEED TO WIN IS
AND STUFF LIKE THAT
...



YOU
GOT
IT.

THAT WAS...
ACCOMPLISHED
WITH SIGNALS,
TOO...?



HUH
...?!

AKAGI VOLUME 6
アカギ 6 / 完
FIN



ALL OF THAT CAN BE ACCOMP-
LISHED WITH COMBINATION PLAYS...



IT WOULD
REQUIRE A
BIT OF
PRACTICE
TO PULL
OFF WELL
...

BUT
IT'S
VERY
SIMPLE
...

OH, BUT
IT IS.

近代麻雀コミックス

アカギ⑥

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乱丁・落丁本はおとりかえいたします。

定価はカバーに表示してあります。

TAKE SHOBO Printed in Japan.

絶賛/レンタル中!!

神域の闘牌コミックス、遂に奇跡のビデオ化!!

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