

福本伸行

AKAGI Nobuyuki Fukumoto
Kindai Mahjong Comics

第7巻

闇に降り立った天才

業火の闘牌

業火の闘牌 7 福本伸行
TAKE SHOBO

近代麻雀コミックス
●竹書房



夏の夜、炎の光に引かれ
虫たちが集まってくるように
今、人々が集まり出した。
彼らは焼け死ぬことを分かっていながら炎に飛び込んでいく。
その炎は魔物の口から発せられる狂気の業火。
火炎の中で不敵に微笑むひとりの巨魁の少年、アカギ。
後に神域の男と呼ばれ、裏社会に君臨する男——あの赤木しげる!!

Kindai
mahjong
Comics



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闇に降り立った天才

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第7巻



●アカギ●福本伸行●月刊近代麻雀好評連載中●毎月1日発売

ア カ ギ

福本伸行

AKAGI ● Nobuyuki Fukumoto
Kindai Mahjong Comics

第 **7** 卷

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第⑦巻

麻雀

福本伸行

● TAKE SHOBO ●

赤木しげる



ニセアカギ

並外れた記憶力と雀力を持つが、
浦部の前に脆くも崩れ去った。



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……。そして昭和39年。最初の伝説の夜に立ち合った不良刑事・安岡によるニセアカギ売り込みが、第二の伝説の幕を開いた……。巧みに倍プッシュ勝負に持ち込んだ藤沢組代打ち・浦部を異端の戦略で打ち破り、赤木は再び姿を消す。しかしその直後、噂を聞きつけて治と赤木の前に現れた麻雀打ち・仲井。その半荘1回有り金勝負で、仲井は赤木から親満を直撃。しかし、赤木は仲井たちの連携プレーを通しを見抜いていた……！



仲井

アカギの金と箔づけを狙って、用意周到な罠を仕掛ける麻雀打ち。



安岡

アカギの伝説を利用し、川田組にニセアカギを売り込んだ不良刑事。

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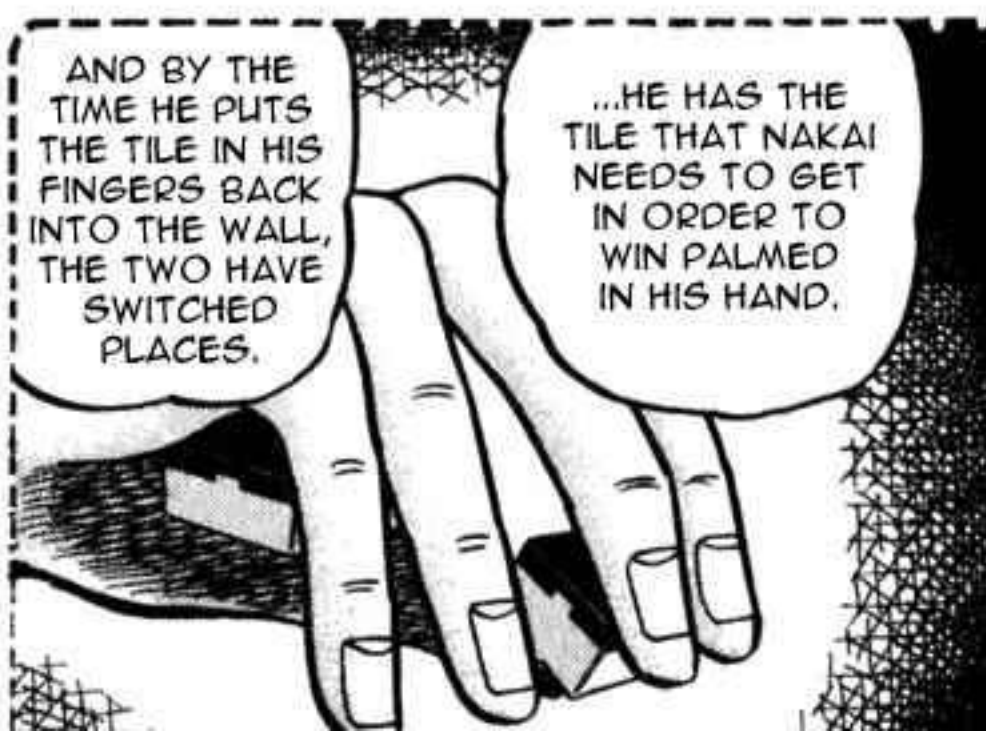
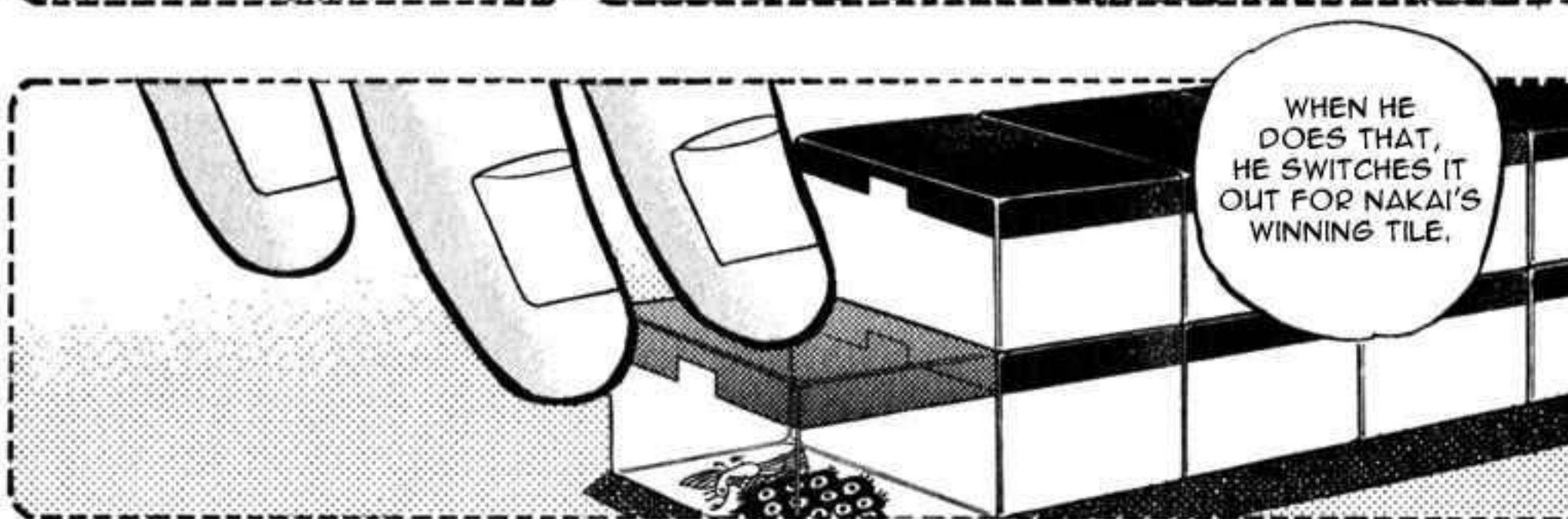


第55話 通し

CHAPTER 55 - SIGNALS







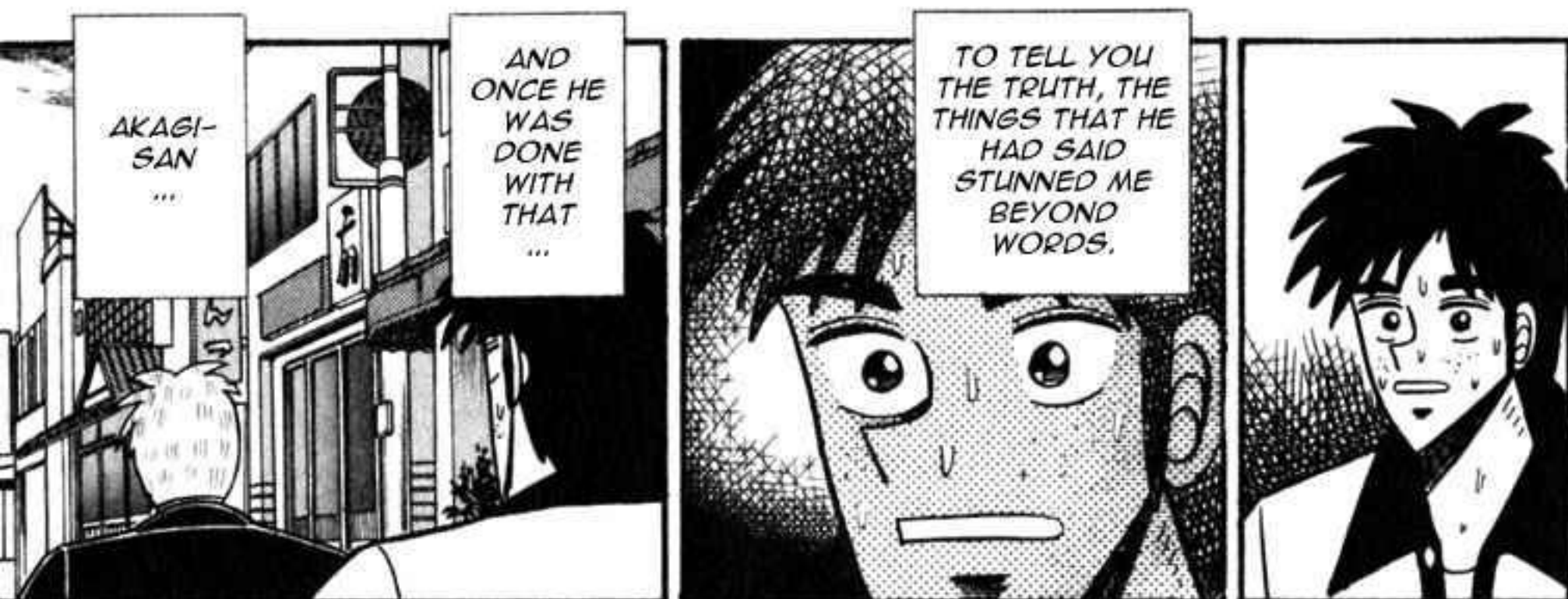


YEAH
...

NOW,
WASN'T
THAT
SIMPLE?

SINCE I
WAS IN
RIICHI, I
HAD TO
DEAL IT.

...INSTEAD
GOES TO
ME, AS IT
DID IN THE
ROUND WE
LEFT OFF
ON.



AKAGI-
SAN
...

AND
ONCE HE
WAS
DONE
WITH
THAT
...

TO TELL YOU
THE TRUTH, THE
THINGS THAT HE
HAD SAID
STUNNED ME
BEYOND
WORDS.



...IT ALL
SEEMED
SO PERFECT,
THAT EVEN
AFTER I'D
HEARD ALL
ABOUT IT...

ONCE I
UNDER-
STOOD
HOW THEY
DID IT...

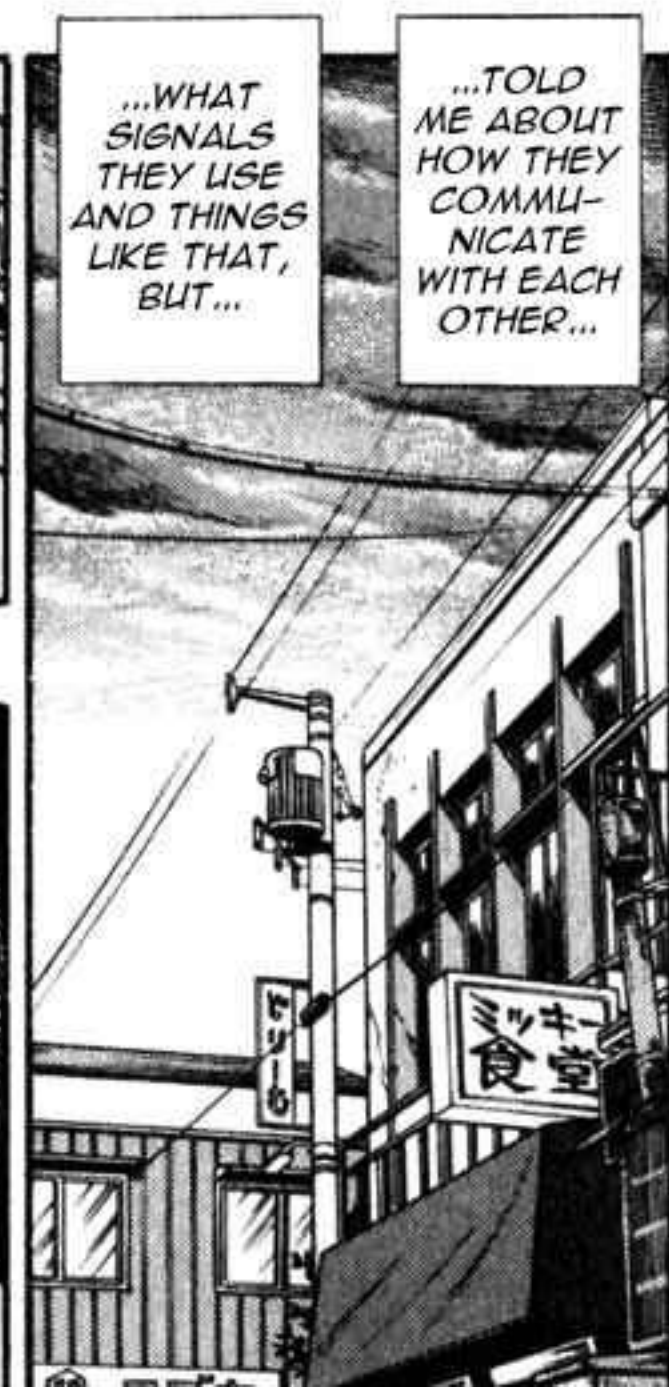
FOR
THIS,
TOO
...

...WHAT
SIGNALS
THEY USE
AND THINGS
LIKE THAT,
BUT...

...TOLD
ME ABOUT
HOW THEY
COMMU-
NICATE
WITH EACH
OTHER...



I WAS
STILL LEFT
IN STUNNED
SILENCE.





AND THAT HE WOULD PULL OFF A CHAIN OF SUCCESSIVE VICTORIES

BUT EVEN STILL, HE SAID THAT HE WOULD-N'T LOSE...

THERE'S ONLY 5 MORE ROUNDS UNTIL THIS SINGLE-HANCHAN MATCH ENDS.

IF HE CAN'T BEAT THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF THE THREE OF THEM ...

BUT STILL, EVEN IF THOSE SIGNALS ARE OBVIOUS AND PREDICTABLE ...

IT WILL STILL BE ENOUGH TO MAKE HIM LOSE THIS.

RIICHI!!

REGARDING THE PARTNERS' SIGNALS ...

WHAT AKAGI-SAN SAID TO ME AT THAT TIME...

THE BATTLE RE-SUMES.

A FAR CRY FROM FLAWLESS METHODS ...

EXTREMELY ROUGH ...

THEIR TECHNIQUES WOULD PROVE TO BE ...

WAS THAT, AS THE BATTLE WORE ON ...

...MORE LIKE THE TOOLS OF AMA-TEURS.



FIRST, WHEN HE TURNS HIS DISCARD SIDEWAYS TO CALL RIICHI...



AKAGI-SAN SAID THAT THERE'S TWO THINGS HE DOES TO SIGNAL TO HIS FRIENDS.

WHEN NAKAI DOES RIICHI'S ...

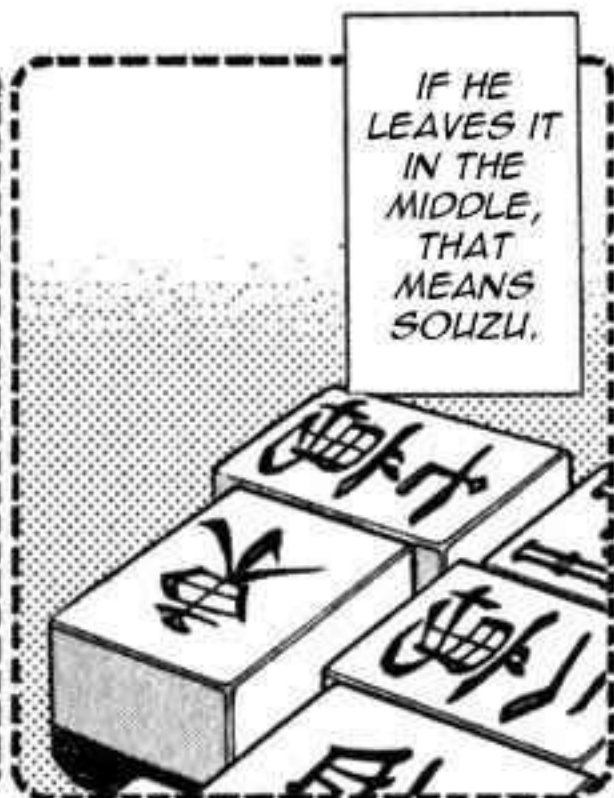


THAT'S IT...!



SO THE FIRST SIGNAL DESCRIBES WHAT SUIT HE'S WAITING ON.

AND IF IT'S PULLED DOWN TOWARDS HIM, THAT MEANS PINZU.



IF HE LEAVES IT IN THE MIDDLE, THAT MEANS SOUZU.



IF HE PUSHES IT UP TO THE TOP ROW, THAT MEANS IT'S A MANZU WAIT.



IF HE DISCARDS AT THE SAME TIME HE THROWS THE STICK ON THE TABLE...

...THAT MEANS HIS WAIT IS ON 2, 5, OR 8.



...AND THEN THROWS THE RIICHI STICK OUT ...

...THAT MEANS THAT HIS WAIT IS ON 1, 4, AND 7.

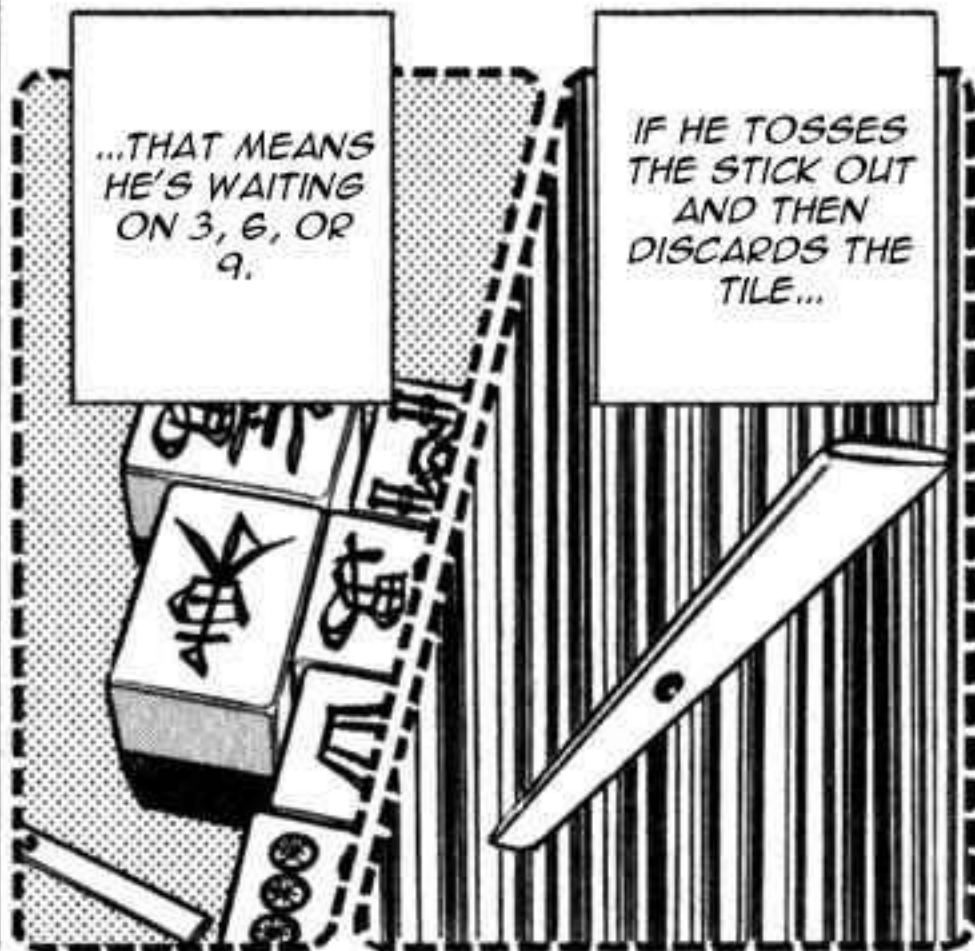


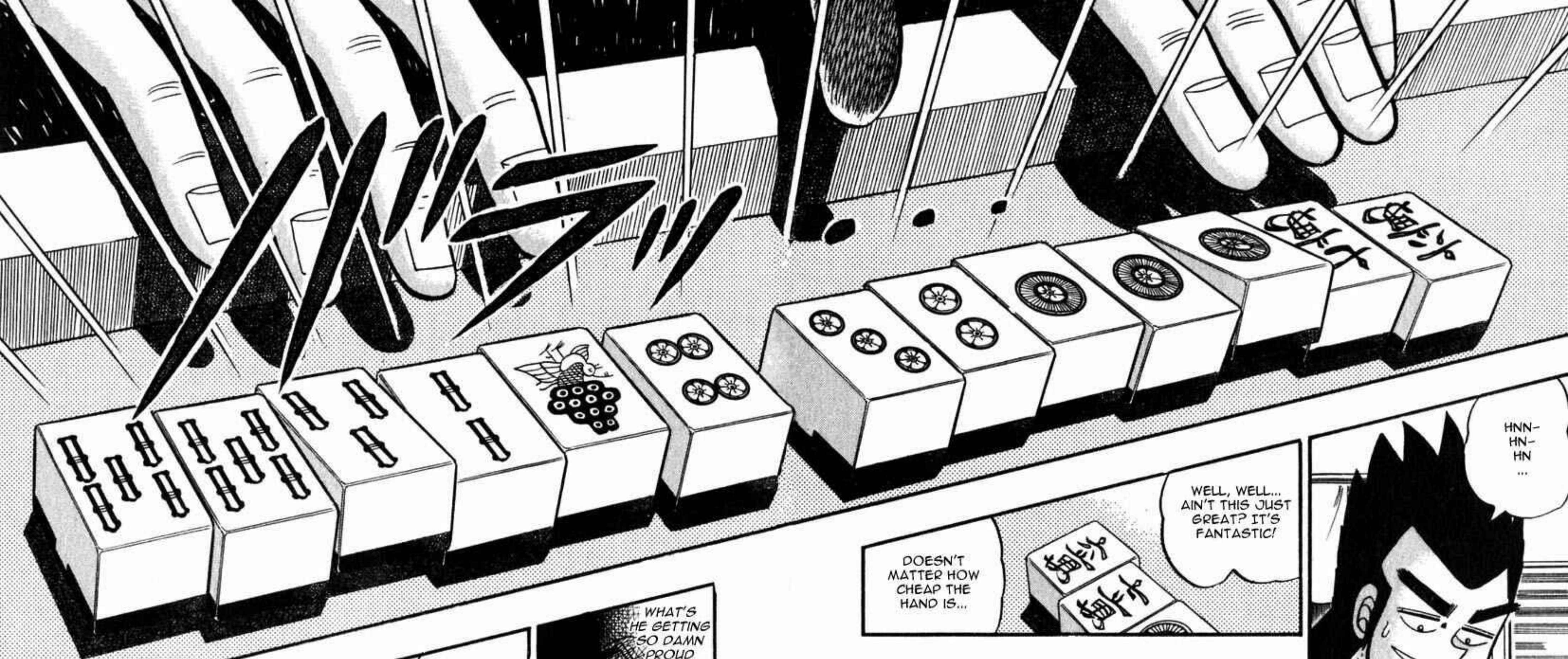
IF HE DISCARDS THE TILE FIRST ...

ONCE HE'S DECLARED RIICHI AND NEEDS TO THROW THE 1000 POINT RIICHI STICK ON THE TABLE...

AND THE SECOND THING IS...

...THE TIMING FOR HIM PUTTING IT DOWN DESCRIBES WHAT NUMBERS IT IS.





ANYONE COULD DO WHAT HE JUST DID!

WITH THREE PEOPLE GANGING UP ON ONE PERSON...

IT'S OBVIOUS THAT HE'S CAUGHT UP TO US WITH THIS, BUT ...

WHAT'S HE GETTING SO DAMN PROUD FOR?

DOESN'T MATTER HOW CHEAP THE HAND IS...

WELL, WELL... AIN'T THIS JUST GREAT? IT'S FANTASTIC!

...THE DIFFERENCE 'TWEEN ME 'N' AKAGI-HAN IS JUST 1300!

WITH THIS 2600 POINTS ...

HN- HN- HN- ...

HN- HN- ...

...IF ONLY UP TO THIS POINT, HE REALLY CAN SAY THAT THINGS ARE GETTING BETTER AND BETTER FOR HIM ...

IT'S TRUE THAT THAT BASTARD IS REALLY TAKING AKAGI-SAN TO THE BANK...

BUT... EVEN THOUGH IT'S DISGRACEFUL...

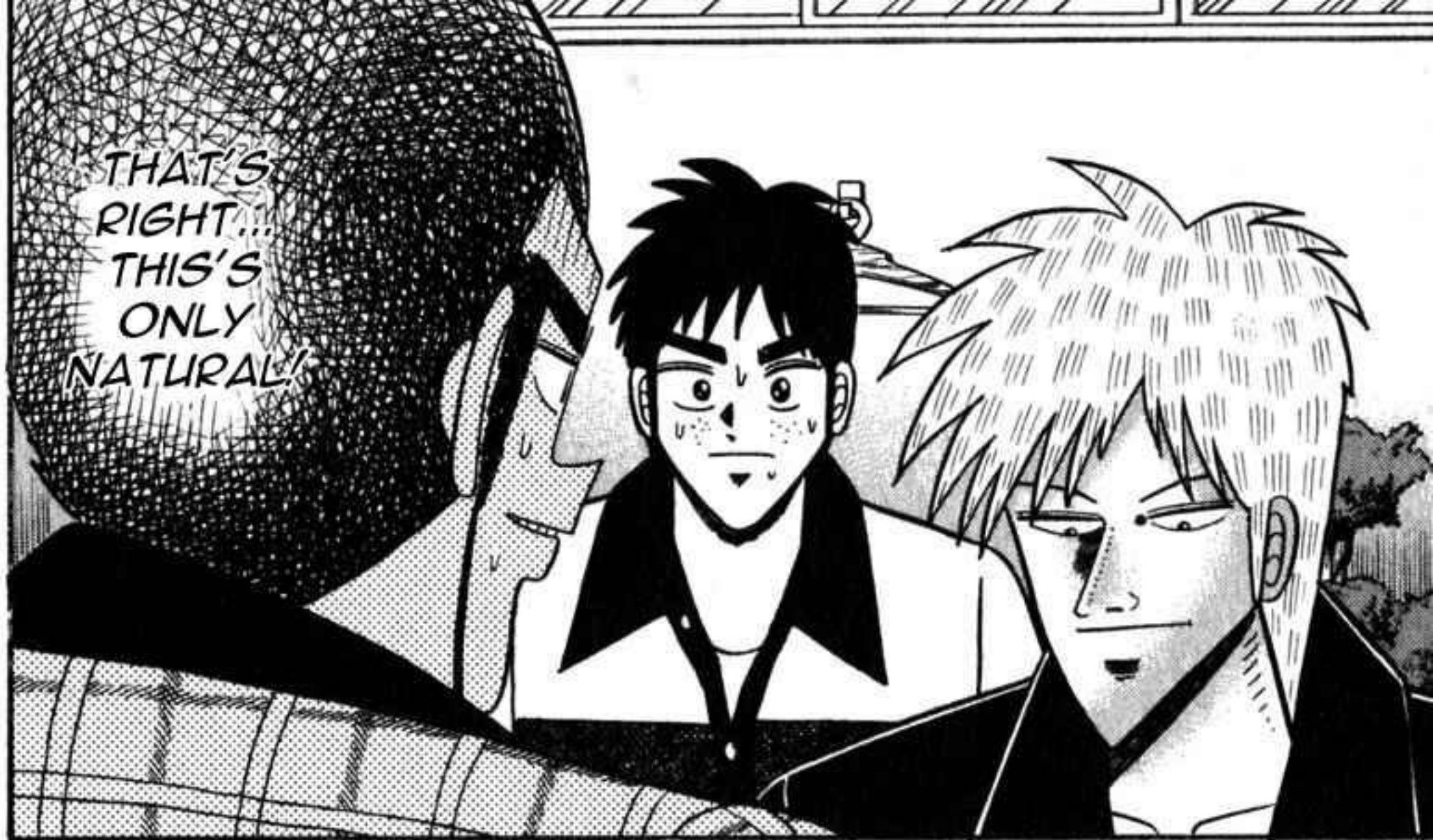
THIS GUY ...

HMM- HM- HM ...

WITH THIS WIN, IT LOOKS LIKE I'M FINALLY RIGHT ON YOUR TAIL!

AIN'T THAT RIGHT?

IT WAS A LONG WAY TO COME, BUT...



THAT'S
RIGHT...
THIS'S
ONLY
NATURAL!



I THINK HE
MIGHT HAVE
DISCOVERED
OUR CRAFTY
COORDINATION
ALREADY...

BUT
EVEN
SO
...

THOUGH,
I AM
CATCHING
A WHIFF
OF SOME-
THING...

THERE'S
NOTHING YOU
CAN DO WHEN
YOU'RE UP
AGAINST
THREE PEOPLE
BY YOURSELF
...!

THAT'S
JUST HOW
THE WORLD
GOES 'ROUND,
AKAGI-HAN!



JUST
SPRINTING
AND
SPRINTING
...

THE WAY
THINGS
ARE NOW,
HE'S
SPRINTING
...

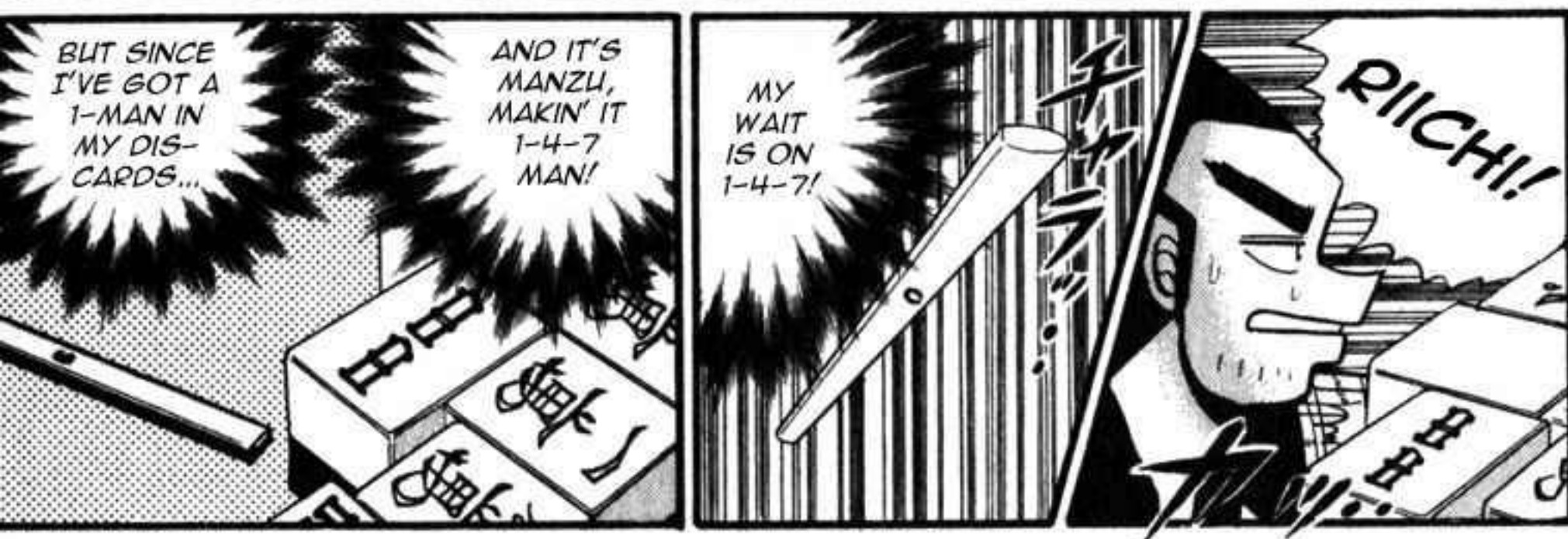
HE'S GOT
NO PROOF
THAT WE'RE
TEAMIN'
UP RIGHT
HERE!

SO IN
THAT
CASE
...

IT'S STILL
JUST A
SUSPICION,
SO HE'S
NOT TO-
TALLY
CERTAIN
...

HE CAN'T
REALLY
COMPLAIN
'BOUT WHAT
WE'RE
DOIN' YET!

THE WAY
THINGS ARE
FOR HIM
AT THE
MOMENT
...





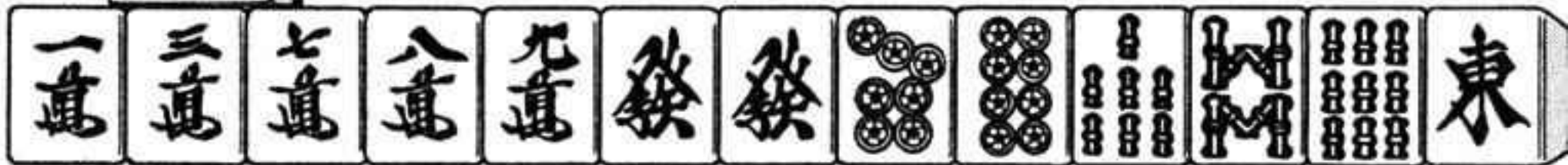
FANPAI,
DORA 3.
ATAMA MANGAN.
HANE.



HE IS IN
TENPAI
FOR A
CHANTA,
SAN SHOKU
HAND.

NAKAI'S
HAND IS
IN GOOD
SHAPE.

AS
PER
USUAL



A black and white manga-style illustration of a character with spiky hair and a determined, slightly angry expression. A speech bubble in the top left corner contains the text "ALL RIGHT". The character has a high forehead, thick eyebrows, and a small, downturned mouth. The background is dark and textured.

...IT
WOULD BE
HANEMAN.

IF HE GOT
HIS PARTNER
TO DEAL
INTO HIS
HAND ON
THE NEXT
TURN...



WITH
RIICHI
AND
IPPATSU
ON TOP
...

A large, bold, black Japanese calligraphic character, '東' (East), is centered on a white background. The character is written in a dynamic, expressive style with thick, fluid strokes. It features a central vertical line with a small loop at the top, and two large, sweeping, curved strokes that extend downwards and outwards, resembling a stylized 'E' or a calligraphic 'H'.



...MY
COMEBACK
CAN BE
COMPLETE!

WITH
ALL THAT



BUT
UNLIKE
LAST TIME,
WE DON'T
HAVE TO
Worry
ABOUT AN
ATAMA
HANE.

FOR THE TIME
BEING, AKAGI
DOESN'T SEEM
AS THOUGH HIS
HAND IS IN
TENPAI AT
THE MOMENT



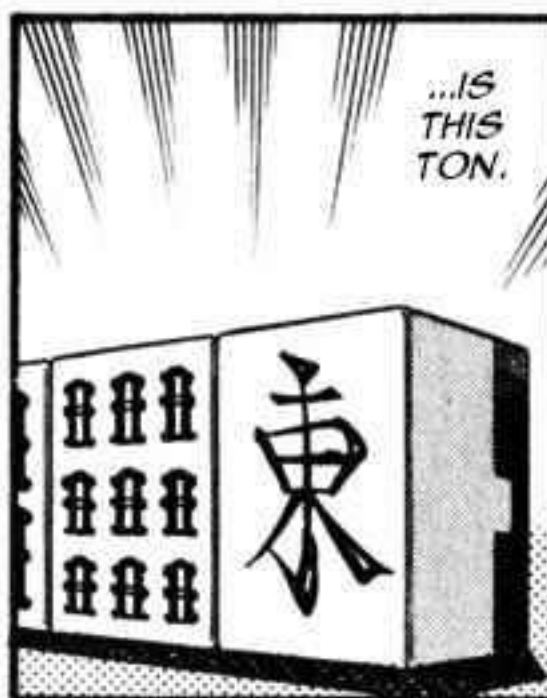
THE
9-
PIN.

AT THE
MOMENT, THE
GUY TO MY
LEFT HAS
THE TILE THAT
WILL TAKE MY
HAND TO
HANEMAN...



BUT
EVEN
SO

THIS TON IS
OF AKAGI'S
SEAT WIND,
AND IT'S A
LIVE TILE.



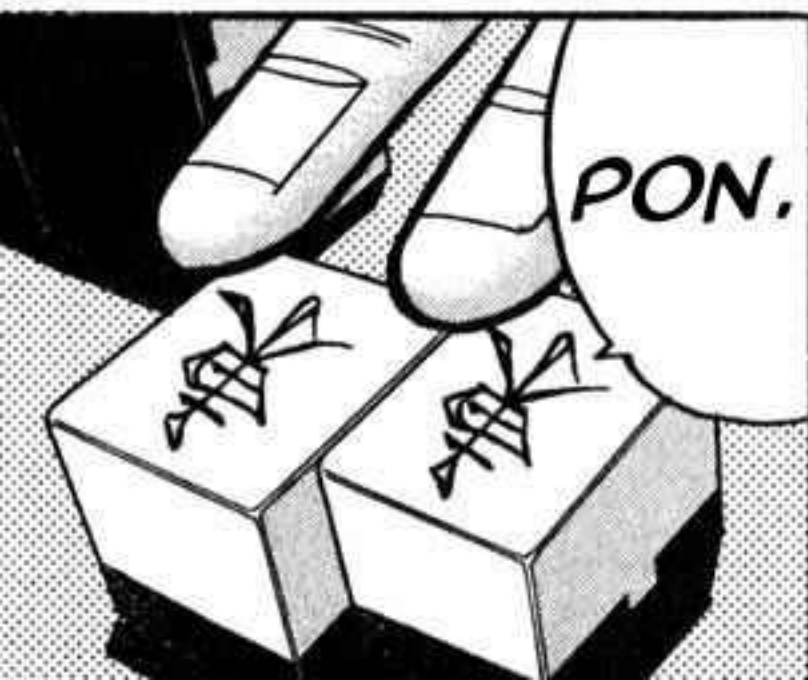
...IS
THIS
TON.



THE ONLY
PROBLEM
I'VE GOT



RIICHI!!



PON.



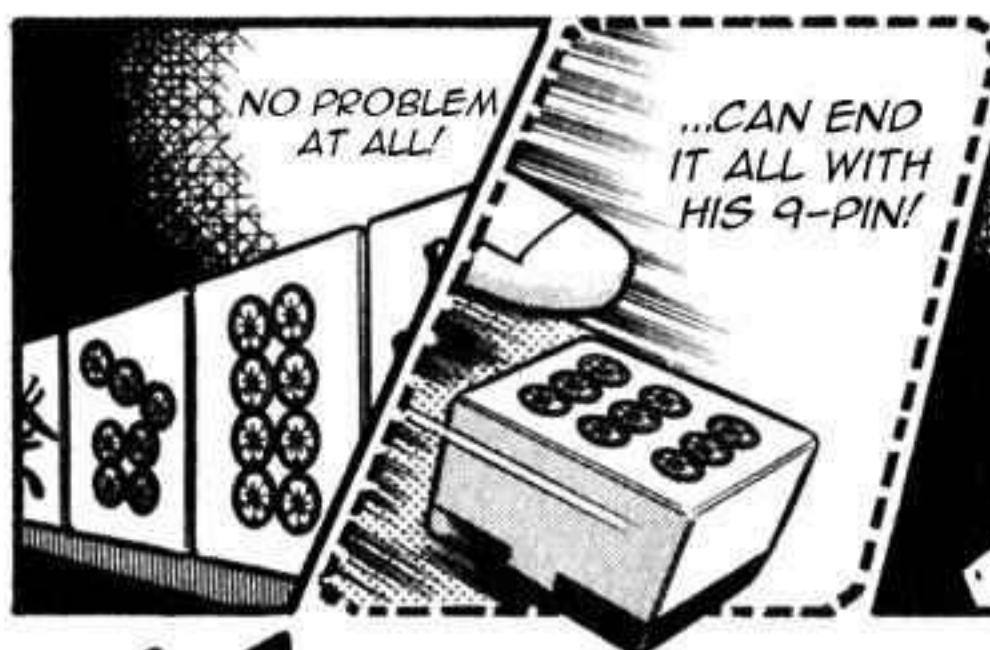
HMM-
HM



I'VE
GOTTA
MAKE IT
PASS!!



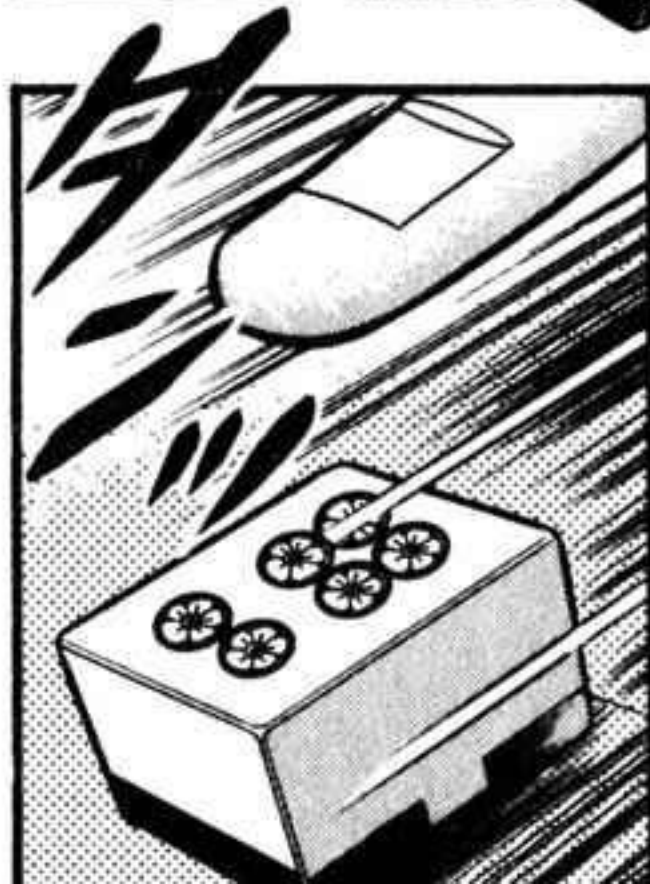
THAT'S FINE... NO PROB!



...CAN END IT ALL WITH HIS 9-PIN!



AS LONG AS IT'S NOT A RON ...

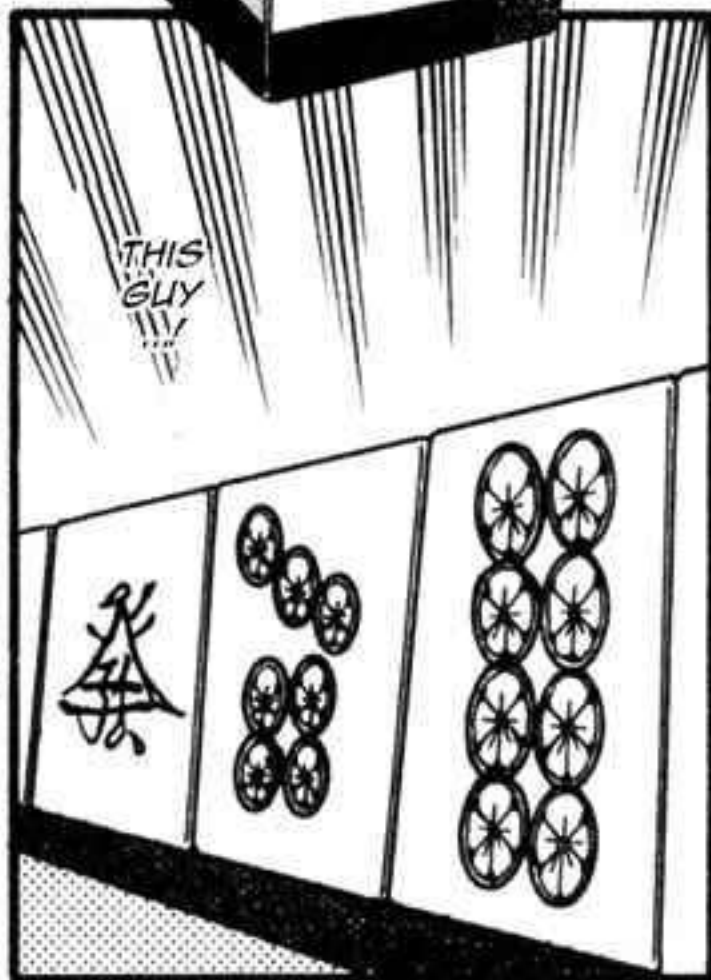




THE G-PIN
...IT
COULD
WIN OFFA
THAT...!!



HE'S
REALLY
SEEN
RIGHT
THROUGH
IT...!!



THIS
GUY
!!!



THIS
GUY

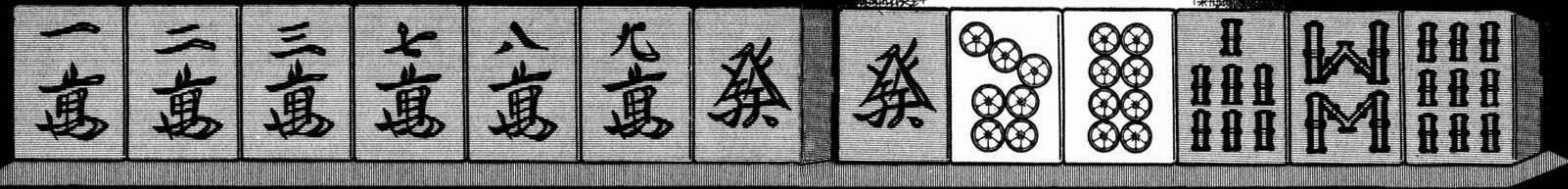
IT'S NOT
JUST OUR
SIGNALS

...
NO
...!



HE KNOWS
ALL OF OUR
SIGNALS...!!

HE KNEW
FOR SURE
THAT I HAD
THIS SHAPE
...!



...AND I CAN'T WIN BY RON ON THE SAME TURN THAT I IGNORE A WINNING TILE.

...I CAN'T CALL OFF THE SIGNAL FOR MY PARTNER TO DEAL THE 9-PIN...

BUT ...

...IF I DID, I COULD STILL LAND A TSUMO ON MY NEXT DRAW...

I COULD IGNORE THIS 6-PIN ...

OF COURSE ...

...WOULD PLAY THE UPPER TILE OF MY EDGE WAIT, THE 9-PIN...!

...HE KNEW THAT THE SOUTH PLAYER ...

THAT IS TO SAY ...

AND SINCE HE DID KNOW FOR SURE, HE DEALT THAT 6-PIN...!!

SHIT ...

...I DEALT THAT RISKY TON TILE THAT WAS ALSO HIS SEAT WIND ...!

AND ALL OF THIS JUST BECAUSE ...

...BUT I'D HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DO JUST THAT...!

IT WILL BE HARD TO DRAW THE WINNING TILE MYSELF ...

...INTO JUST A GARBAGE HAND!

...HE TURNED MY CHANTA, SAN SHOKU HANEMAN HAND...

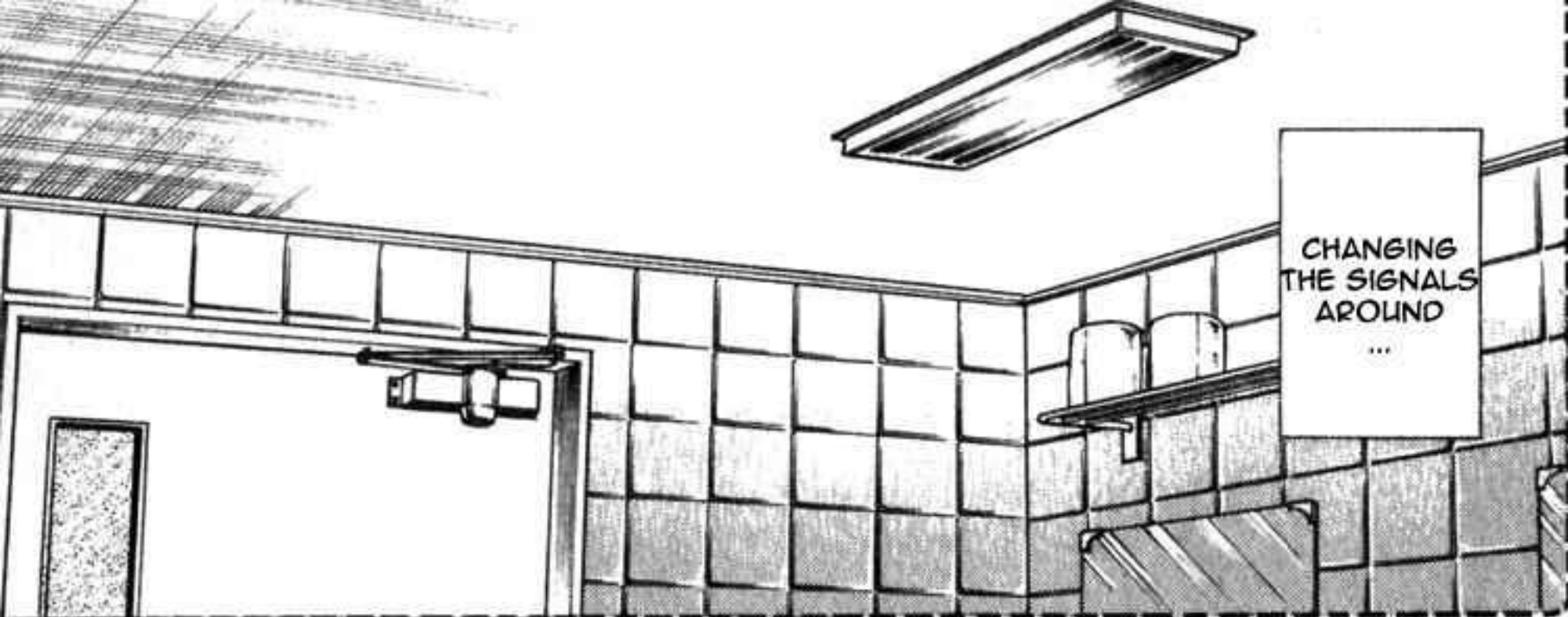
...HE PLAYED THIS 6-PIN ONE TURN AHEAD OF HIM TO TURN MY HAND INTO JUNK!

AND KNOWING THAT HE WOULD ...

IN OTHER WORDS...

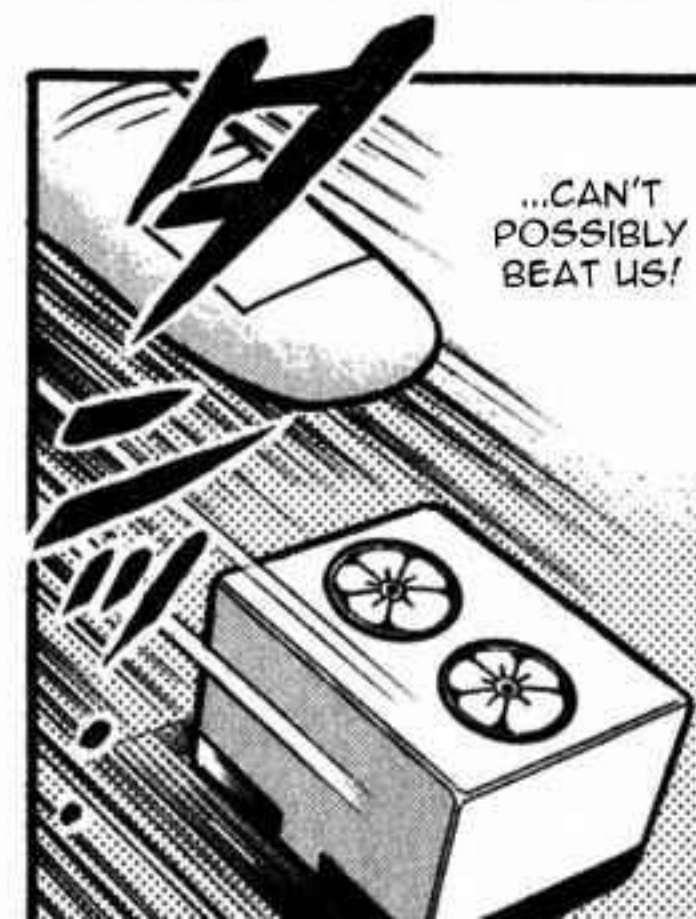
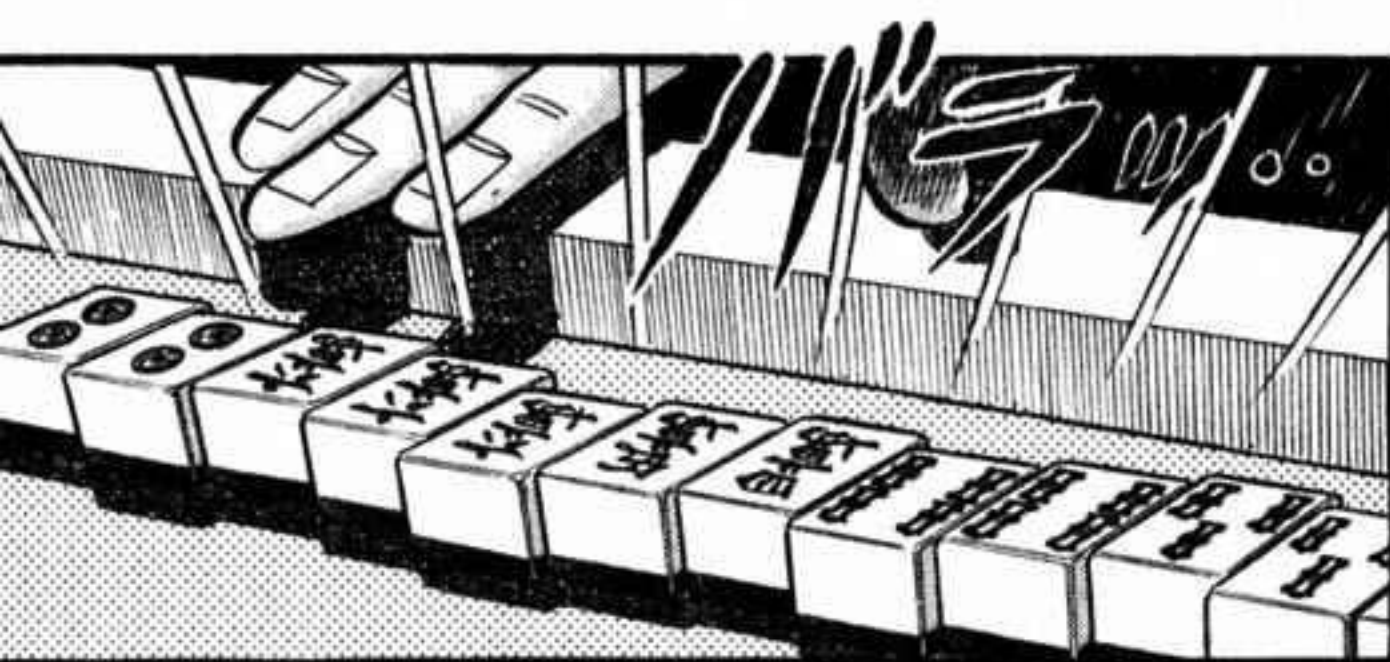
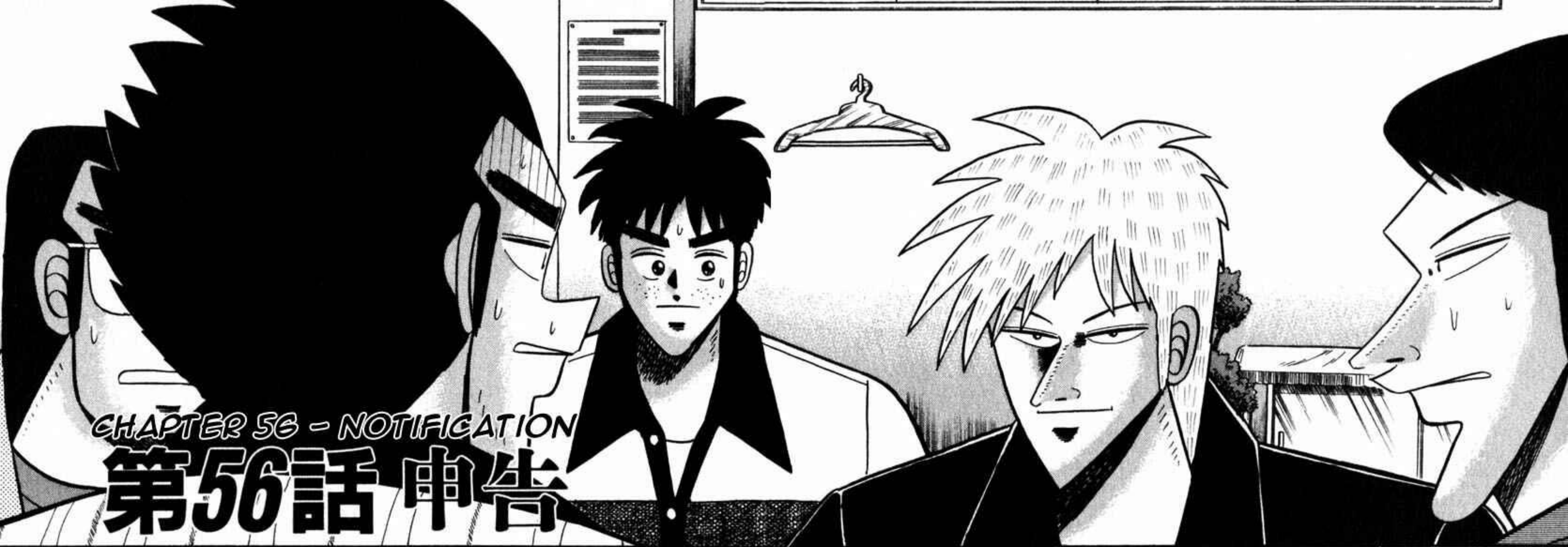


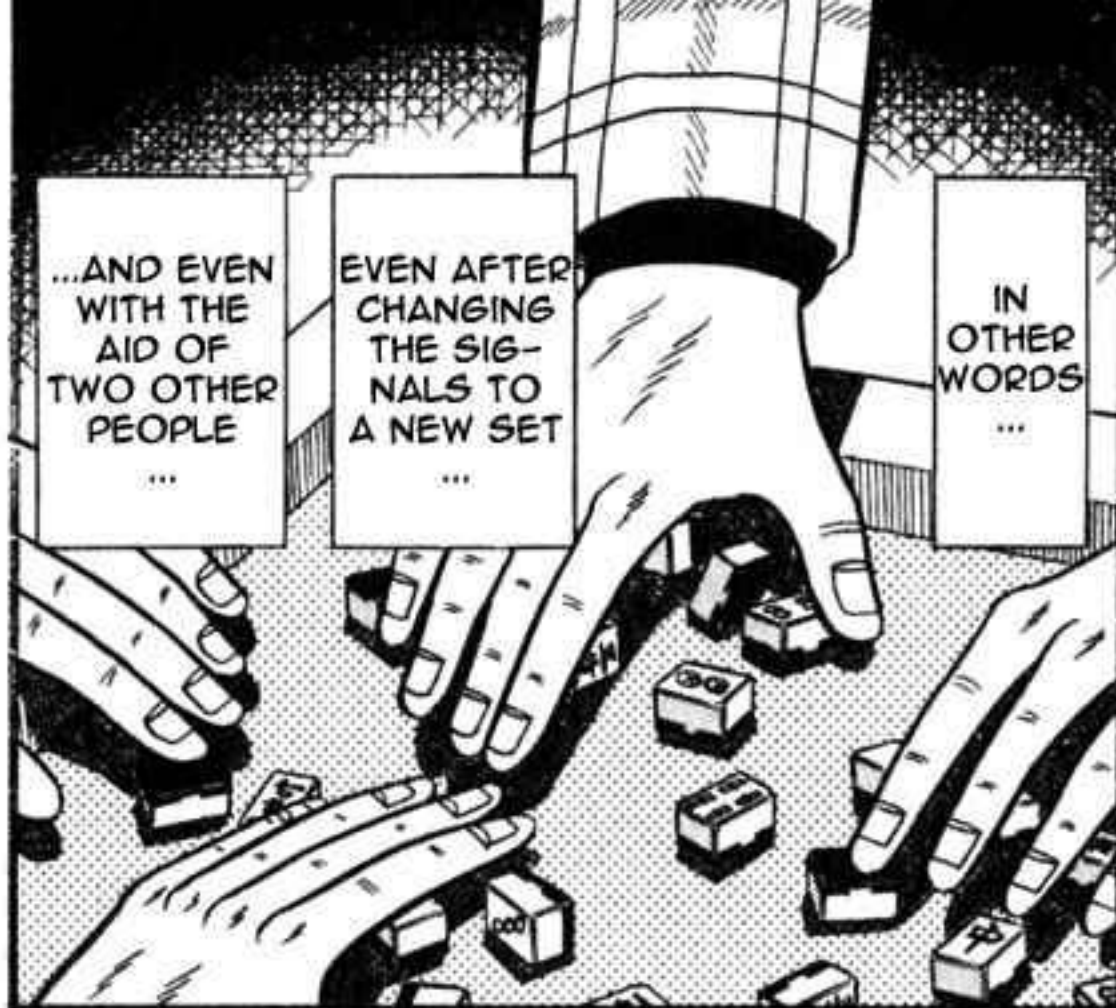




NOT EXACTLY UNREACHABLE...







...AND EVEN WITH THE AID OF TWO OTHER PEOPLE ...

EVEN AFTER CHANGING THE SIGNALS TO A NEW SET ...

IN OTHER WORDS ...

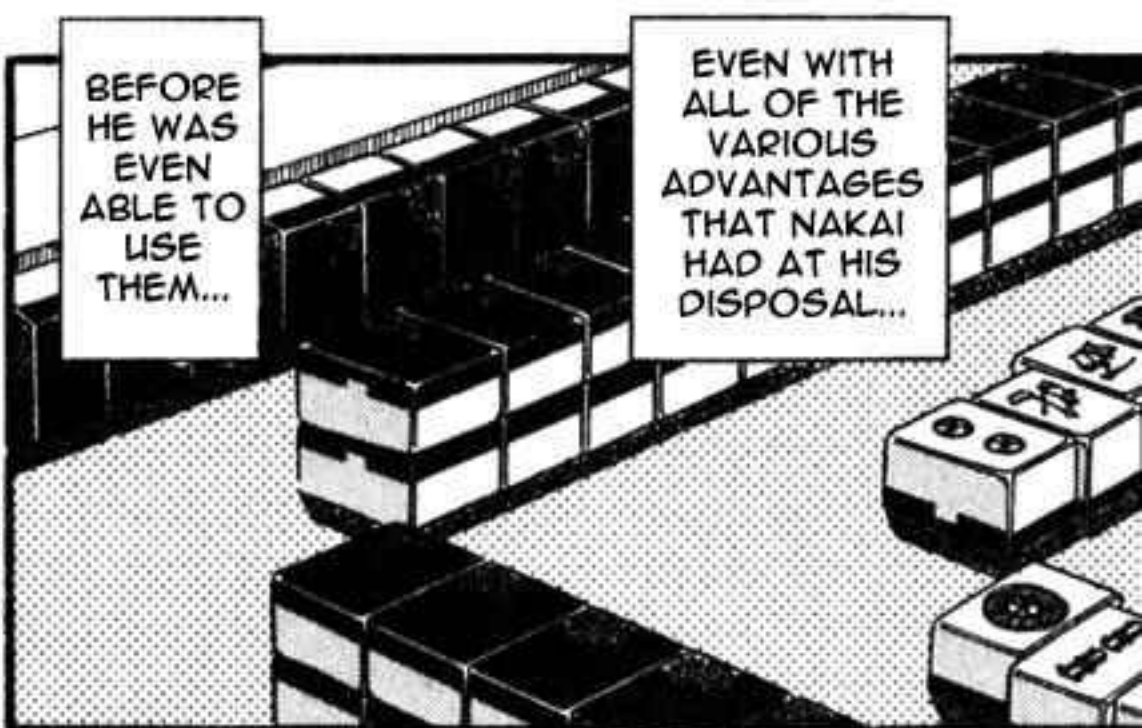


THINGS WERE ONLY GETTING WORSE AND WORSE FOR HIM.



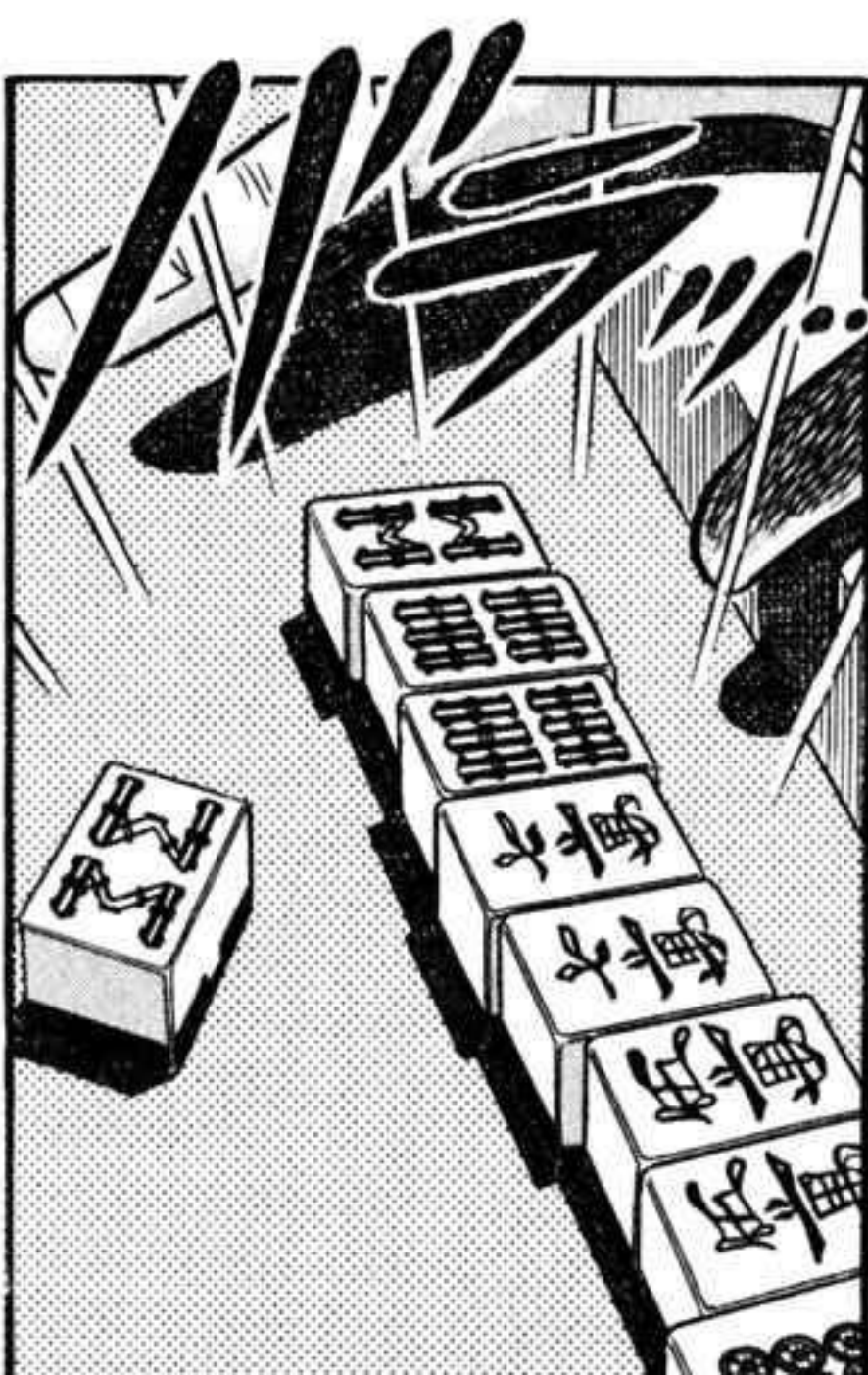
...WOULD SWIFTLY STRIKE TO ELIMINATE SUCH THINGS!

AKAGI ...



BEFORE HE WAS EVEN ABLE TO USE THEM...

EVEN WITH ALL OF THE VARIOUS ADVANTAGES THAT NAKAI HAD AT HIS DISPOSAL...

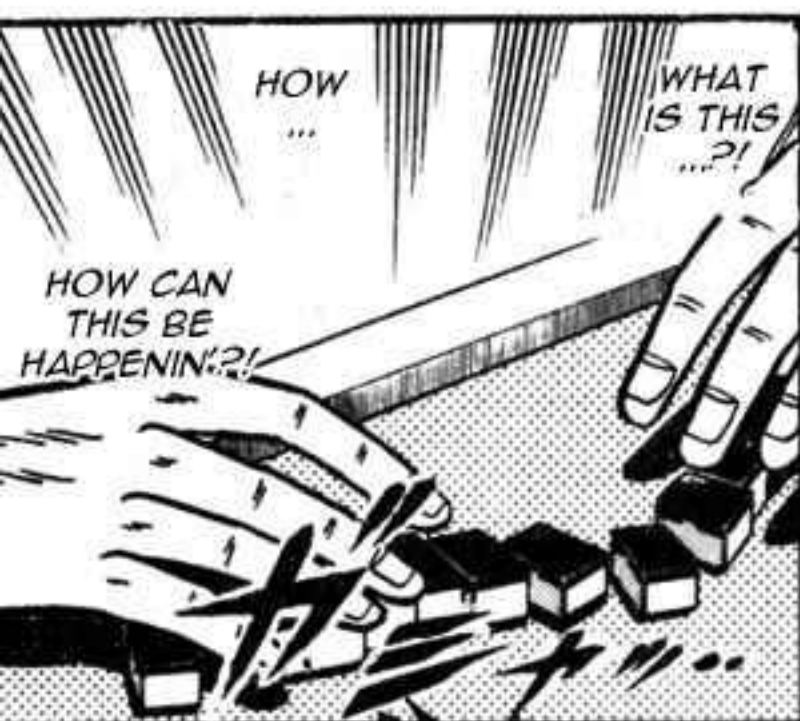


IT'S ONLY
THE 5TH
TURN...!!

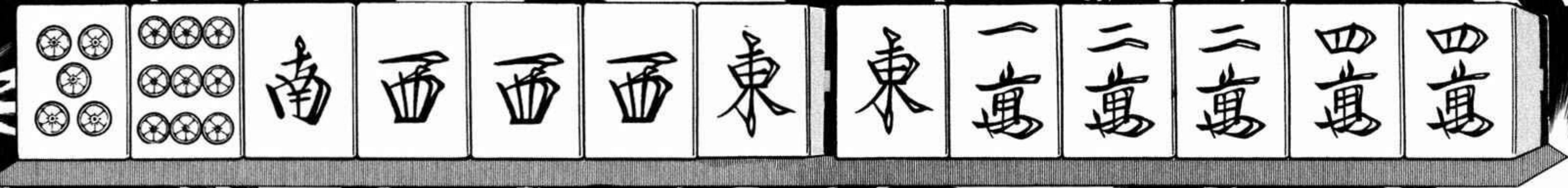
NO
WAY...

URGH
...

AKAGI HAD
COMPLETED
YET
ANOTHER
HAND!



NAKAI GETS
THIS STARTING
HAND...!



I'M
FORCIN' MY
WAY THROUGH

I'M NOT GONNA
LET THIS CHANGE
GO TO WASTE!

BUT NOW I CAN MOVE!



I'VE GOT
MYSELF
A FIGHTIN'
HAND!

AT THE
END OF
IT ALL
...

THIS
IS IT
...!



WITH HON ITSU AND TOI TOI...



THAT GIVES ME...



...TO
THIS
NAN!

I'LL
CHANGE
THE NEW
DORA
...

FIRST,
USIN' A
SLEIGHT
OF HAND
...

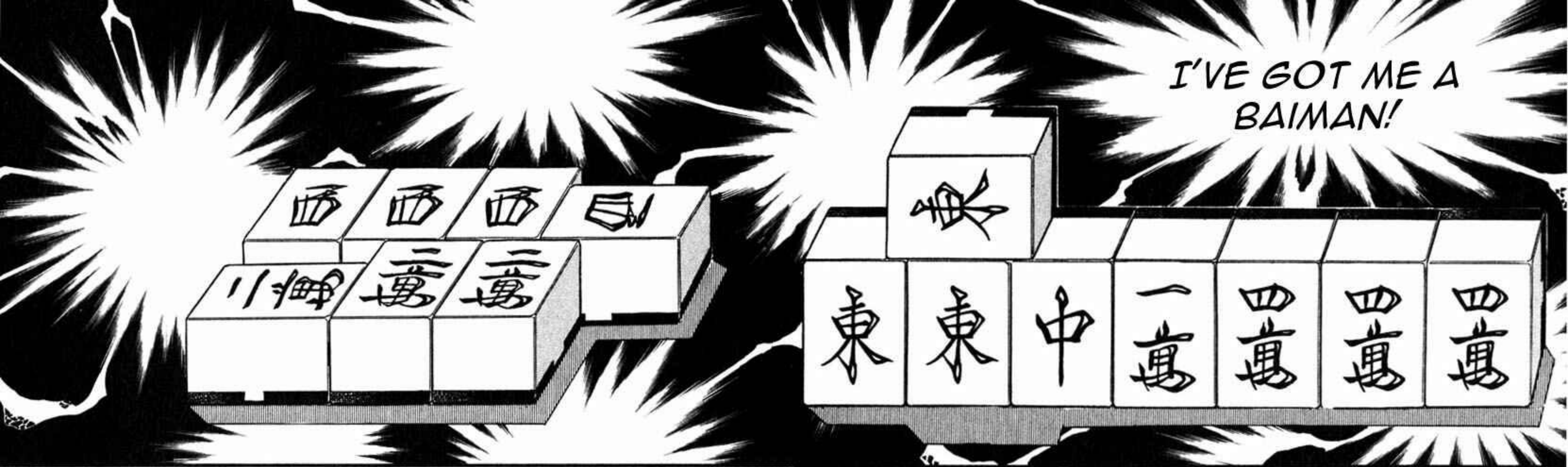


...AND
MY FLOW
WAS GETTIN'
WORSE AND
WORSE...

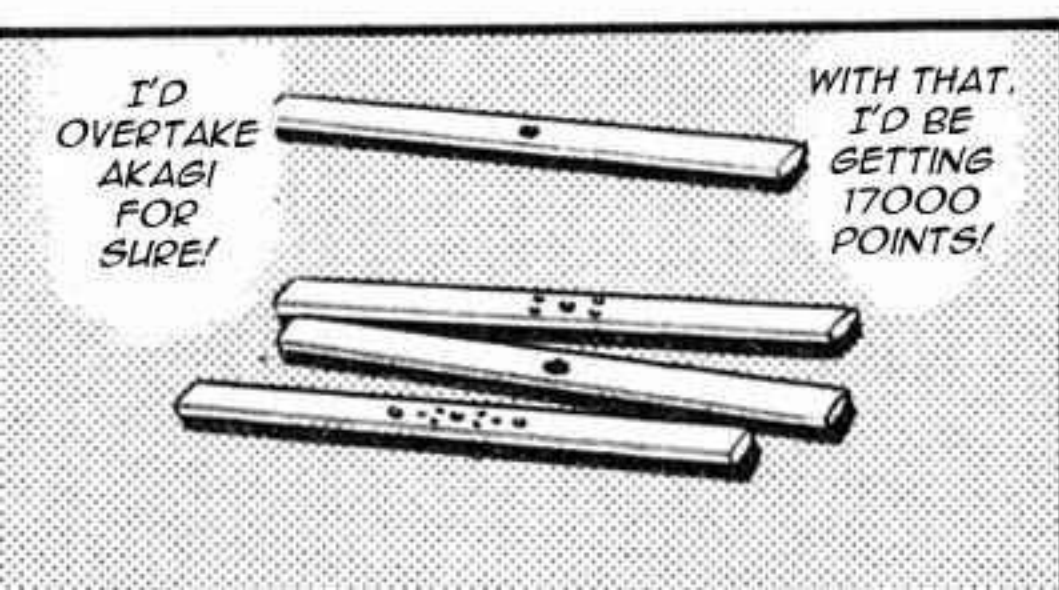
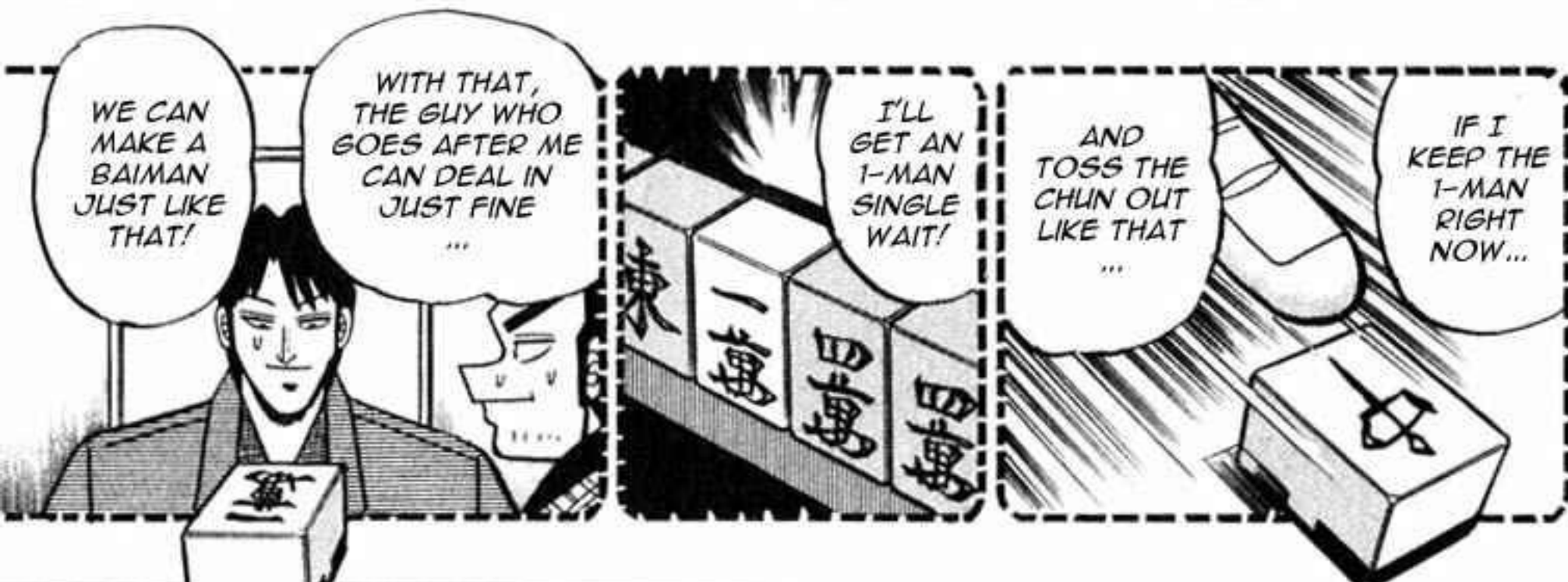


THINGS
WERE
STARTIN'
TO WEAR
DOWN
...



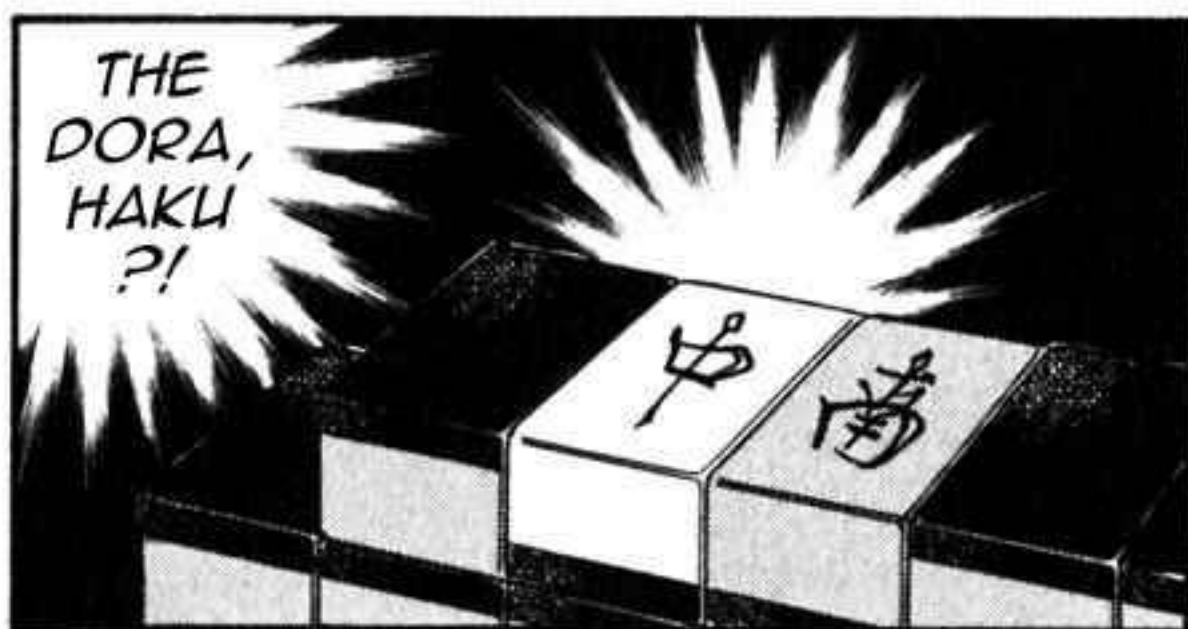
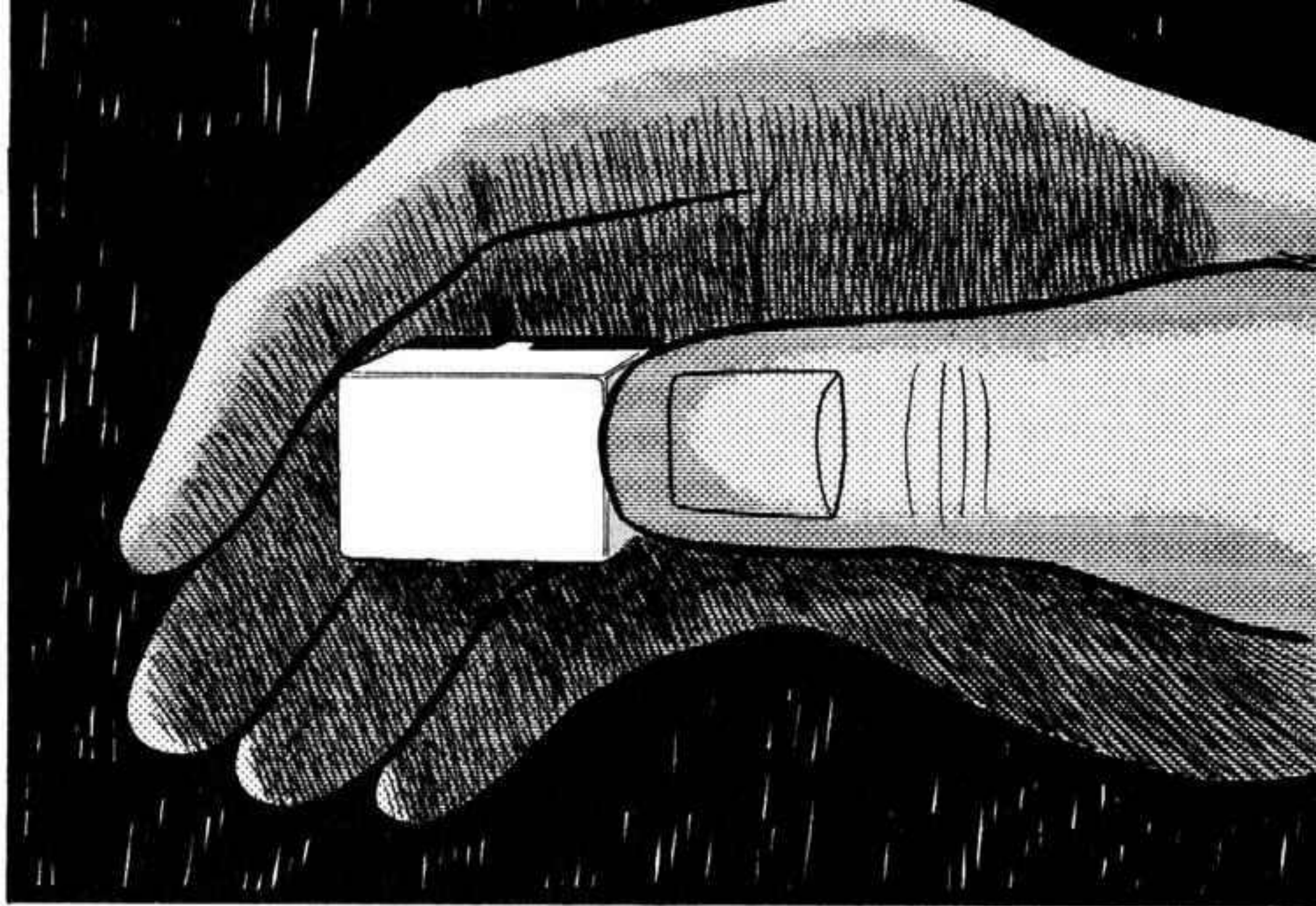


I'VE GOT ME A
BAIMAN!









THE
DORA,
HAKU
?!

GH
....!!



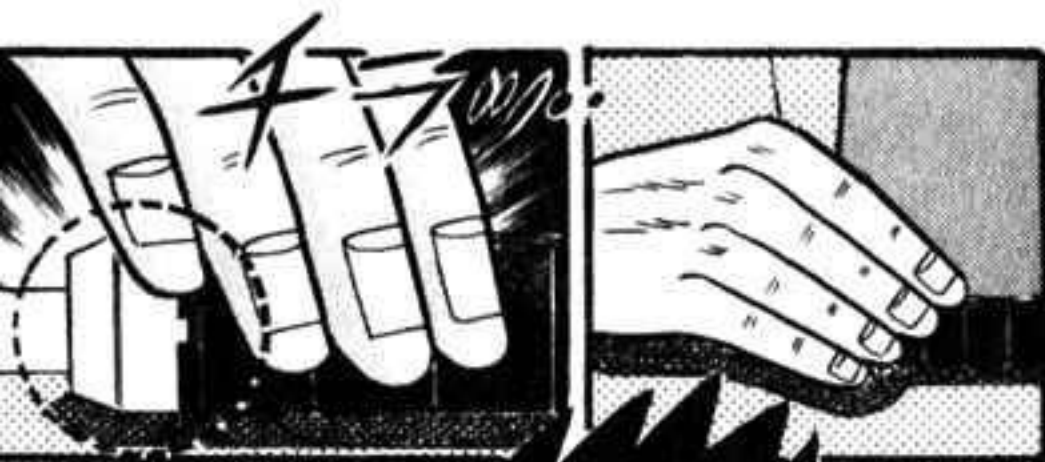
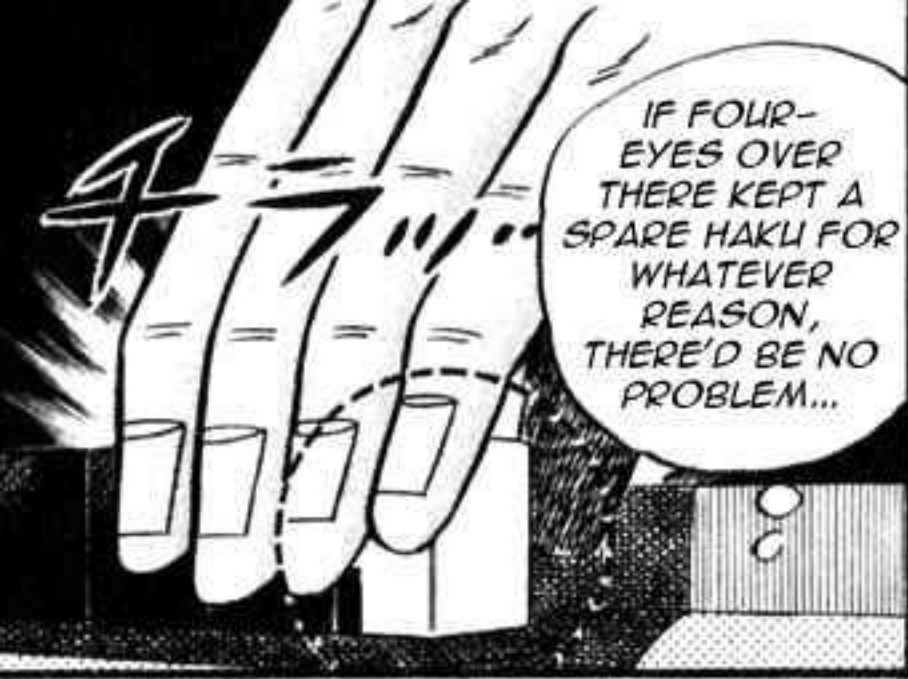
ALL I
NEEDED
WAS FOR
THIS ONE
DAMN TILE
TO MAKE IT
PAST HIM
...

I MEAN,
AT THE
LAST
SECOND!



THIS IS
BULLSHIT
....!!







THEN
I CAN
SAFELY
WAIT
WITH
THIS
ONE!

IF MY
BUDDY
HERE
KEPT A
HAKU...



NOW
IT'S FINE
TO DEAL
THIS HERE
HAKU!

I'VE
BEEN
SAVED
...!



ALL
RIGHT
...!!



NOW,
I CAN
CHANGE
IT UP FOR
THIS 1-
MAN!



NO
PRO-
BLEM!

AND THANKS
TO ATAMA
HANE, I'LL
GET IT FIRST,
FOR SURE!

IN THE
NEXT
TURN, MY
ALLY CAN
PLAY THE
HAKU!



IT'S LIKELY
THAT AKAGI
HAS THE SAME
SINGLE-HAKU!
WAIT, BUT...



YES,
NEARLY
ALL OF
NAKAI'S
MIND...

...WAS
CERTAIN
THAT THIS
1-MAN
WOULD
PASS.



90%
...

I'VE
WON!!



...SO
THERE'S NO
PROBLEM
IN PLAYIN'
THIS!

I CAN SEE
WHERE ALL'A
THE 2-MANS
ARE, NOW
...

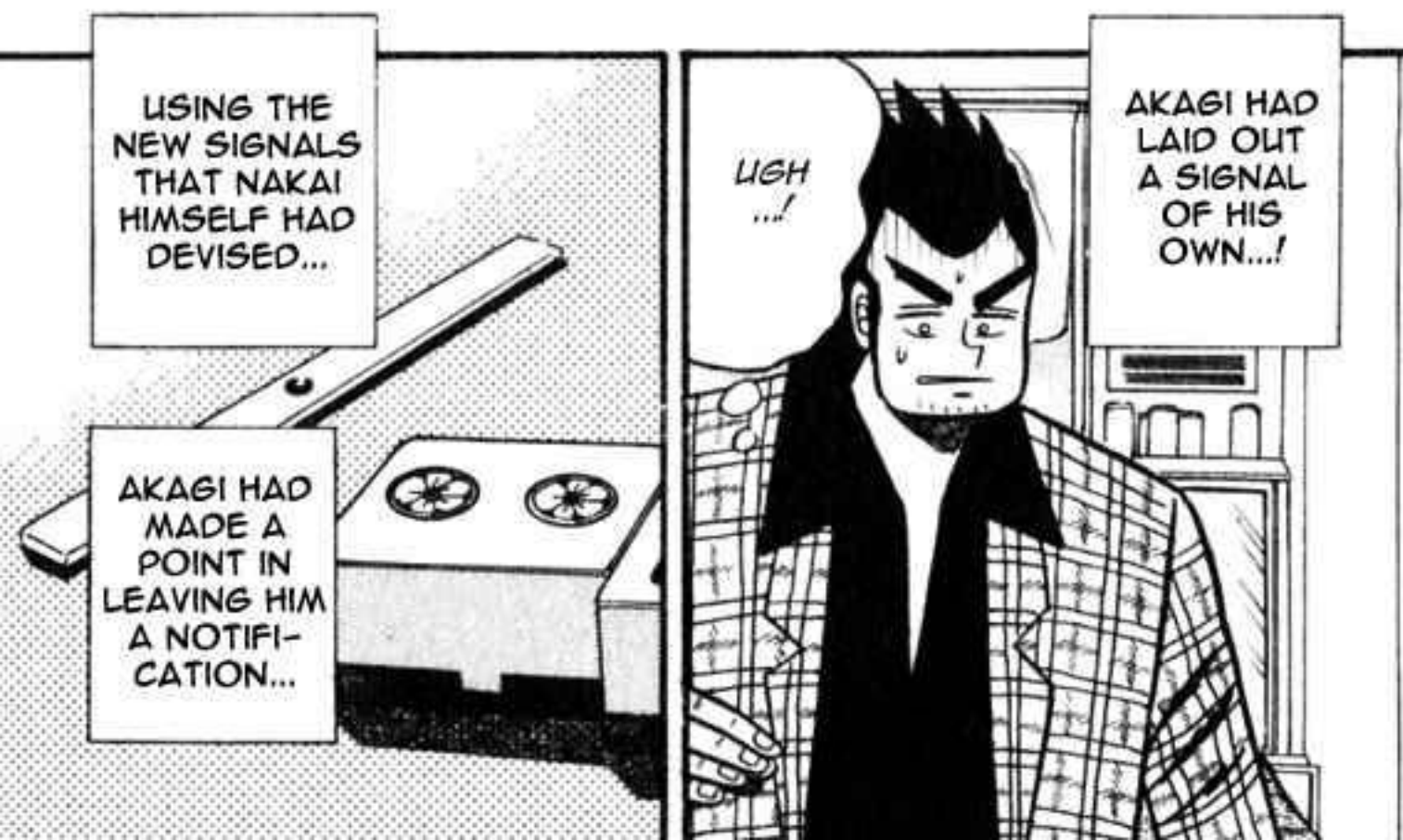


BUT
IN THE
MOMENT
HE WAS
TO PLAY
IT ON THE
TABLE...



"HOW
COULD
THIS BE,"
HE ASKED
HIMSELF...

... A
HORRI-
FYING
REALI-
SATION
TRE-
MORED
THROUGH
HIS
BODY
...!



USING THE
NEW SIGNALS
THAT NAKAI
HIMSELF HAD
DEvised...

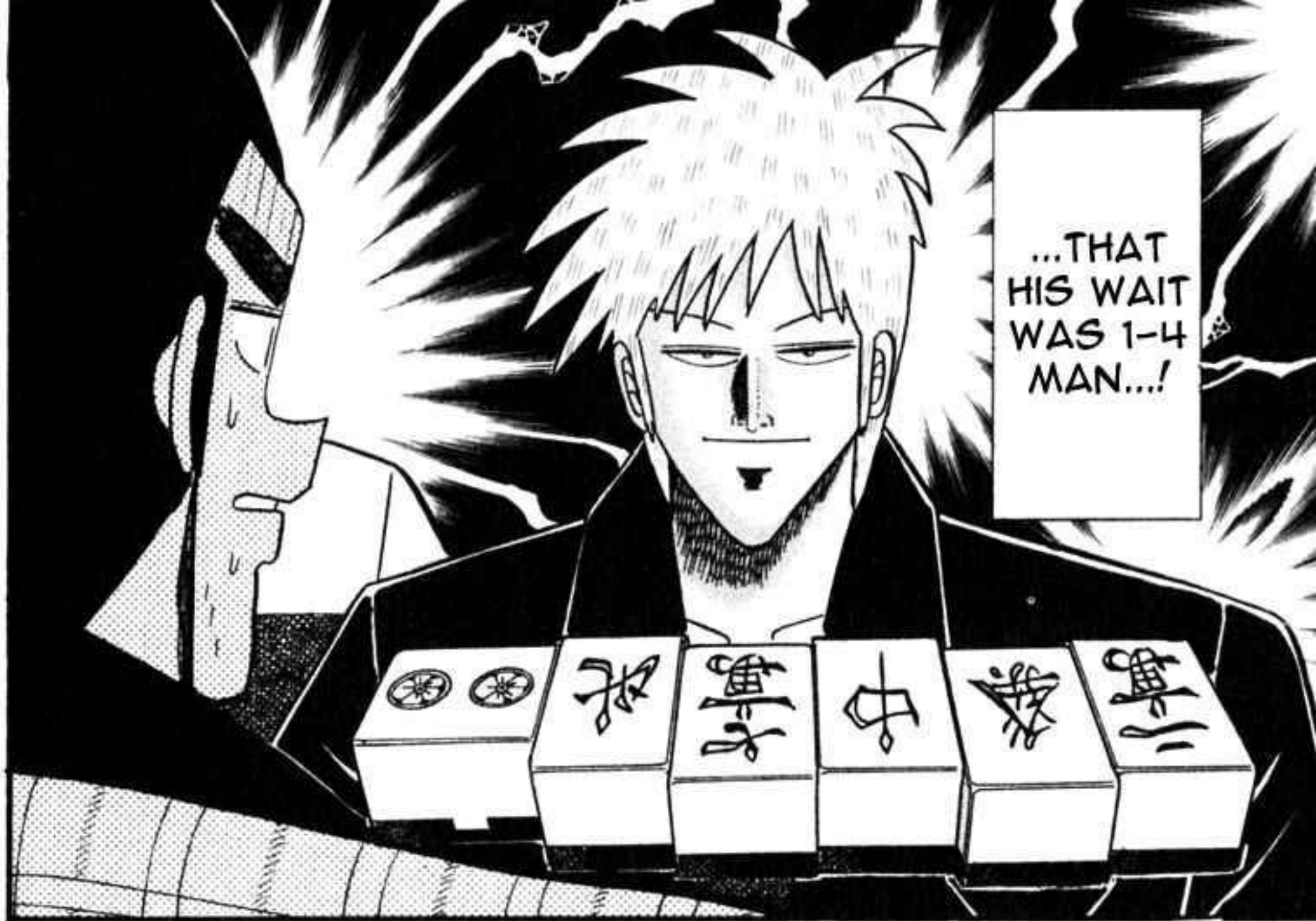
AKAGI HAD
MADE A
POINT IN
LEAVING HIM
A NOTIFI-
CATION...

LIGH
...!

AKAGI HAD
LAID OUT
A SIGNAL
OF HIS
OWN...!



LIGH
...!



...THAT
HIS WAIT
WAS 1-4
MAN...!



NO...
NO WAY
...!!



...AND
PUTTING THE
DISCARD IN
THE CENTER
MEANS IT'S
MANZU...

...SO
THAT
WOULD
MAKE IT
1-4 MAN
...?



...LOOKED
JUST
LIKE
...

...THE
SIGNAL
FOR
1-4
...

THE
TIMING
HE USED
TO THROW
HIS STICK
OUT...

BUT
...



IMPOSSIBLE...



...AND
WE DIDN'T
EVEN SHOW
OUR HANDS
THEN!

WE'VE
ONLY HAD
ONE
CHANCE
TO USE
THEM...



SINCE
WE GOT
THE NEW
SIGNALS
...

THERE'S NO
WAY AKAGI
CAN KNOW
HOW WE
DID IT!

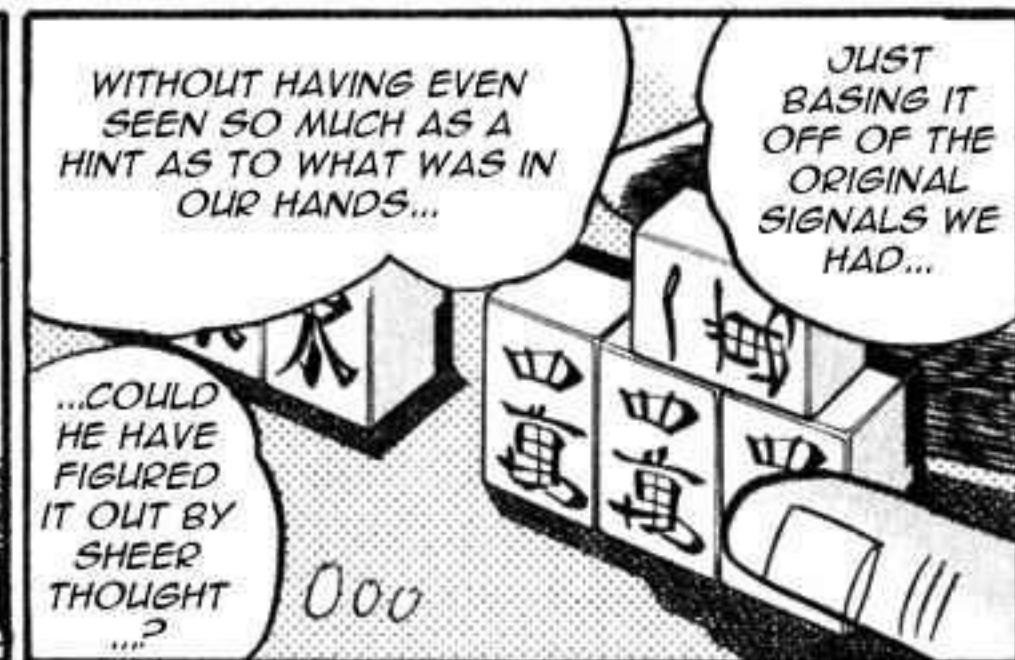


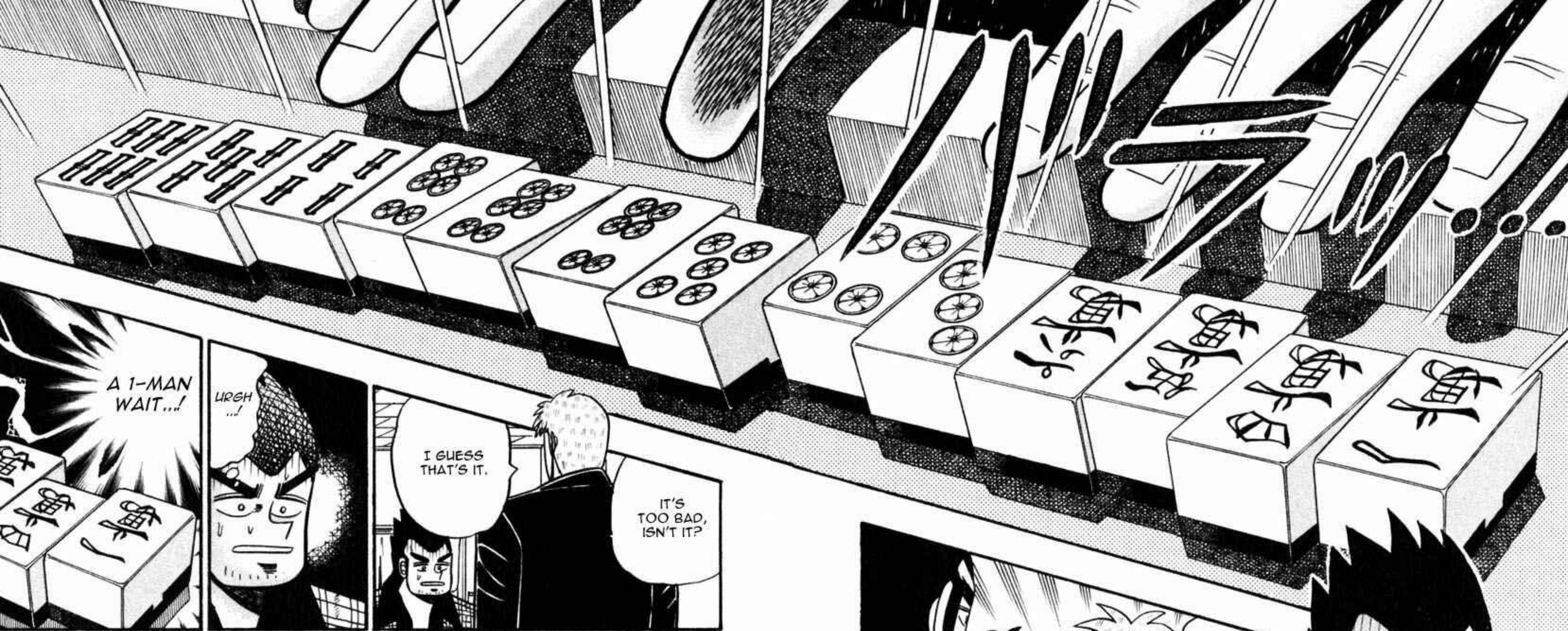
WE'VE
CHANGED
THEM UP
SINCE
THEN!

IF IT WAS
THE OLD
SIGNALS,
I COULD
BELIEVE IT,
BUT...



THIS IS THE ONLY MAN WHO I CAN'T UNDERSTAND...





A 1-MAN
WAIT...!



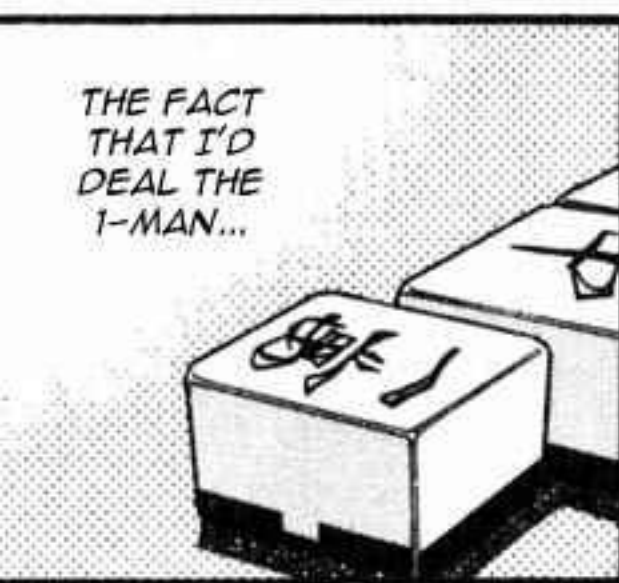
URGH
...



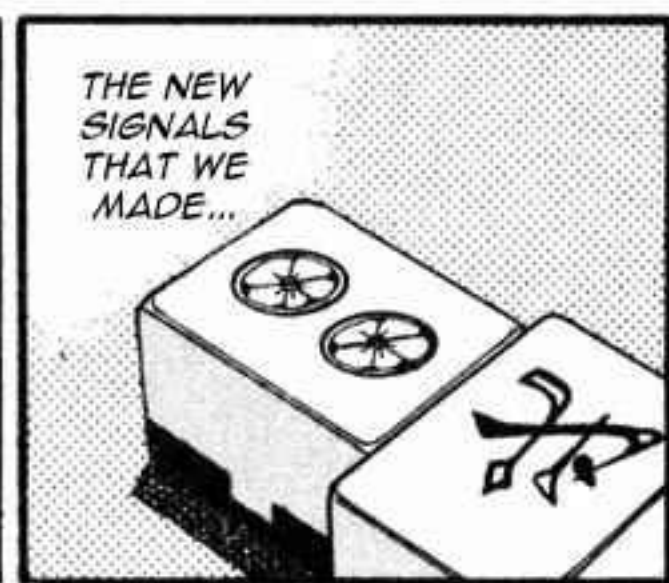
I GUESS
THAT'S IT.



IT'S
TOO BAD,
ISN'T IT?



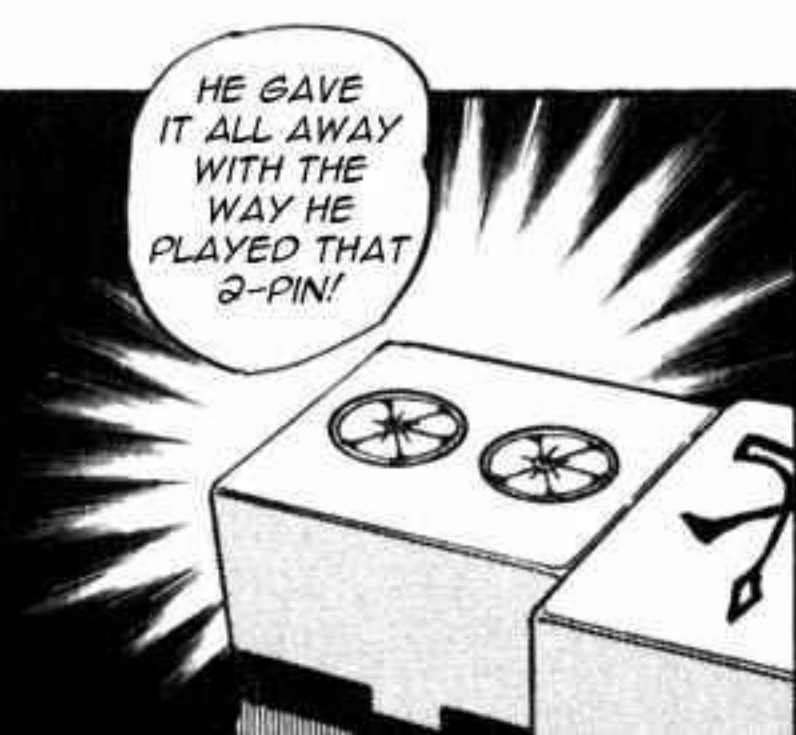
THE FACT
THAT I'D
DEAL THE
1-MAN...



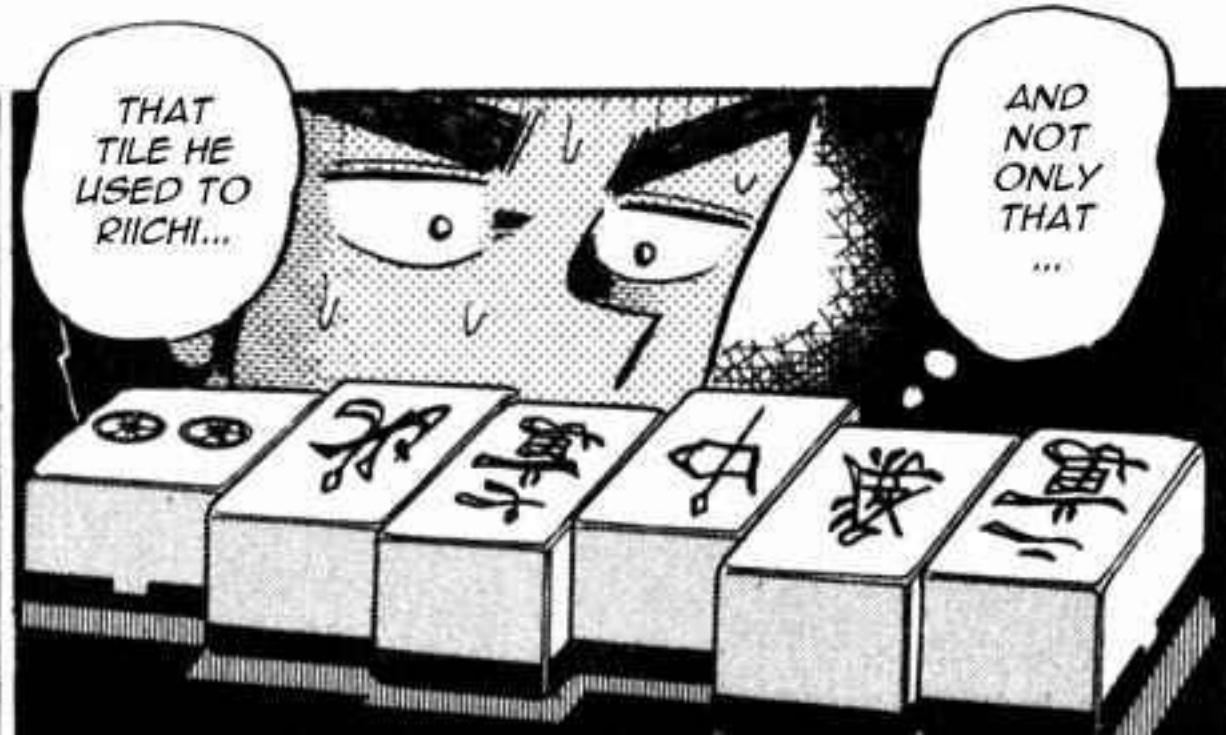
THE NEW
SIGNALS
THAT WE
MADE...



THIS GUY...
HE READ ME
LIKE A BOOK
...



HE GAVE
IT ALL AWAY
WITH THE
WAY HE
PLAYED THAT
3-PIN!



THAT
TILE HE
USED TO
RIICHI...

AND
NOT ONLY
THAT
...



RON.



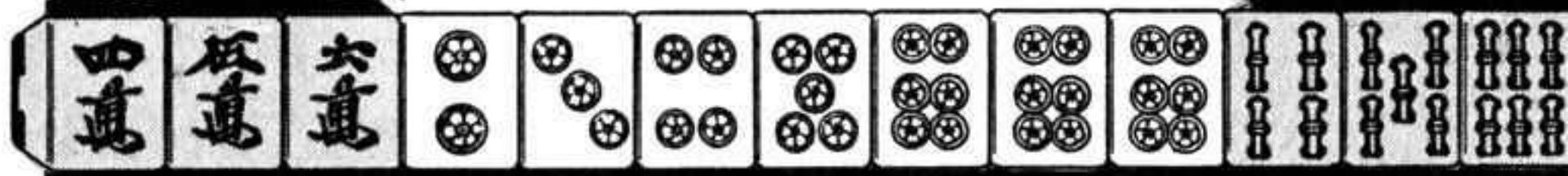
HMM-
HM-
HM
...



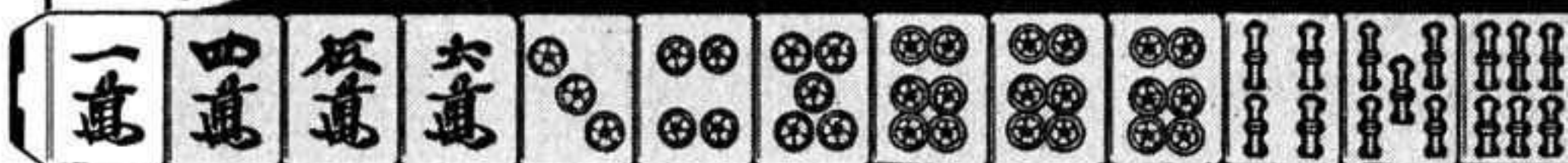
...A
1-2-4-
5-7 PIN
WAIT.

HE COULD
HAVE HAD A
5-SIDED
WAIT LIKE
THIS ONE
...

IF HE'D
KEPT THAT
2-PIN IN
HIS WAIT
...



HE GAVE
THAT UP FOR
A 1-MAN SINGLE
WAIT...!



BE
CAREFUL
WITH THIS.



HE SAW RIGHT
THROUGH ME...
AND I DIDN'T
EVEN NOTICE
...!!



REALLY
...?!

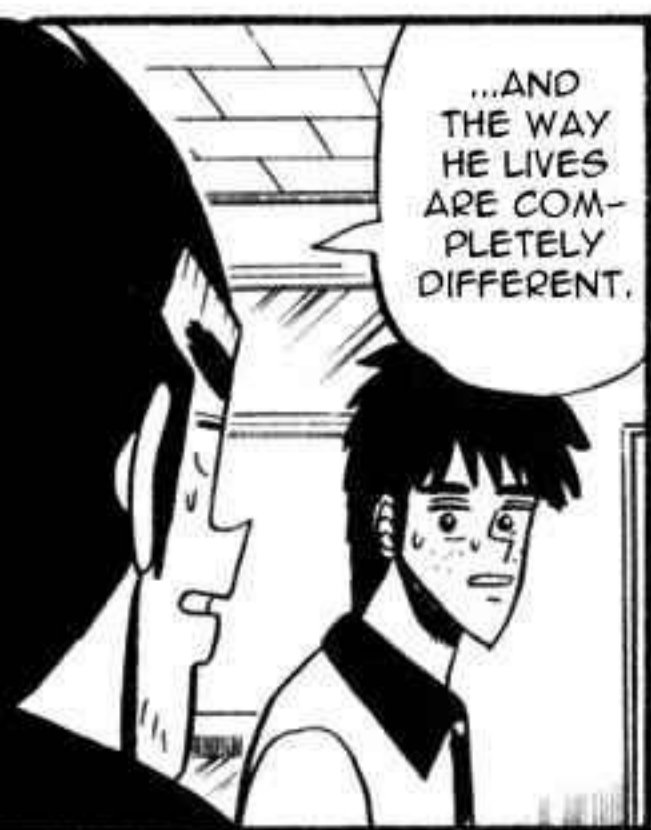
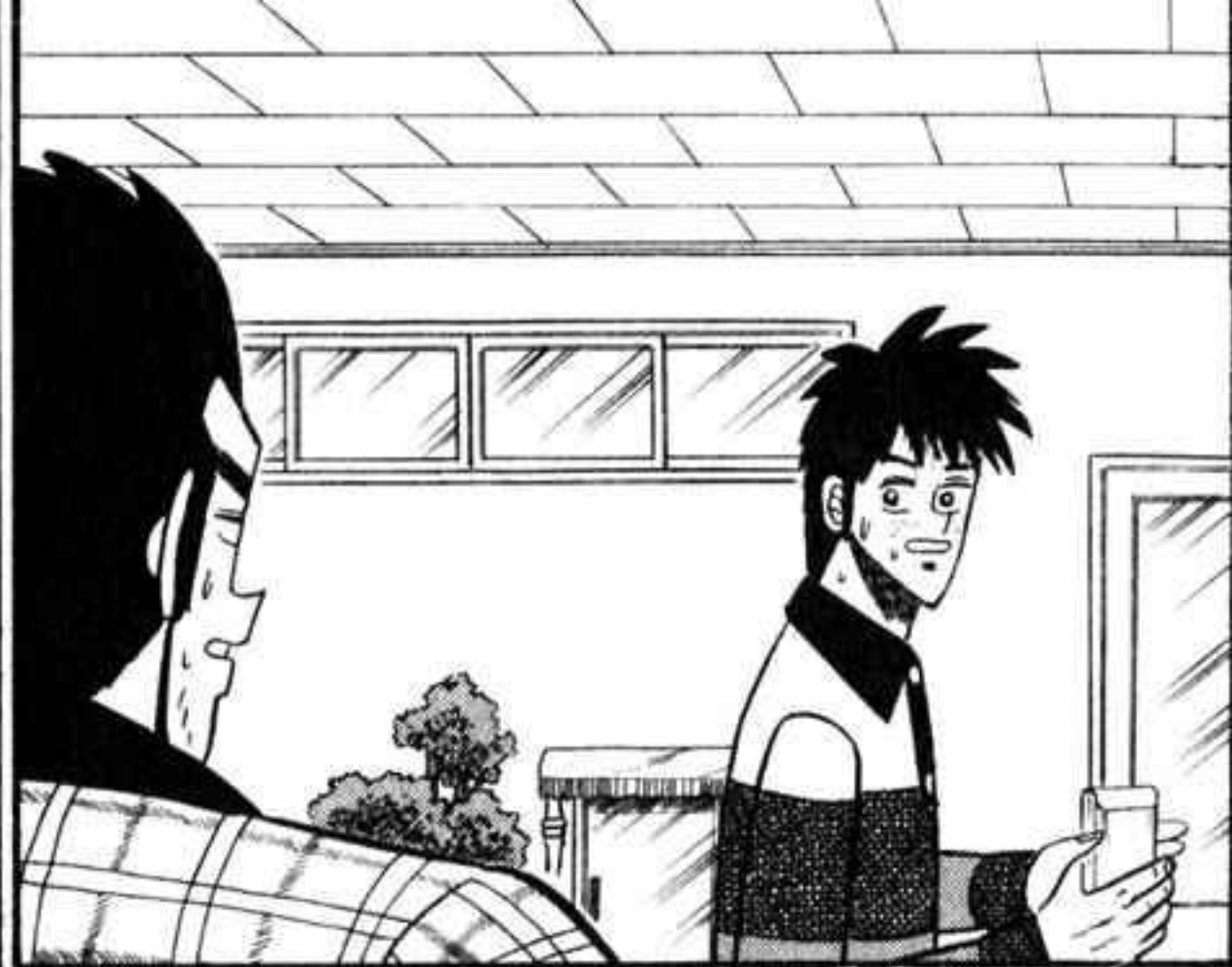
ARE
YOU
LEAVING
FOR
GOOD,
NOW
...?!



STOP
THAT!

AKAGI-
SAN
....!!







AKAGI'S CONDUCT ...

FOR NORMAL PEOPLE ...

HIS WAY OF LIFE WOULDN'T FIT THEM.



...BUT ON THE INSIDE, HE'S EXCEPTIONAL.

HE MAY LOOK LIKE A NORMAL PERSON ON THE OUTSIDE ...



...WHO HAS SENSES THAT ARE JUST AS STRANGE, BUT ALL THE MORE DEADLY.

HE'S A STRANGE SPECIES OF FISH ...



...FOR THE SINGLE WAIT ON THE 1-MAN ...?

AKAGI'S DECISION TO GIVE UP THE 5-SIDED PINZU WAIT ...



DIDN'T YOU CATCH IT?

OR ELSE ...

WHAT WENT DOWN JUST NOW ...?



AM I WRONG?

...



...BUT THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN LIES ON THE SURFACE...

IN ORDER TO DO THAT ...

THAT MEANS HE HAD TO HAVE READ RIGHT INTO ME WITH THAT 1-MAN SINGLE WAIT ...



THAT RIGHT ... WELL, IT WAS AN UNBELIEVABLE DECISION ...

NO ...

SUPPO-SIN' THE 1-MAN WASN'T IN MY HAND WHEN HE DID THAT ...



AND HE HAD TO TAKE THAT FAITH AND FOLLOW THROUGH WITH IT...

THAT'S WHAT IT TOOK.

HE HAD TO TRUST HIMSELF ENOUGH TO PUT HIS WHOLE FAITH IN THAT READ HE MADE OF WHAT I HAD...

...HE WOULD'A LOST, FOR SURE.







AKAGI

**THE GENIUS WHO FELL INTO THE DARKNESS.
A WORK BY FUKUMOTO NOBUYUKI.**



第57話 怪死

CHAPTER 57 - HOMICIDE



SHOWA
ERA, YEAR
40.

(1965)

IT IS THE
MIDDLE
OF
SUMMER,
AUGUST
1ST.

HE IS OUT
RATHER LATE
TODAY, AT
THE EARLY
HOUR OF
2:00 AM.

HE IS ON
A NIGHT
DRIVE
THROUGH
THESE DEEP
PARTS OF
THE TAMA
MOUNTAINS.

THIS MAN IS
ASANUMA
KOUICHI, A
MEMBER OF
THAT VERY
SAME TAMA
CITY'S COUNCIL
OF FOREST
PROTECTION.

BE-
TWEEN
TOKYO
AND
TAMA
CITY.

THE LO-
CATION IS
THE TAMA
MOUNTAIN-
SIDE...



...AND IS
STILL QUITE
BUZZED
FROM THE
LARGE
QUANTITIES
OF ALCHO-
HOL HE
CONSUMED.

HE HAS
JUST LEFT
A FAREWELL
PARTY FOR
A DEAR
FRIEND OF
HIS...



...AND
IS AL-
MOST
IN THE
CITY,
WHEN
...

NATURALLY,
HE IS
DRIVING
BACK
HOME TO
TAMA CITY
AT THIS
TIME...





...HE
SEES A
LIGHT!



HE
HEARS
RUSTLING
SOUNDS
COMING
FROM THAT
DIRECTION
...

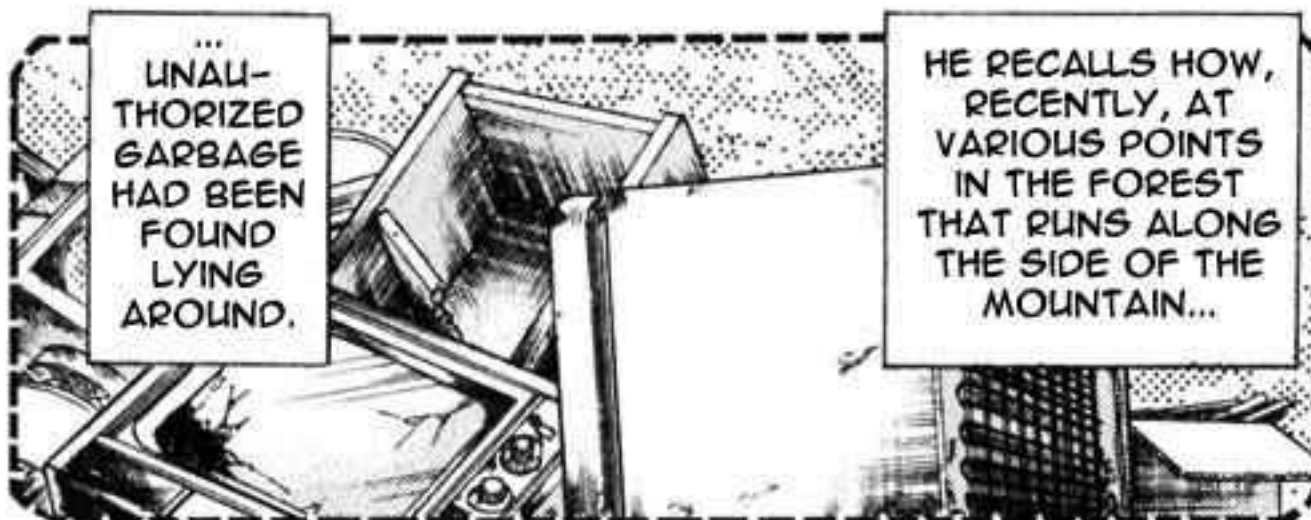
ONCE
ASA-
NUMA
STEPS
OUT OF
HIS CAR
...

IT IS
CLEAR
THAT
THERE ARE
PEOPLE
THERE.



IT IS
CLOSE.

THIS LIGHT
EMITTING
FROM THE
FOREST IS
NOT AT ALL
OUT OF
WALKING
RANGE...



...
UNAU-
THORIZED
GARBAGE
HAD BEEN
FOUND
LYING
AROUND.

HE RECALLS HOW,
RECENTLY, AT
VARIOUS POINTS
IN THE FOREST
THAT RUNS ALONG
THE SIDE OF THE
MOUNTAIN...



...HAVE BEEN
ARBITRARILY
DUMPED THERE
BY NEARBY RE-
SIDENTS, NOT
WANTING TO
DEAL WITH IT
THEMSELVES.

THIS CAN ONLY
MEAN THAT LARGE,
CUMBERSOME
ITEMS OF TRASH
THAT PEOPLE NO
LONGER HAVE A
USE FOR...



HE FORMS
AN IDEA
AS TO
WHO IT
MIGHT
BE...

UPON DISCO-
VER-
ING THIS
...

...AND THAT IS BECAUSE THE GARBAGE DUMPED BY THOSE CARELESS RESIDENTS HAD TO BE CLEANED UP BY THE COUNCIL, THEMSELVES.

AS A MEMBER OF TAMA CITY'S COUNCIL OF FOREST PROTECTION, ASANUMA WAS WELL AWARE OF THE ILLEGAL TRASH DISPOSAL

...AND STARTS IN THE DIRECTION OF THE LIGHT.

...REACHES INTO HIS CAR TO GET A FLASH-LIGHT...

ASA-
NUMA ...

ASSHOLES...

THERE WAS NO OTHER GROUP AVAILABLE FOR IT.

THE TASK OF REMOVAL WAS A TREMENDOUSLY LABORIOUS JOB TO PERFORM, TO SAY THE VERY LEAST.

IN THE SWELTERING HEAT OF THE HOTTEST PART OF THE SUMMER MONTHS...

...WAS NOT A VERY RESPECTABLE SIGHT, AND REMOVING IT EVEN LESS SO, BUT IT HAD TO BE DONE.

THE GARBAGE, BY THAT TIME COVERED WITH SLIMY RESIDUE FROM DECAY...

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE-
...?!

HEY,
YOU!

HOW PATHETIC ...

IT REALLY IS THEM ...

AND HERE HE WAS, ABLE TO PUT A STOP TO IT AT THE SCENE OF THE CRIME ...

THOSE DAMN PARASITES ...

AS YOU MIGHT IMAGINE, HE HAD TO DO JUST THAT TO ENFORCE THE LAW.







GH-

....



huhhh

||
....

huhhh

|||
....



GYAAA

AAAAA

AAAUUU

UUUGG

GGHH

HHH

!!!!!!

THIS
MARKED
THE
BEGIN-
NING

...

MARKED THE
LAUNCHING
POINT OF THE
MADMAN'S
RAMPAGE.

THIS EXTRA-
ORDINARILY
BIZARRE
HAPPENING
...



...DID NOT
APPEAR TO
HAVE
SUSTAINED
ANY GRAVE
INJURIES.

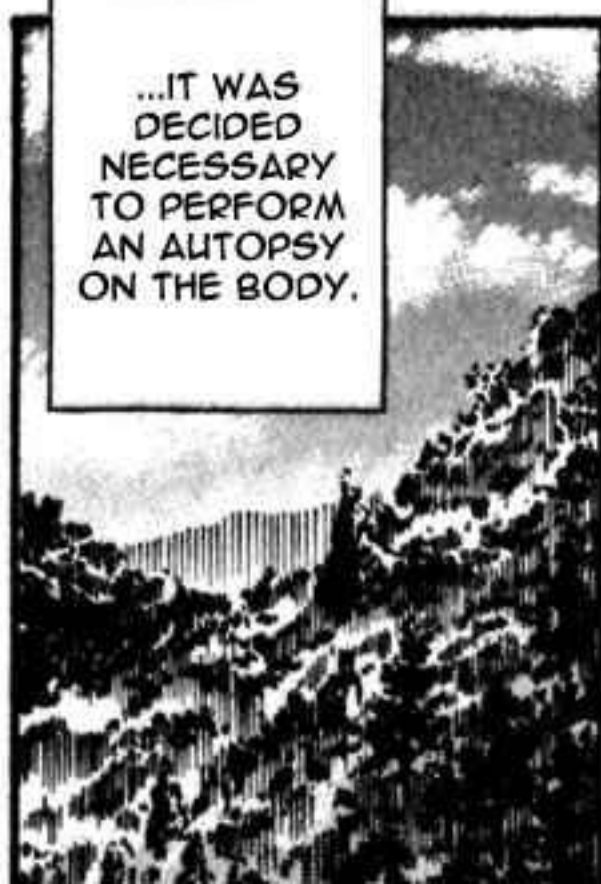
THE MAN
FOUND
BURIED
BENEATH
THE SOIL
THAT DAY
...

...THE
POLICE
RUSHED TO
THE SCENE
OF THE
CRIME TO
INVESTI-
GATE.

THE VERY
NEXT
MORNING
AFTER
ASANUMA
REPORTED
WHAT HE
SAW...

...IT WAS
DECIDED
NECESSARY
TO PERFORM
AN AUTOPSY
ON THE BODY.

AND WITHOUT
THE ABILITY TO
DISCERN THE
CAUSE OF
DEATH FROM
SUCH THINGS
AS WOUNDS
...



WAS,
CONCLUSIVELY,
SHOCK
INDUCED BY
SEVERE
BLOOD LOSS.

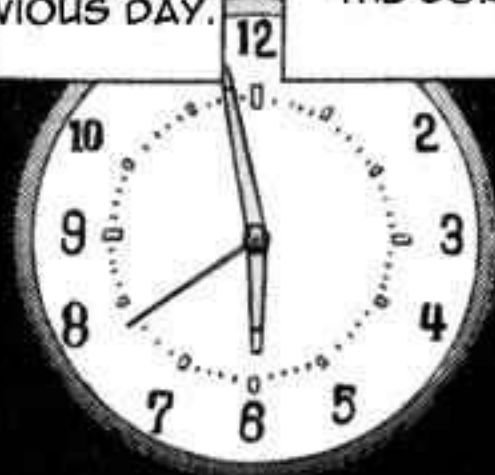
THE
CAUSE
OF
DEATH
...

...WHICH
WOULD PUT
IT IN THE
VICINITY OF
6PM ON
THE PRE-
VIOUS DAY.

THE ESTIMATED
TIME OF DEATH
WAS 8 HOURS
PRIOR TO THE
DISCOVERY OF
THE CORPSE...

A FEW DAYS
LATER, THIS
REQUESTED
AUTOPSY WAS
ABLE TO TAKE
PLACE.

THAT
MUCH, AT
LEAST,
WAS
CERTAIN.



ON THE
BODY
THEY
EXAM-
INED
...

WHERE COULD
THEY FIND
THAT WOULD
SEEM MOST
INDICATIVE OF
MASSIVE
BLOOD LOSS?

WHERE HAD
THE BLOOD
EXITED THE
BODY?

THE
QUES-
TION
WAS
...

...WAS A SMALL
WOUND ON HIS
LEFT ARM,
RESEMBLING
SOMETHING
MADE BY A
SYRINGE.

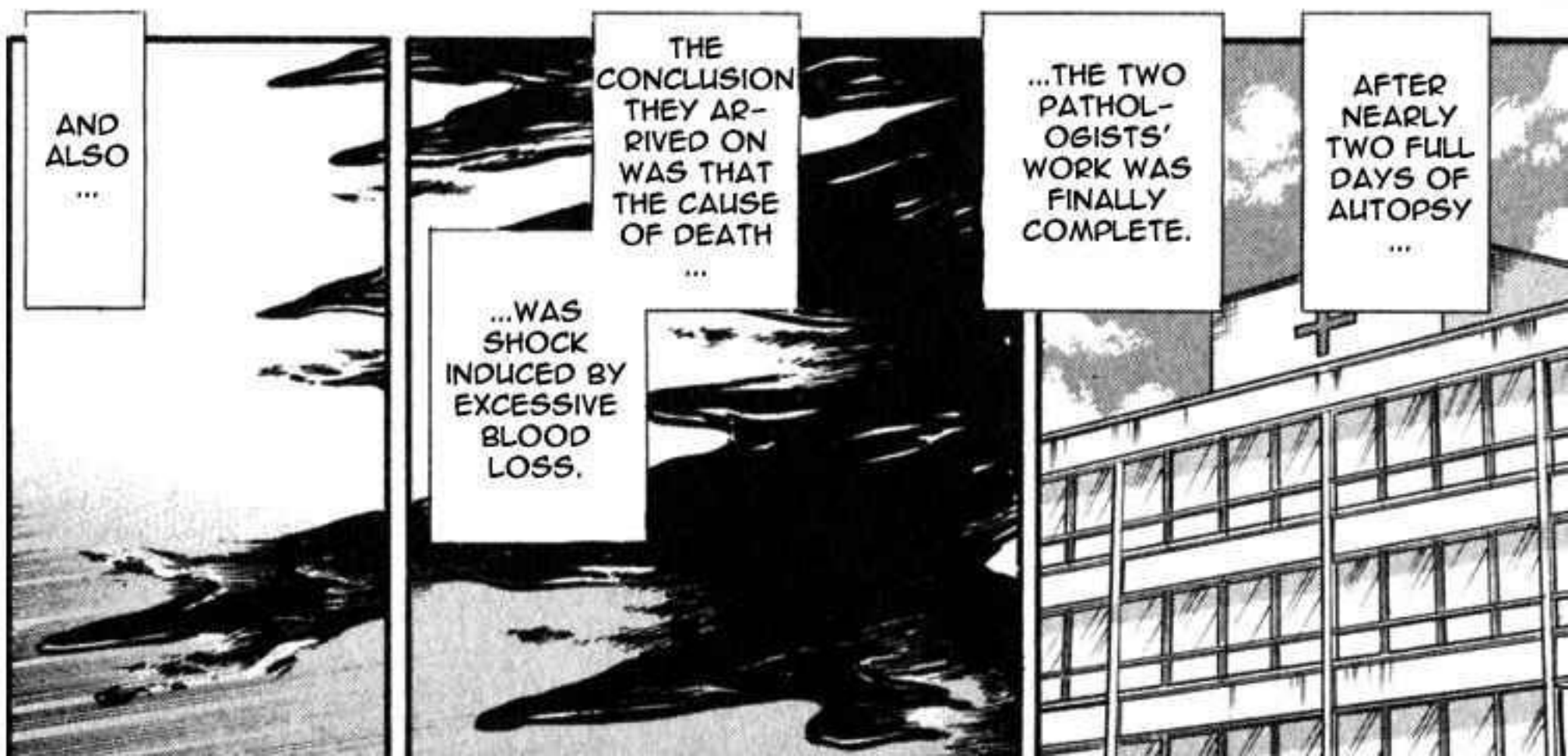
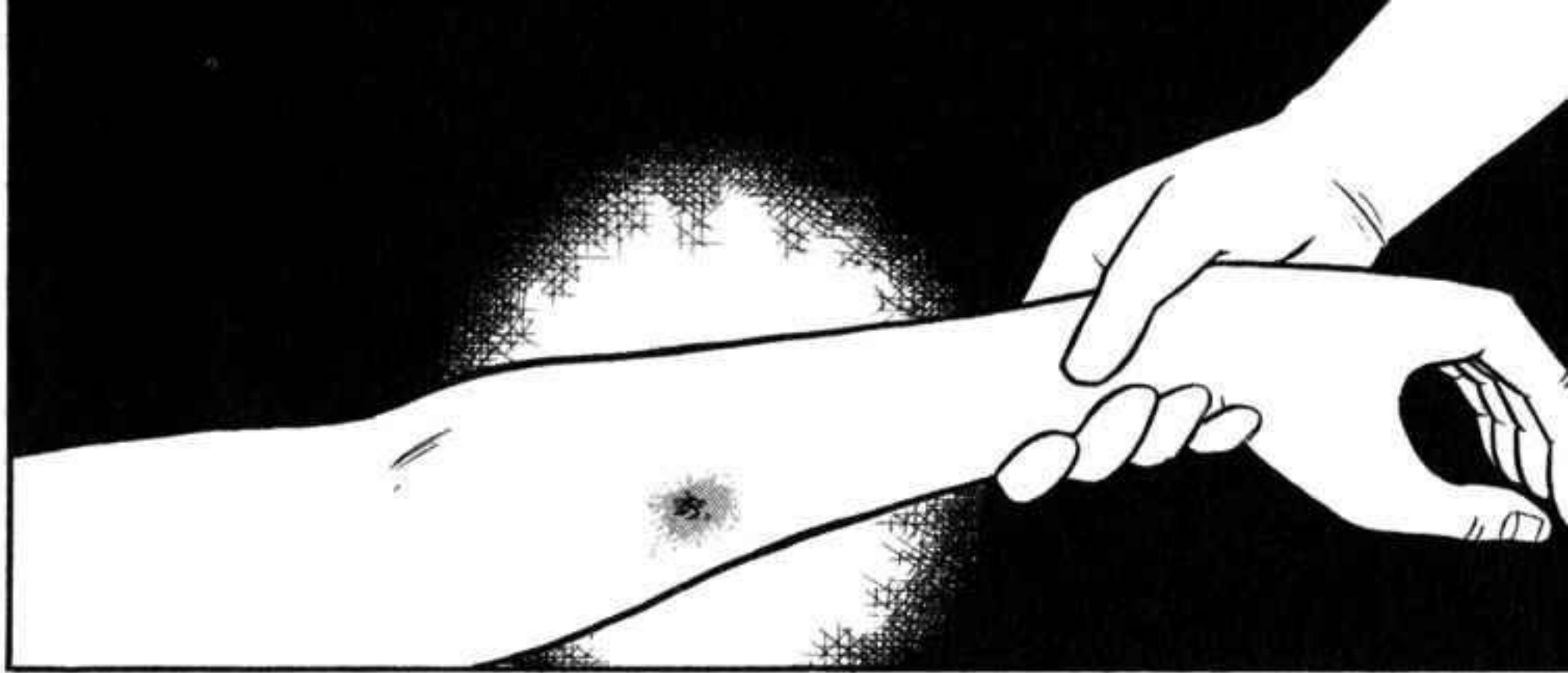
THE SINGLE
THING THAT
DREW THEIR
ATTENTION
...

IT WAS
APPARENT
THAT A
GREAT
DEAL OF
BLOOD
HAD BEEN
LOST PRIOR
TO DEATH
...

...BUT
NO SIGNS
OF SUCH
A MASSIVE
LOSS OF
BLOOD
COULD BE
LOCATED.

THAT,
AND
THAT
ALONE.

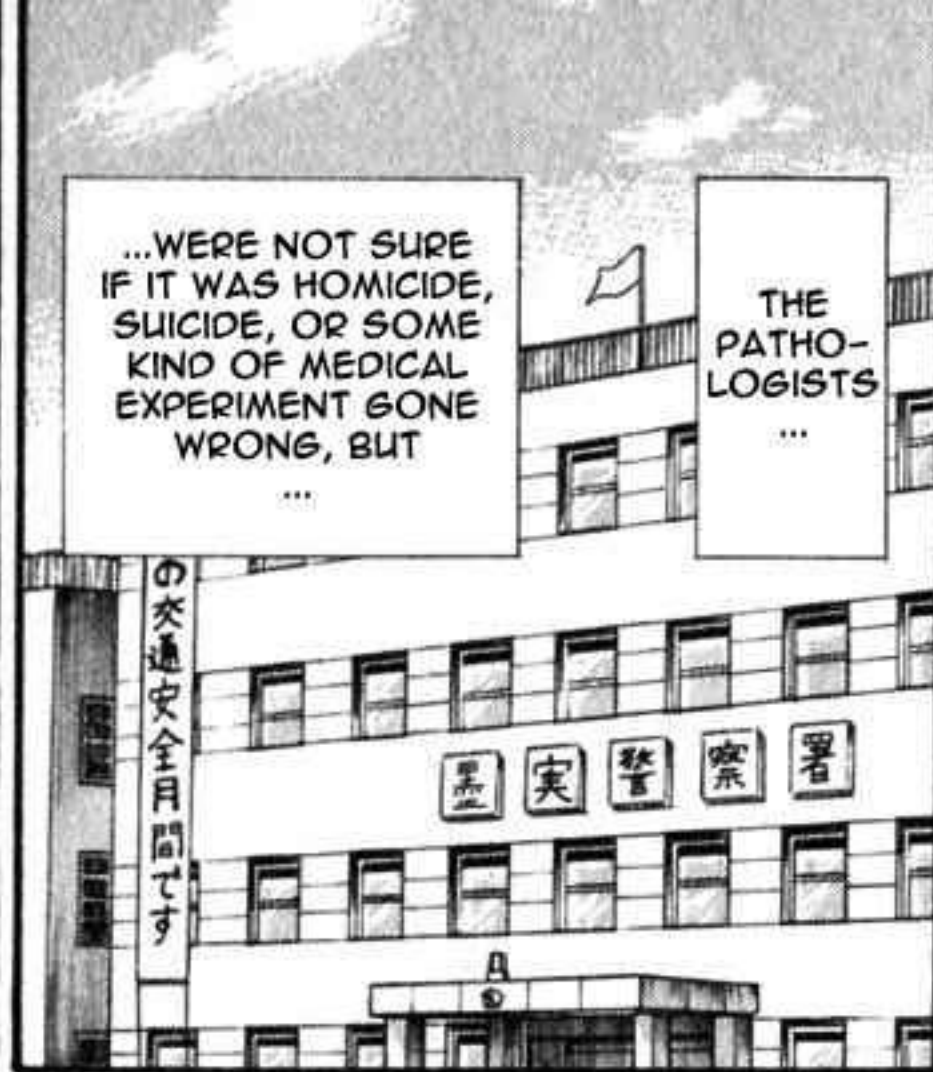






THE THING
THEY
WERE
CERTAIN
OF...

...WAS THAT
THE MAN HAD
DIED AFTER
A LARGE
AMOUNT OF
BLOOD WAS
EXTRACTED
FROM HIS
LEFT ARM.

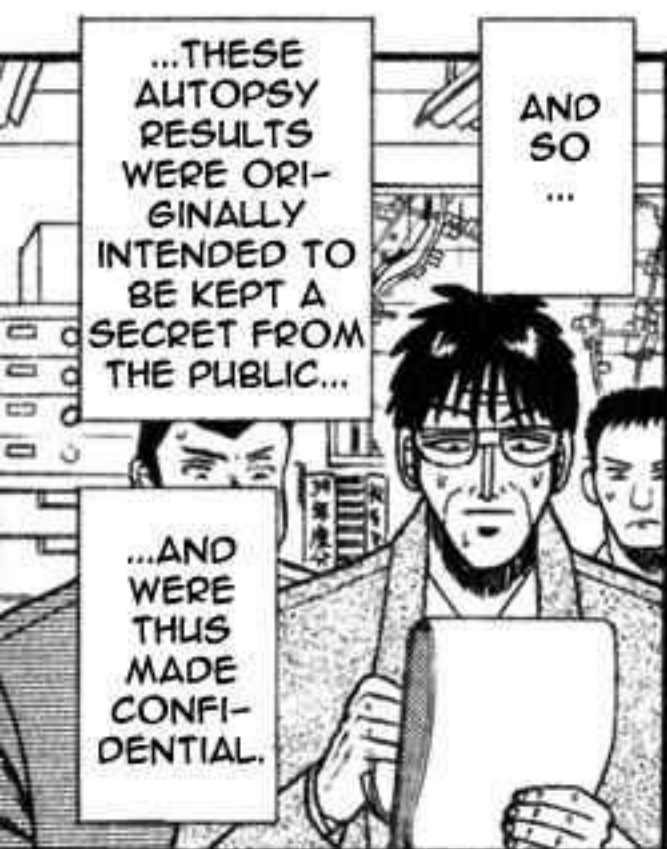


...WERE NOT SURE
IF IT WAS HOMICIDE,
SUICIDE, OR SOME
KIND OF MEDICAL
EXPERIMENT GONE
WRONG, BUT

THE
PATHO-
LOGISTS
...



...THAT
THE BLOOD
HAD BEEN
EXTRACTED
THROUGH
THE HOLE
IN HIS
LEFT ARM.



...THESE
AUTOPSY
RESULTS
WERE ORI-
GINALLY
INTENDED TO
BE KEPT A
SECRET FROM
THE PUBLIC...

AND
SO
...

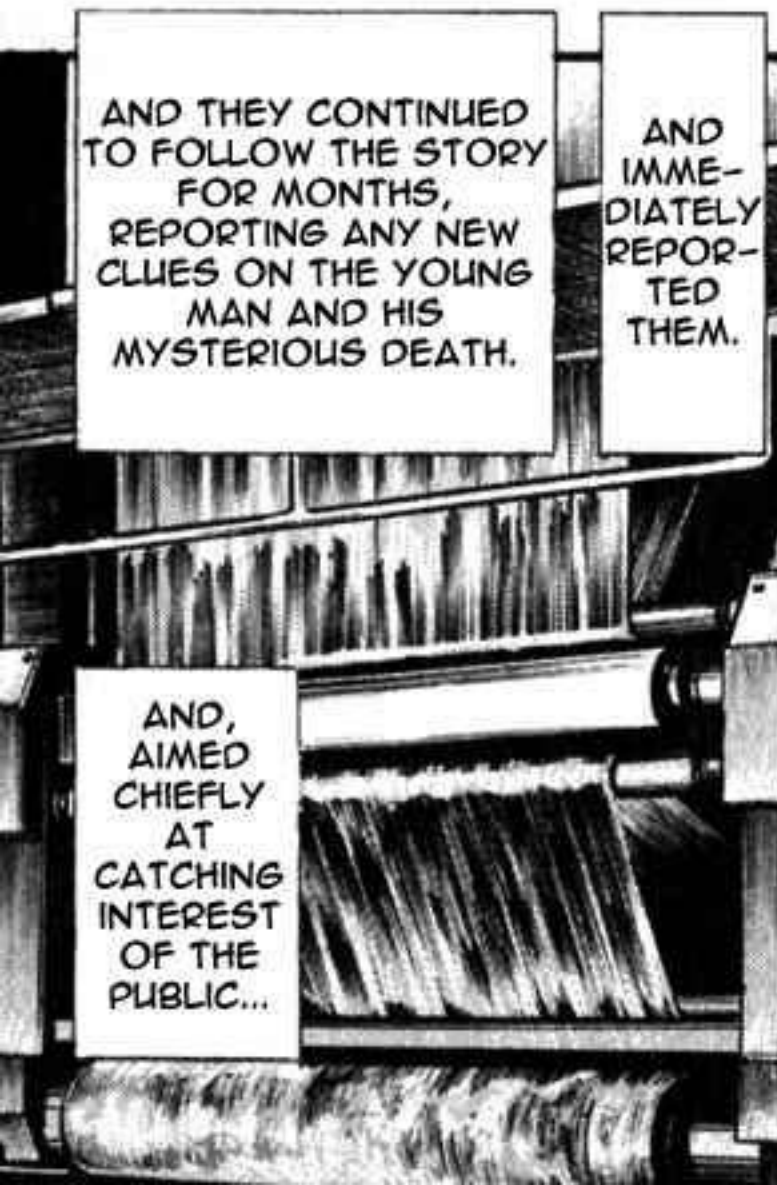
...AND
WERE
THUS
MADE
CONFI-
DENTIAL.



IT WAS
STILL A
MYSTER-
IOUS
DEATH...

...AND
AN AS-
TONISHING
REPORT!

ALTHOUGH
THEY NOW
KNEW
HOW THE
MAN HAD
DIED...



AND THEY CONTINUED
TO FOLLOW THE STORY
FOR MONTHS,
REPORTING ANY NEW
CLUES ON THE YOUNG
MAN AND HIS
MYSTERIOUS DEATH.

AND IMME-
DIATELY
REPORTED
THEM.

AND,
AIMED
CHIEFLY
AT
CATCHING
INTEREST
OF THE
PUBLIC...



THE RESULTS
THAT THEY
HAD DECID-
ED UPON
WERE TOO
MYSTERIOUS
TO NOT
SPREAD LIKE
WILDFIRE.

THEY
WERE
MADE
INTO
CLAS-
SIFIED
INFOR-
MATION,
BUT...

A CERTAIN
NEWSPAPER
COMPANY
GOT WIND
OF THESE
FINDINGS
...



...THE
FACT THAT
THERE WERE
THINGS ABOUT
THE CASE THAT
STILL ELUDED
THEM...

AND
ALONG
WITH THE
CON-
TENTS
...

WERE
ALSO
MADE
CONFI-
DENTIAL.



THE
DEATH
BECAME
KNOWN

...

AS THE
VAMPIRE
MURDER

...



YASUOKA
DID NOT
SEEM TO
SHOW ANY
SIGNS OF
INTEREST IN
THE CASE.

WHEN THE
NEWS
FIRST
BEGAN TO
SPREAD
...

POLICE
DETECTIVE
YASUOKA

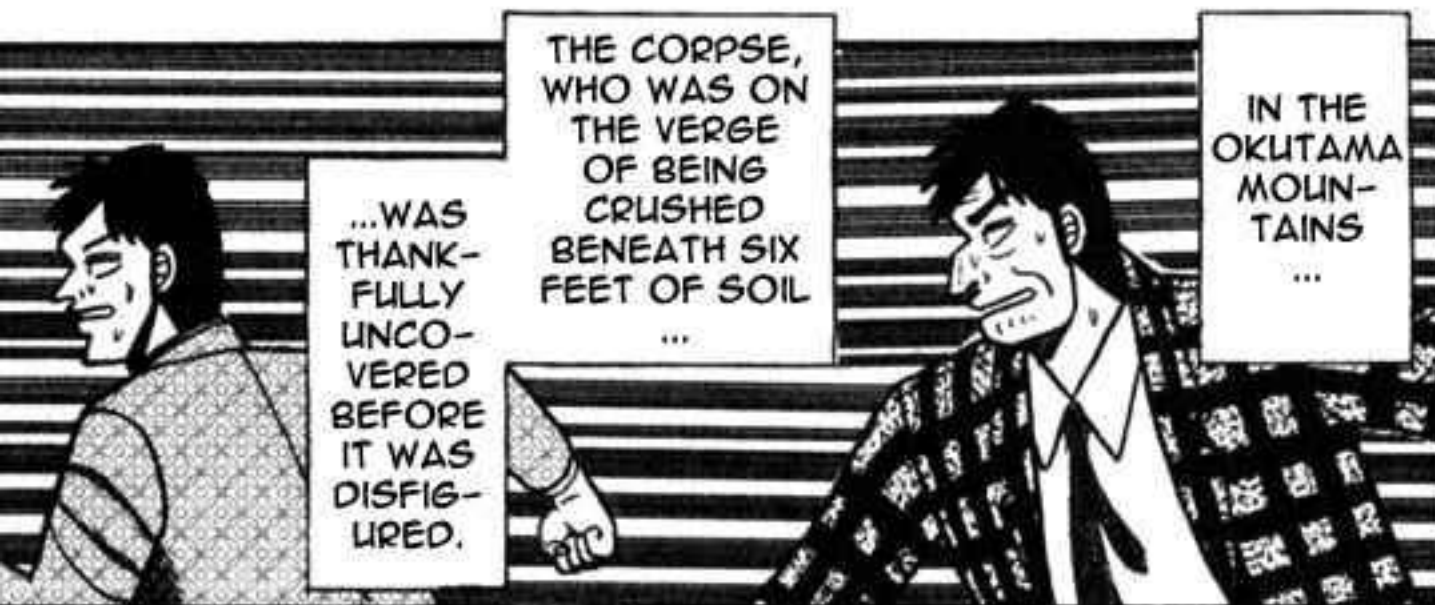


SENPAI
...

...TO THIS
MURDER
CASE.

HE HAD
AN IM-
PORTANT
CONNEC-
TION...

HOWEVER,
ALTHOUGH HE
DID NOT
REALIZE IT
AT THE TIME
...



THE CORPSE, WHO WAS ON THE VERGE OF BEING CRUSHED BENEATH SIX FEET OF SOIL ...

IN THE OKUTAMA MOUNTAINS ...



PLEASE COME WITH ME RIGHT AWAY, SIR...!



AND SO...

THE INVESTIGATION SQUAD HAD TAKEN TURNS RACKING THEIR BRAINS ...

AND THUS, HE COULD BE EASILY RECOGNIZED BY SOMEONE WHO KNEW HIM...



YEAH ...



...TO TRY AND IDENTIFY THE MYSTERIOUS CORPSE.

IT IS NOW YASU-OKA'S TURN ...



THIS MAN IS HIRAYAMA YUKIO.



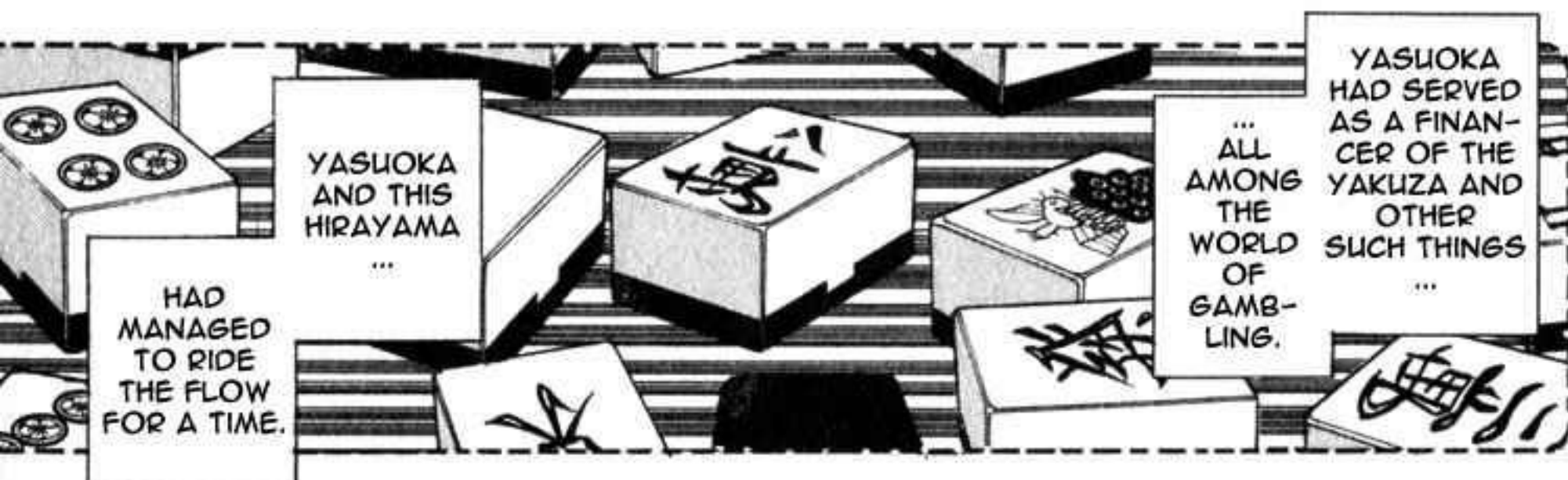
SENPAI ...





...HAD FOUGHT
TOGETHER FOR
A SHORT TIME.

YASUOKA AND
THIS HIRAYAMA
YUKIO, SEVEN
MONTHS AGO
...



YASUOKA
AND THIS
HIRAYAMA
...

HAD
MANAGED
TO RIDE
THE FLOW
FOR A TIME.

...
ALL
AMONG
THE
WORLD
OF
GAMB-
LING.

YASUOKA
HAD SERVED
AS A FINAN-
CER OF THE
YAKUZA AND
OTHER
SUCH THINGS
...



THE MAN
FOUND
BURIED
BENEATH
THE SOIL
ON THAT
NIGHT...

YES
...

YASUOKA
HAD ACTED
AS THE
MANAGER
FOR THIS
HIRAYAMA.

BUT PRIOR
TO THAT,
HE WAS
SUPERB
IN KNOWING
WHAT TO
DISCARD
AND WHAT
HANDS TO
KEEP.

HIRA-
YAMA HIT
ROCK
BOTTOM
QUICKLY
AND AB-
RUPTLY...

IN THE
END,
AFTER
HE HAD
BATTLED
ENOUGH
...





HE HAD
NO IDEA
...

I'VE GOT
NO MORE
OF AN
IDEA THAN
YOU DO!



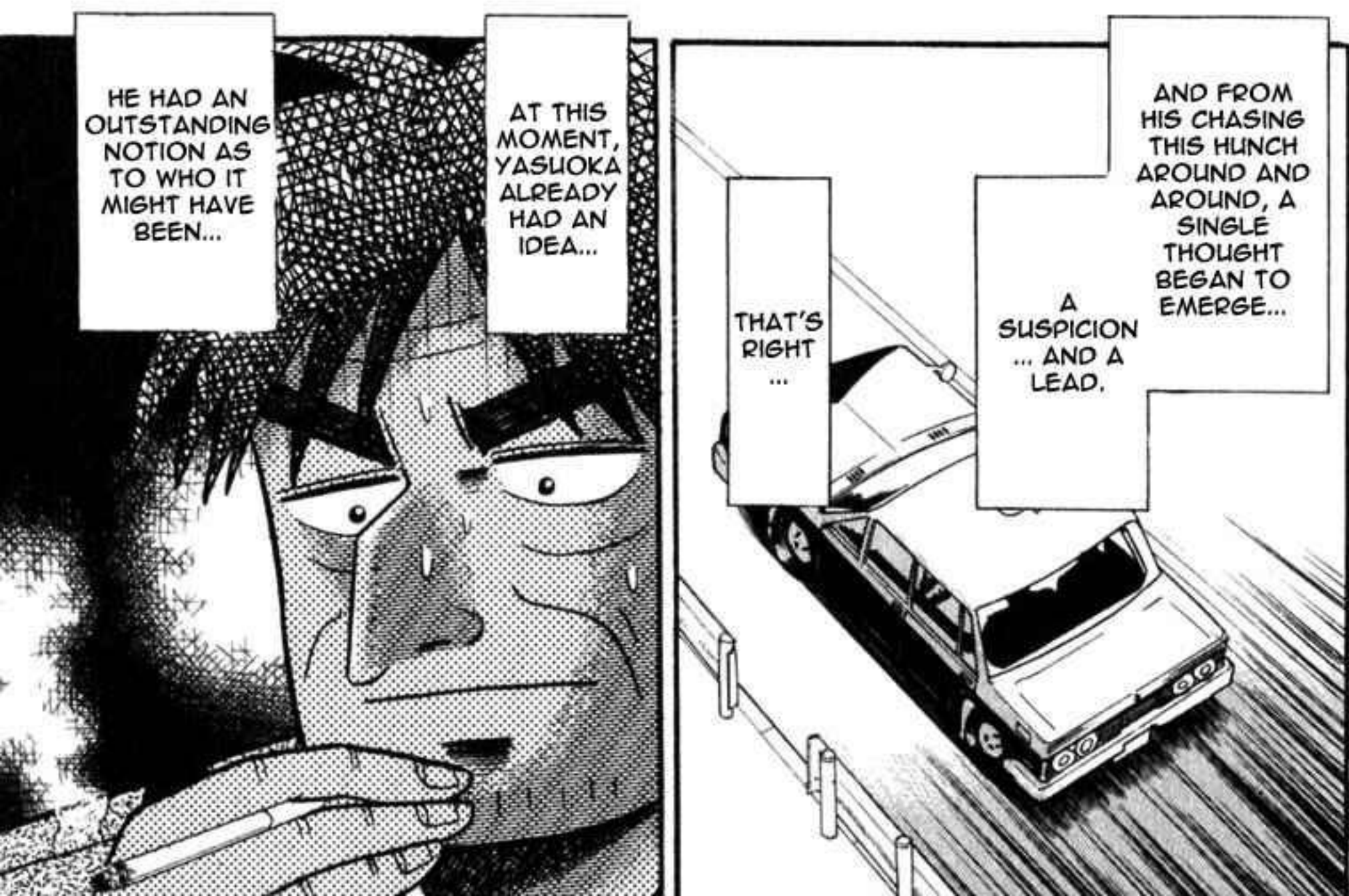
IN
TRUTH,
AT THE
MOMENT
...

YASUOKA
HAD BEEN
CHASING
AROUND
A HUNCH
IN THE
BACK OF
HIS MIND.

AND
WHILE
THAT
WAS
WHAT
HE
SAID
...

...BY SIMPLY
STATING THAT
HE HAD NO
FURTHER CLUES
AS TO WHAT
MIGHT HAVE
HAPPENED TO
THAT MAN.

AT THAT
TIME, HE
FENDED
OFF HIS
COLLEAGUE
...



HE HAD AN
OUTSTANDING
NOTION AS
TO WHO IT
MIGHT HAVE
BEEN...

AT THIS
MOMENT,
YASUOKA
ALREADY
HAD AN
IDEA...

THAT'S
RIGHT
...

A
SUSPICION
... AND A
LEAD.

AND FROM
HIS CHASING
THIS HUNCH
AROUND AND
AROUND, A
SINGLE
THOUGHT
BEGAN TO
EMERGE...



HE
HAD A
SUSPICION
AS TO
WHO THIS
BIZARRE
MURDERER
WAS!



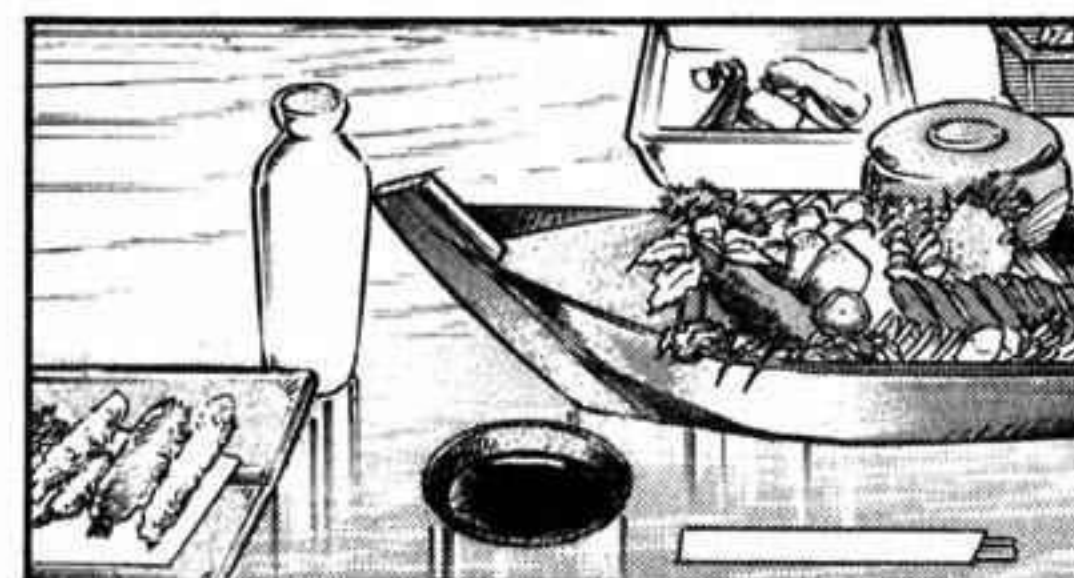
IT'S RATHER
UNUSUAL FOR
THE COP HIMSELF
TO CALL ME
OUT.

HEH-
HEH-
HEH
...



INADA GROUP
UNDERBOSS

OHGI



HAH-
HAH
...



BEFORE
ALL THAT,
WHY DON'T
YOU HAVE
A CUP OF
SAKE?



NOW,
NOW
...



SO, WHAT
BRINGS YOU
TO REQUEST
ME HERE,
HMM?





TO
TALK
WITH
HIM.

YOU
USED A
PHONE,
DIDN'T
YOU?

SO,
THEN
...



HMM
...



WE ACTED AS
MIDDLEMEN,
AND BROUGHT
SEVERAL
YOUNG MEN
TO HIS
ESTATE.

LET'S STOP
BEATING
AROUND THE
BUSH... YOUR
SUSPICIONS
ARE CORRECT.



WITH THE
OLD MAN,
YOU MEAN?



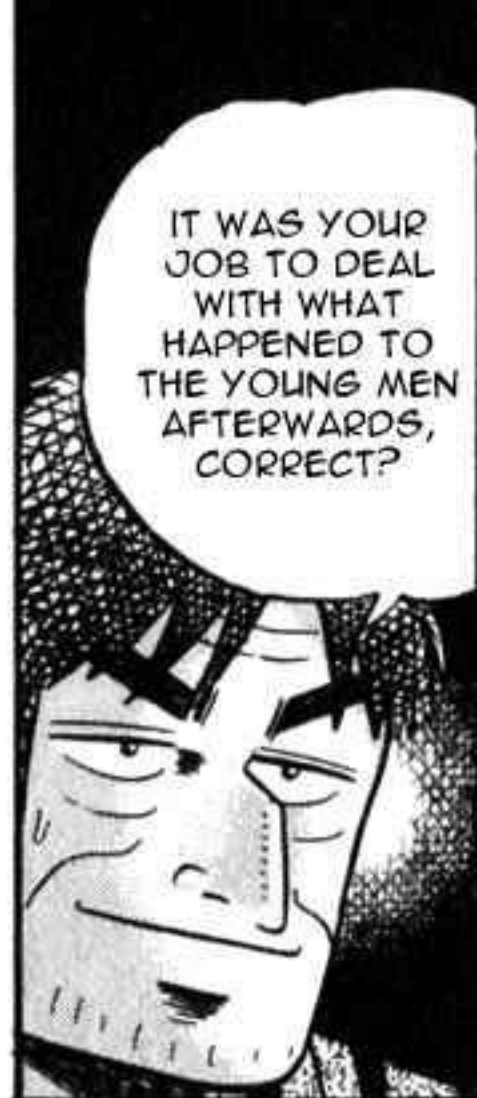
IN GENERAL,
PEOPLE WHO
WOULDN'T BE
MISSED MUCH
IF THEY JUST
SO HAPPENED
TO DISAPPEAR
SUDDENLY.



SO FOR
THE MOST
PART,
THEY WERE
OUTCASTS
...

WE BROUGHT
THEM THERE
FOR A HIGH-
STAKES GAME
OF MAHJONG
...





IT WAS YOUR
JOB TO DEAL
WITH WHAT
HAPPENED TO
THE YOUNG MEN
AFTERWARDS,
CORRECT?



TO
FOLLOW
WHAT YOU
JUST SAID,
OHGI-SAN
...

...
?



YOU
REALLY
THINK SO?

I
SUPPOSE
HE JUST
LOST
INTEREST.



YEAH
...

THAT'S
WHAT THE
DEAL WAS,
CORRECT?



AND IN RETURN,
THE YOUNG MAN
WOULD BE PUT
INTO FORCED
LABOR...

WORKING AT
ONE OF YOUR
MANY RES-
TAURANTS,
AM I RIGHT?



THAT IS TO SAY, IF THE
YOUNG MEN YOU OFFERED
HAPPENED TO MEET THE
CONDITIONS FOR DEFEAT,
IT WAS YOU AND THE
INADA GROUP THAT
HAD TO PAY FOR IT,
CORRECT?



JUST
AS I
THOUGHT
...

FOUR,
MAYBE FIVE
MONTHS
AGO?



...



SO, THEN, WHEN DID
THIS OLD MAN YOU'RE
TALKING ABOUT STOP
CALLING YOU UP FOR
MORE PEOPLE TO
PLAY WITH?





...WITH A
MONSTER
OF OUR
OWN!

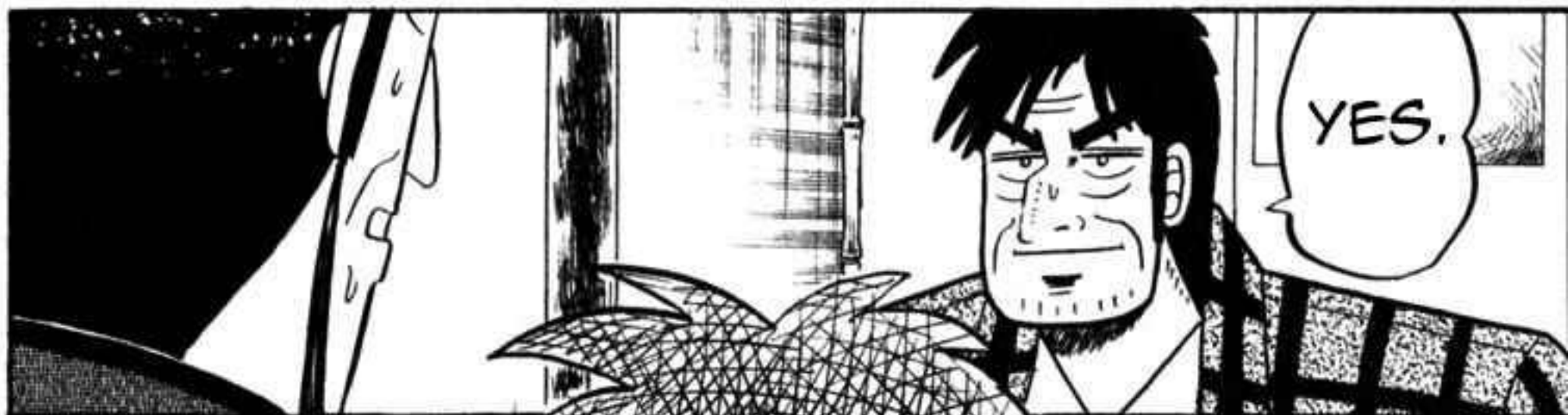


THIS
MONSTER

...
I WAS THINKING
IT WOULD BE
THE RIGHT
THING IF WE
TOOK HIM
DOWN...



MON-
STER
...?



YES.



AKAGI
SHIGERU!

WE'LL PUT
HIM UP
AGAINST A
MONSTER
THAT NO
ONE CAN
DEFEAT

...



CHAPTER 58 - FIRE POWER

第58話 火力



AKAGI
SHI-
GERU
WILL
FIGHT
FOR
US!

CHO-HAN: A TRADITIONAL JAPANESE GAMBLING GAME WHERE PLAYERS BET ON WHETHER THE ADDED TOTAL OF TWO DICE WILL BE ODD OR EVEN, ORGANIZED SIMILAR TO MODERN-DAY CRAPS.

AND EVEN
THOUGH THEIR
CHOSEN GAME
FOR THE HOUSE
WAS CHO-HAN
...

AS I
HEAR
...

THERE, THEY
TEND TO
PLAY SIMPLE
GAMBLES
FOR RECORDED
REWARDS...

...THAT CAME
FROM THE
GAMBLING
HOUSE OF
AN AFFILIATE
OF OURS.

THERE WAS A
RUMOR THAT
I OVERHEARD
...

BUT IN
THE END,
I COULD-
N'T FIND
ANYONE.

I TRIED
LOOKING
AROUND FOR
SOMEONE
LIKE THAT
...

AKAGI
SHIGERU,
HMM...

HE ACCEPTS
SOME PRETTY
CRAZY GAMBLES
WITH OPEN ARMS,
BUT HE DOESN'T
SEEM TO HAVE
ANY BACKUP.

THAT'S
THE
RUMOR.

HE LOOKS
LIKE SOME
KID OFF THE
STREET, AND
SEEMS TO BE
AROUND 20
YEARS OLD
OR SO.

THERE'S A
YOUNG MAN
THERE WHO
WINS EVERY
SINGLE TIME
HE PLAYS.

HOW-
EVER
...

...I HAVEN'T HEARD OF
ANY GANGS WITH REP
PLAYERS AT ALL
RESEMBLING THE
KIND OF
GAMEPLAY HE'S
KNOWN FOR.

EVEN
WITH ALL
OF MY RESOR-
CES...





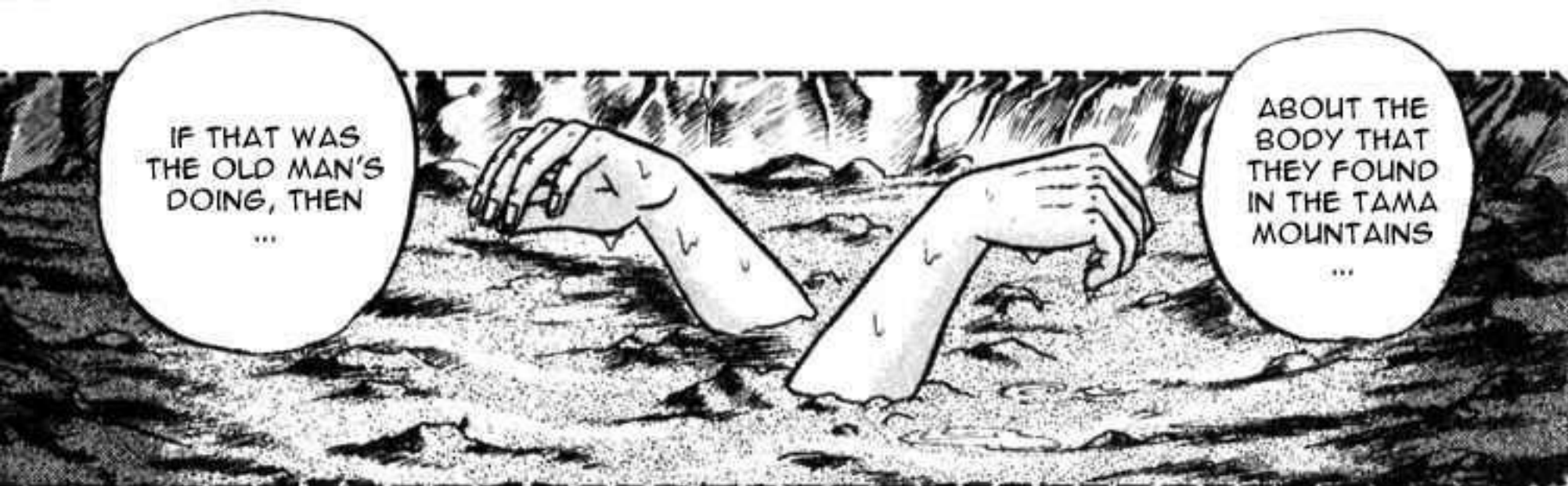
IF WHAT
YOU SAID IS
TRUE...

BUT,
YASUOKA-
SAN
...



OF
COURSE,
THERE'S
NOT A
PROBLEM
THERE.

ALL RIGHT,
CAN YOU
TAKE ME
THERE?



IF THAT WAS
THE OLD MAN'S
DOING, THEN
...

ABOUT THE
BODY THAT
THEY FOUND
IN THE TAMA
MOUNTAINS
...



THE DEAD
BODY JUST
ADDS TO OUR
CERTAINTY
ON THAT
POINT.

THAT'S AN
UNDENIABLE
TRUTH, FAR
FROM A MERE
BLUFF!

IT'S THE
MOST
DANGER-
OUS KIND
OF MAH-
JONG.

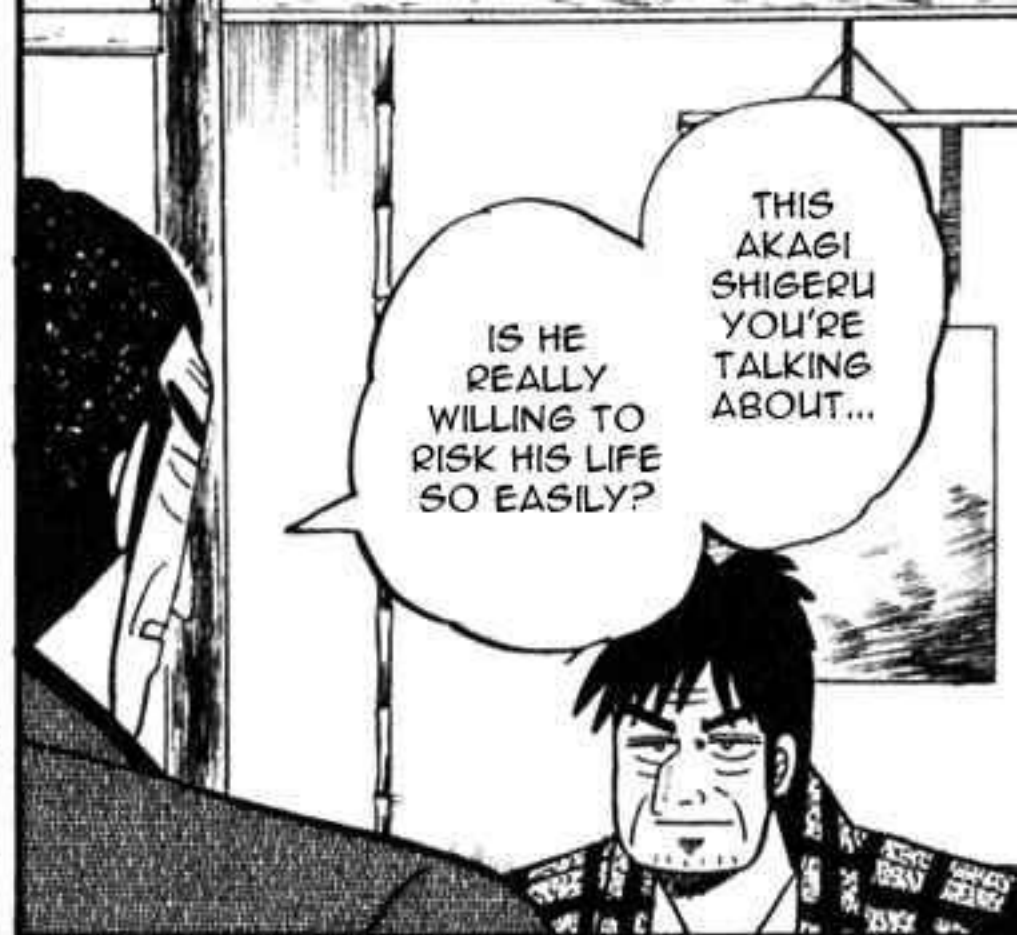


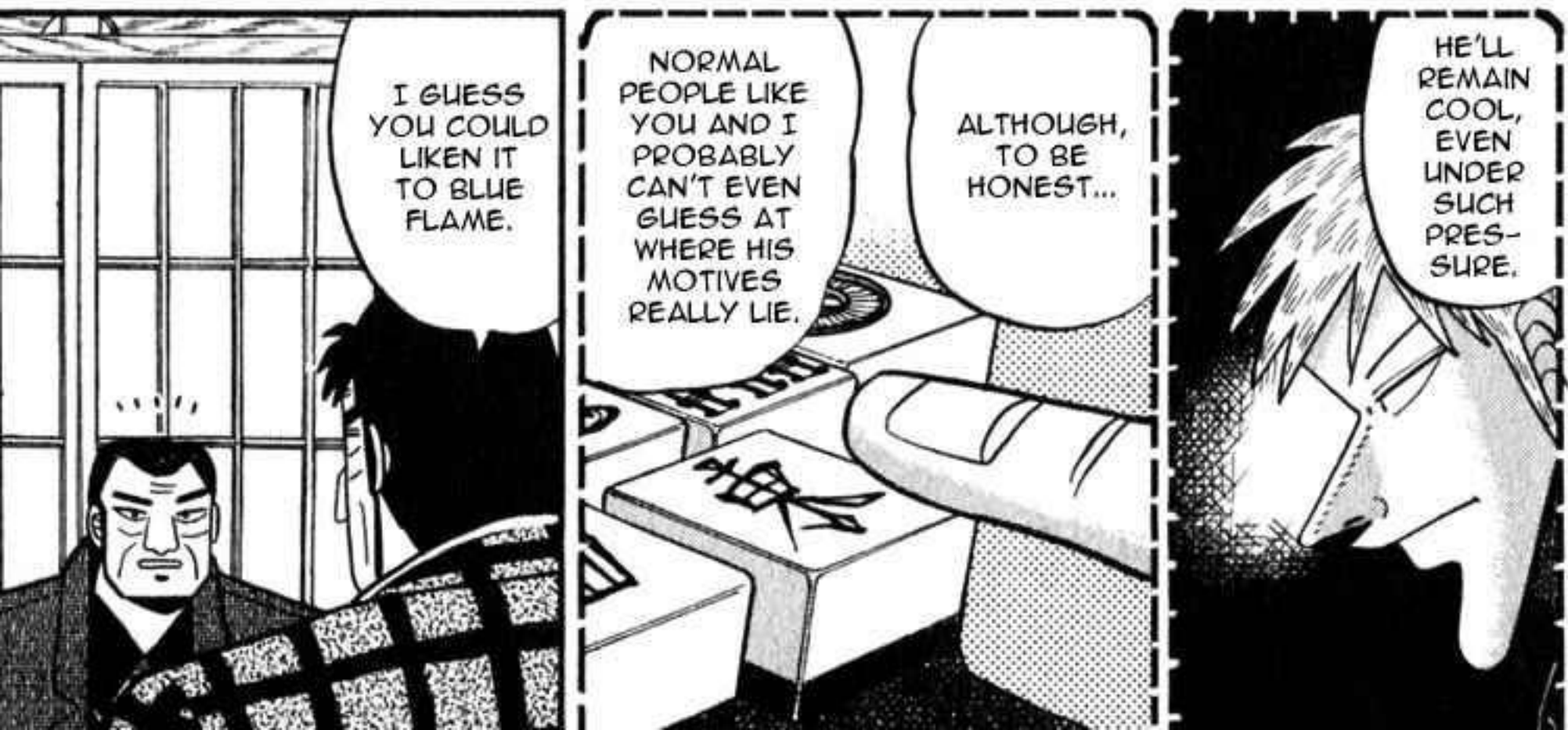
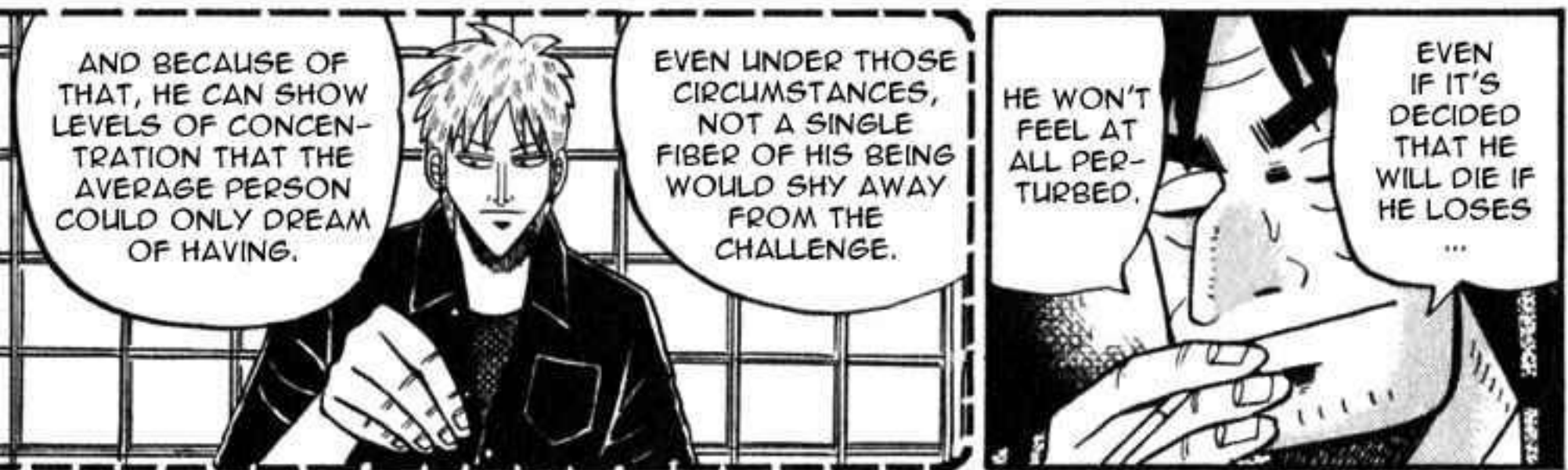
IF AKAGI
LOSES, HE
WILL DIE!



ANY YOUNG
PERSON
WHO GOES
UP AGAINST
HIM...

...WILL BE
LITERALLY
RISKING THEIR
LIFE IN A
GAME OF
MAHJONG!







HIS FLAME
CAN REACH
EXTREMELY
HIGH TEM-
PERATURES,
AND TURN
BLUE!

HE'S A
LONG WAY
FROM THAT
PRIMITIVE
LEVEL OF
FIRE...



IF WE
GET HIM
TO FIGHT
...

EVEN
RAW IRON
IS SPLIT
UP BY
SUCH AN
EXTREME
LEVEL OF
HEAT!



ORDINARY PEOPLE LIKE YOU
AND ME, NO MATTER HOW HARD
WE CONCENTRATE OR WHAT
WE'RE DOING, CAN NEVER
GET OUR FLAMES BURNING
AT A HIGHER TEMPERATURE
THAN IT TAKES TO GET A
RED OR YELLOW FLAME.

ON
THE
OTHER
HAND
...



...THEN THE OLD MAN
WILL BURN DOWN TO
NOTHING UP AGAINST
THAT LEVEL OF SHEER
FIRE POWER!



...CAN
REALLY DRIVE
THE OLD MAN
INTO A
CORNER!

AKAGI
...



AND
IN THAT
CASE
...



HAH-
HAH
...



ONLY ONE
OF THEM
CAN
REMAIN.

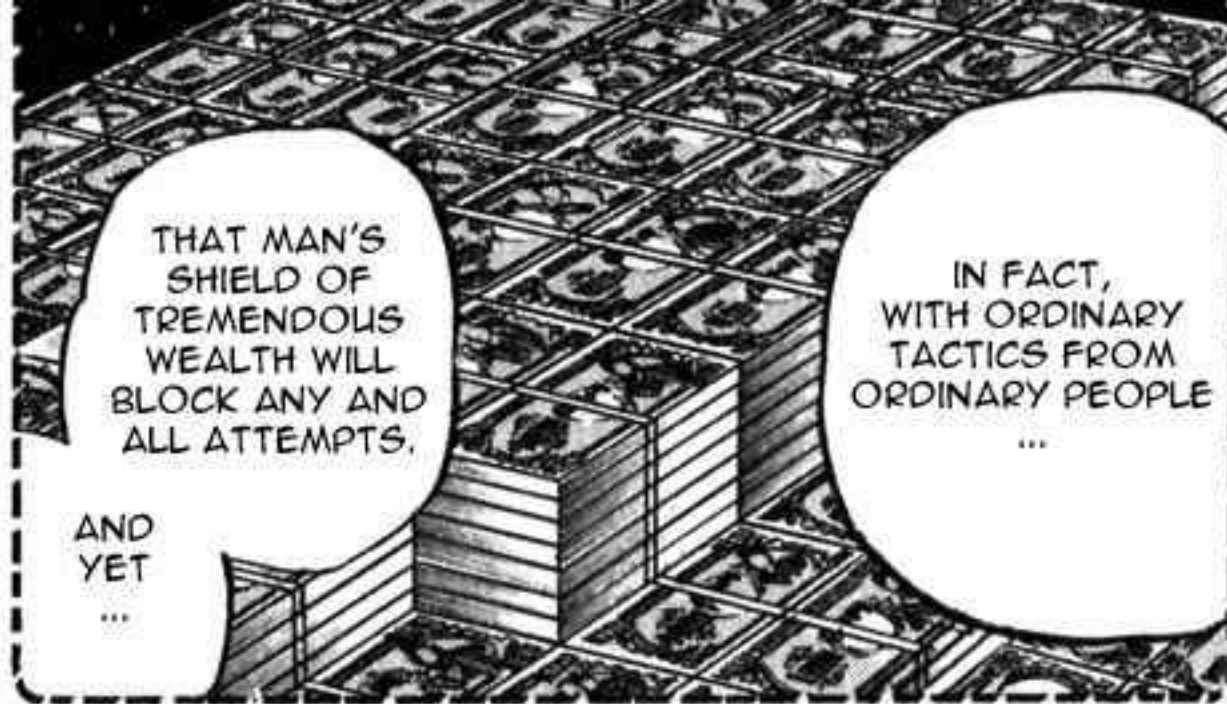
EVEN THAT
MADMAN WOULD
CATCH A FEVER
UP AGAINST THAT
KIND OF HEAT.



I CAN'T SAY I'M TOTALLY SURE ABOUT IT.

NO ...





THAT MAN'S
SHIELD OF
TREMENDOUS
WEALTH WILL
BLOCK ANY AND
ALL ATTEMPTS.

AND
YET
...

IN FACT,
WITH ORDINARY
TACTICS FROM
ORDINARY PEOPLE
...



...AND TO
AN EXTENT,
THE ONE WITH
THE MOST
MONEY WOULD
LIKELY EVEN
HAVE THE
ADVANTAGE.

I'M
NOT
SURE
IF HE'LL
WIN
...



EVEN THAT
IRON SHIELD
MIGHT
CRUMBLE
APART!

AGAINST AKAGI'S
FIRE, HOTTER
THAN ANY
OTHER KIND,



HE STILL
MIGHT
JUST
COME
OUT ON
TOP!

...EVEN IF THE
RULES ARE MADE
SO THAT HE'S AT
A MOUNTAINOUS
DISADVANTAGE,



IF IT'S
AKAGI
SHIGERU
PLAYING
...



THAT'S
RIGHT.

ALL
OF THEM
...?!



THEN ALL OF
THE OLD MAN'S
WORLDLY
POSSESSIONS
WILL BE HIS
FOR THE
TAKING!

AND IF
HE DOES
HAPPEN
TO WIN
...



AS "KYOUSEI"
GREW, HE WAS
ABLE TO SAVE AND
SAVE HIS MONEY
OVER THE YEARS
...

HE WAS A
PIONEER IN
THE MANAGE-
MENT OF
CONSULTANCY
FIRMS.

AFTER RETIRING
FROM THE POLICE
FORCE, THE OLD
MAN REVIVED HIS
BOUNTIFUL
ENTERPRISE.

...AND BY
FINDING A WAY
TO DODGE HIS
TAXES TIME AND
TIME AGAIN...

THEN
AKAGI,
MYSELF
...

IF HE
WINS THE
GAME AGAINST
THE OLD MAN
...

THIS 500
MILLION IN
SHOWA 40
(1965)
EQUATES TO
ABOUT 5 BIL-
LION TODAY.

HIS FORTUNE
TODAY
REACHES
SOMEWHERE
BETWEEN
500 MILLION
AND A BILLION
YEN.

AKAGI
SHOULD BE
ABLE TO
WIN...

I'LL DO
WHATEVER
IS NEEDED
TO PREPARE
...

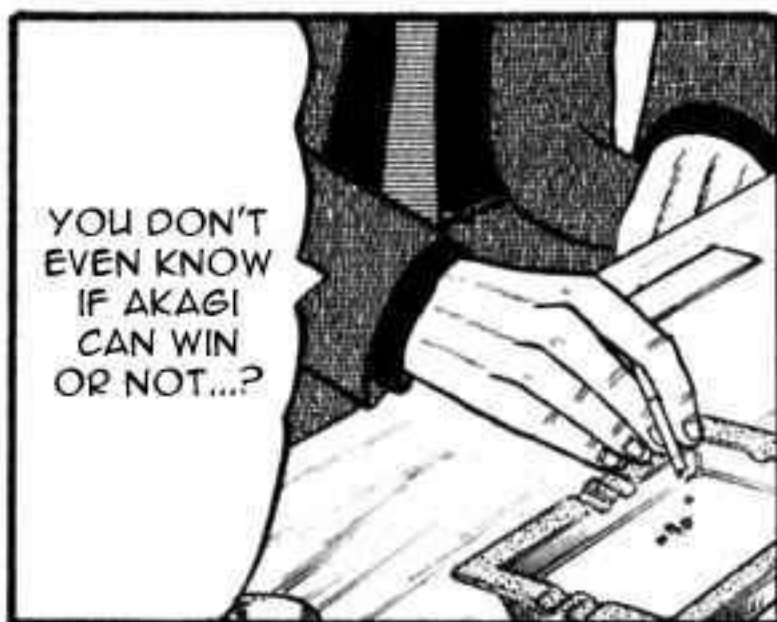
BUT IF
IT HAPPENS
THAT THE
OLD MAN
DOES,
INSTEAD
...

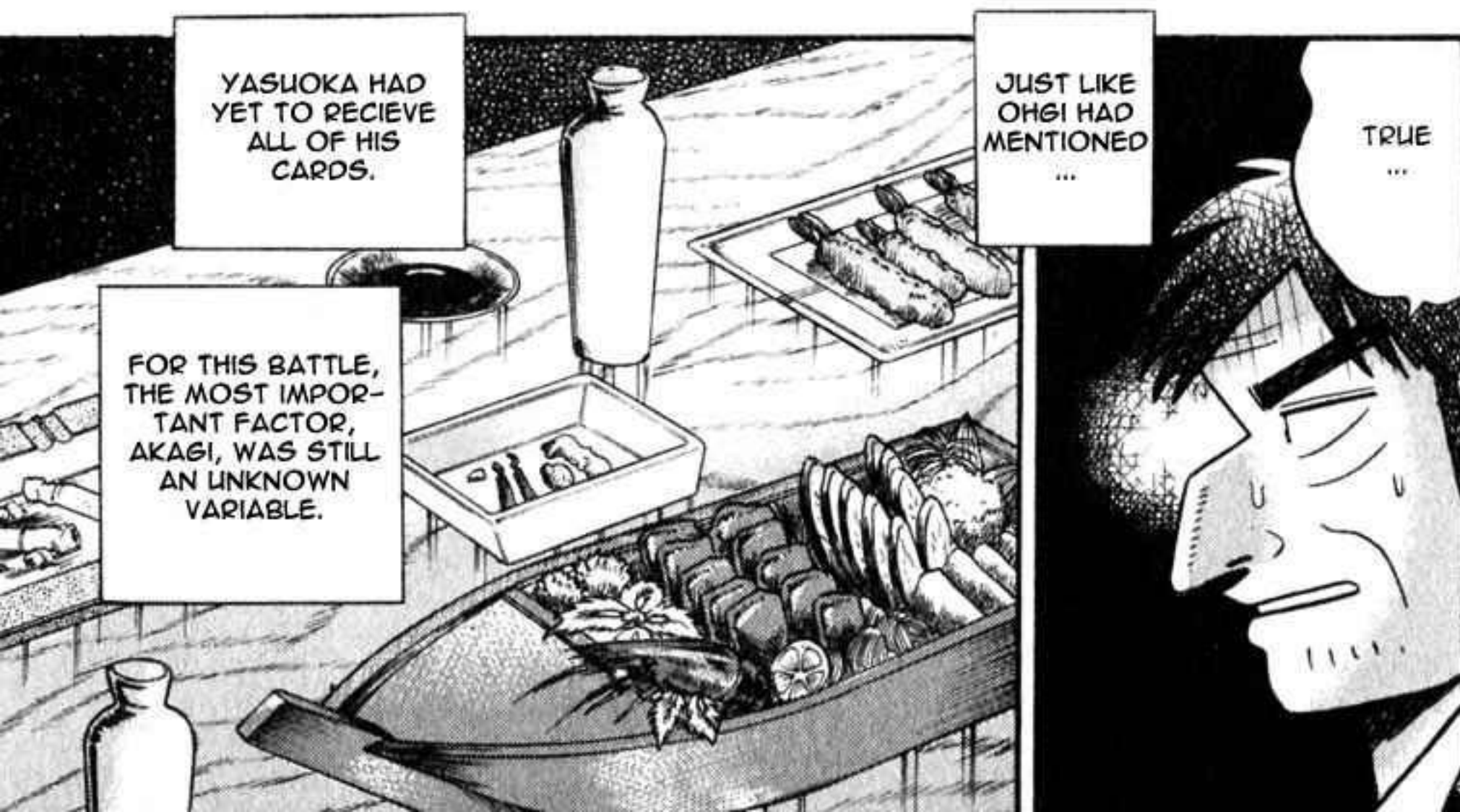
IN ORDER TO
GET THIS
BATTLE ON
ITS FEET
...

...WE'LL
MOST DEFINITELY
NEED TO HAVE
YOUR EXPERIENCE
WITH THE OLD
MAN!

AND
ALSO
YOU,
OHGI-
SAN
...

...WILL
GET EQUAL
CUTS OF
THE MONEY!





A
FEW
DAYS
LATER
...

FIRST,
HE HAD
TO FIND
OUT
WHAT
HE HAD
TO
WORK
WITH!

THE DATE
IS AUGUST
14TH, 1965.

THE SECOND
SATURDAY
OF THE
MONTH.

...HEAD TO
CHIBA TO
FIND THE
KURATA
GROUP.

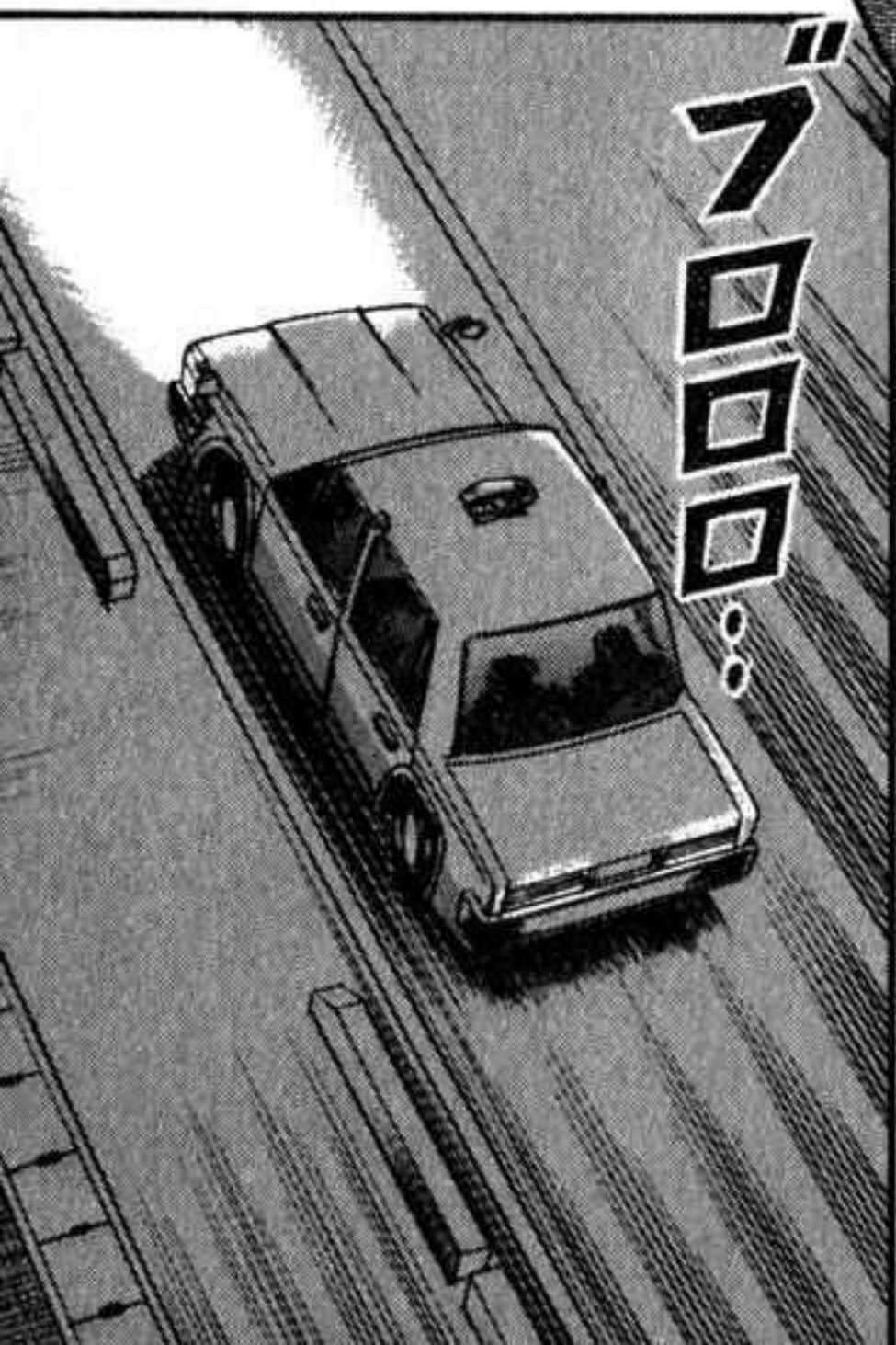
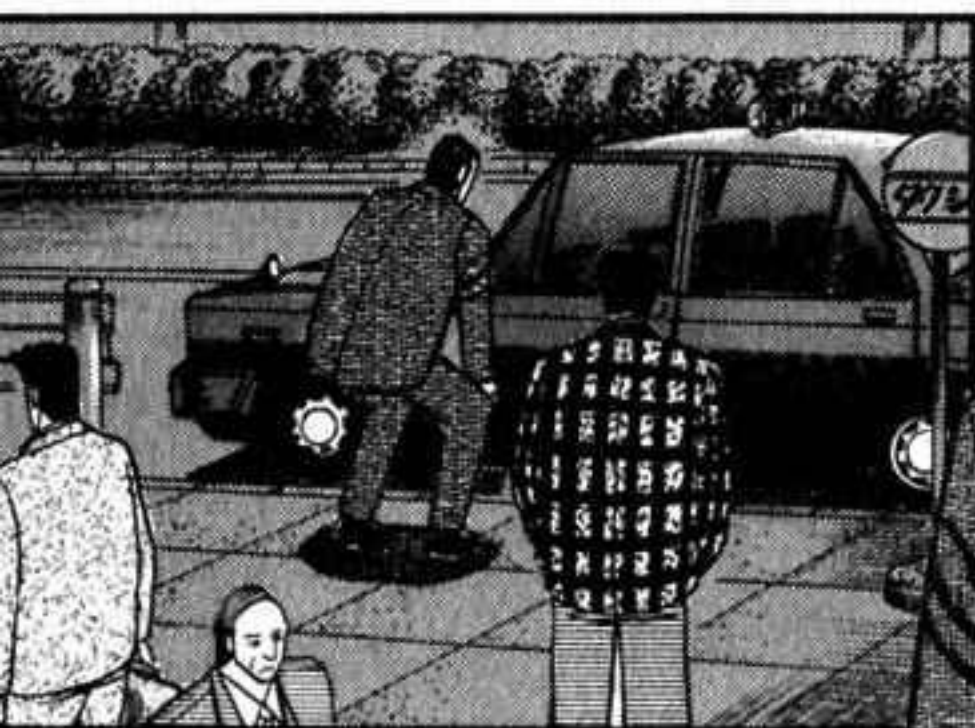
YASUOKA
AND
OHGI...

IF IT TURNS
OUT NOT TO
BE AKAGI, ALL
OF YASUOKA'S
PREPARATION
WILL HAVE BEEN
FOR NOTHING.

...THE MYSTERIOUS
MAN WHO MAY OR
MAY NOT BE AKAGI
HAD WON.

THAT
MANY
TIMES TO
NOW,
WHENEVER
THE
GAMBLING
HOUSE
OPENED
...

IT GOES
WITHOUT
SAYING
...





WILL I ENCOUNTER THE LEGENDARY MAN ...THE GENIUS, AKAGI, BY SHEER CHANCE, AGAIN?





MEAN-
WHILE,
AT THE
KURATA
HOUSE.



ARE YOU
BETTING
ODD?!

OR
WILL IT
BE EVEN
?!



EVEN.

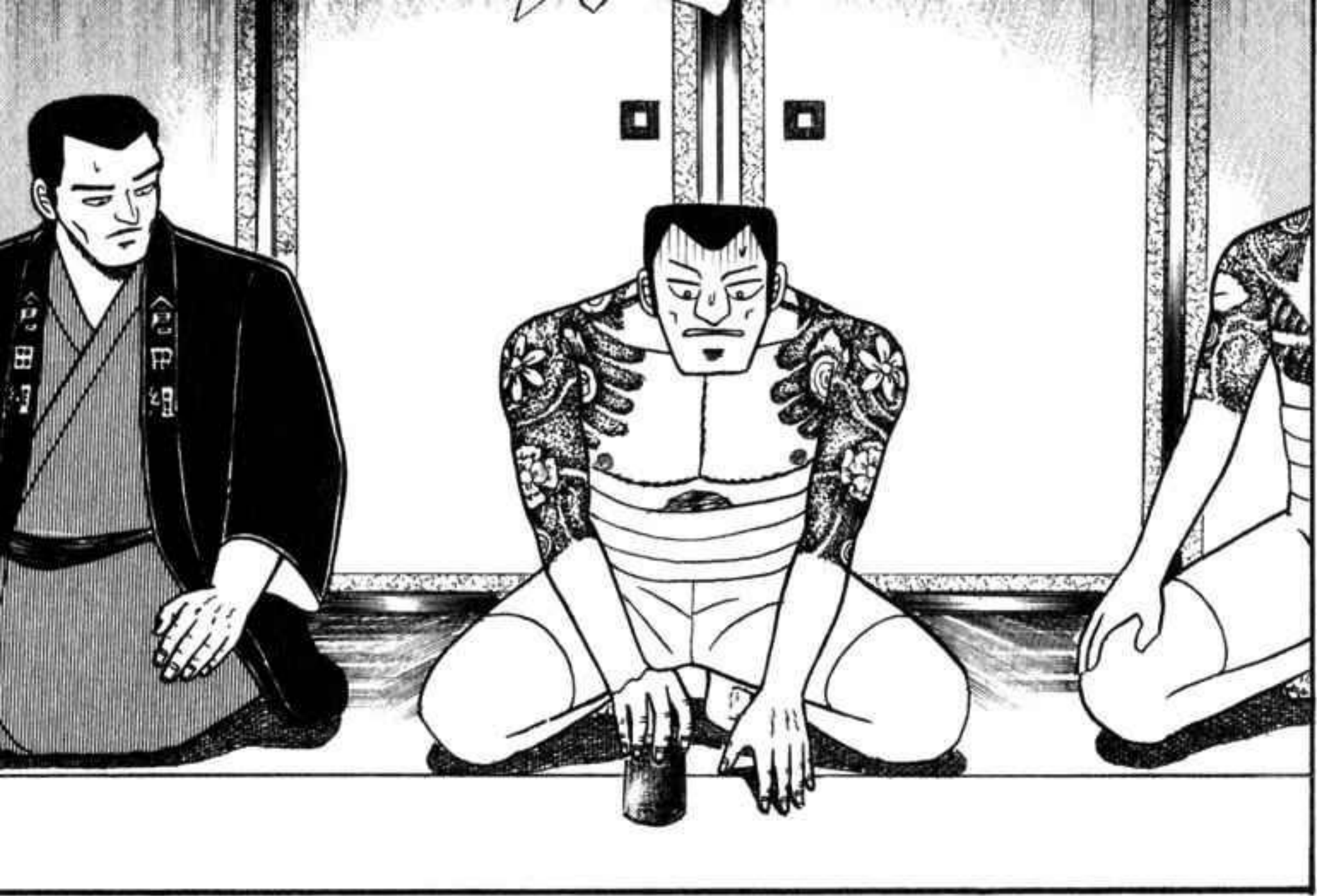


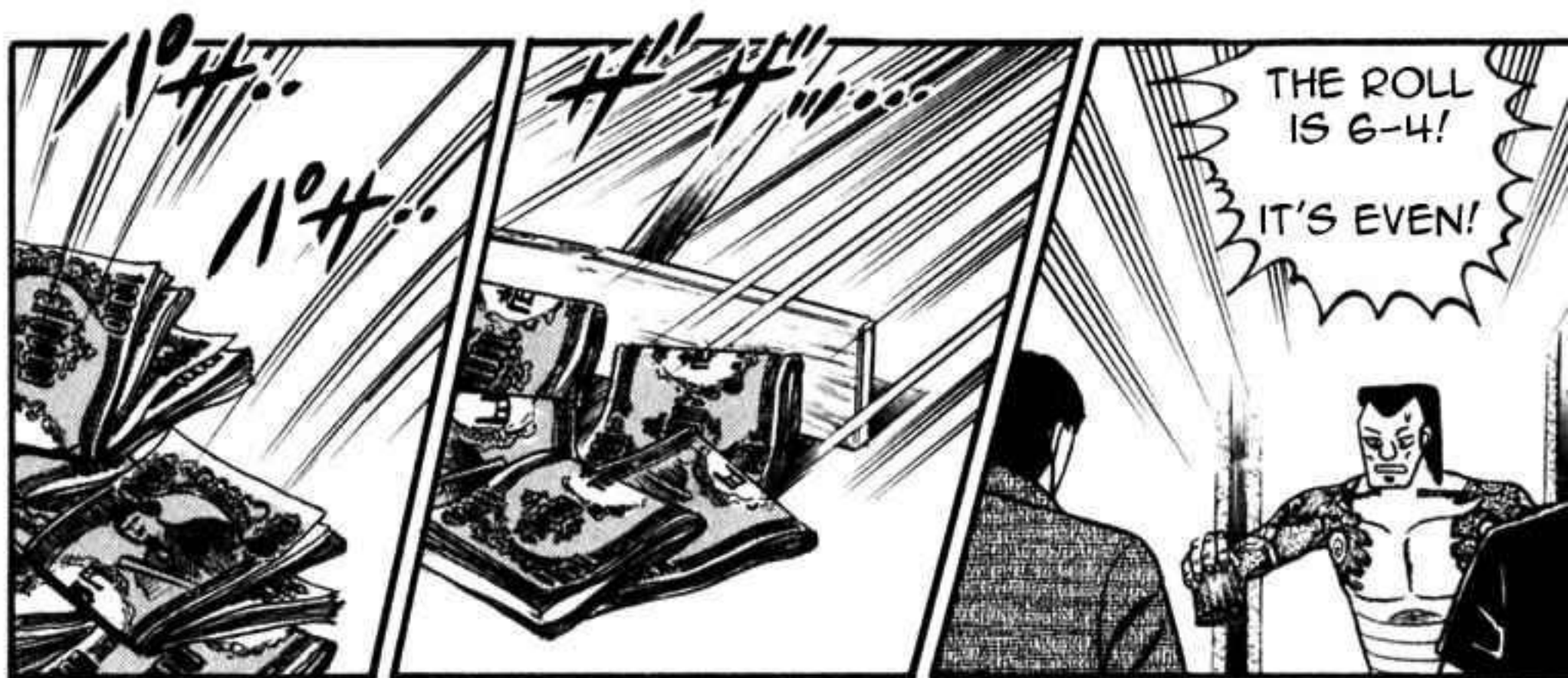
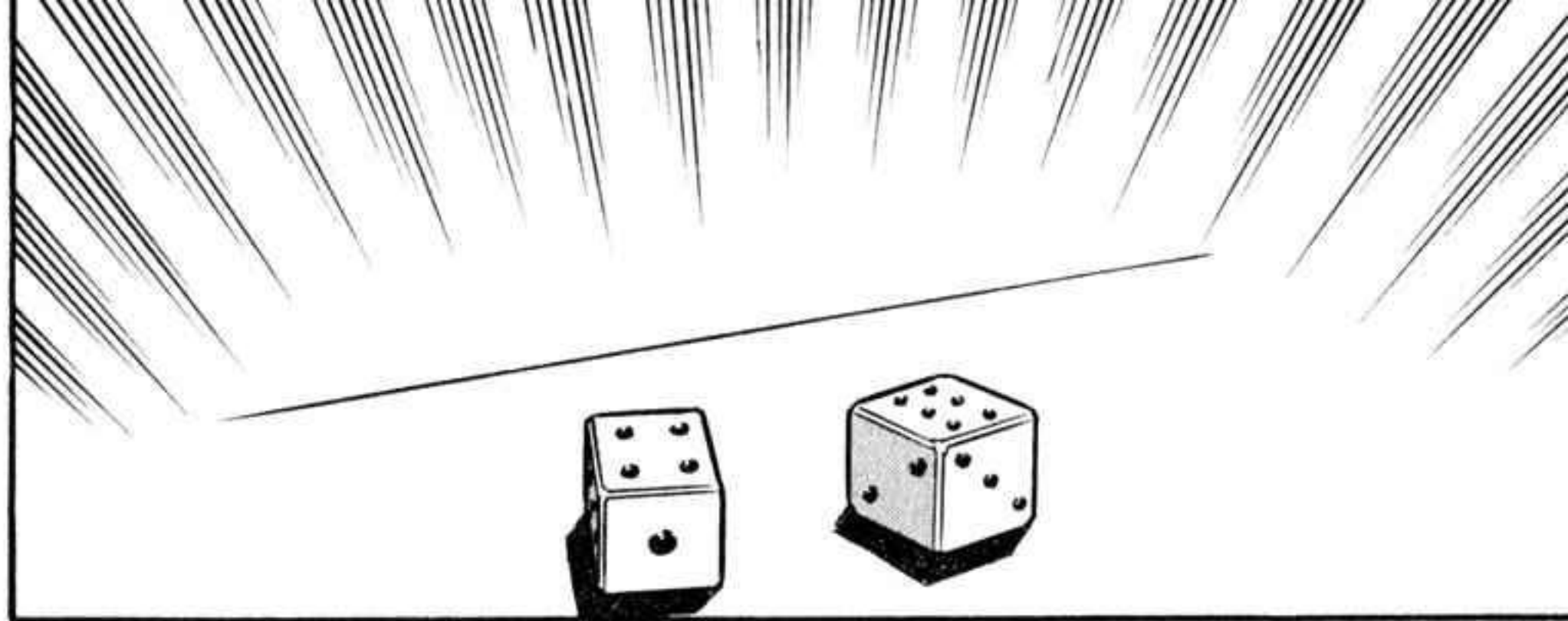
WHICH
WILL IT
BE?



ざわ..
ざわ..



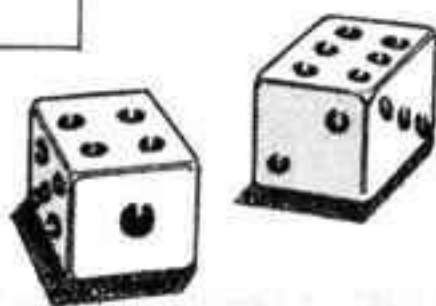




...AND ALL THE CUSTOMERS BATTLE IT OUT AMONGST THEMSELVES.

ONE SIMPLY BETS ON THE OUT-COME OF THE DICE BETWEEN EVEN AND ODD...

...IS NOT A GAME ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL PERSON'S STRUGGLE AGAINST THE HOUSE.



...AND CONSEQUENTLY DO NOT GENERALLY CARE WHICH OF THEIR CUSTOMERS ENDS UP WINNING IN A GIVEN ROLL.

IT IS, OF COURSE, FUNDAMENTAL THAT THEY DO NOT TAKE PART IN THE GAME, THEMSELVES...

...USUALLY ONLY 5-10% OF THE WINNINGS.

THE ORGANIZERS OF THE GAME TAKE A SMALL CUT OF THE WINNINGS FOR THEMSELVES ...

HOWEVER ...



INEVITABLY, IN THE FACE OF THAT, LARGE AMOUNTS OF OTHER GUESTS WILL END UP GOING BROKE.

WHEN ALL OF THE WINS ARE FOCUSED ON A SINGLE PATRON...

THE EVENT OF A SINGLE GUEST MAKING AN ABSURD AMOUNT OF VICTORIES BY HIMSELF ...

...IS NOT AT ALL DESIRABLE.

AND ONCE THAT HAPPENS, THE GUESTS TEND TO LEAVE.





...HAS BECOME
VERY CLOSELY
WATCHED BY
THE ORGA-
NIZERS.

IN
REALITY,
THIS
YOUNG
MAN...

THIS IS
BECAUSE
HE IS
LOSING
THEM
CUSTOM-
ERS.



THE
HOUSE
ENDS UP
PROFITING
LESS.

AND THE
FEWER
GUESTS
THERE ARE,
THE LOWER
THE ORGA-
NIZER'S FEE
GETS.



AND
NOW,
THE
RESULT
...!!



HAS AROUND
50% OF THE
GUESTS
THAT IT
USUALLY
DOES.

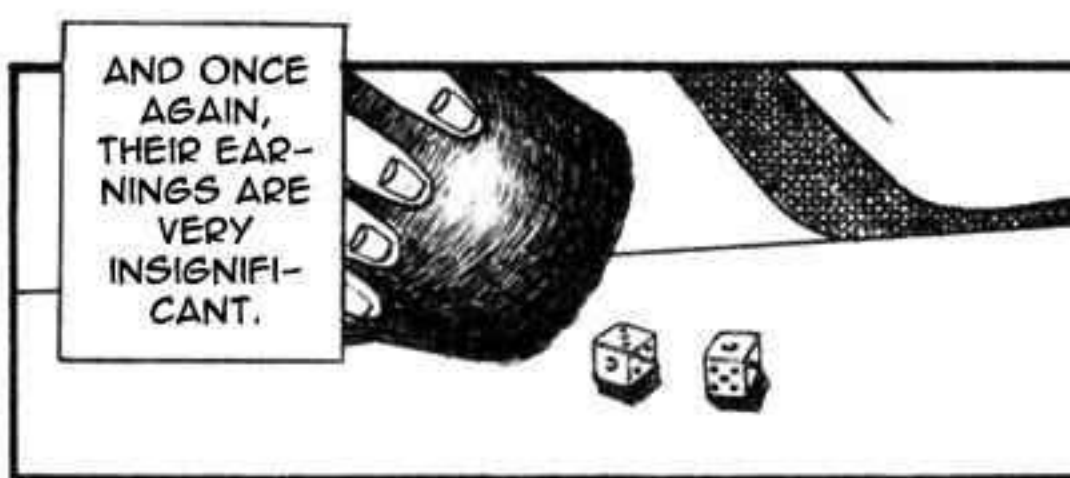
AT
PRESENT,
THE
GAMBLING
HOUSE
...



THE KURATA
GROUP, TOO,
IS BEGINNING
TO SHOW
SOME SIGNS
OF DISCOM-
FORT.

EVEN
THEY
ARE AP-
PROACH-
ING THEIR
LIMIT.

1-3...
EVEN
...!!

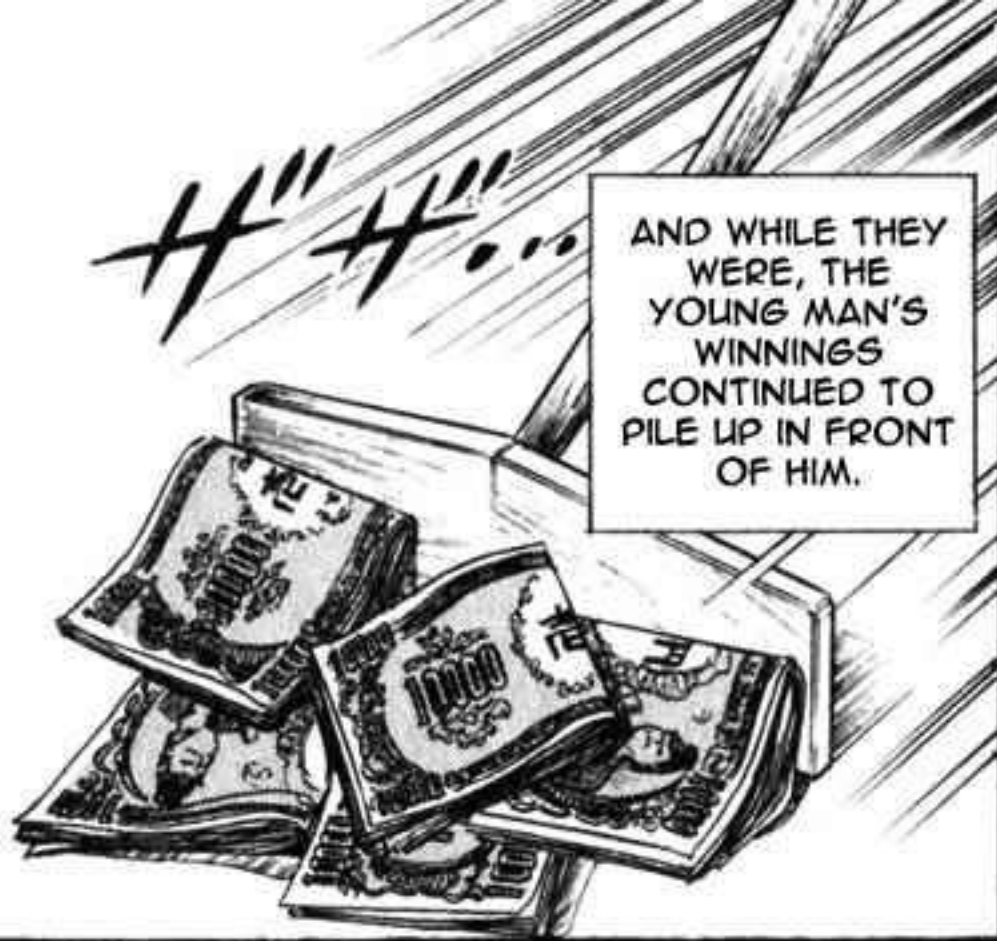


AND ONCE
AGAIN,
THEIR EARN-
INGS ARE
VERY INSIGNIFI-
CANT.



...SO FOR
THEM, THIS
IS A VERY
SERIOUS
MATTER.

THE KURATA
GROUP
MAKES MOST
OF THEIR
INCOME
FROM THE
ORGANIZERS'
FEE...



AND WHILE THEY WERE, THE YOUNG MAN'S WINNINGS CONTINUED TO PILE UP IN FRONT OF HIM.



THOSE THOUGHTS ARE WRITTEN ON THEIR FACES.

AND WHILE THEY DON'T EXACTLY SAY IT OUT LOUD,

"YOU'RE A NUICANCE ... GET OUT OF HERE!" IS WHAT THEY ARE THINKING.



HE COULD LOSE A GOOD PART OF HIS MONEY AT ANY TIME ...

THIS RAZOR-SHARP ANIMOSITY SHOWED IN HIS STARE ...

...BUT HIS EYES SHOWED NO SUCH UNEASINESS.

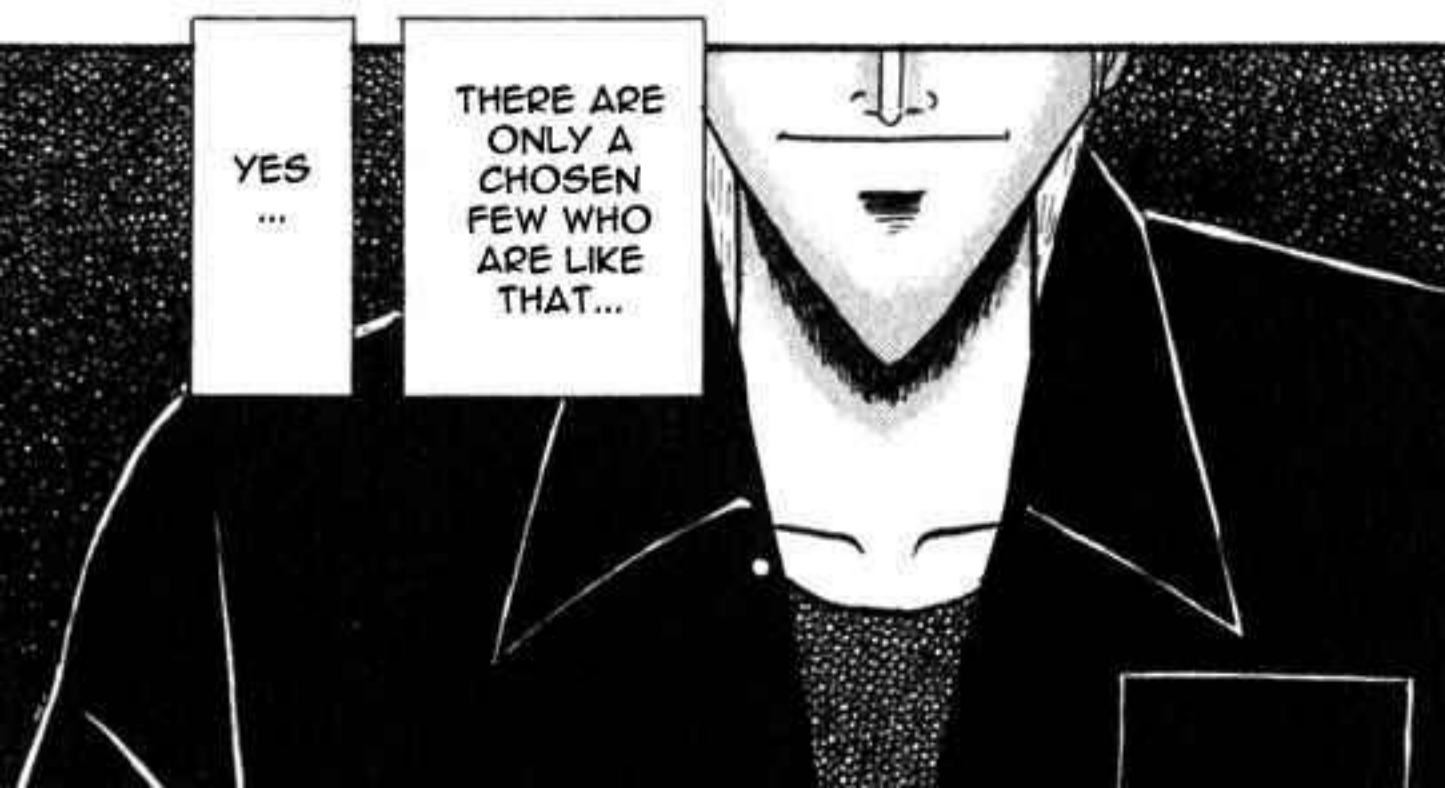


AND MORE THAN THAT, HIS SENSES WERE SHARP AS A KNIFE.

HE HAD ABSOLUTELY NO BACKUP ...



IT WOULD SEEM AS THOUGH THIS MAN HAD SENSES THAT DEFY THE HUMAN MIND'S CAPACITY FOR UNDERSTANDING.



YES ...

THERE ARE ONLY A CHOSEN FEW WHO ARE LIKE THAT...





THE
YOUNG
MAN IS,
INDEED,
AKAGI
SHIGERU!



CHAPTER 59 - VIOLENCE

第59話 暴拳



IN MODERN TIMES, THIS SUM WOULD AMOUNT TO OVER 200 MILLION YEN...

IT IS TREMENDOUS!

TO THIS POINT, THE AMOUNT OF MONEY HE HAS WON FROM THE KURATA GROUP AND THEIR CUSTOMERS AMOUNTS TO OVER 20 MILLION YEN.

AND OVER THE SIX TIMES THAT HE HAS BEEN SEEN HERE... HE HAS AMOUNTED A HUGE SUM OF CASH.

AKAGI HAS BEEN GAMBLING HERE EVERY OTHER SATURDAY FOR THE PAST 3 MONTHS...

THIS HOUSE IS ONE THAT SPECIALIZES IN CHO-HAN.

IT IS AUGUST 14TH, AT THE KURATA GAMBLING HOUSE.

...HE HAS CAUSED THE KURATA GROUP TO LOSE OUT ON MONEY DUE TO HIS ONE-SIDED VICTORIES.

AND, BY ASSIMILATING THIS 20 MILLION YEN...

A FAR CRY FROM A NORMAL AMOUNT TO GAIN THROUGH CHO-HAN.

IF IT WERE NOT FOR HIM, THEY WOULD HAVE GAINED 6 MILLION YEN TO THIS POINT.

HIS WINS ARE LARGE AND INCESANT.



IF THE KURATA GROUP THEMSELVES LOSES MONEY, THEY CAN NO LONGER SIMPLY STAND IDLY BY.



BUT THEY ARE LEFT WITH NO CHOICE BUT TO GIVE UP MORE AND MORE MONEY!

IT SEEMS TO THEM AS IF THEY ARE SIMPLY THROWING MONEY AWAY...

THE ORGANIZERS' EARNINGS, THEREFORE, HAVE ALSO BEEN GREATLY REDUCED.

EVER SINCE AKAGI ARRIVED, THE GUESTS HAVE BECOME FEWER AND FEWER.



LOOKING BACK ON IT NOW ...

DAIGASHI

KURAISHI

IT WOULD SEEM TO BE TRUE THAT WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS.

T/N: DAIGASHI: THE YAKUZA POSITION IN CHARGE OF A GAMBLING HOUSE, WORKING FOR THE BOSS DIRECTLY



TO PREVENT THIS VERY THING FROM HAPPENING, SUCH A MAN AS HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN BANNED FROM THE HOUSE A LONG TIME AGO.



THEY WOULD
FOCUS ON
CRUSHING HIM
NEXT TIME HE
MADE AN
APPEARANCE.

IT WAS
JUDGED TO
NOT BE
ENOUGH TO
FORCE HIM
TO LEAVE
AT THE TIME
...

IT HAD
SEEMED AS
THOUGH
THERE WAS
STILL A
CHANCE FOR
THE EARNINGS
TO EVEN
BACK OUT.

THOUGH IN HIS
FIRST TWO APPEAR-
ANCES AKAGI HAD
INDEED WON AT
THE SAME RATE
AS NOW...

THEY HANDLED
IT IN THE SAME
WAY THAT THEY
WOULD FOR
ANY EVENT
RESULTING IN
LOWER INCOME.

THE MONEY
THAT THEY COULD
HAVE MADE
WASHED AWAY
WITHOUT A
SINGLE
ADDITION!

AND BY
THE TIME
THEY
REALIZED
THAT...

BUT, IN THE
END, THEIR
HOPES FOR
HIS DEFEAT
WERE LEFT
UNFULFILLED.

AND THAT
WAS THE
RATIONALE
...
FOR THEIR
PERMITTING
HIS ENTER-
ANCE THE
THIRD AND
FOURTH
TIMES.

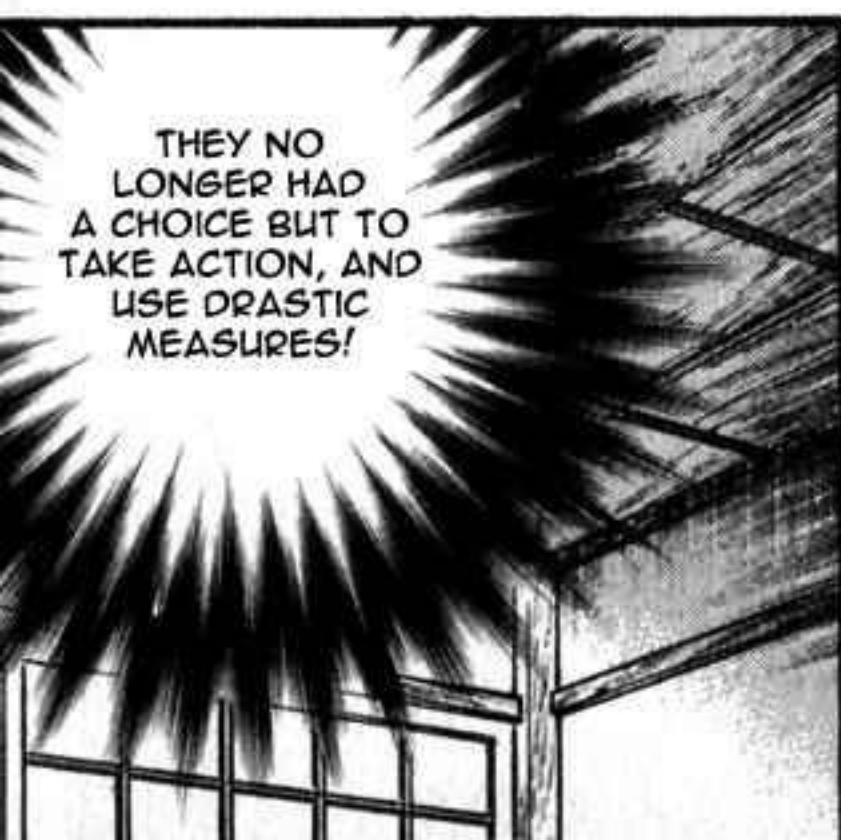


IT WAS AS
IF THE MONEY
PLAYED NO
PART IN HIS
MOTIVATION.

HE HAD ALREADY
PASSED THE
POINT WHERE
THAT REASON-
ABLE TACTIC
WOULD BE OF
ANY USE.

HE WOULD
NOT QUIT
WHILE HE
WAS
AHEAD...

AND MORE AND
MORE, THEY
BEGAN TO REALIZE
THAT AKAGI WOULD
NOT LEAVE THEM
ALONE OF HIS OWN
ACCORD.



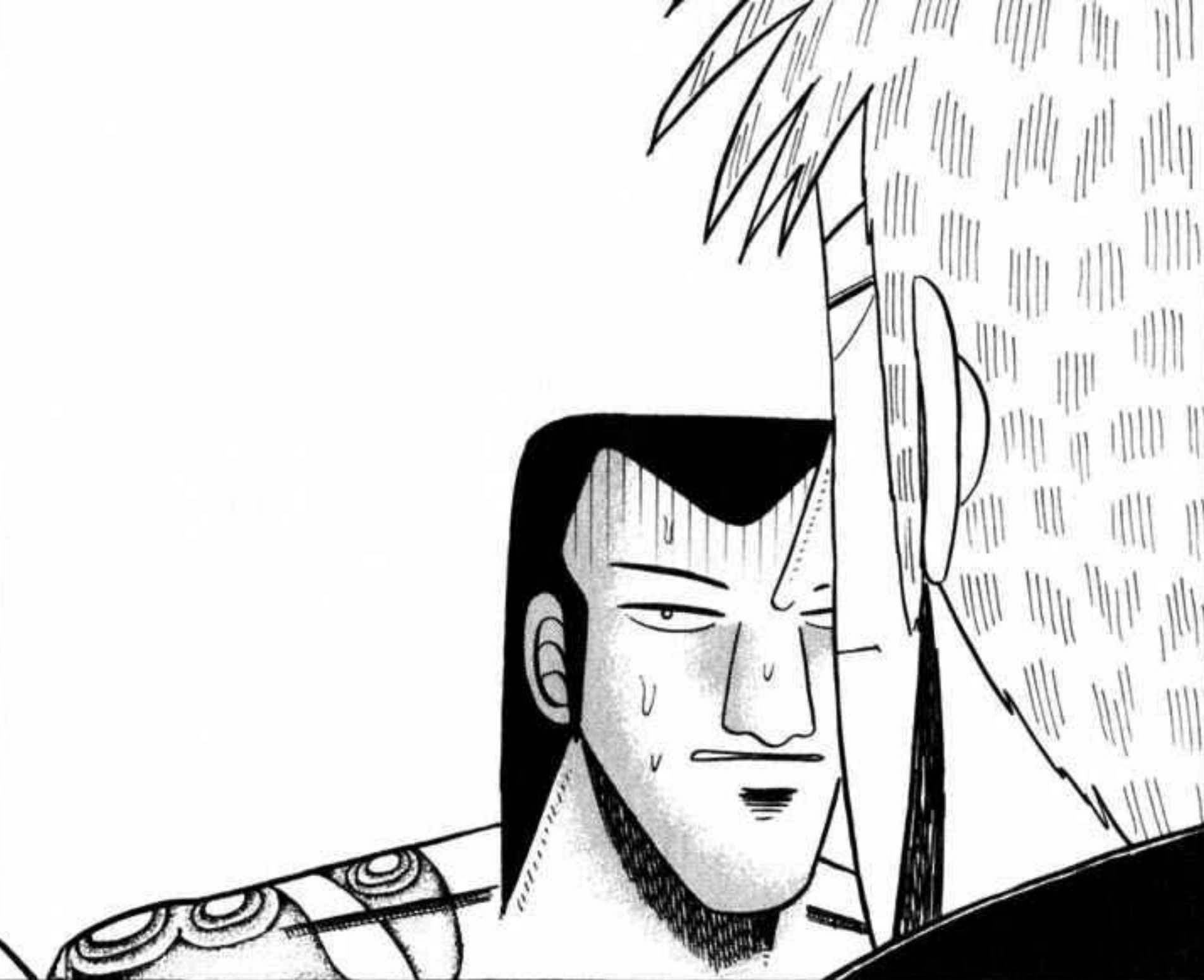
THEY NO
LONGER HAD
A CHOICE BUT TO
TAKE ACTION, AND
USE DRASTIC
MEASURES!

THE
TIME
HAD
COME.



THIS
WAS A
DISGRACE
TO THE
KURATA
GROUP.





NO
MATTER
WHAT,
THEY
HAD TO
CRUSH
HIM!



THAT
IS BE-
CAUSE
...

WILL THE
DICE SHOW
EVEN?!

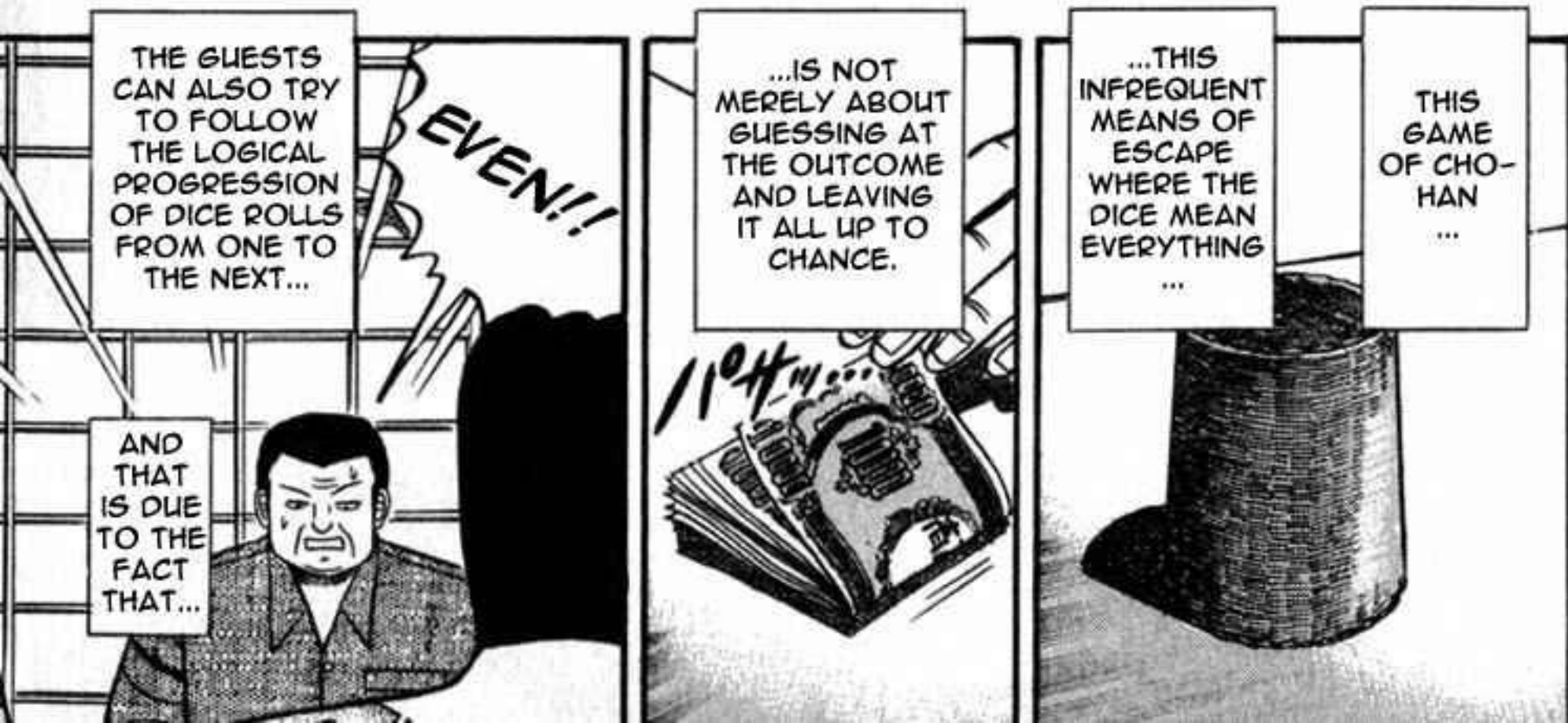
OR
WILL IT
BE ODD
?!

NOW THEN,
PLACE YOUR
BETS, PLACE
YOUR BETS!



IT WAS
THEIR
VOLITION.

THIS WAS
THE CON-
SENSUS
REACHED
BY THE
KURATA
GROUP...



THE GUESTS
CAN ALSO TRY
TO FOLLOW
THE LOGICAL
PROGRESSION
OF DICE ROLLS
FROM ONE TO
THE NEXT...

EVEN!!

...IS NOT
MERELY ABOUT
GUESSING AT
THE OUTCOME
AND LEAVING
IT ALL UP TO
CHANCE.

...THIS
INFREQUENT
MEANS OF
ESCAPE
WHERE THE
DICE MEAN
EVERYTHING
...

THIS
GAME
OF CHO-
HAN
...



...HAD
TO BE
KEPT
GOING.

ABOVE ALL,
THE KURATA
GROUP'S
DICE GAMES,
PLACED IN
THE MOUN-
TAINS...

THE NEXT
ROUND
BEGINS
NOW!



AND NOW,
THE
RESULT
...!



THE BETS
HAVE BEEN
MADE!

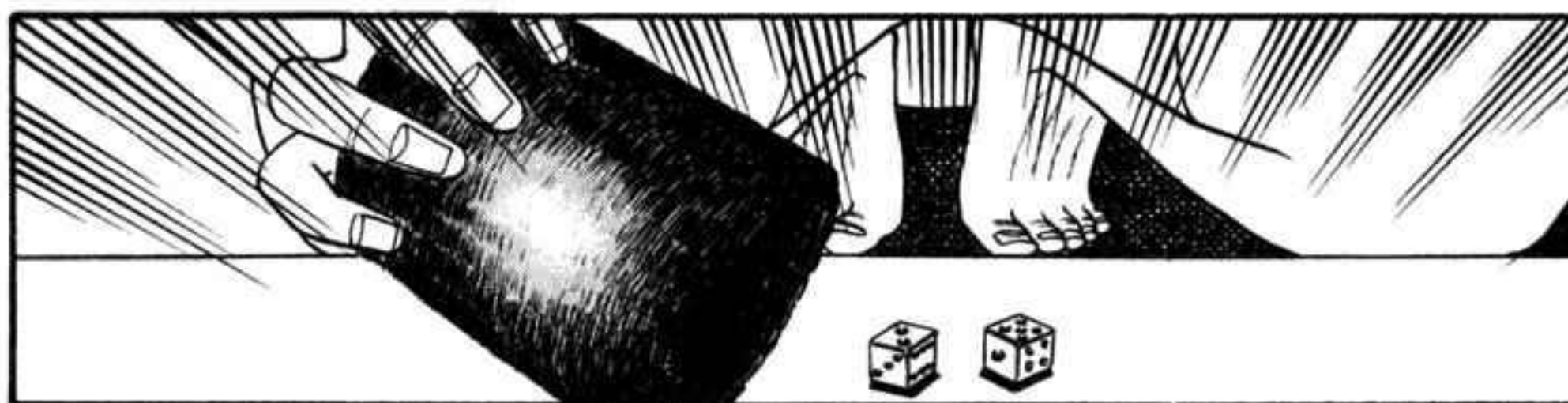


ODD!

EVEN!

THE ORGANIZERS
CAN MANIPULATE
THE OUTCOME
OF THE DICE AT
WILL!

EVEN!



2-5...
ODD!

ざわ

ざわ



ざわ



THE GUESTS
OF THE HOUSE
ARE WELL
AWARE OF THIS.

OF
COURSE
...

ざわ

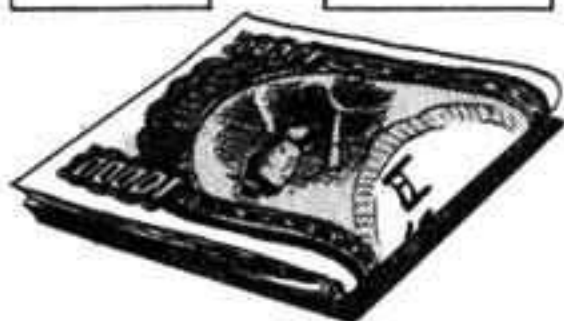
BUT, IN THE
END, THAT
IS SIMPLY
THE SINGLE-
MINDED
THINKING OF
NOVICES.

THE
MONEY
WILL BE
SPREAD
AROUND
TO EVE-
RYONE.

BESIDES,
WHETHER
THEY END
UP ON THE
WINNING
OR LOSING
SIDE...

AS LONG AS
THEY CAN'T
CHANGE THE
ROLL AFTER
THE BETS, IT
ALLOWS FOR
AN ELEMENT
OF PSYCHO-
LOGY TO IT.

HOWEVER,
MOST EVERY-
ONE WHO
VISITS IS
FINE WITH
THEM BEING
ABLE TO
MANIPULATE
THE DICE.

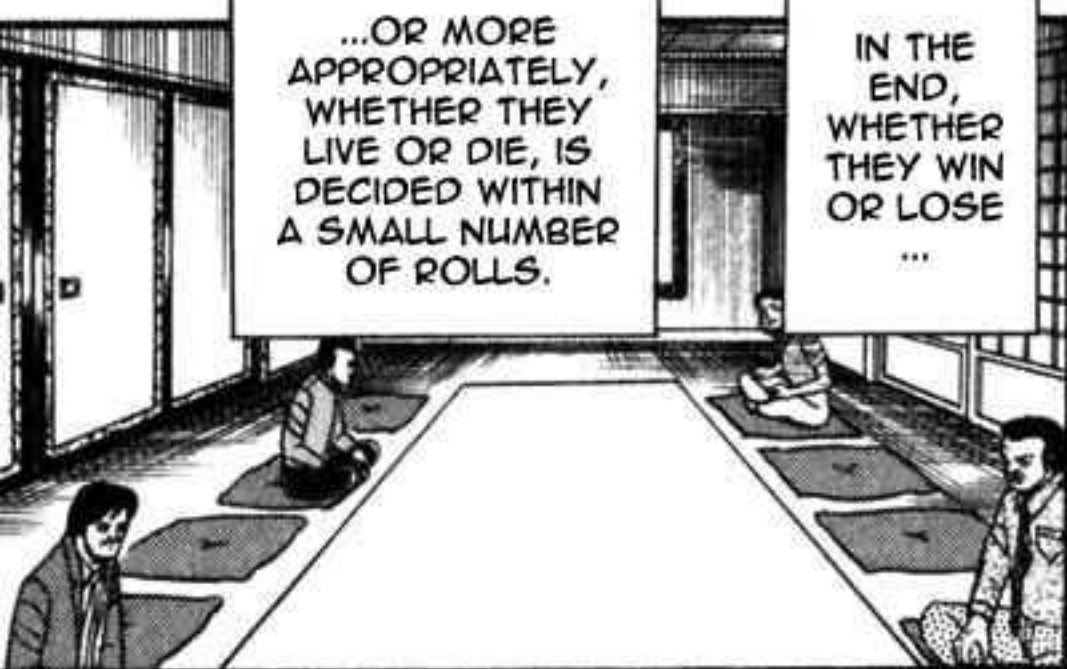


...OR MORE
APPROPRIATELY,
WHETHER THEY
LIVE OR DIE, IS
DECIDED WITHIN
A SMALL NUMBER
OF ROLLS.

IN THE
END,
WHETHER
THEY WIN
OR LOSE
...

...IT'S RARE
FOR ANYONE
TO WIN ANY-
THING OF
VALUE.

IN THE END,
THE DICE
SIMPLY LEAD
THE PATRONS
AROUND BY
THE NOSE...



ONLY THE
WORST
DRUNKARDS
COULD BE
EXPECTED
TO ACTUALLY
BELIEVE IT.

THIS
CONCEPT
IS ONE
THAT IS
CLEARLY
A WORK
OF FIC-
TION...

...THERE EXISTS
A PARTICULAR
SPIRIT... A DIETY
THAT CAN CON-
TROL THE FATE
OF THE DICE AND
WHICH PATRONS
ARE THE UNLUCKY
ONES.

...THAT,
DEEP IN
THE MOUN-
TAINS
...

IT
HAS
BEEN
SAID
...



AND
YET
...





A REAL
MONSTER
HAS
CONGRE-
GATED
HERE!

WHAT HAS
JUST
HAPPENED
IS NO MERE
STORY...



THIS MAN,
JUST LIKE
THE SATORI
OF LEGEND
...

TRULY, THIS IS
AN HONEST-TO-
GOODNESS
MONSTER, AS IF
LIFTED STRAIGHT
OUT FROM A
FAIRY TALE!

T/N: THE SATORI IS A MOUNTAIN-DWELLING MONSTER IN JAPANESE FOLKLORE CAPABLE OF READING MINDS

HIS EYES
WOULD PEEER
INTO THEIR
SOUL AND
RIP OUT THE
PROPER
RESPONSE!

...AND DO SO
EFFECTIVELY,
NO MATTER
HOW THEY
TRIED TO
RESIST HIM!

WOULD
ALWAYS
READ
THEIR
MINDS
...

OF
COURSE
...

AND THIS
WAS THE
FIRST TIME
THEY HAD
EVER SEEN
SOMETHING
QUITE LIKE
THIS!

THEY HAD
BEEN RUN-
NING THIS
GAME FOR
7 YEARS
TO THIS
POINT...

IT'S ABSURD,
BUT THERE
IS NOT MUCH
THAT CAN
BE DONE
ABOUT IT
...

EVEN
SO...

BUT
...

HE HAS
A FEW
STRAY
MISSES,
AS
WELL.

THIS IS NOT
TO SAY THAT
AKAGI WINS
EVERY BET
THAT HE
MAKES...



NO

RATHER

...



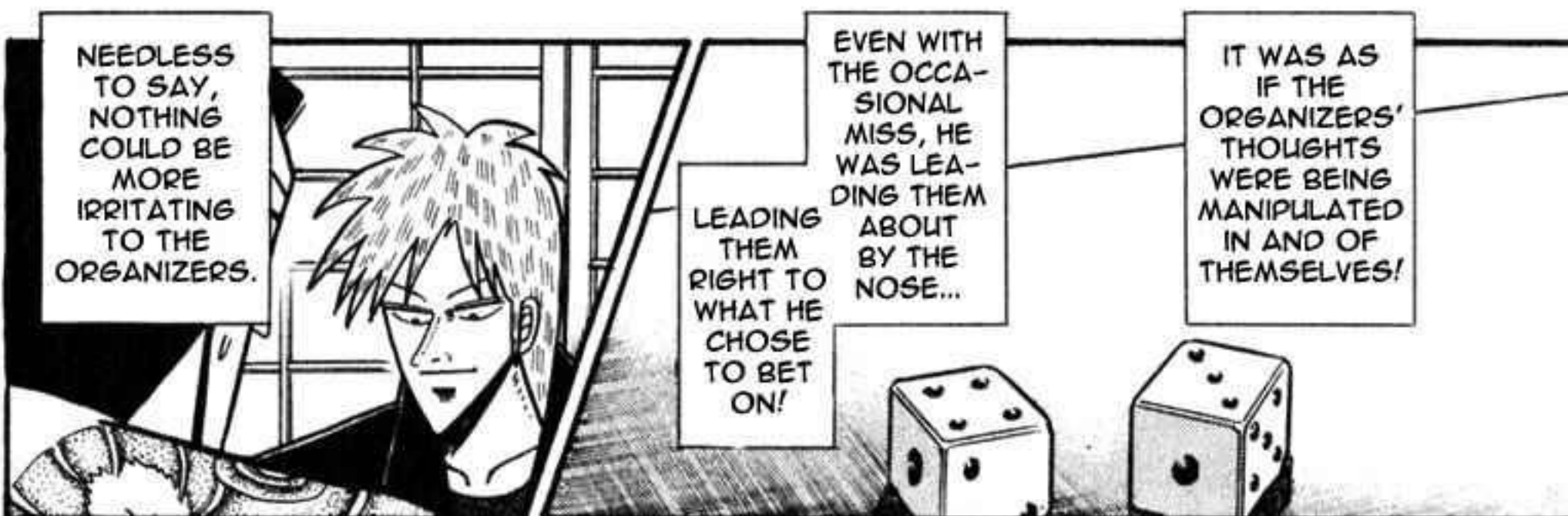
...THE EFFECT WAS THE SAME.

HERE, IN SUCH A TENSE ATMOSPHERE AS THIS...



AND TO FOLLOW

IT WAS AS IF HE HAD LOST THOSE SMALL SUMS ON PURPOSE!



NEEDLESS TO SAY, NOTHING COULD BE MORE IRRITATING TO THE ORGANIZERS.

LEADING THEM RIGHT TO WHAT HE CHOSE TO BET ON!

EVEN WITH THE OCCASIONAL MISS, HE WAS LEADING THEM ABOUT BY THE NOSE...

IT WAS AS IF THE ORGANIZERS' THOUGHTS WERE BEING MANIPULATED IN AND OF THEMSELVES!



BUT THE ONLY ONE GETTING ANYTHING AT THE MOMENT WAS AKAGI HIMSELF!

THEY COULD DO NOTHING BUT GIVE HIM WHAT HE WANTED...



BUT EVEN STILL, NOTHING COULD BE DONE ABOUT IT.



THEY FELT AS THOUGH THEY WERE BEING MOCKED.



IT
CONTINUED
INFINITELY
...

THERE
WAS NO
END IN
SIGHT
...

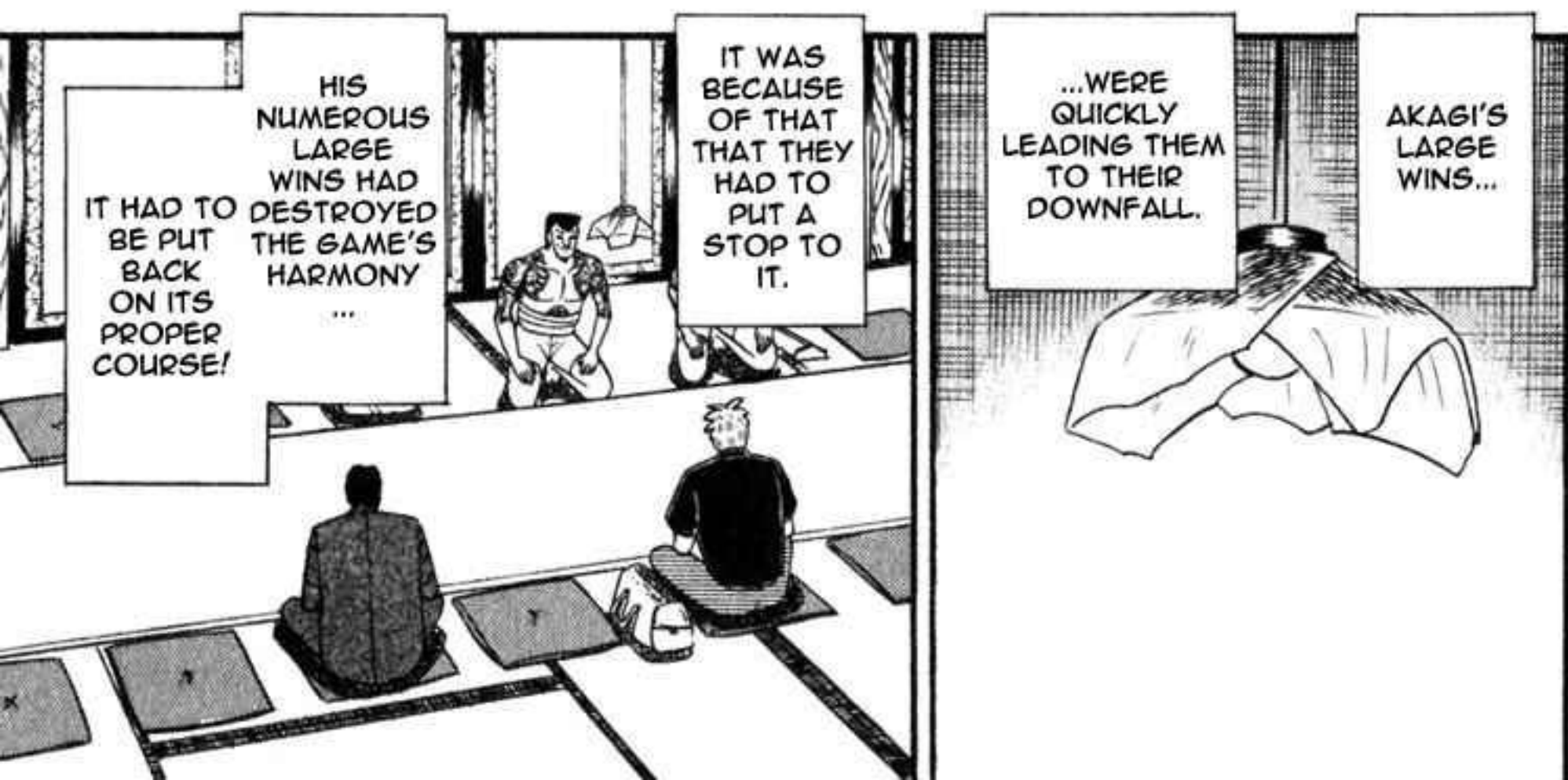
WITH
NOTHING
THEY
COULD
DO TO
STOP
IT!



IT WAS FOR
THAT VERY
REASON
THAT THEY
HAD TO DO
SOMETHING.

AND
YET
...

IT WAS TRULY
AN OVER-
WHELMINGLY
LOSING
BATTLE.



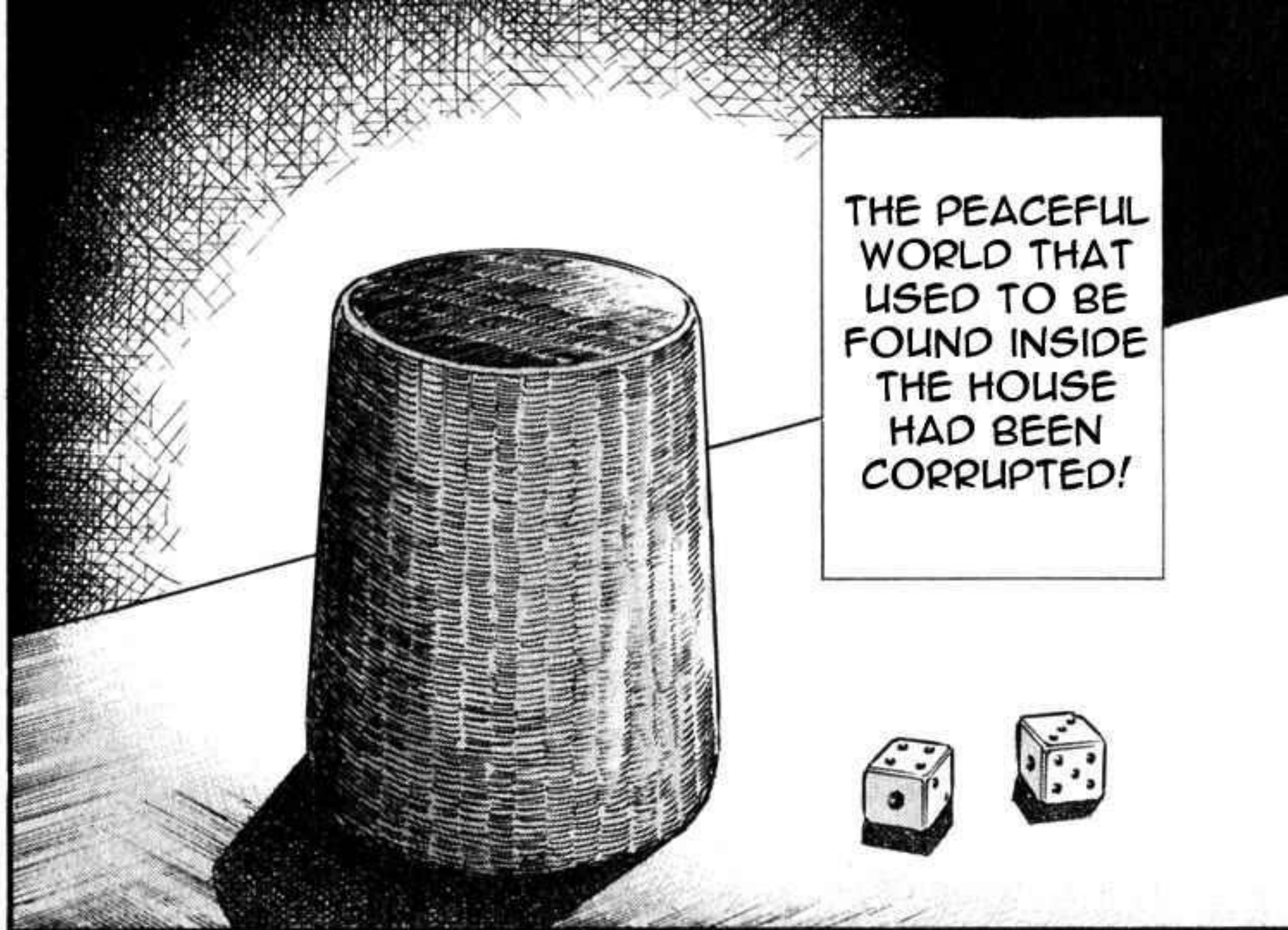
IT HAD TO
BE PUT
BACK
ON ITS
PROPER
COURSE!

HIS
NUMEROUS
LARGE
WINS HAD
DESTROYED
THE GAME'S
HARMONY
...

IT WAS
BECAUSE
OF THAT
THAT THEY
HAD TO
PUT A
STOP TO
IT.

...WERE
QUICKLY
LEADING THEM
TO THEIR
DOWNFALL.

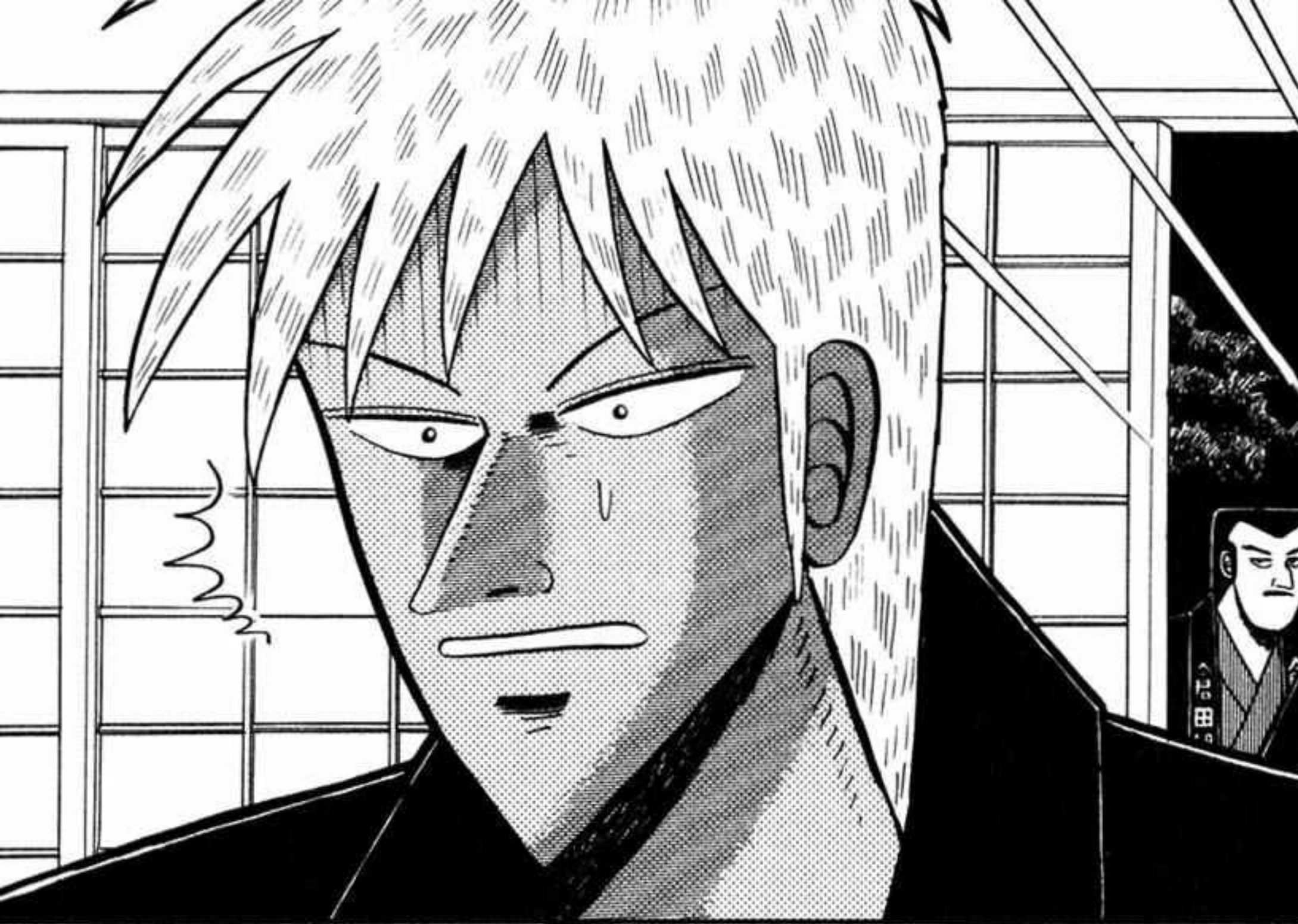
AKAGI'S
LARGE
WINS...



THE PEACEFUL
WORLD THAT
USED TO BE
FOUND INSIDE
THE HOUSE
HAD BEEN
CORRUPTED!



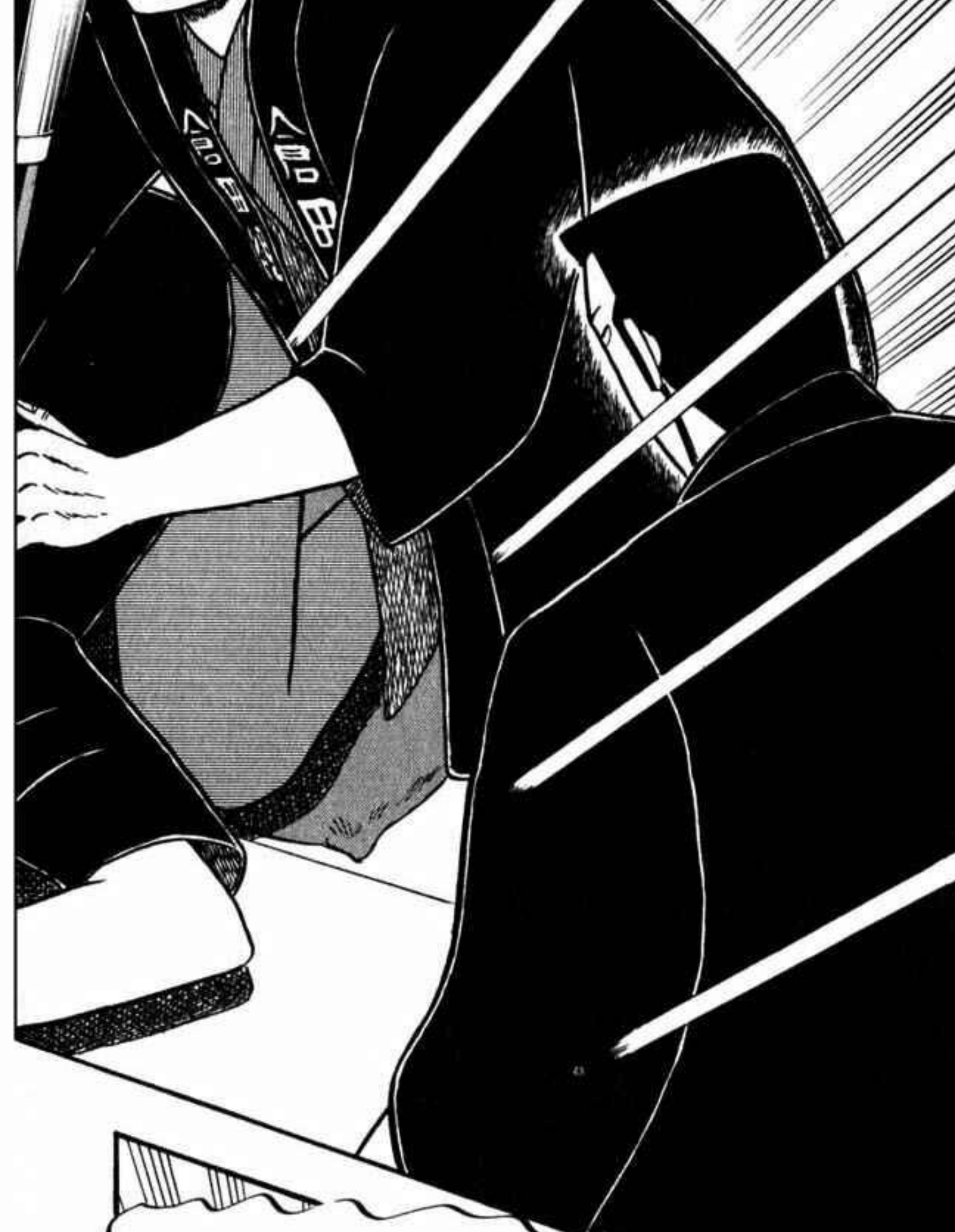






ONLY IF
YOU DO THAT
WILL WE
PERMIT YOU
TO LEAVE
HERE WITH
YOUR HEAD!

BEG
FOR YOUR
LIFE, YOU
LOWLY
WORM!



AT
THAT
TIME,
THEY
MADE
THEIR
MOVE!

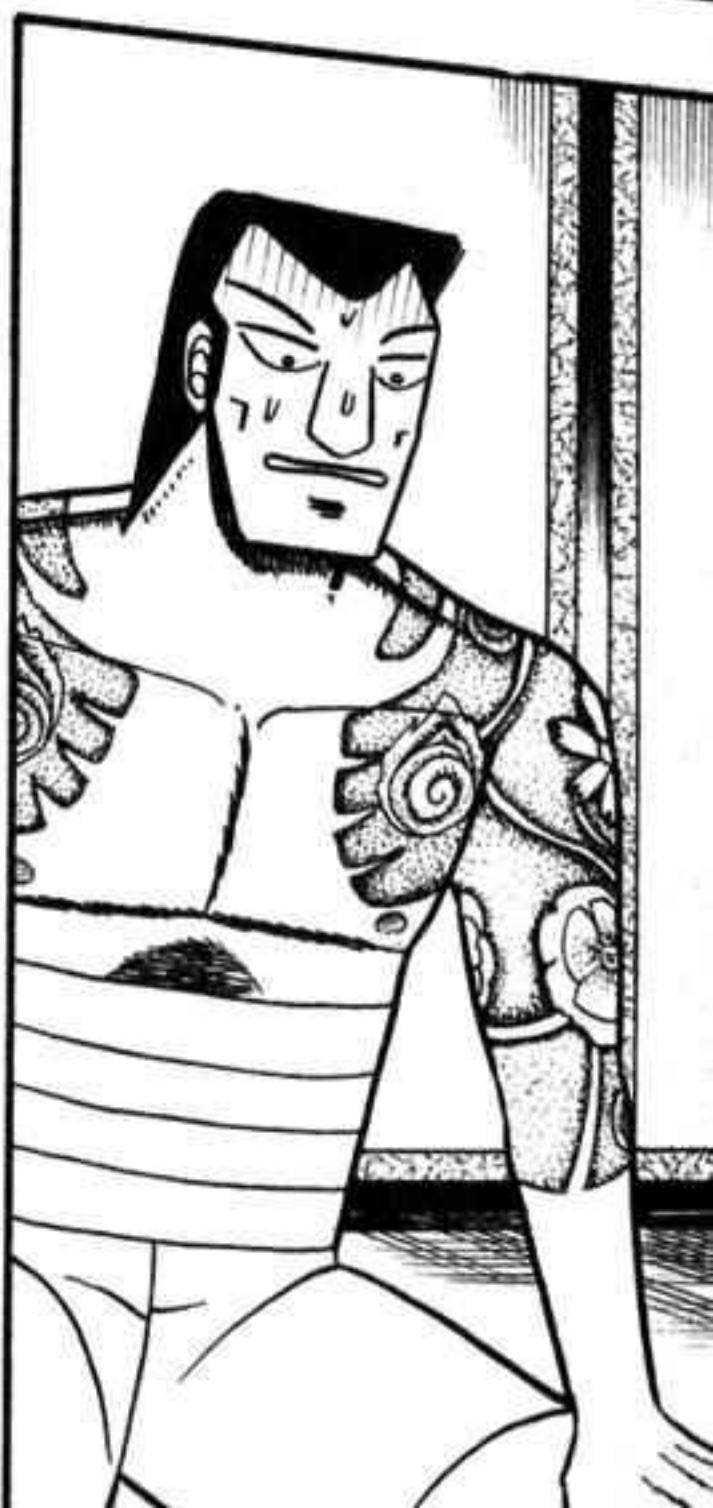
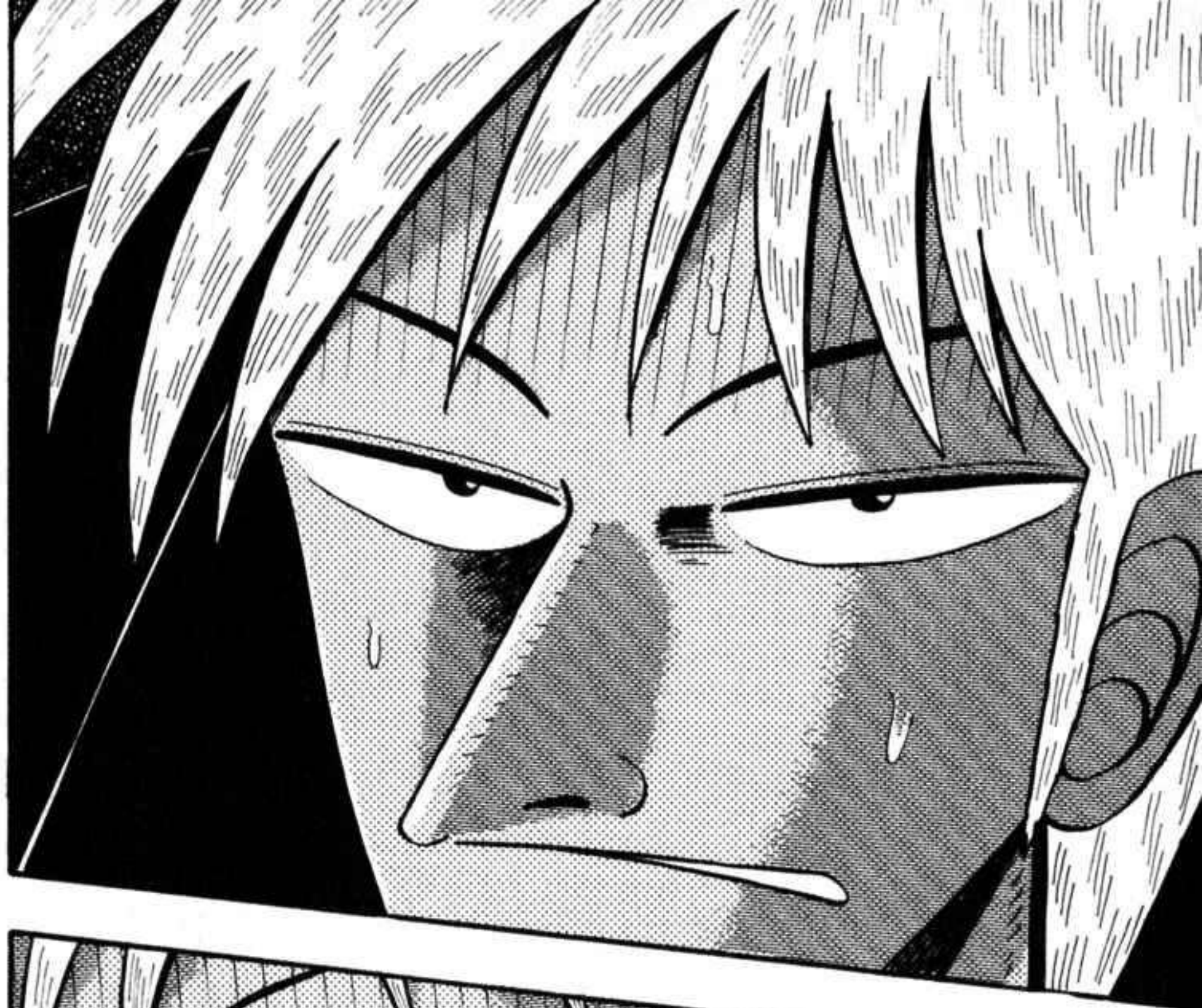


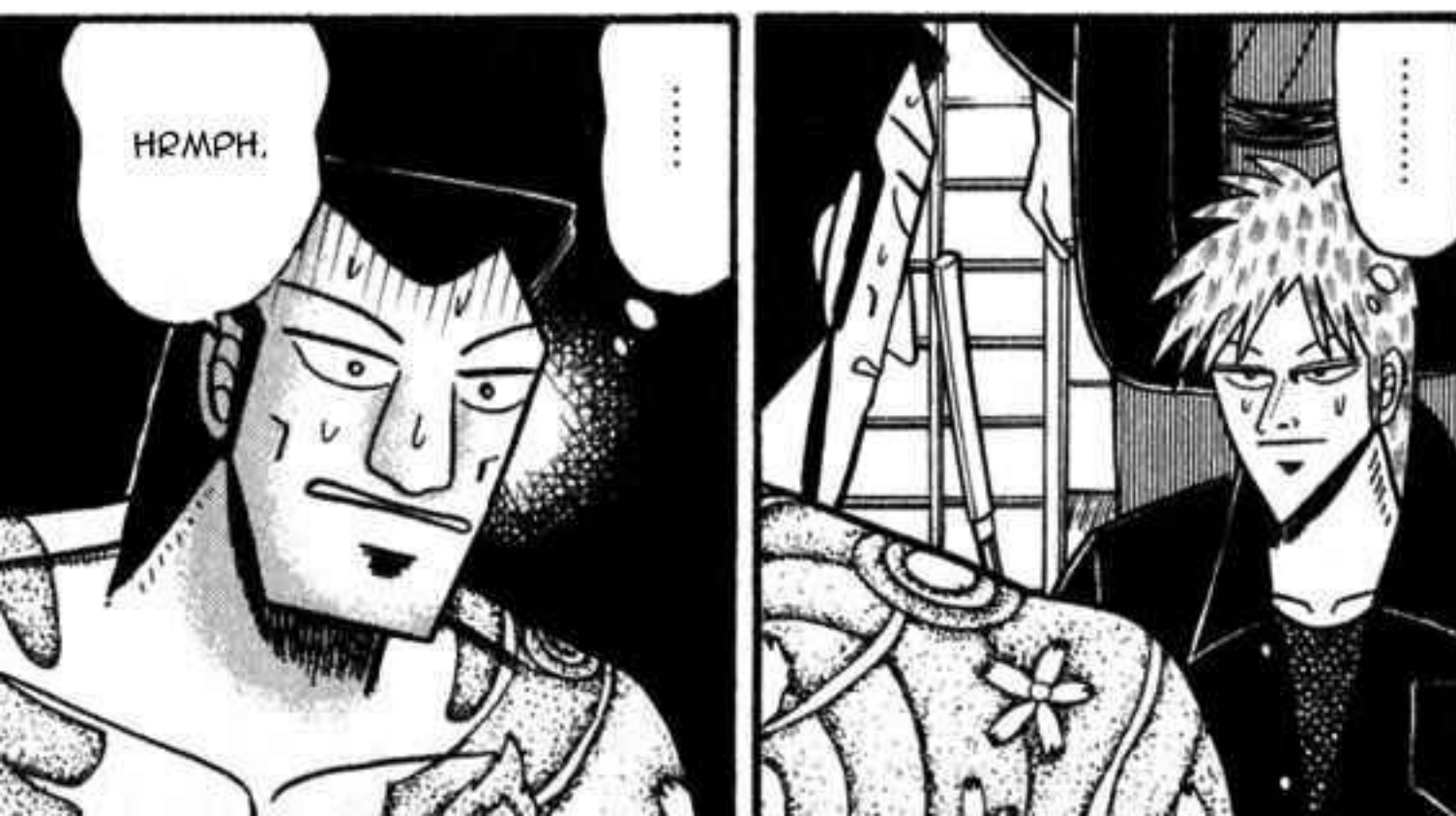
HAHH
...!!!

AUUUUUGGGHHH....!!!



KYAAAAAAAAHHHHH!!!







IF SOMEONE
GIVES US REASON
TO, WE'LL USE
THOSE SWORDS...
STAB THEM RIGHT
THROUGH.

YOU
ARE NO
EXCEP-
TION.

WE
DON'T
LIKE TO
DO THIS,
BUT...

AKAGI,
WAS IT?

NOW,
THEN...



HOW-
EVER
...



WE DO NOT
TAKE KINDLY
TO THAT SORT
OF MIS-
CONDUCT.

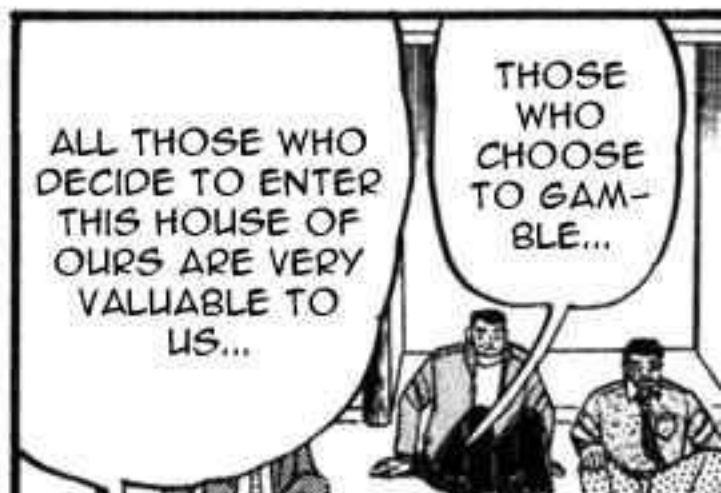


THAT SAID, WHAT
YOU'VE DONE IS
VIOLATE THE TRUST
WE HAVE BETWEEN
OURSELVES AND
OUR CUSTOMERS
...



THIS CAN END
SIMPLY WITH
YOUR BANISH-
MENT FROM
EVER RETURNING
TO THIS PLACE.

WE DON'T
PARTICULARLY
CARE TO HAVE
TO CLEAN UP
THE BLOOD-
STAINS FROM
THIS ROOM...



ALL THOSE WHO
DECIDE TO ENTER
THIS HOUSE OF
OURS ARE VERY
VALUABLE TO
US...

THOSE
WHO
CHOOSE
TO GAM-
BLE...



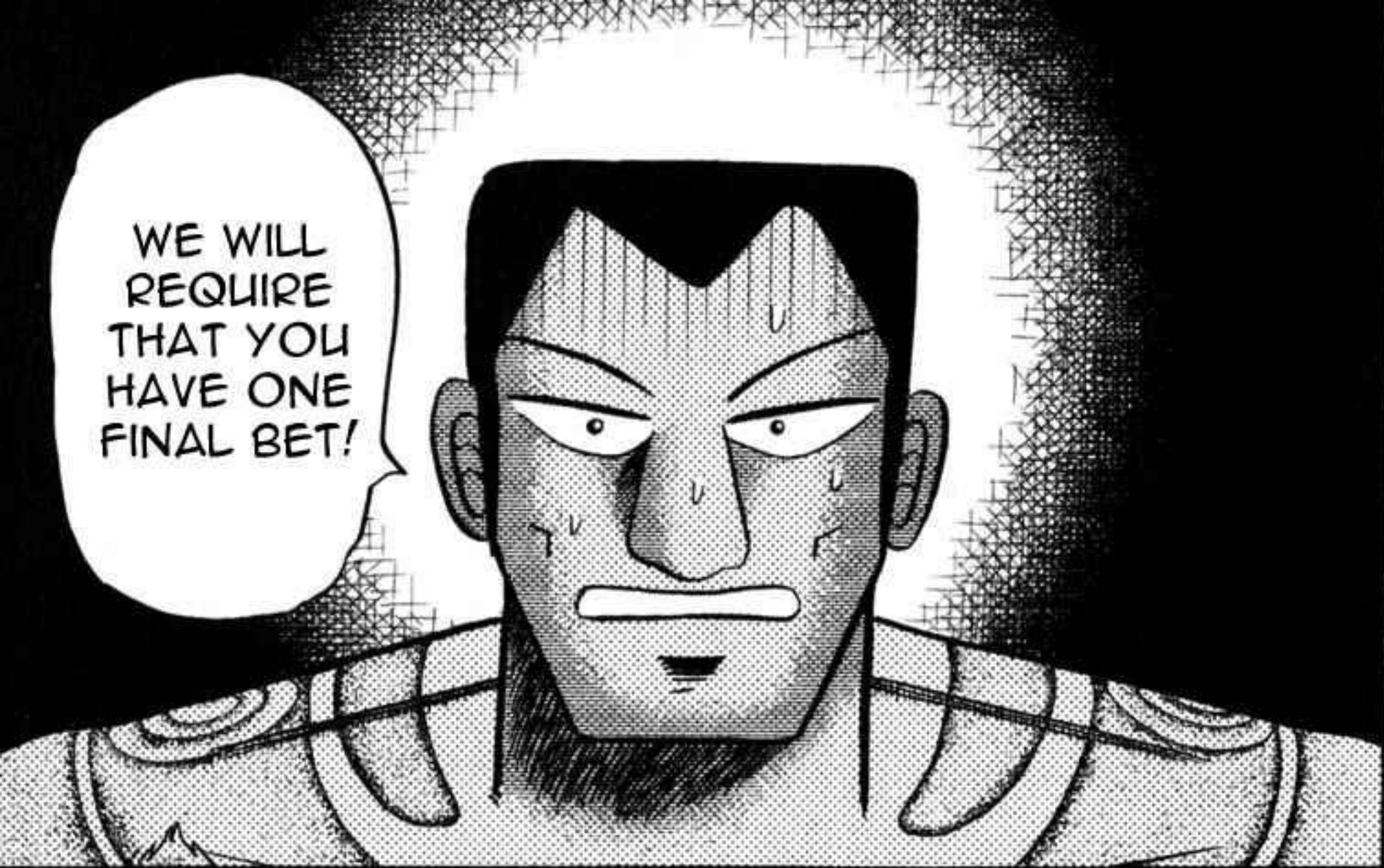
HOW-
EVER
...



WE ALSO
WON'T REQUIRE
THAT YOU GIVE
US BACK ANY
MONEY THAT
YOU HAVE IN
YOUR BAG.



AND SO,
WE WOULD
LIKE TO SEE
YOU LIVE.



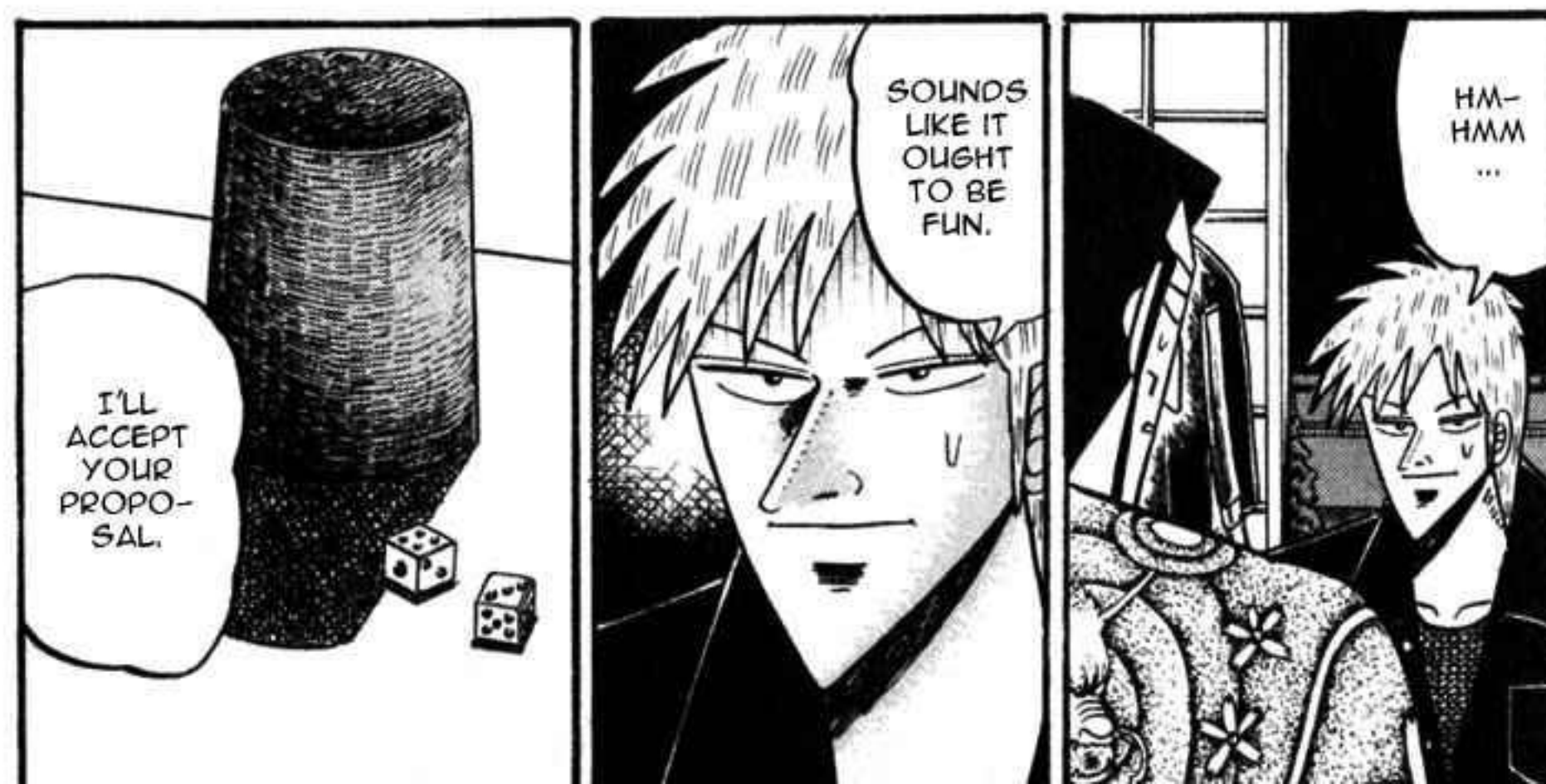
WE WILL
REQUIRE
THAT YOU
HAVE ONE
FINAL BET!



AND IN THIS
FINAL ROUND,
YOU WILL BET
EVERYTHING...

...YOU WILL
RETURN ALL
OF THE MONEY
IN THAT BAG
SHOULD YOU
LOSE!



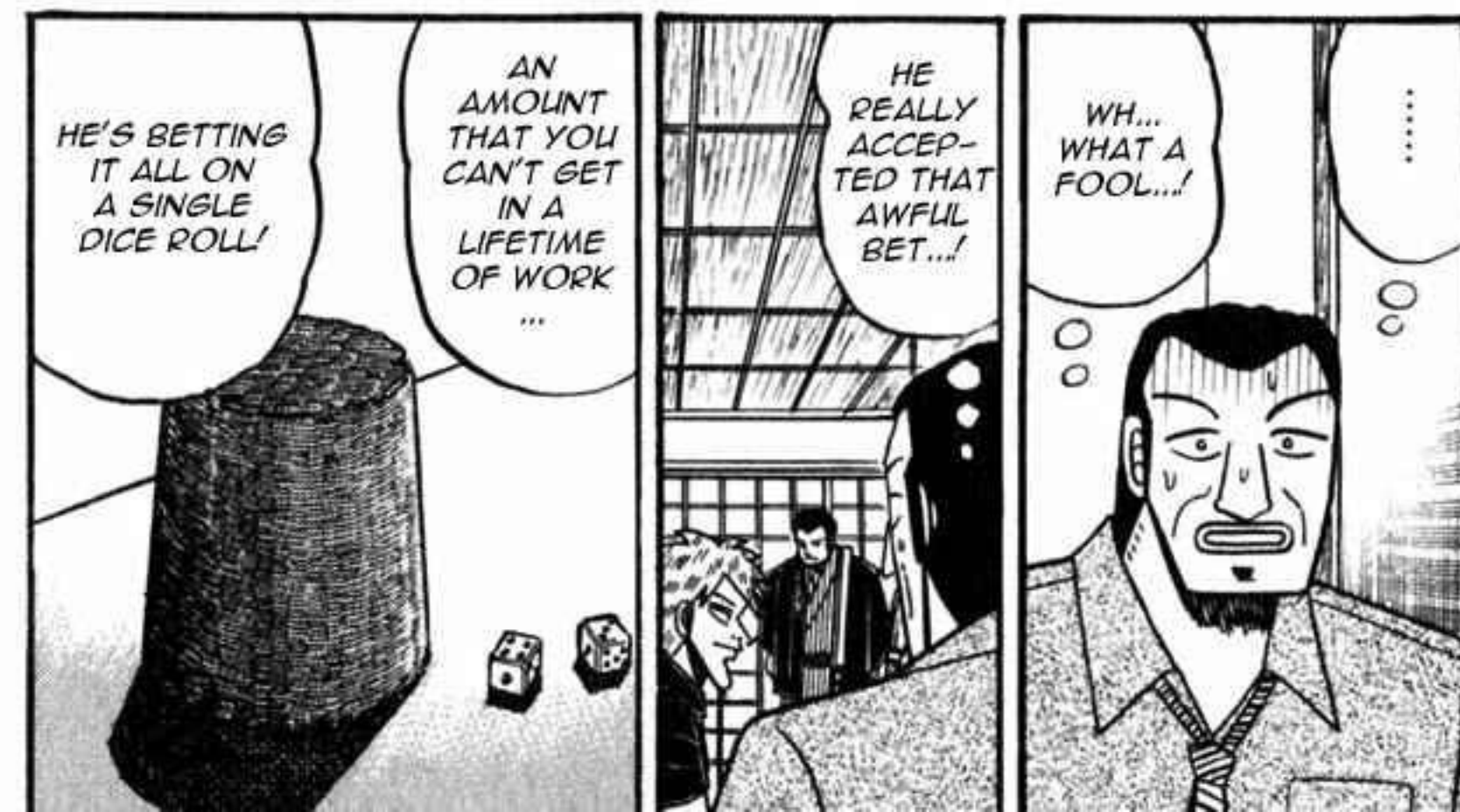
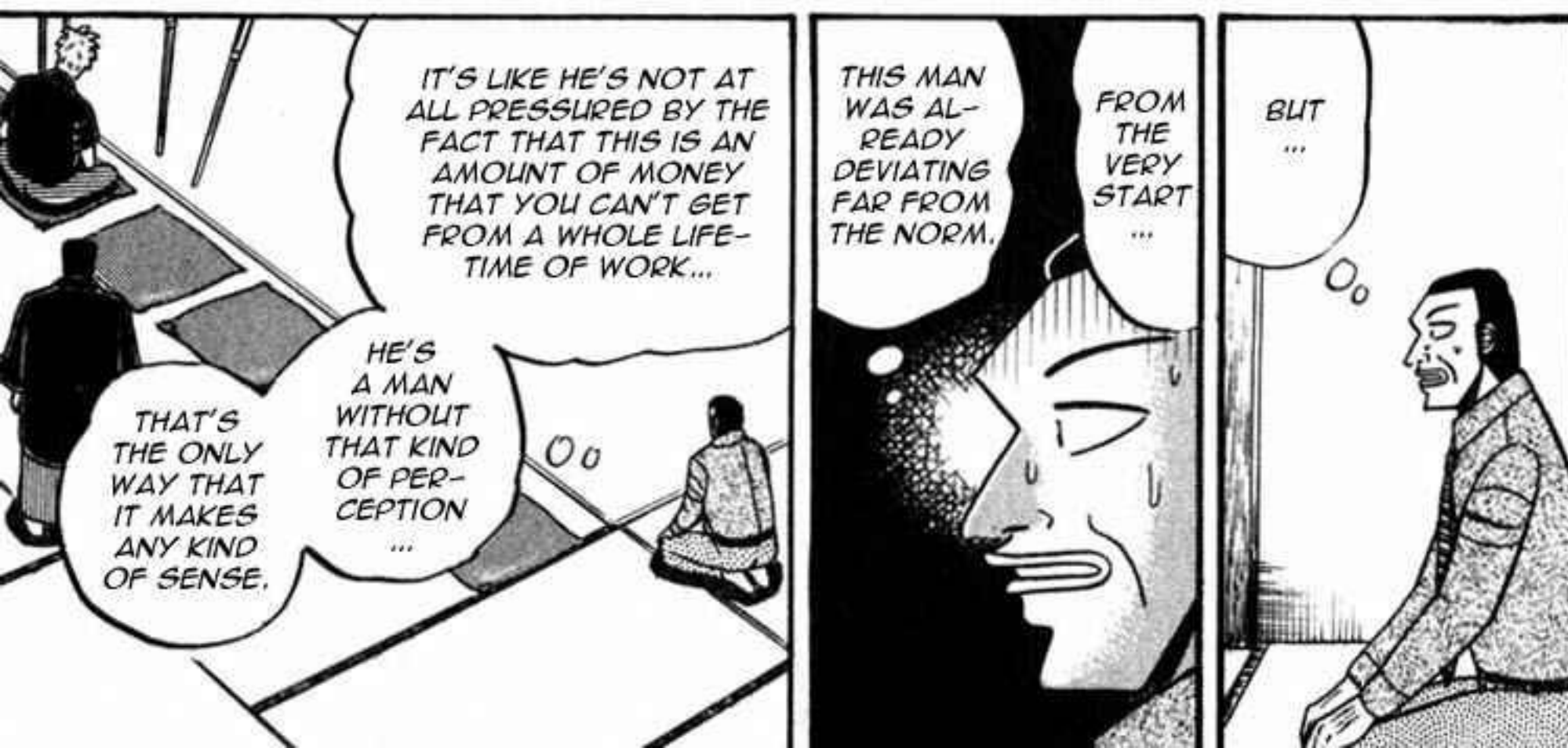
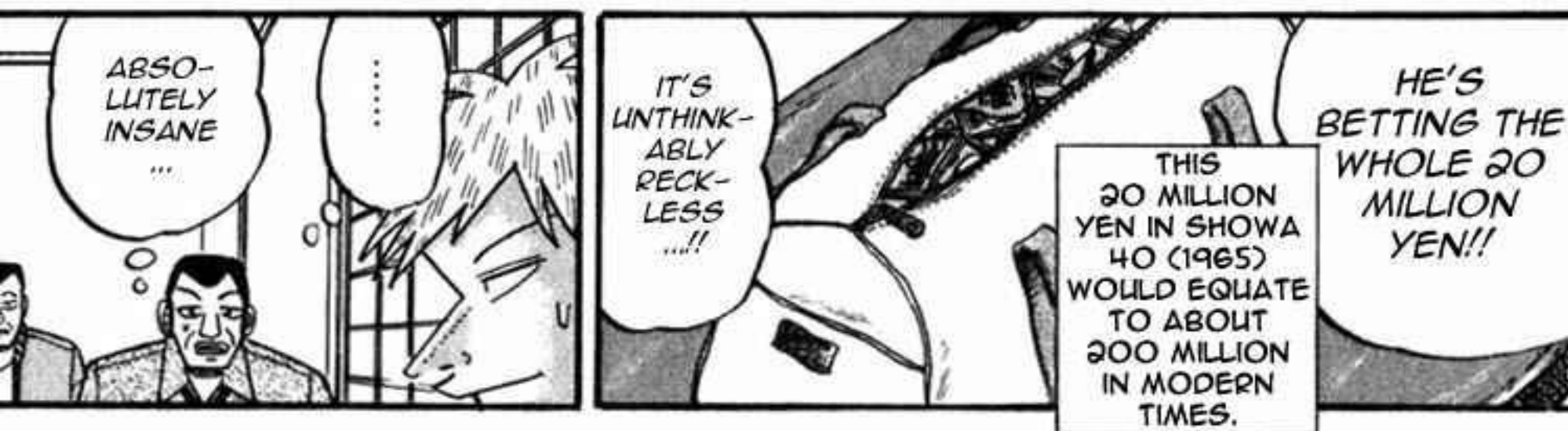


ざわ..

CHAPTER 60 - DEVIATION 第60話 逸脱



AKAGI
READILY
ACCEPTS
IT...!





HIM HAVING
THIS KIND OF
REACTION TO
SUCH A GIGAN-
TIC GAMBLE
...

...I CAN'T
EVEN BEGIN
TO UNDER-
STAND IT.

IF IT
WERE ME,
I WOULD
BE TREM-
BLING AT
THE VERY
THOUGHT
...

HIS
EXPRES-
SION
HASN'T
EVEN
CHANGED
...



...THE
KURATA
GROUP IS
THE EXACT
OPPOSITE.

IN
THAT
CASE
...



THIS MAN
SEES HIMSELF
AS TOO GOOD
FOR MONEY
...

HE'S SOME-
HOW GOTTEN
IT INTO HIS
HEAD THAT
HE DOESN'T
NEED IT...?



PERHAPS
...



THAT IS TO SAY,
THIS SINGLE
CHO-HAN MATCH
WORTH 20
MILLION YEN
...

...IS ABOUT
GETTING
THEMSELVES
BACK ON
TRACK!



...BEFORE THEY
WILL CONSIDER
LETTING THIS
AKAGI GUY
LEAVE...

...THEY
NEED TO
GET THEIR
MONEY
BACK
FROM
HIM!

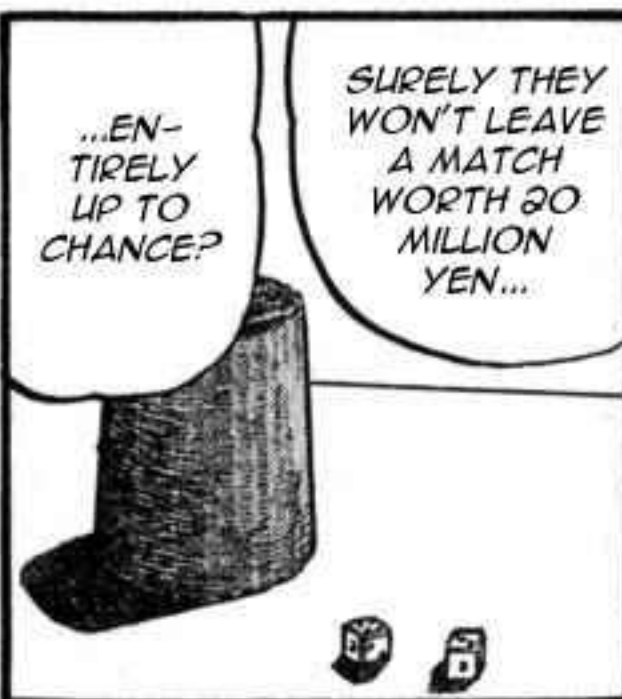


AND
SINCE
THEY
HAVE
THAT
STANCE
...

NATURALLY,
THEY'RE VERY
CONCERNED
ABOUT THE
MONEY THAT
THEY HAVE TO
GAIN, HERE.



IT'S NOT
AN AMOUNT
OF MONEY THAT
THEY CAN AFFORD
TO LET SLIP PAST
THEM...



...EN-
TIRELY
UP TO
CHANCE?

SURELY THEY
WON'T LEAVE
A MATCH
WORTH 20
MILLION
YEN...



SO, WHAT
KIND OF
POLICIES
WILL THEY
ADD...?



IT'S QUITE
ADMIRABLE.

I'M GLAD
THAT YOU
AGREED
...



VERY
WELL...
AKAGI,
RIGHT?

THEY MUST THINK THEY
HAVE A GOOD CHANCE
OF WINNING... DO THEY
HAVE SOMETHING UP
THEIR SLEEVES TO
GIVE THEM THE EDGE?



...WAS OUR
TOP PRIORITY
WITH THAT
PROPOSAL.

SIMPLY
GETTING
YOU TO
TAKE THE
GAMBLE
...



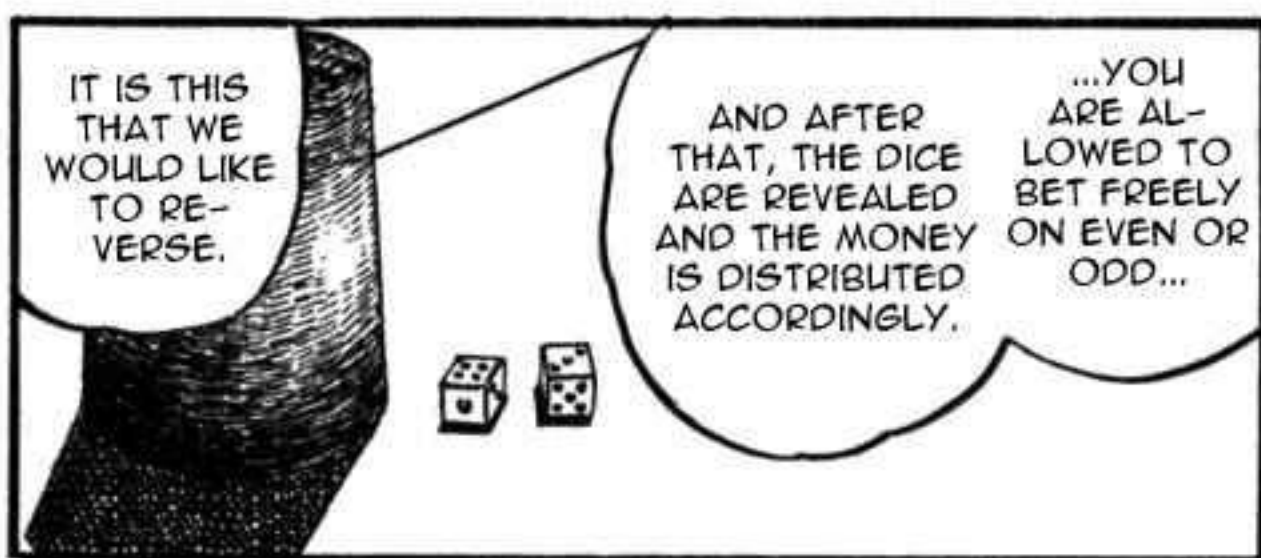
I SUPPOSE WE
COULD HAVE
SETTLED FOR IT
IF YOU'D
DEMANDED TO
RISK LESS THAN
ALL OF YOUR
MONEY.

HAH-
HAH...
NEVER-
THELESS
...



BUT IF YOU
HADN'T
AGREED,
WE WOULD
NOT HAVE
ALLOWED
YOU TO
LEAVE.

I SUPPOSE
IT'S A BIT
TRIVIAL AT
THIS POINT
...





BUT IT'S BETTER TO BE SAFE THAN SORRY.

WE DON'T HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT'S WHAT'S HAPPENING ...

HMM-HM ...



...WE THINK YOU MIGHT BE SOMEHOW TRACKING WHICH SIDE OF THE DICE WILL LAND UP, THOUGH WE DON'T KNOW HOW.

THAT IS TO SAY ...



SOME WAY OF TRACKING HOW THE DICE MOVE.

IT JUST FEELS LIKE YOU HAVE SOME KIND OF TRICK ...



YOUR SUSPICION IS A BIT OFF THE MARK, BUT ...

TO PUT YOUR MIND AT EASE, I SUPPOSE I CAN ALLOW THAT.

I SEE...



SO, THEN, LET'S TRY THIS.



? ...



I'LL USE THESE 10-YEN AND 5-YEN COINS TO PICK BETWEEN EVEN AND ODD BEFORE YOU ROLL.

I'VE GOT A BIT OF POCKET CHANGE, HERE...





CAN I
GET A
PENCIL
AND
SOME
PAPER?



THAT'S
RIGHT.

10-YEN
AND 5-YEN
...?



THAT
WILL
MEAN
EVEN.

IF I HAVE
THE 10-YEN
COIN IN MY
HAND AFTER
THE DICE ARE
ROLLED,



...AND
THEN,
HOLD IT
OUT LIKE
SO.



...CHOOSE
ONE OF
THE COINS
TO HOLD
ON TO...

IN SHORT,
I'LL SLIP MY
HAND INTO MY
POCKET...

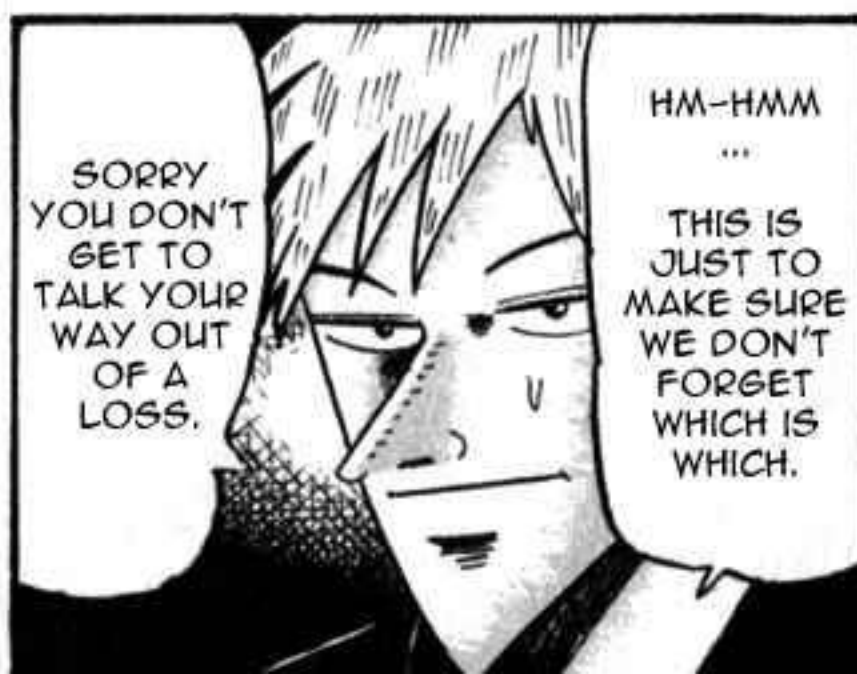


THERE
WILL BE
NO QUES-
TION AS TO
THE OUT-
COME.

SO, THEN,
SINCE WE
HAVE THIS,



¥10 → Even
¥5 → Odd



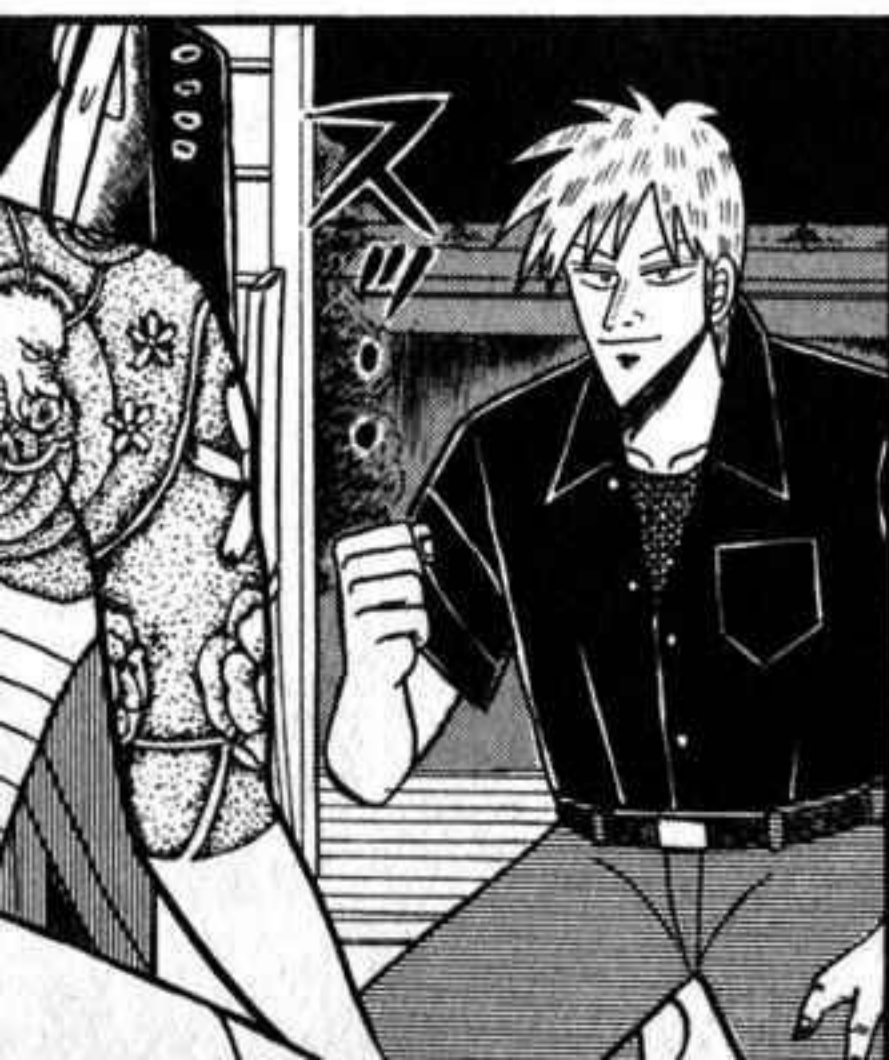
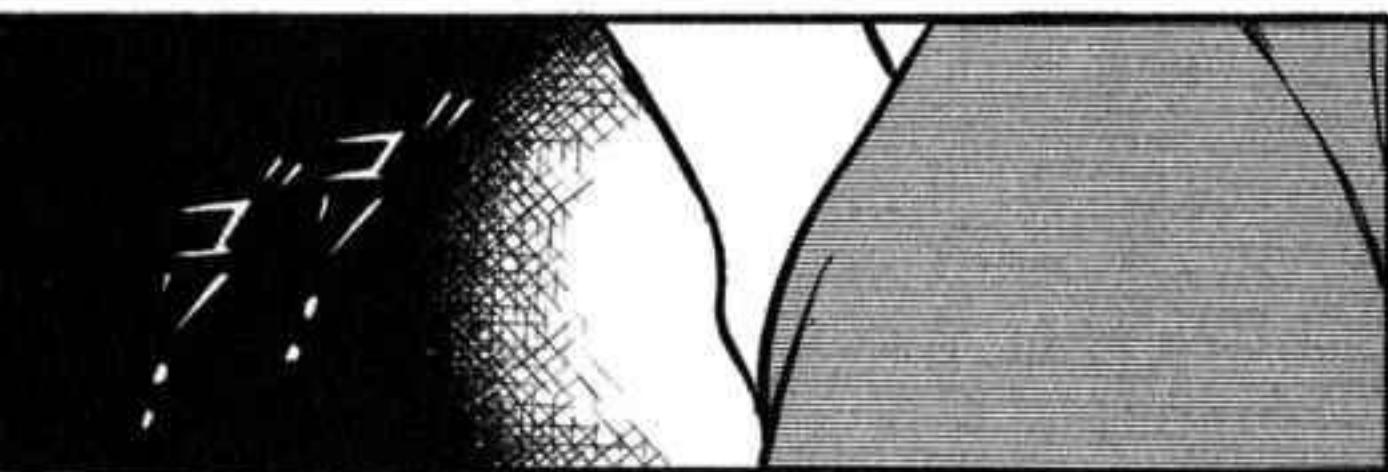
SORRY
YOU DON'T
GET TO
TALK YOUR
WAY OUT
OF A
LOSS.

HM-HMM
...

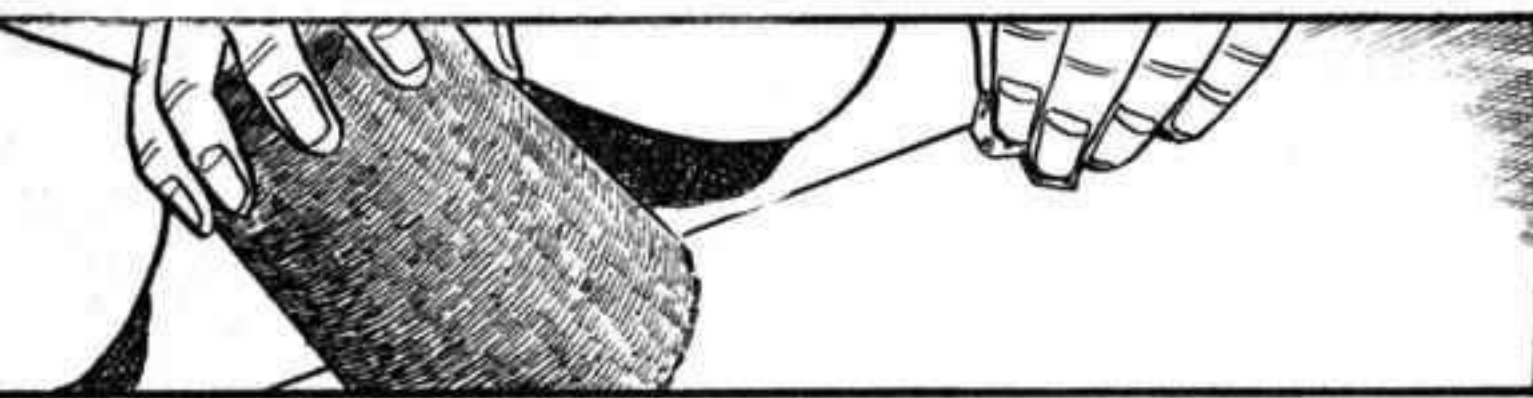
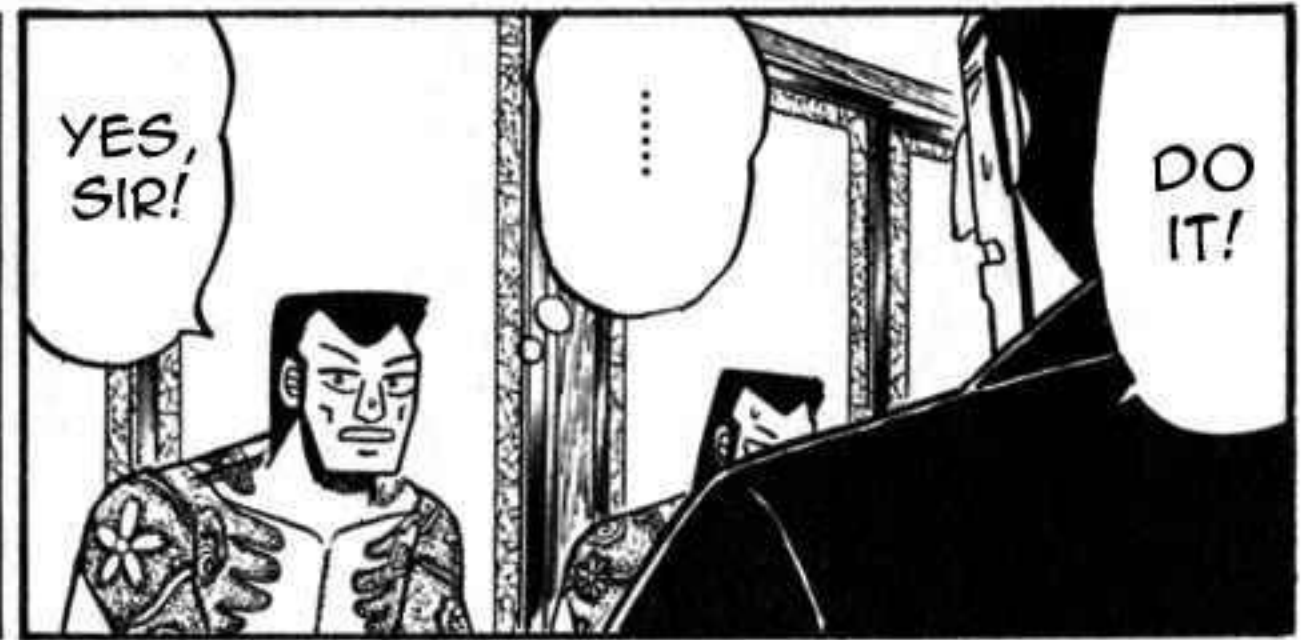
THIS IS
JUST TO
MAKE SURE
WE DON'T
FORGET
WHICH IS
WHICH.

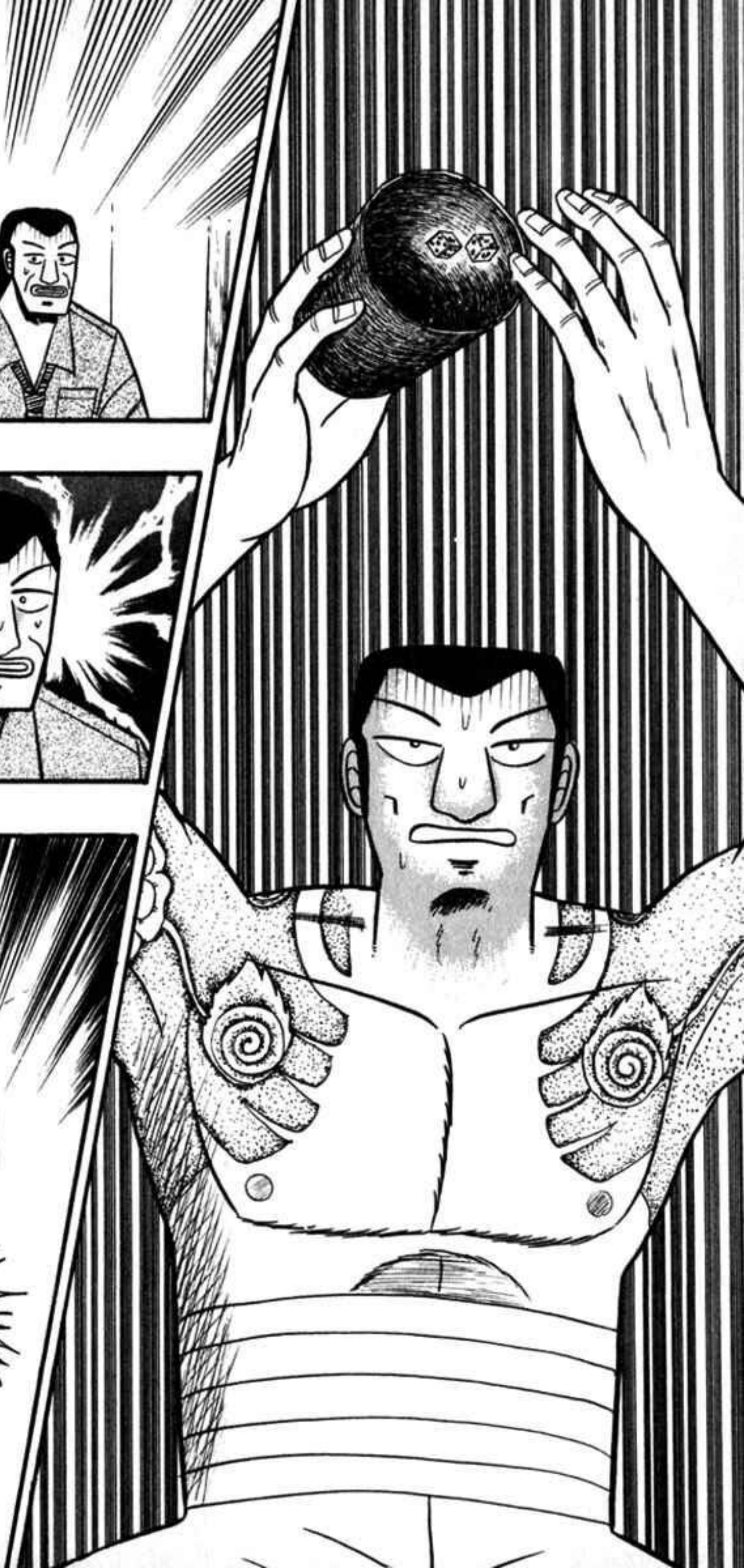
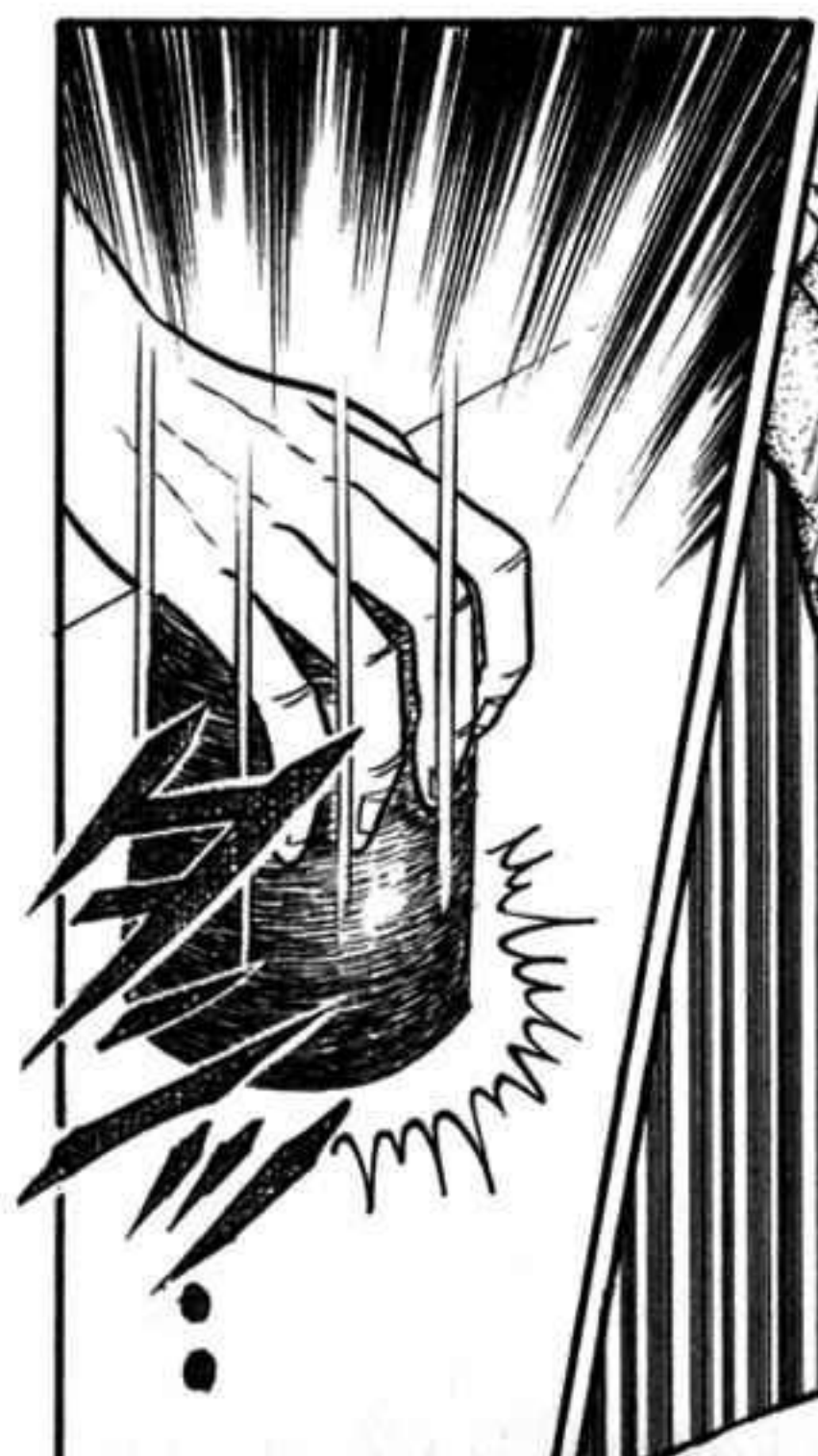


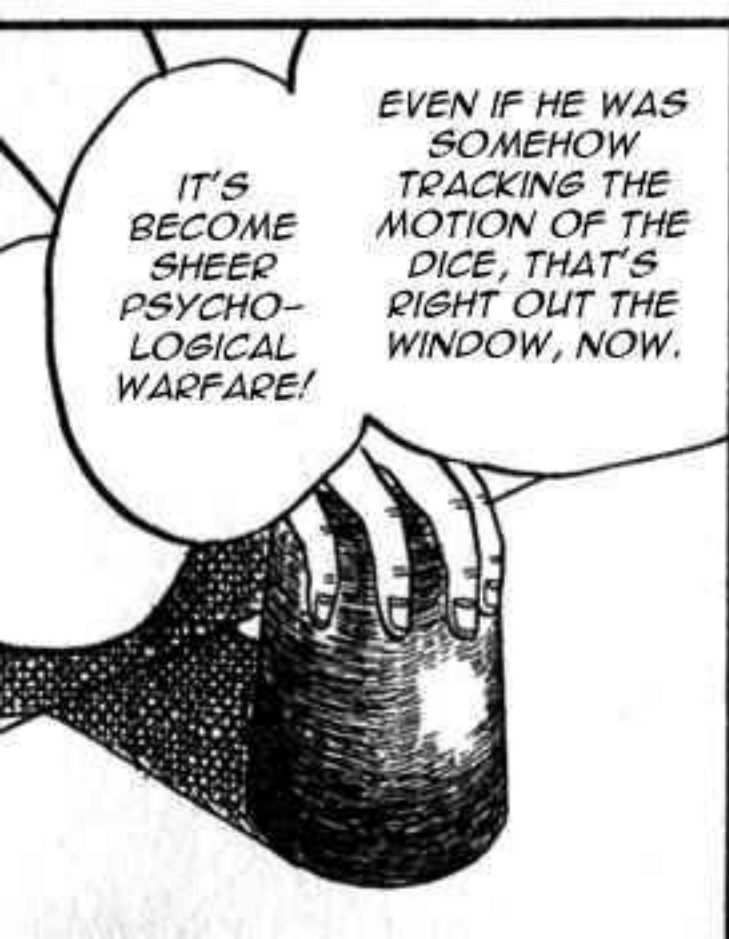
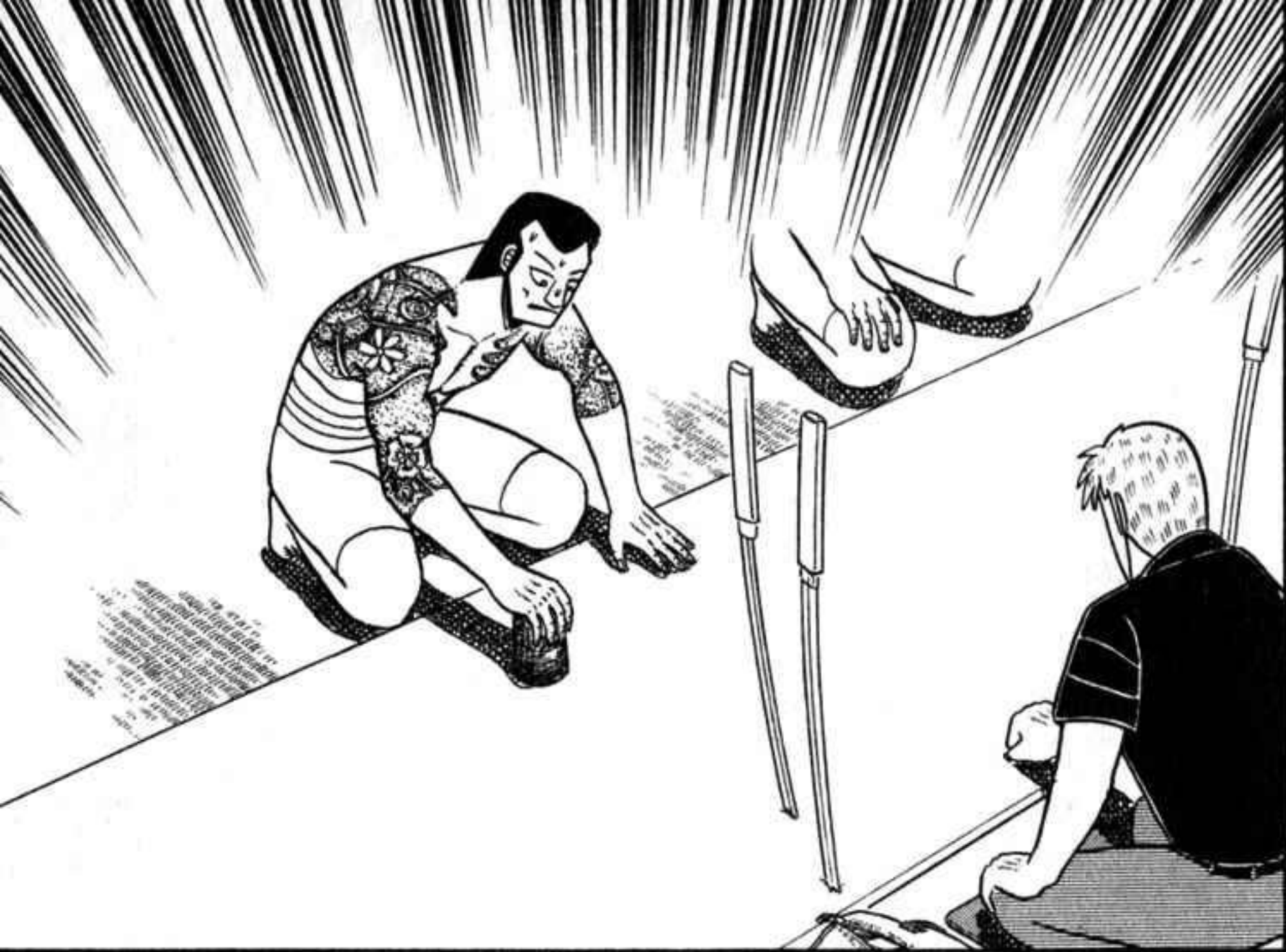
AND IF
IT'S THE
5-YEN
COIN, IT
WILL BE
ODD.













OR
WASN'T
HE...?



WAS HE
ABLE TO
READ HIM
...?

WAS HE
ABLE TO SEE
THROUGH THE
KURATA
GROUP'S
DEALER FOR
THIS GAME...?



WHAT
DID HE
CHOOSE
...?

HE MADE HIS
BET BEFORE
THE DICE WERE
ROLLED...

WAS
HIS BET
ON EVEN
OR ODD
...?

00



AH
...!!



HM-
HMM
...



10 YEN
MEANS
EVEN!



SO
WHAT
WAS
THE
ROLL
...?!



SO
WHAT
WAS
THE
ROLL
...?!



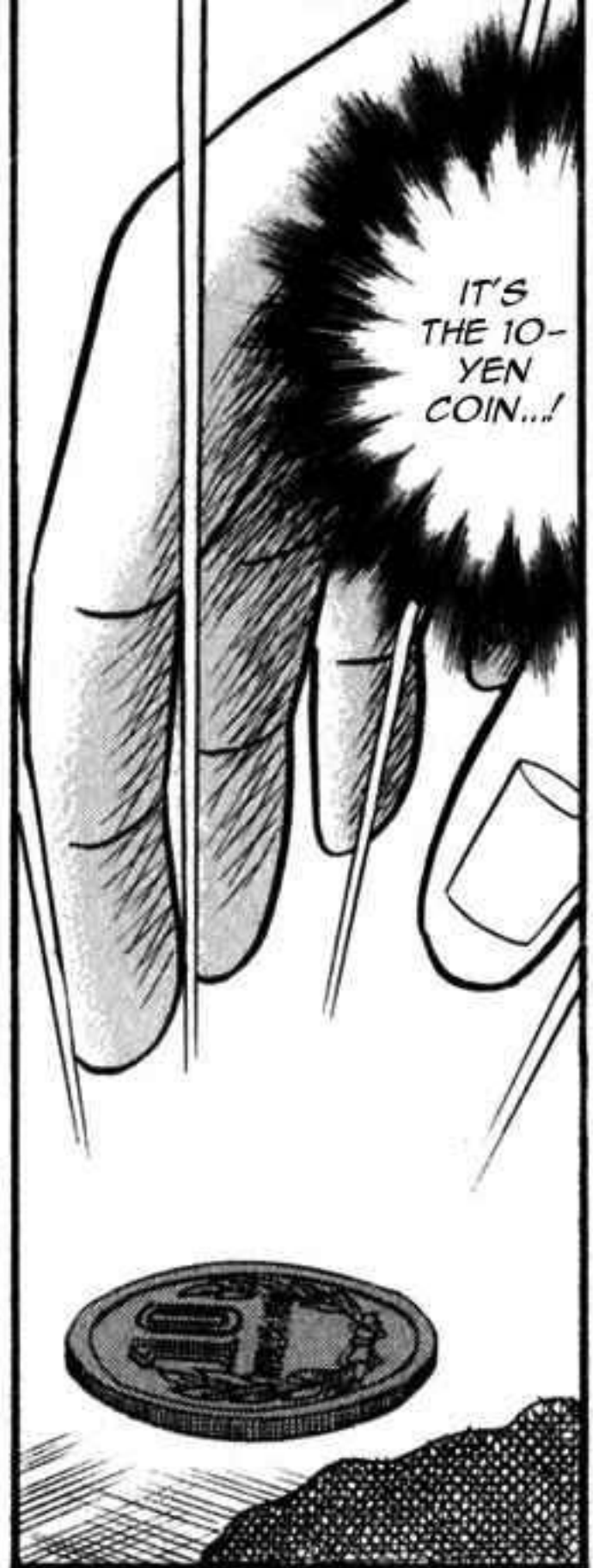
SO
WHAT
WAS
THE
ROLL
...?!



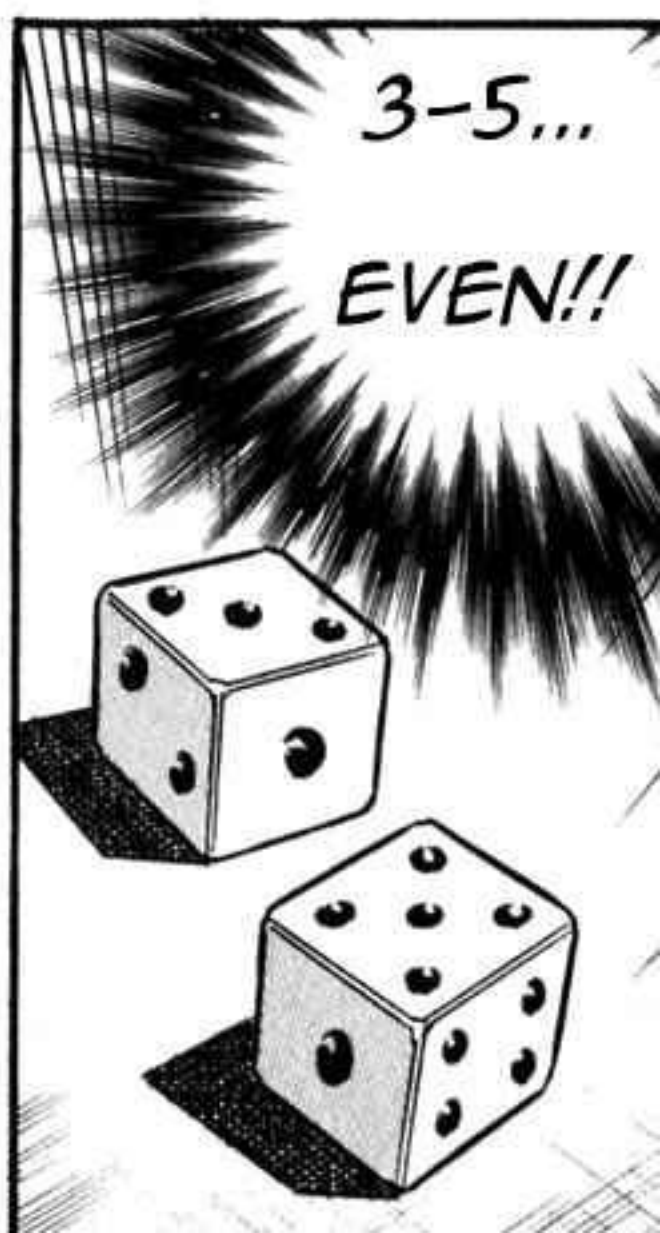
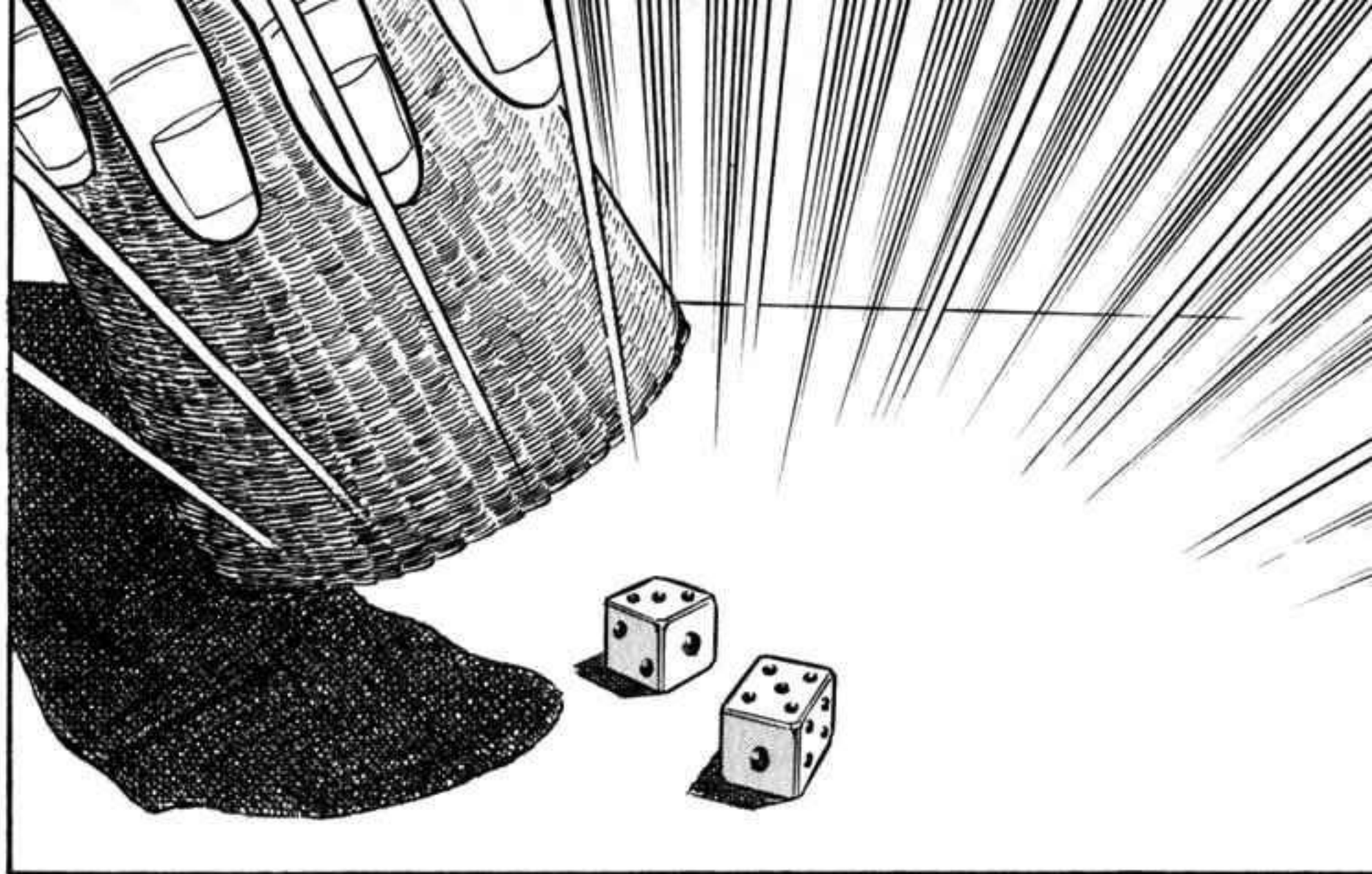
SO
WHAT
WAS
THE
ROLL
...?!



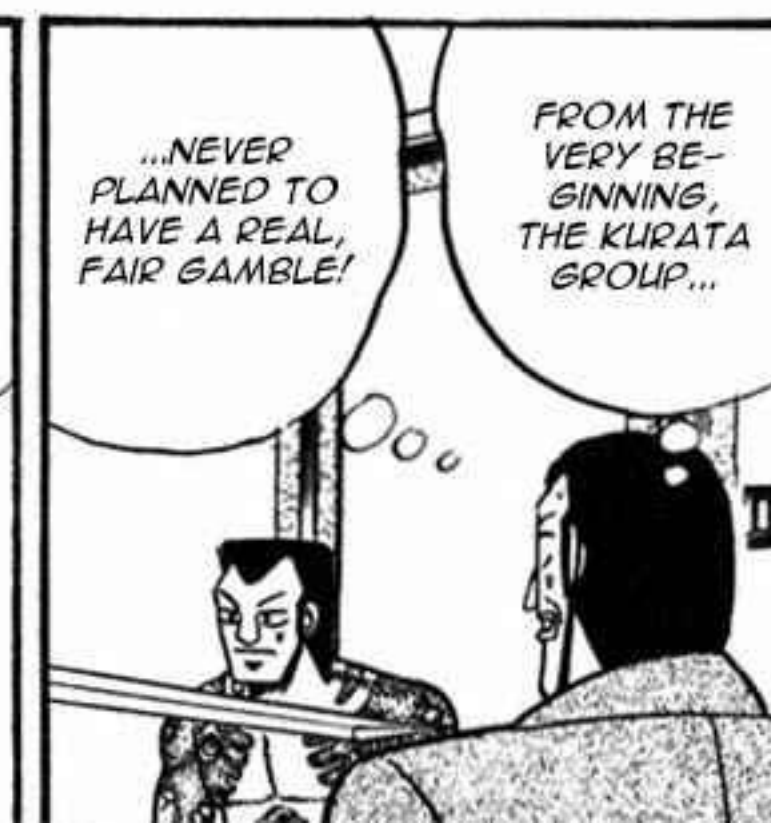
HEH-
HEH
...

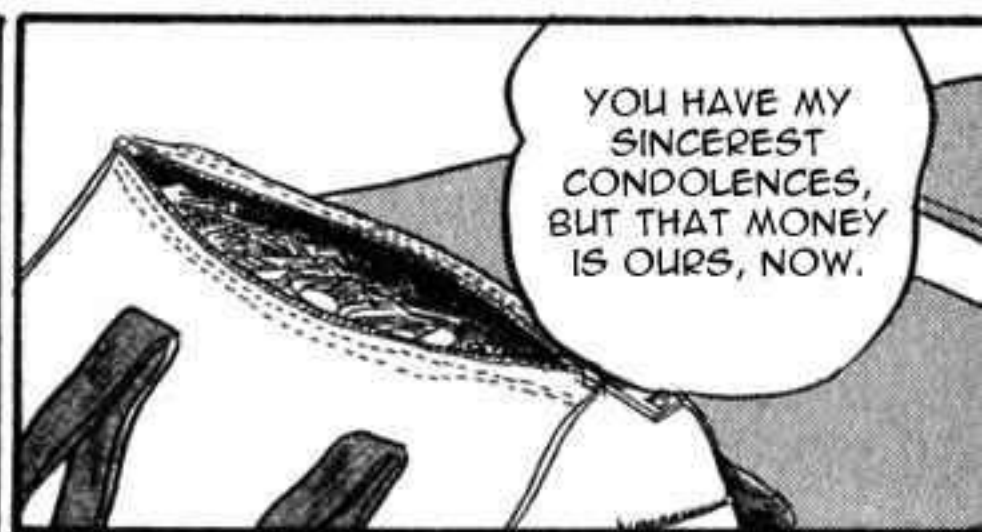


IT'S
THE 10-
YEN
COIN...!











CUT
THE
BULL
CRAP!



IT'S
EVEN!



HAH-
HAH-
HAH!



HHAHHAH

WHA
...?



NO...
MORE THAN
THAT!

ABOUT IT
BEING
EVEN OR
ANYTHING
ELSE,

IT DOESN'T
MATTER WHAT
YOU CHOOSE
TO BLURT
OUT...



YOU'RE
ACTING SO
VERY
STRANGE!

AGAIN
WITH
THAT?



HEY,
HEY!

IF NOT, HE
WOULDN'T HAVE
SAID SUCH NONSENSE
LIKE THE ROLL BEING
EVEN!

HE
MUST
HAVE
HEARD
US
WRONG!



TALKING
ABOUT
ANYTHING
ELSE IS
JUST PLAIN
STRANGE!

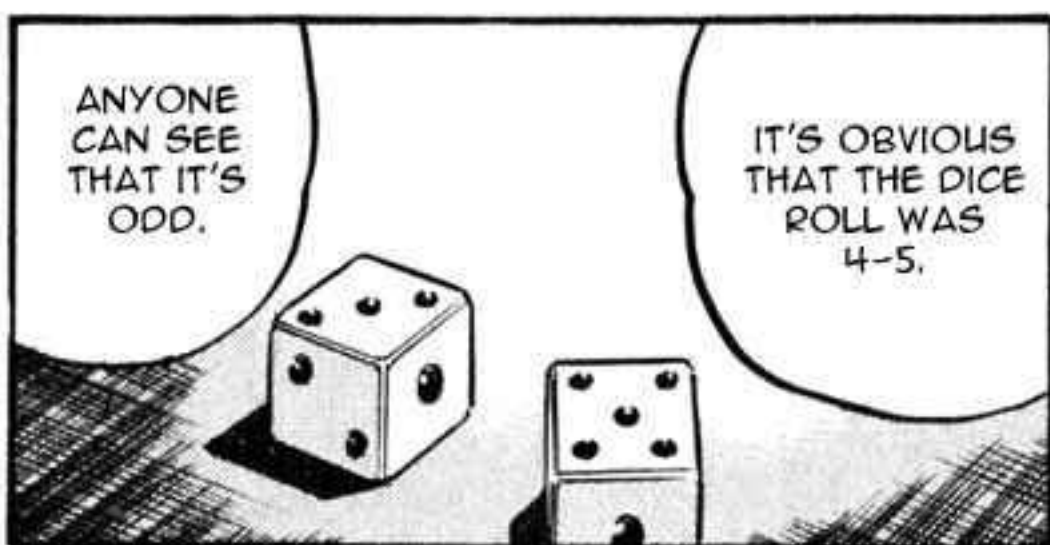
THE ONLY
THING WE
NEEDED TO
KNOW WAS
THE DICE
ROLL...

PLEASE
EXCUSE
ME, MR.
KURAISHI!



WE DON'T
NEED TO
TELL HIM,
IT'S JUST
THE WAY
THINGS
ARE!

WHAT ODD
THINGS YOU'RE
SAYING!



ANYONE
CAN SEE
THAT IT'S
ODD.

IT'S OBVIOUS
THAT THE DICE
ROLL WAS
4-5.



JUST
NOW,

AT ANY RATE, WHATEVER
HE'S GRUMBLING ABOUT
RIGHT NOW IS PURE
NONSENSE.



THEN
AKAGI
OR WHO-
EVER HE
IS...

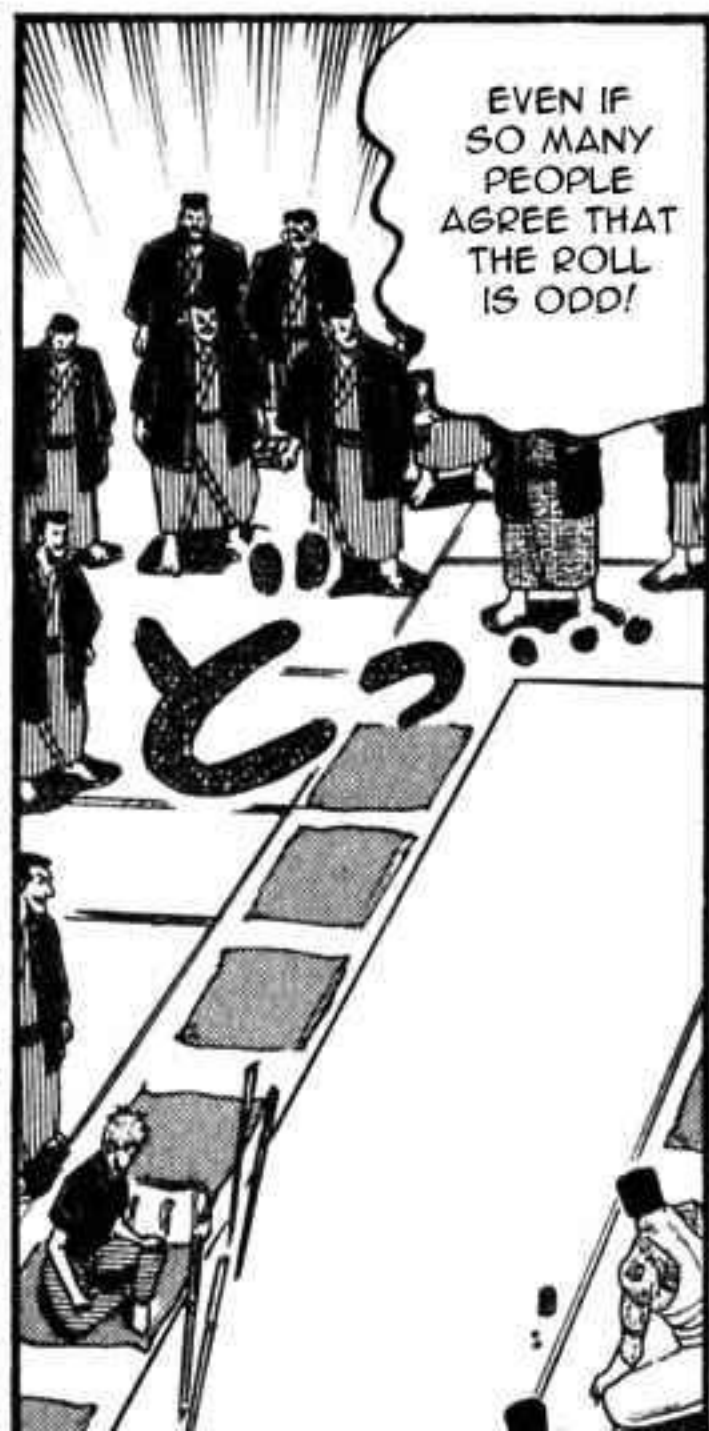
IF THAT'S
HOW IT IS
...



IS
THAT
SO?

WE'VE CONFIRMED
THAT IN NUMEROUS
WAYS, AS IT IS!

ALL THE OTHER
PATRONS WHO WERE
GATHERED HERE
AGREE THAT THE
ROLL WAS ODD!





EVERY
SINGLE
ONE...

...OF YOU
DESPICABLE
FUCKS...

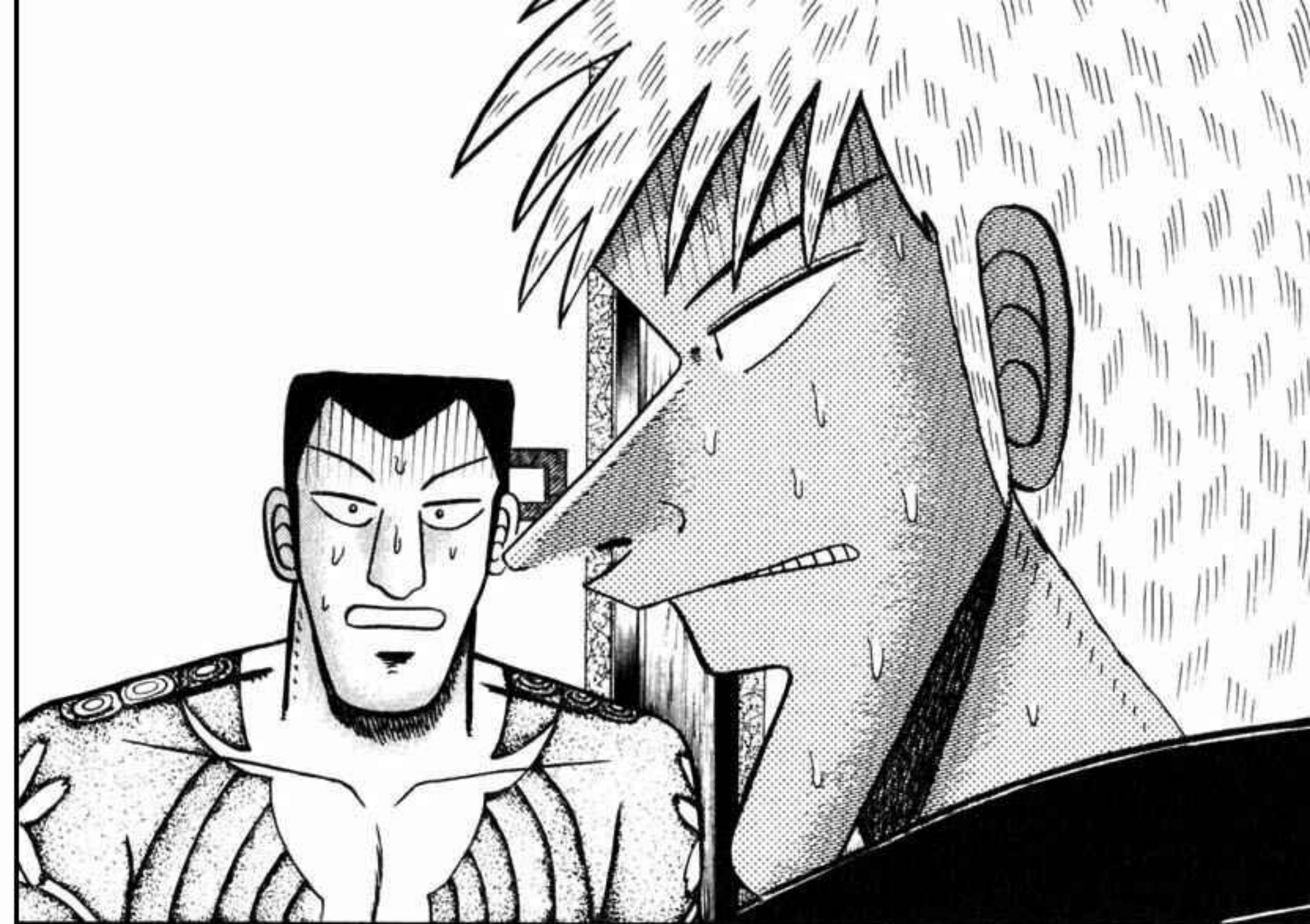


...YOU'RE
ALL GOING
STRAIGHT TO
HELL!



第61話 心中

CHAPTER 61 - HEART



...YOU'RE A CHICKEN, AND WE'VE GOT YOUR TINY NECK FIRMLY PRESSED BETWEEN OUR FINGERS.



THAT IS TO SAY, IT'S AS IF...

RIGHT NOW, YOU ARE IN NO POSITION TO SPEAK BACK TO US IN SUCH A MANNER.



HEH-HEH...



I WILL ASK YOU ONCE MORE.



YOU NEED TO TRY AND APPEAL TO US WITH ALL OF YOUR STRENGTH.

IT SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO JUST AGREE AND MOVE ON.

IF YOU DON'T WANT US TO SEPERATE YOUR HEAD FROM YOUR BODY...



...WE CAN DO SO JUST LIKE THAT.

IF WE DECIDE TO SNAP IT IN TWO...

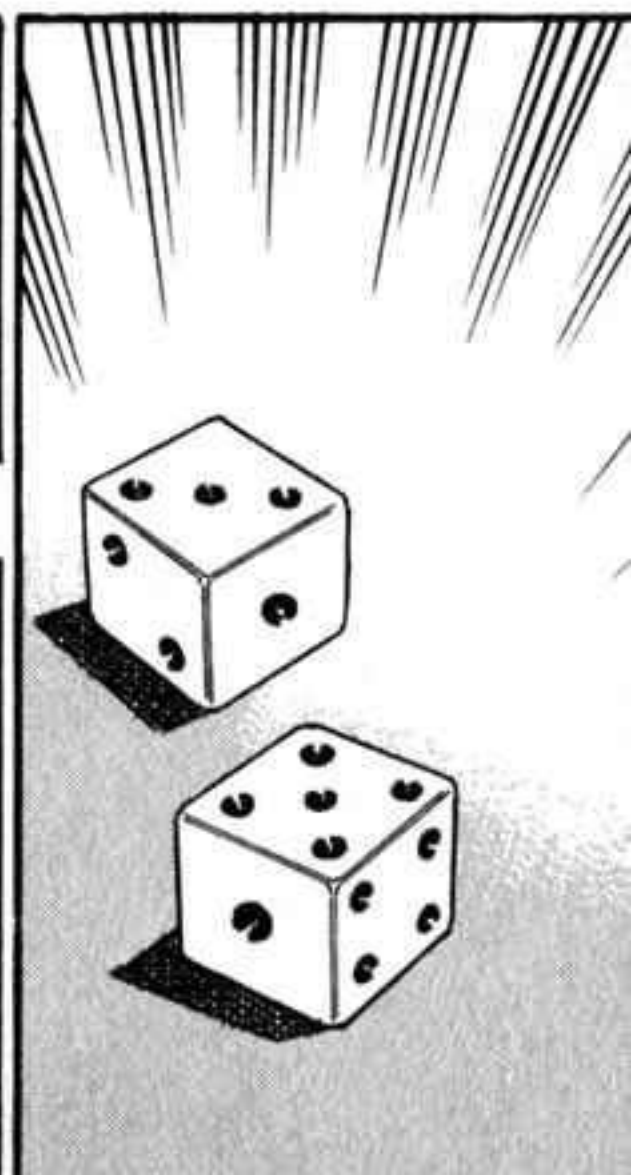


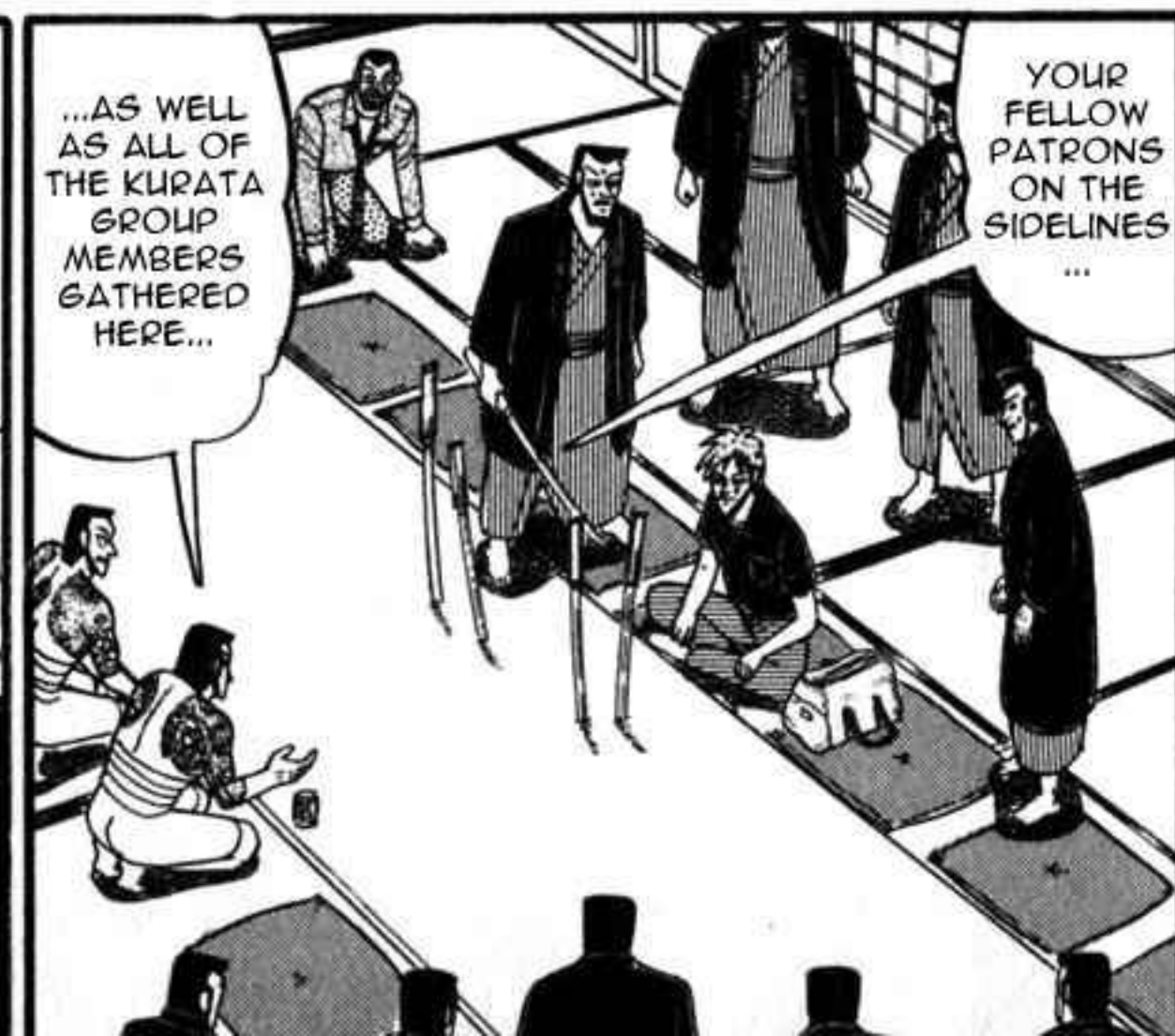
WE'VE GOT IT ALL UNDER CONTROL.

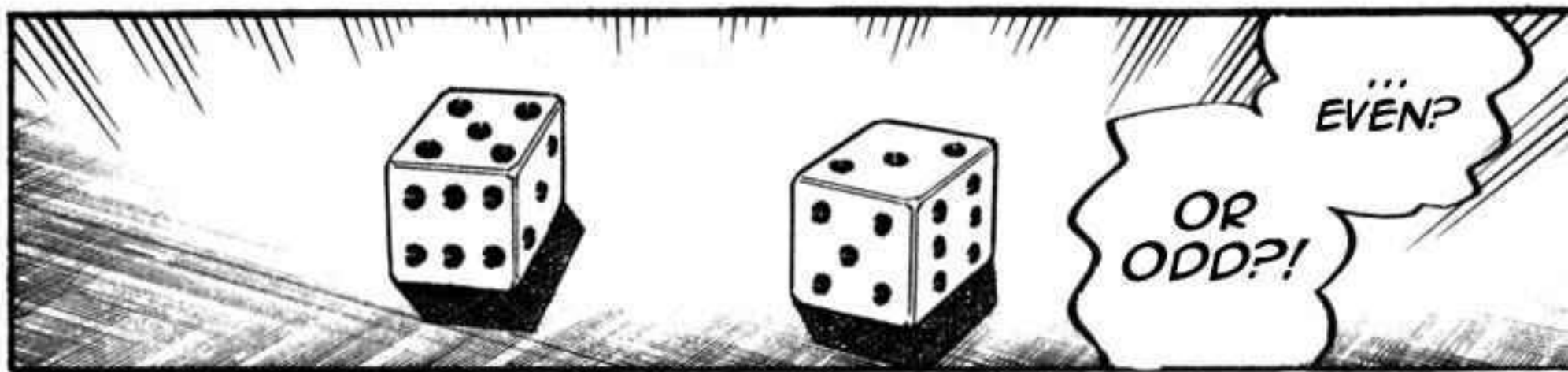


YOU REALLY DON'T GET IT, DO YOU?

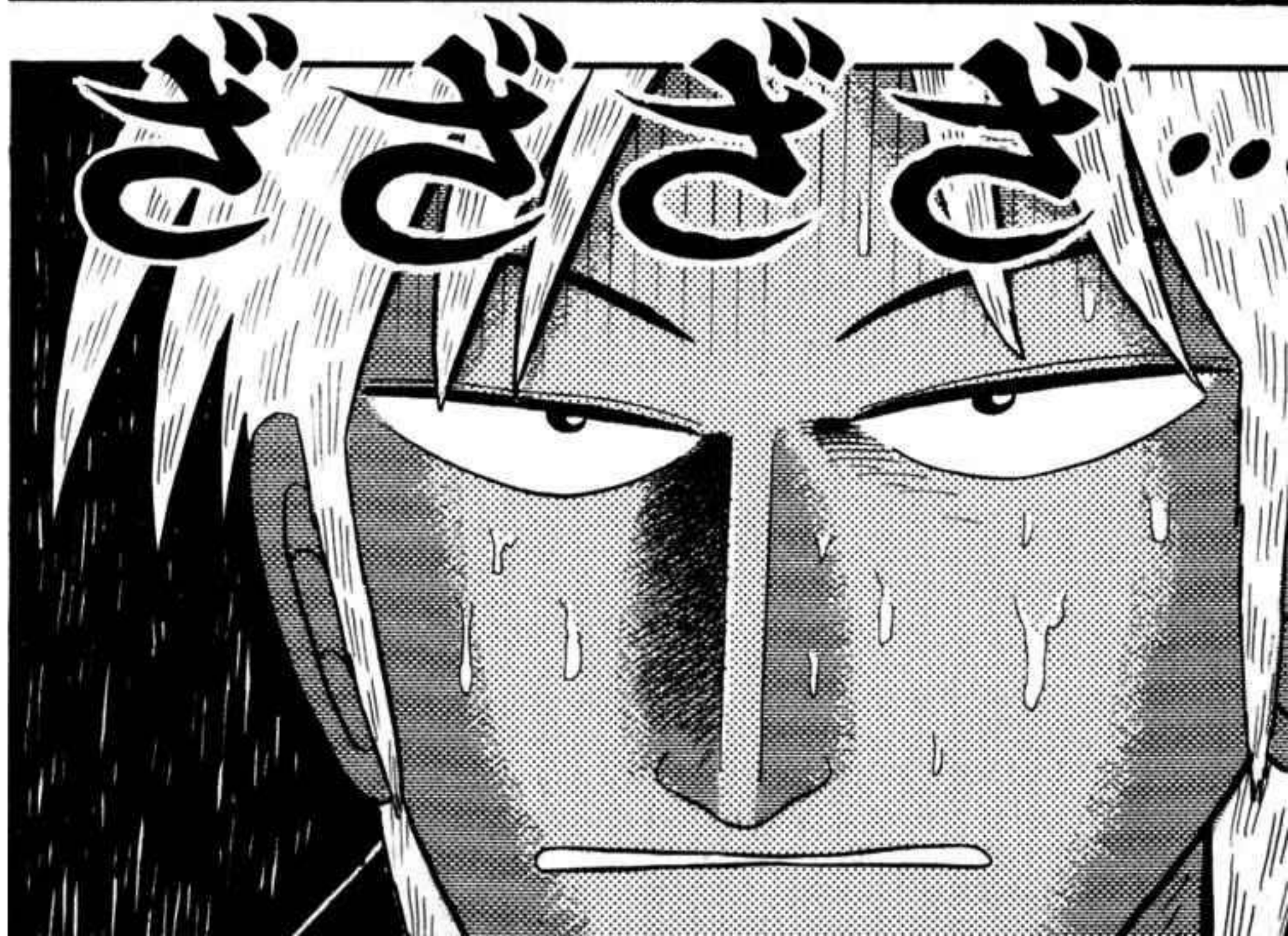


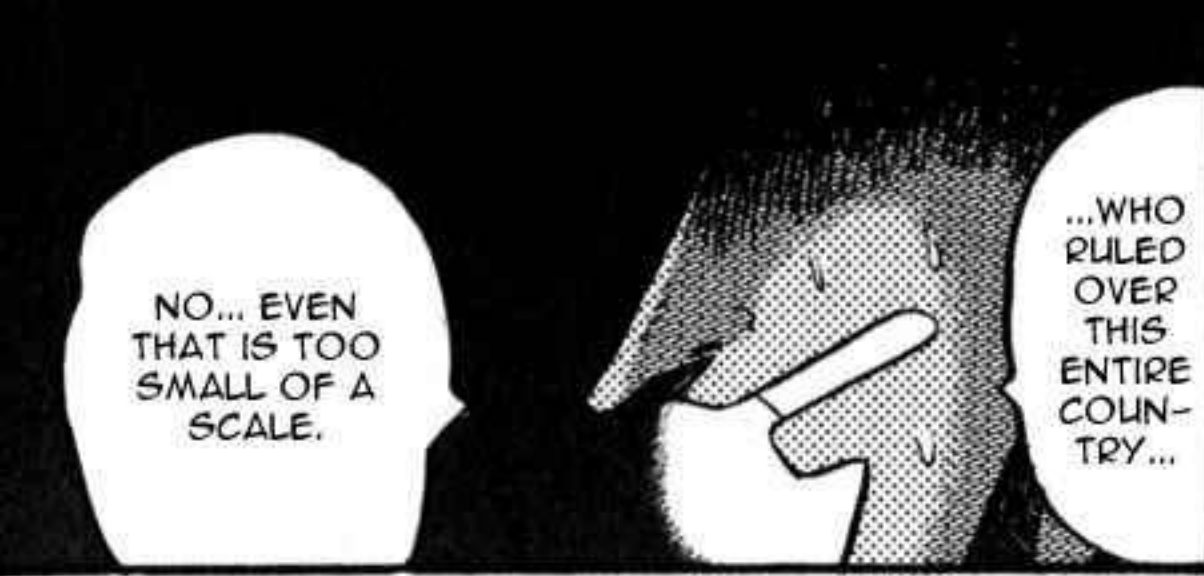












NO... EVEN
THAT IS TOO
SMALL OF A
SCALE.

...WHO
RULED
OVER
THIS
ENTIRE COUN-
TRY...

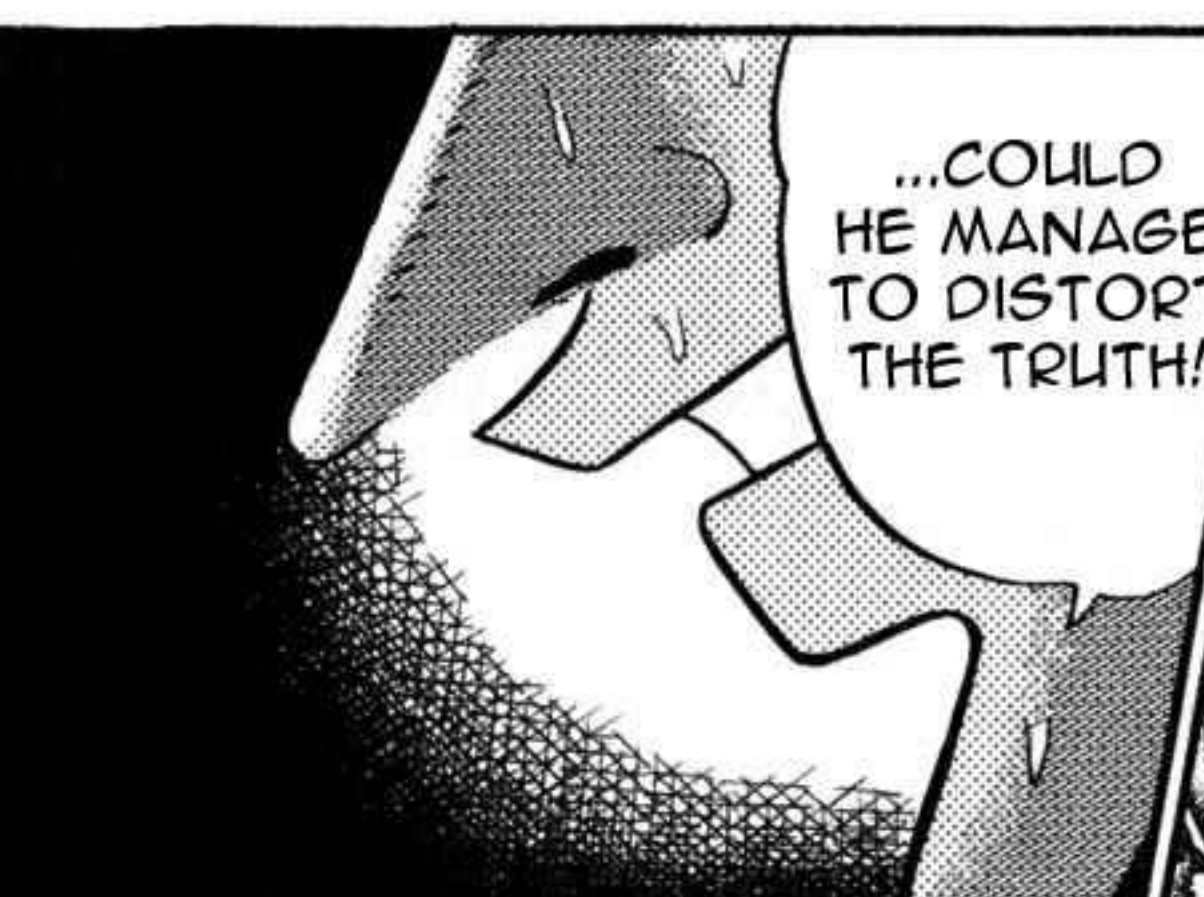


FROM
EUROPE TO
EURASIA,
NORTH
TO SOUTH
...


IF ALL OF THIS
WORLD'S COUN-
TRIES AND LAND
MASSES WERE
DICTATED BY
ONE RULER...




IF
THERE
WERE
A MAN
...




...COULD
HE MANAGE
TO DISTORT
THE TRUTH!



NOT EVEN IF
THIS RULER WERE
SOME KIND OF
OTHERWORLDLY
MONSTER...



...AND HE
CERTAINLY
COULD NOT
CHANGE THE
OUTCOME
OF A
GAMBLE!

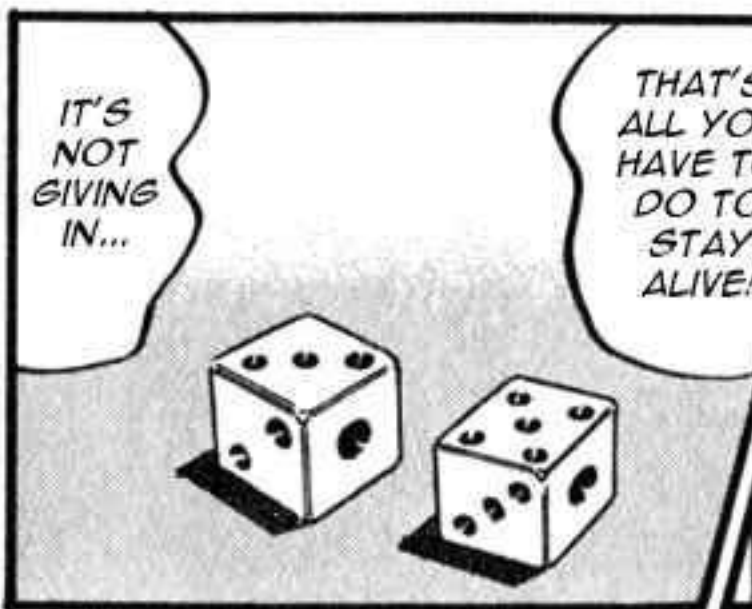


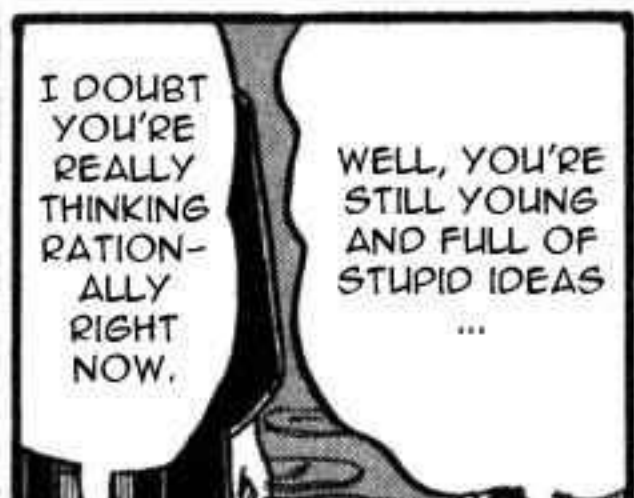
HE COULD
NOT CHANGE
EVENTS AROUND,
HE COULD NOT
ALTER MY
UNTIMELY DEATH
...

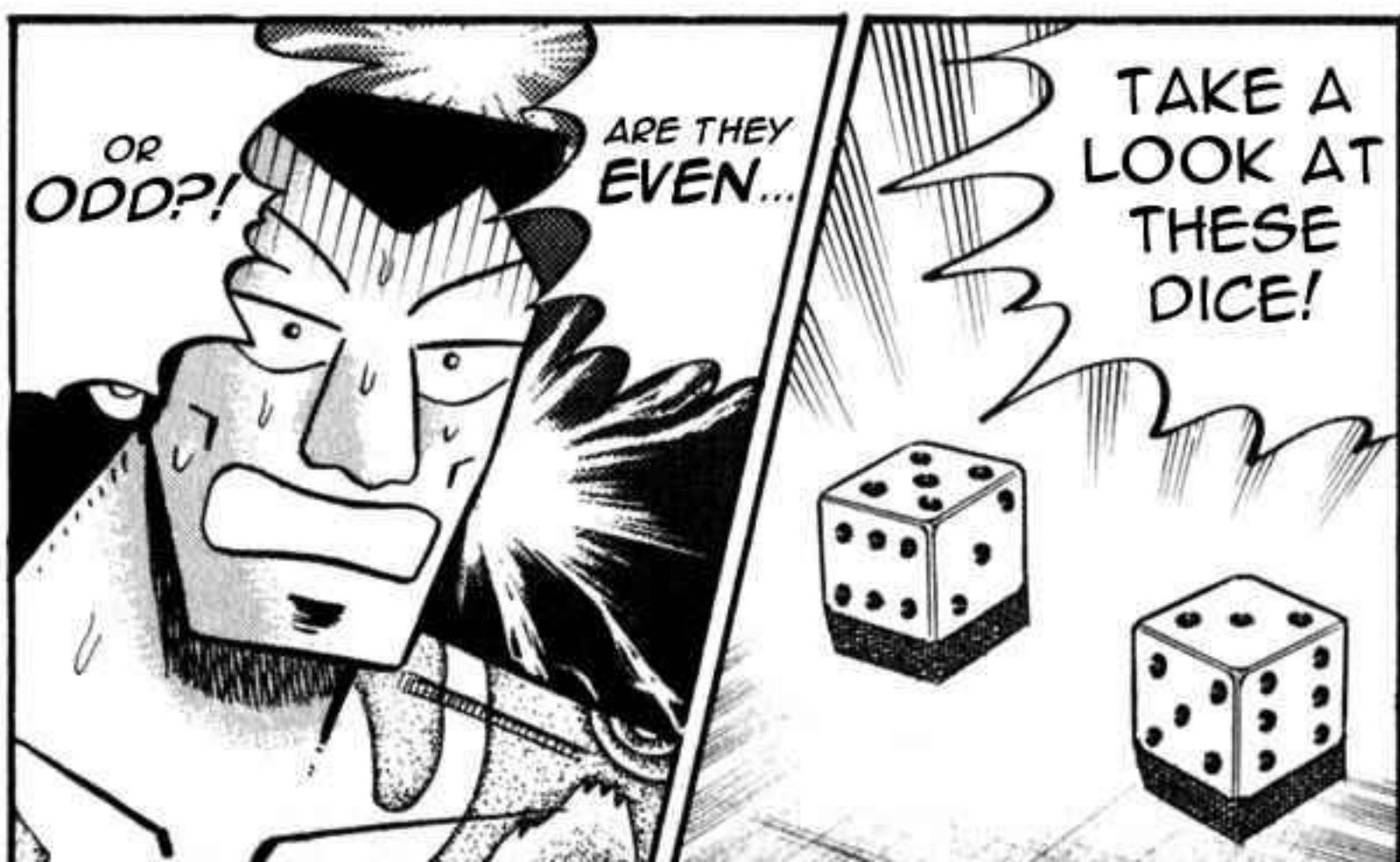


**IT'S
EVEN!**







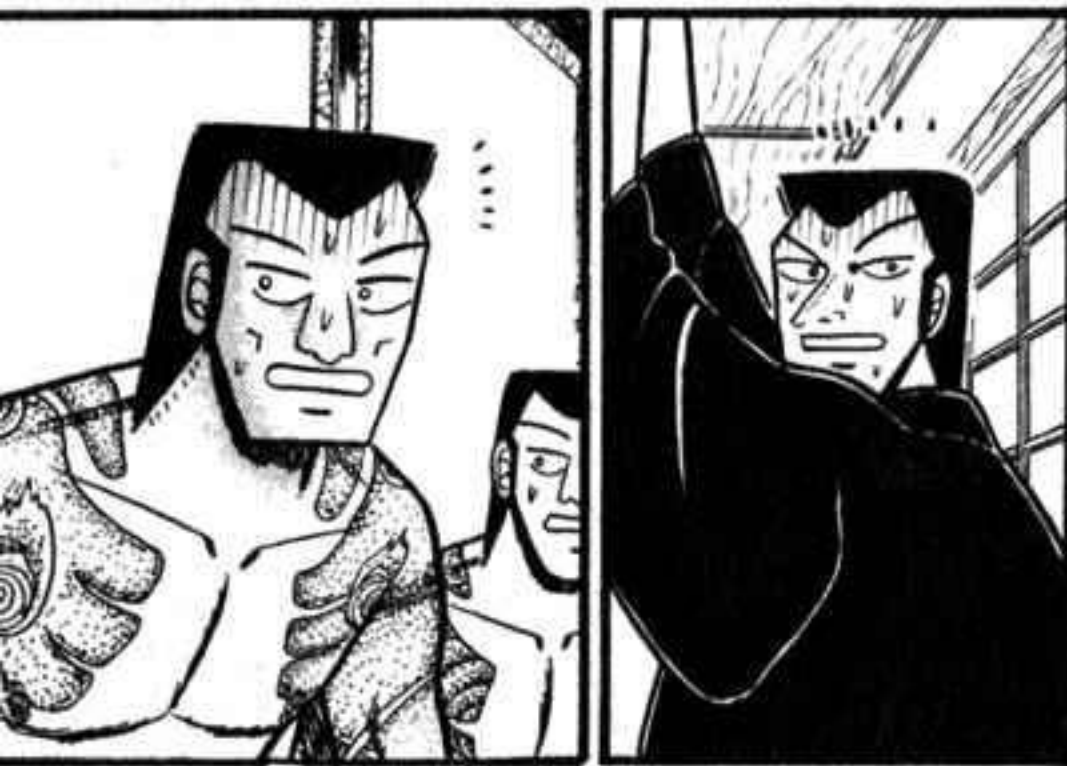


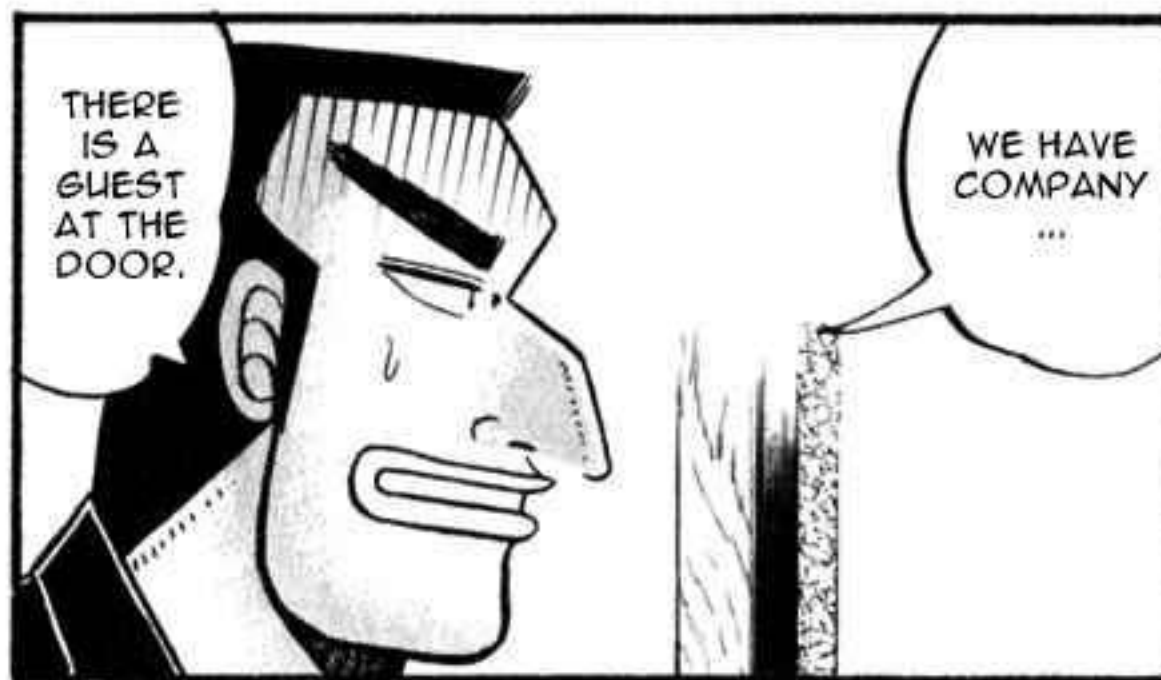
...EVEN IF WE HAVE TO KILL SOMEONE!

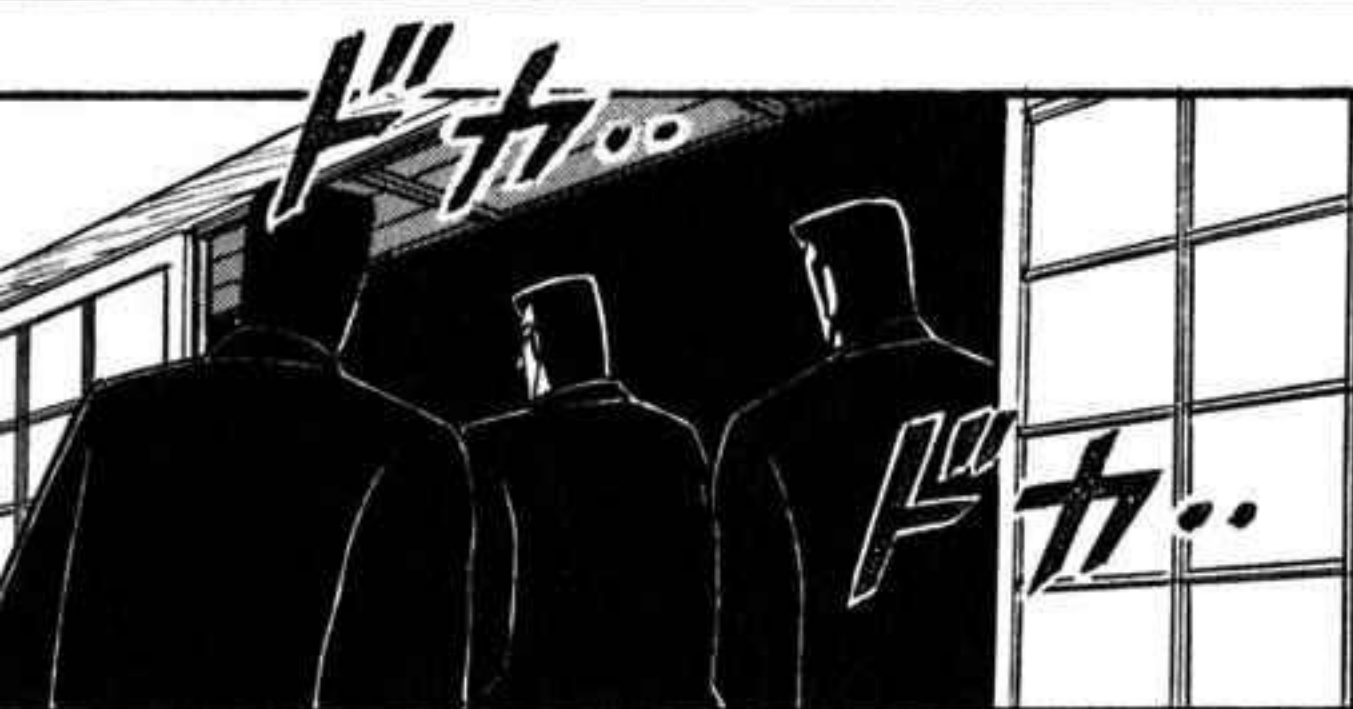
















IT'S A
BIT EARLY,
BUT IT CAN'T
BE HELPED.

WE'VE
CLOSED
FOR THE
NIGHT.



I'M
SORRY TO
SAY
THIS,
BUT...

THE HOUSE
IS STILL
OPEN,
RIGHT?



WE'RE
LOOKING
TO GAM-
BLE,
TONIGHT.



IN
LIGHT OF
THAT...

I'M TERRIBLY
SORRY FOR
THE INCON-
VENIENCE,
BUT...



YES.

CLOSED,
YOU SAY
...?



WHAT'S
UP WITH
HIM?

...



THEY CAN'T
EVEN KEEP
UP A SCHEDULE
...?

...

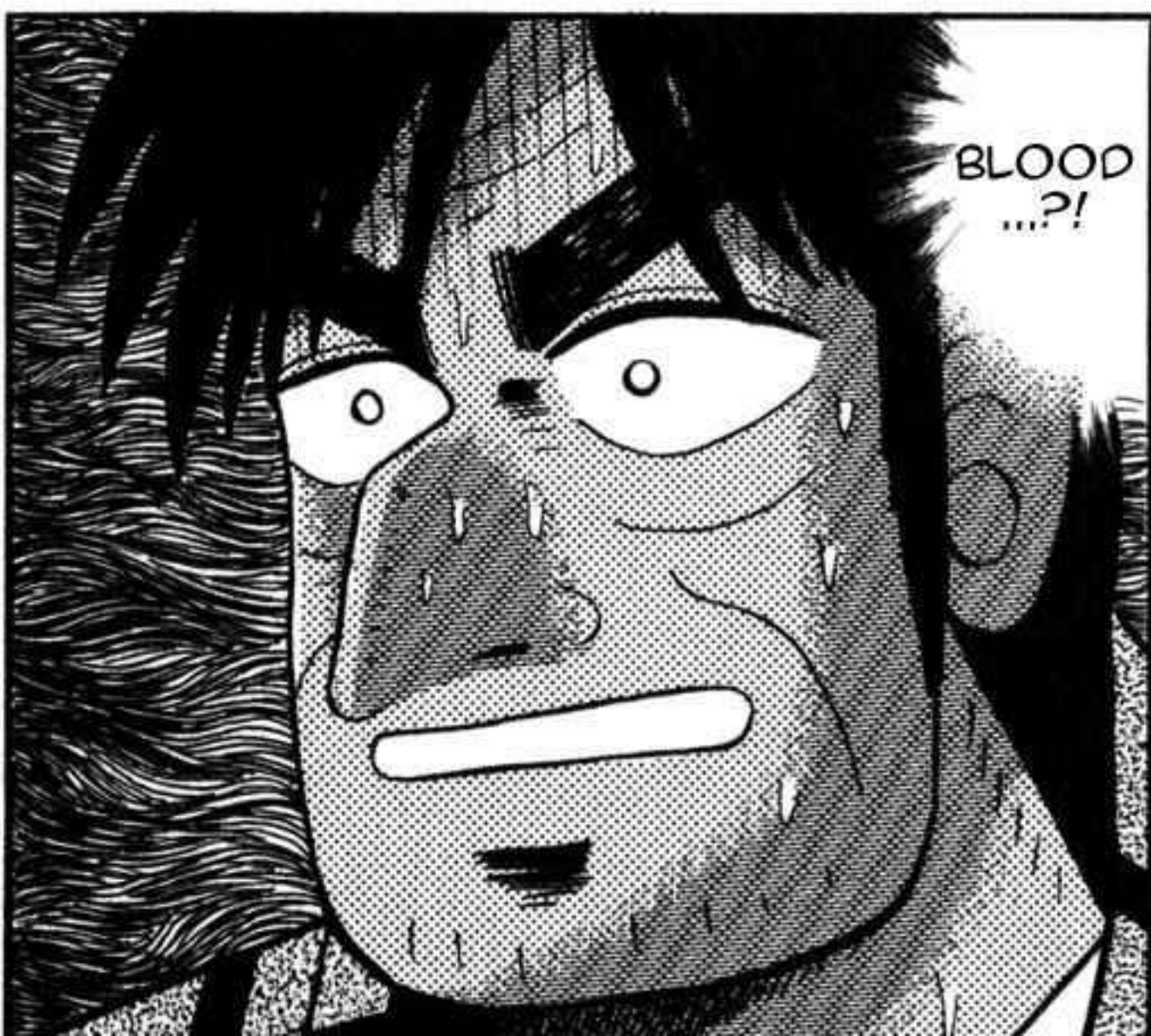
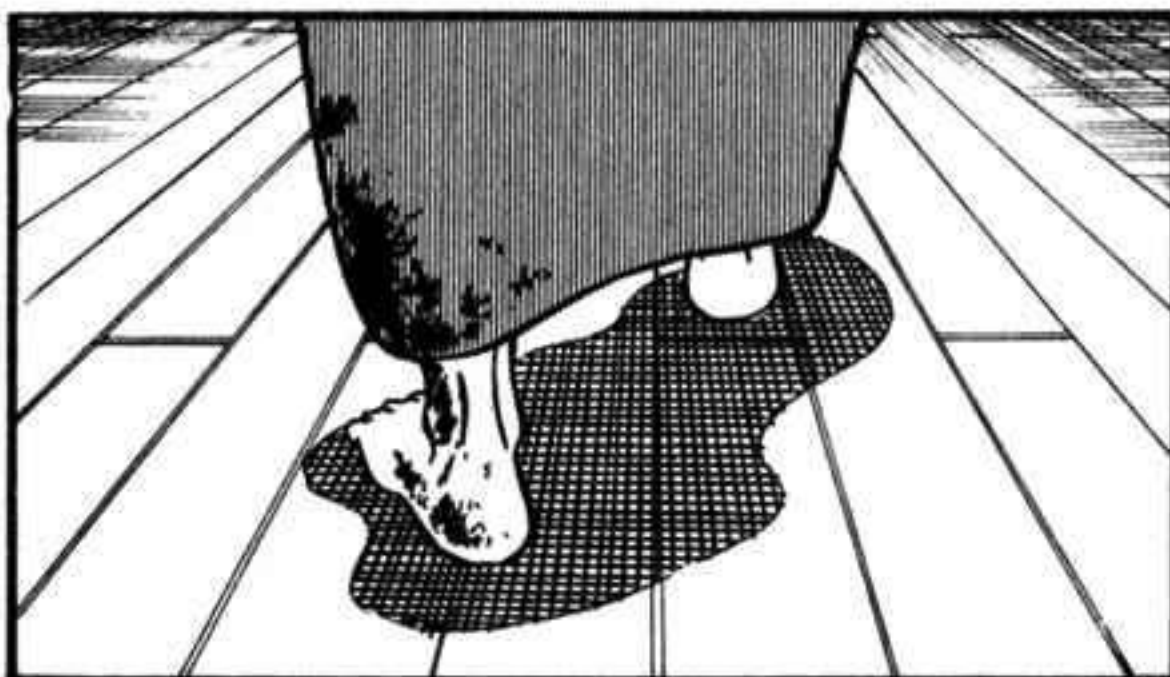


HEY
...!!



...I MUST
RESPECTFULLY
ASK YOU TO
TAKE YOUR
LEAVE.

WHA
...?





SOME-
THING
TRULY
BIZZARE...

IT IS A
STATE OF
EMER-
GENCY!!!

THERE IS
SOME-
THING
HAP-
PENING
....!

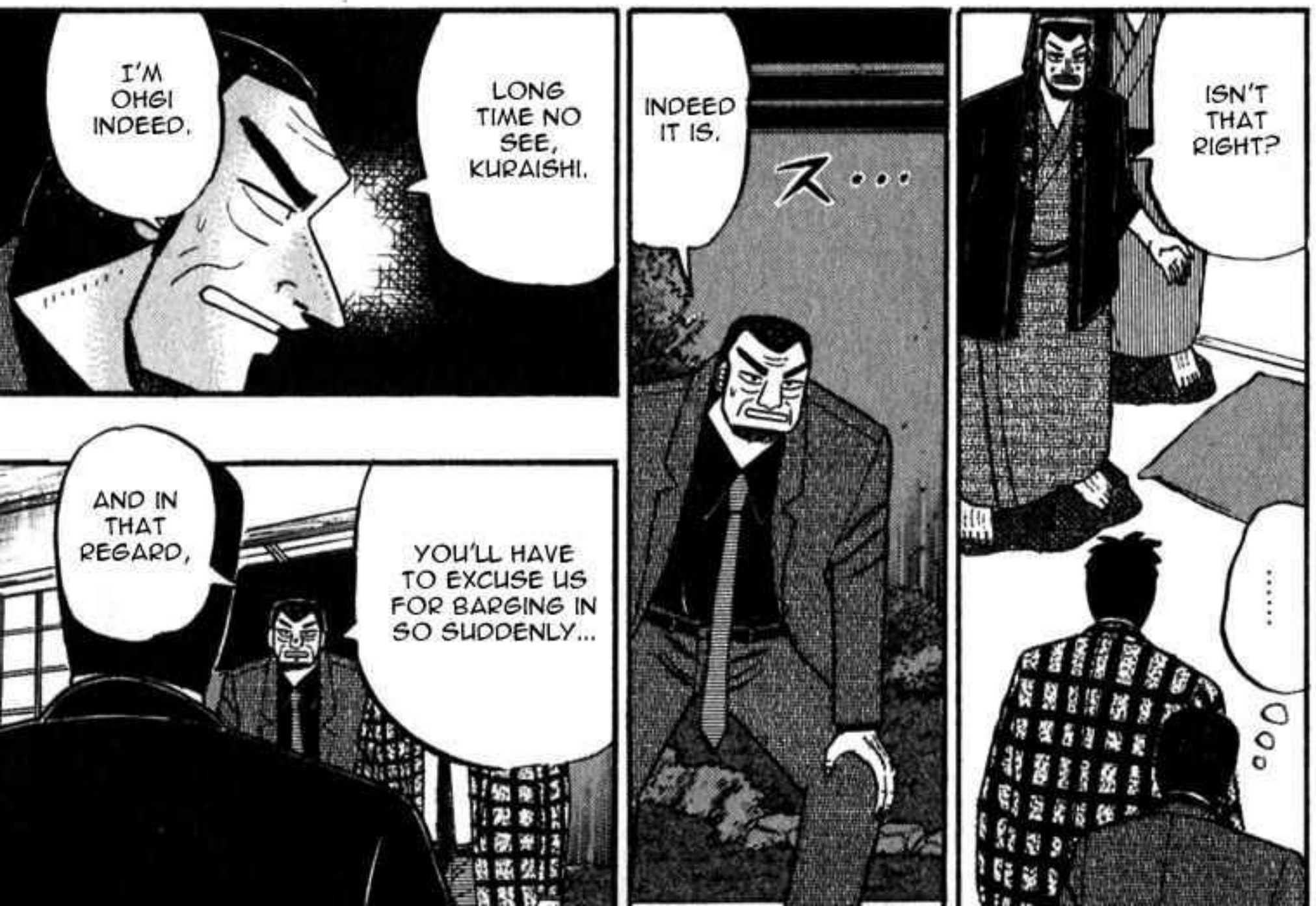
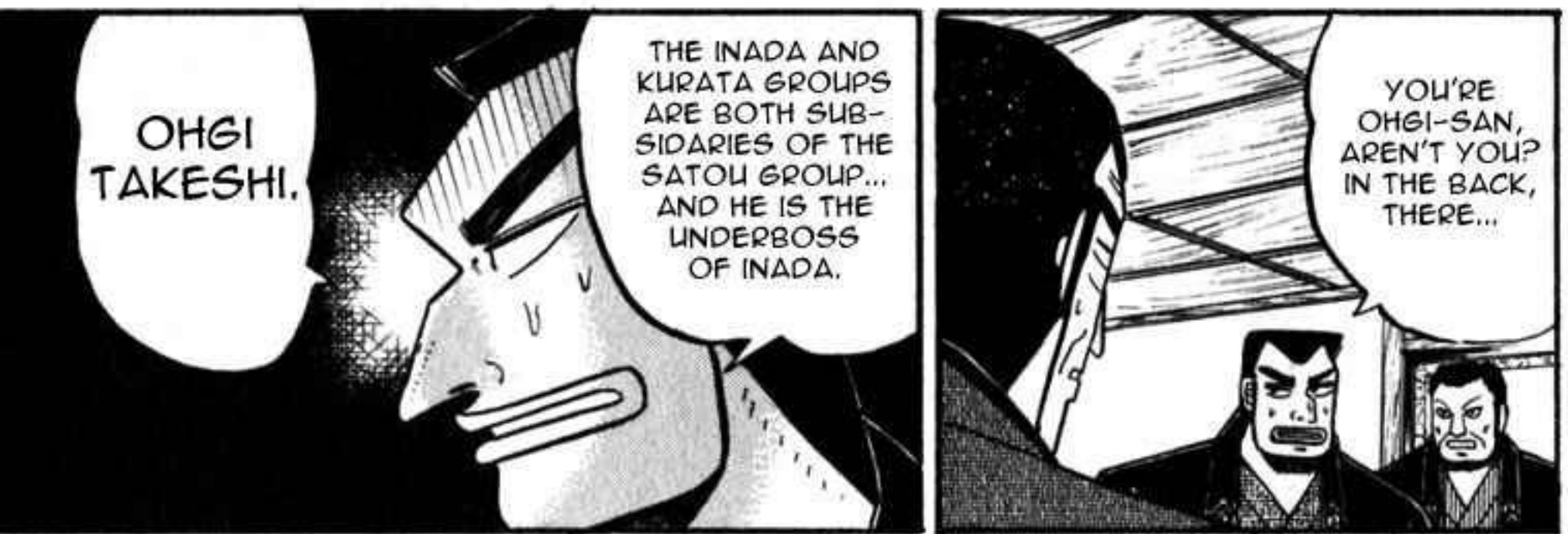
CHAPTER 62 - FILTH
第62話 泥土





AKAGI
....!!







NEVER-
THELESS
...

AH,
IT'S
QUITE
ALL
RIGHT.

I
APOLOGIZE
FOR THIS,
SINCERELY.



HEH-
HEH
...

WHAT'S
ALL THIS
ABOUT?



THERE
IS
SIMPLY
NO WAY
AROUND
IT IN
THIS
CASE.

AS I'M SURE YOU'RE
WELL AWARE, WE
HARDLY EVER NEED
TO RESORT TO
VIOLENCE OF THIS
KIND, BUT...



IT SEEMS
AS THOUGH
YOU'VE
CAUGHT US
AT A RATHER
BAD TIME.

AH, YES,
ABOUT
THAT...



THE DICE
USED FOR
THE MATCH
I'M REFER-
RING TO
SHOW
EVEN.

AS
YOU
CAN
SEE
...



I HAVE NO
IDEA WHERE
HE GOT ALL
OF THAT,
BUT I
SUPPOSE
IT DOESN'T
MATTER...

IF YOU
TAKE A
LOOK AT
HIS SACK
OVER THERE,
YOU'LL SEE
IT'S A
LARGE SUM
OF MONEY.

EITHER
WAY, IT'S
REALLY
BECOME A
MESS.



YOU
SEE, HE
BET
ALL THE
MONEY
HE HAD
ON
HAND
...

THIS MAN
IS SIMPLY
BEING
STUBBORN!



WHA-
?!



...
IS TRYING
TO INSIST
THAT THE
DICE ARE
ODD
INSTEAD!

BUT
YOU
SEE,
THIS
MAN
...



ISN'T THAT
RIGHT,
EVERYONE?!



HEH-
HEH-
HEH
...



SINCE YOU TWO
WEREN'T HERE
FROM THE START,
LIKE WE WERE
...

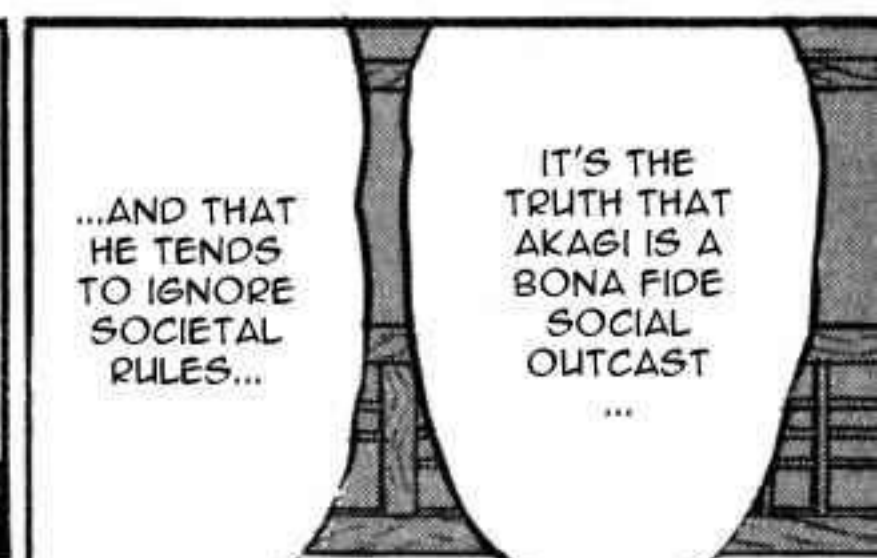
DON'T BE
SURPRISED
IF THIS KID,
HERE
...

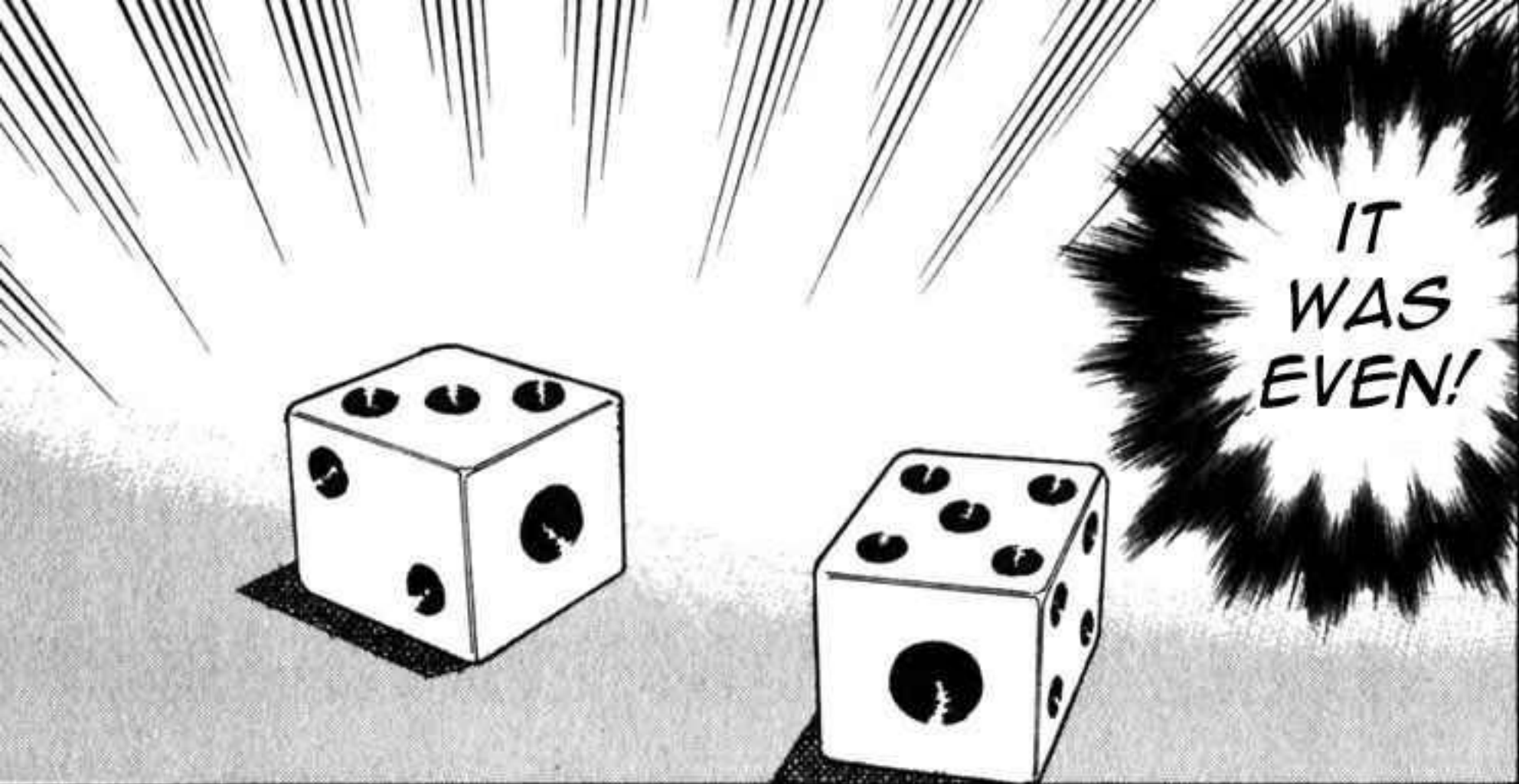


IT
IS!!

Y...
YES!







...ARE
THE
KURATA
GROUP
...!

I'M
POSITIVE
THAT'S
WHAT
HAPPENED!



THE ONES
WHO'RE TRYING
TO TURN THE
GAME AROUND
TO THEIR FAVOR
BY FORCE...

AKAGI
IS THE
ONE
BEING
HONEST!



KH
...!

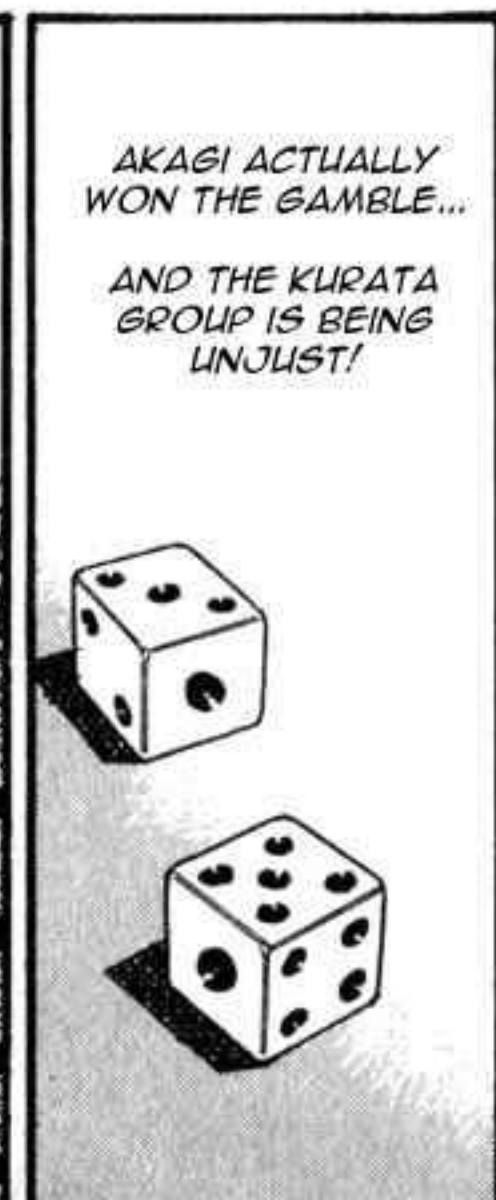


THEY
CAN'T!

AT THIS RATE,
THE KURATA GROUP
WILL NEVER BACK
DOWN FROM THEIR
CLAIM ABOUT
WHAT THE BET WAS



BUT
...



AKAGI ACTUALLY
WON THE GAMBLE...

AND THE KURATA
GROUP IS BEING
UNJUST!



IT'S
JUST THE
WAY HE IS
TO STAND
STRONG
UNTIL THE
VERY
END!

NEITHER
WILL
AKAGI!!

BUT,
ON THE
OTHER
HAND

THIS HAS GOTTEN
TO A POINT
WHERE THEY
WILL NEVER
BACK DOWN!



WE'LL WORK
IT OUT BY
OURSELVES,
SO YOU
DON'T NEED
TO STAY.

THIS
IS OUR
PROBLEM
TO DEAL
WITH.



SO,
WITH
THAT
SAID
...



SO
WHAT
SHOULD
I DO?!



BUT
WHAT
CAN I
DO?!

I'VE
GOT
TO DO
SOME-
THING!



WITHOUT
A DOUBT...

A MEANING-
LESS
DEATH!

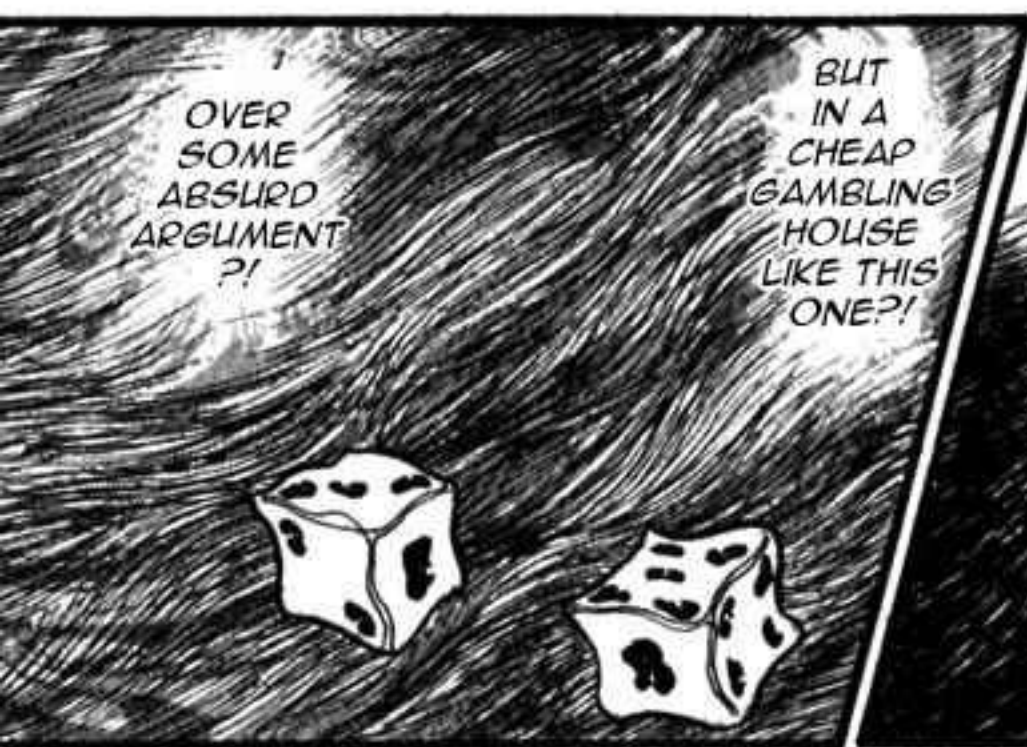
IF I LET THINGS
RUN THEIR COURSE
NOW, THEN THE
RESULT WILL BE
WHAT AKAGI CALLED
THE ESSENCE OF
GAMBLING...



GH
...!!



DEATH
...?!



OVER
SOME
ABSURD
ARGUMENT
?!

BUT
IN A
CHEAP
GAMBLING
HOUSE
LIKE THIS
ONE?!



AND
NOT
ONLY
THAT
...

IS AKAGI, THE
UNMATCHABLE
GENIUS, REALLY
ABOUT TO DIE
A MEANINGLESS
DEATH...?!

NO
WAY!!



NO
WAY!!

WILL HE VANISH OFF THE
EARTH JUST LIKE THAT?!



LIKE
A PRICE-
LESS
JEM
SINKING
INTO THE
MUD
...?!

IS IT
POS-
SIBLE
FOR
HIM TO
SINK
AWAY
JUST
LIKE
THAT?!



THERE'S
JUST NO
WAY!!



YASU-
OKA
....!!

YAAAAAA
AAUUUUU
GGHHH!!

THE
DICE
ARE NO
MORE!!

WHAT
IS-?!



I
CAN'T
LET
THAT
HAP-
PEN!!

GH
...!!

COME
ON.




I
WON'T
ALLOW
IT!!



AS
IF I'D
LET
THAT
HAP-
PEN!!



THERE'S
NO WAY TO
TELL WHAT
THEY WERE,
NOW!



WHAT EVERYONE
HERE WAS PUTTING
THEIR LIVES AND
PRIDE ON THE LINE
FOR...

NO ONE
CAN SAY
IF THEY
WERE
EVEN OR
ODD,
NOW!!

T/N: DAIGASHI: THE YAKUZA POSITION IN CHARGE OF A GAMBLING HOUSE, WORKING FOR THE BOSS DIRECTLY.

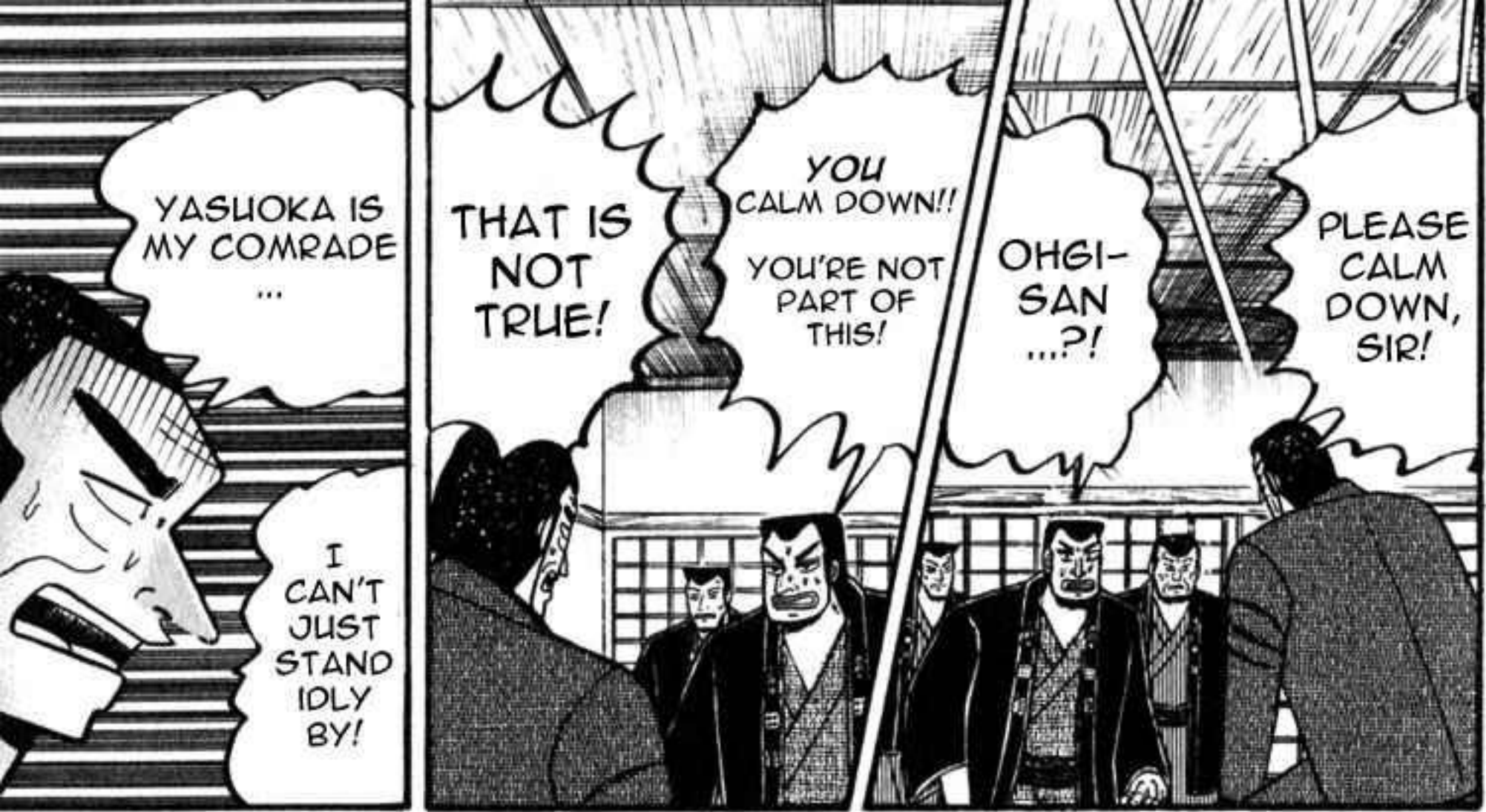


DAI-
GASHI!

HOW
DARE
YOU-?!

YOU
BAS-
TARD
...!!

...HAS
VANISHED
OFF THE
FACE OF
THE
EARTH!!





WHA...
WHAT
A STUPID
THING TO
SAY!!

...AND GO
BACK TO
THE WAY
THINGS WERE
BEFORE THIS
MESS
STARTED?!



SO CAN
WE NOT
ACT AS
THOUGH
IT NEVER
HAPPENED
...

THIS
BATTLE
CAN GO
NOWHERE,
NOW...



YOU'RE
GOING TO
HAVE TO!

YOU
KNOW FULL
WELL THAT
WE CAN'T
DO THAT!!!



SO STOP
TRYING TO
FORCE IT!

AND BECAUSE OF
THAT, NO ONE CAN
POSSIBLY WIN
THE BATTLE!



...BUT
NO ONE CAN
DEFINITELY
PROVE WHAT
THE OUT-
COME WAS!

THE DICE'S
ROLL HAS
BEEN
KNOCKED
AWAY, SO
ARGUE ALL
YOU LIKE
...



...I WILL HAVE
NO CHOICE BUT
TO REPORT IT
TO MY SU-
PERIORS!

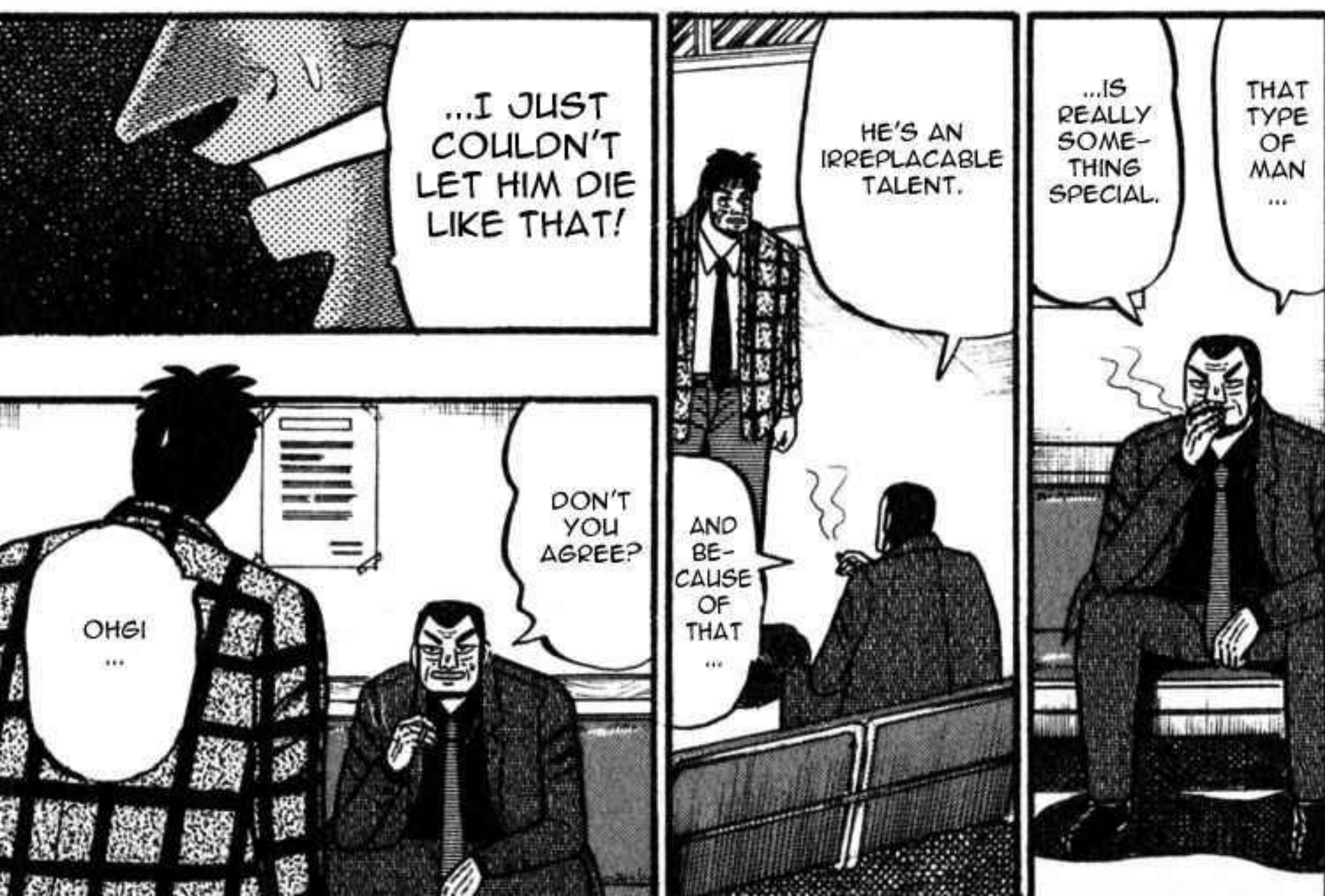
IF YOU
INSIST ON
CONTINUING TO
FIGHT THIS
BATTLE LOCKED
IN A PERMANENT
STALEMATE...

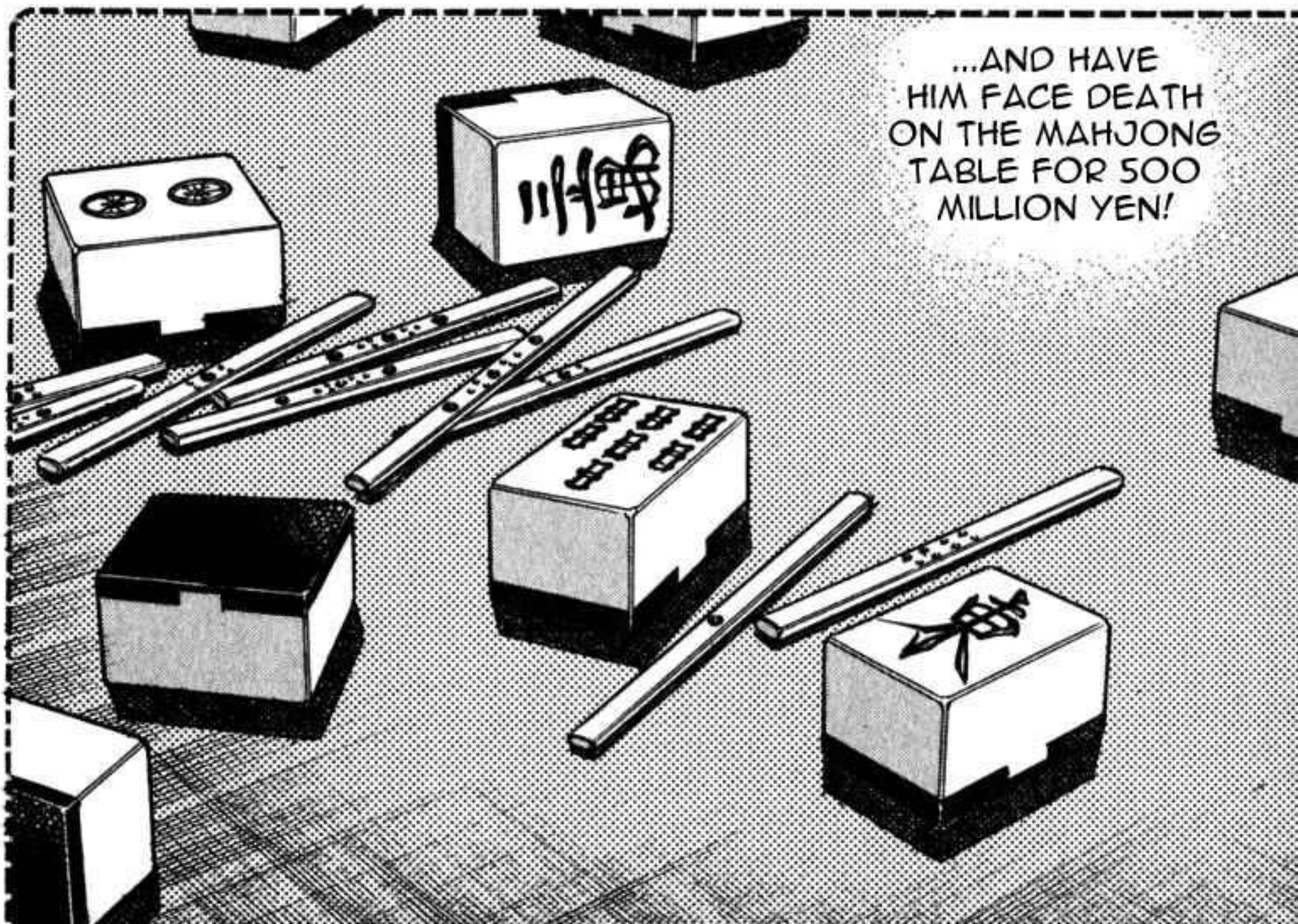
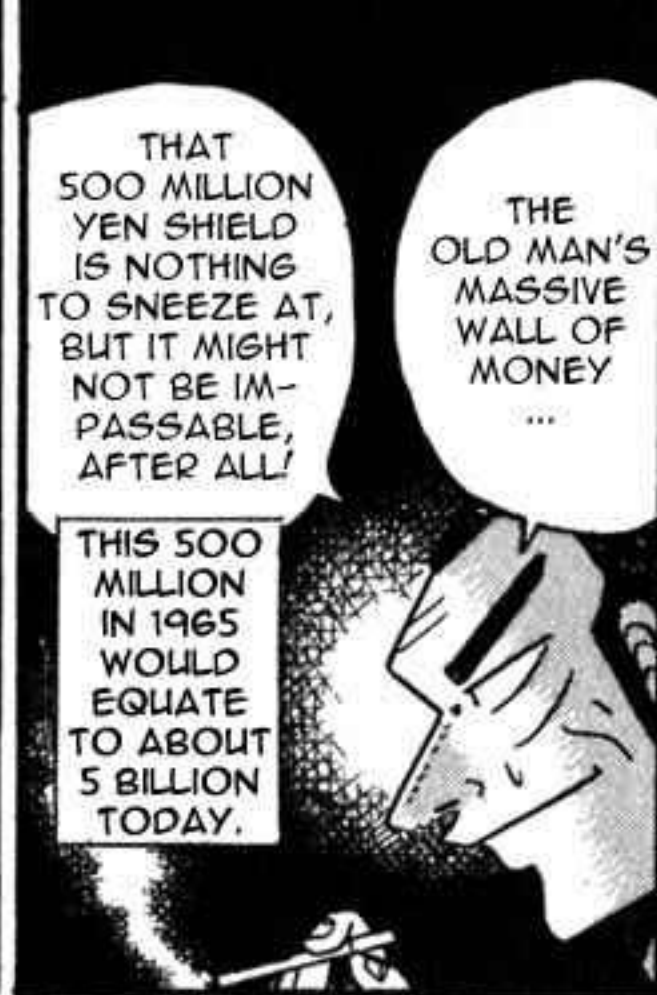








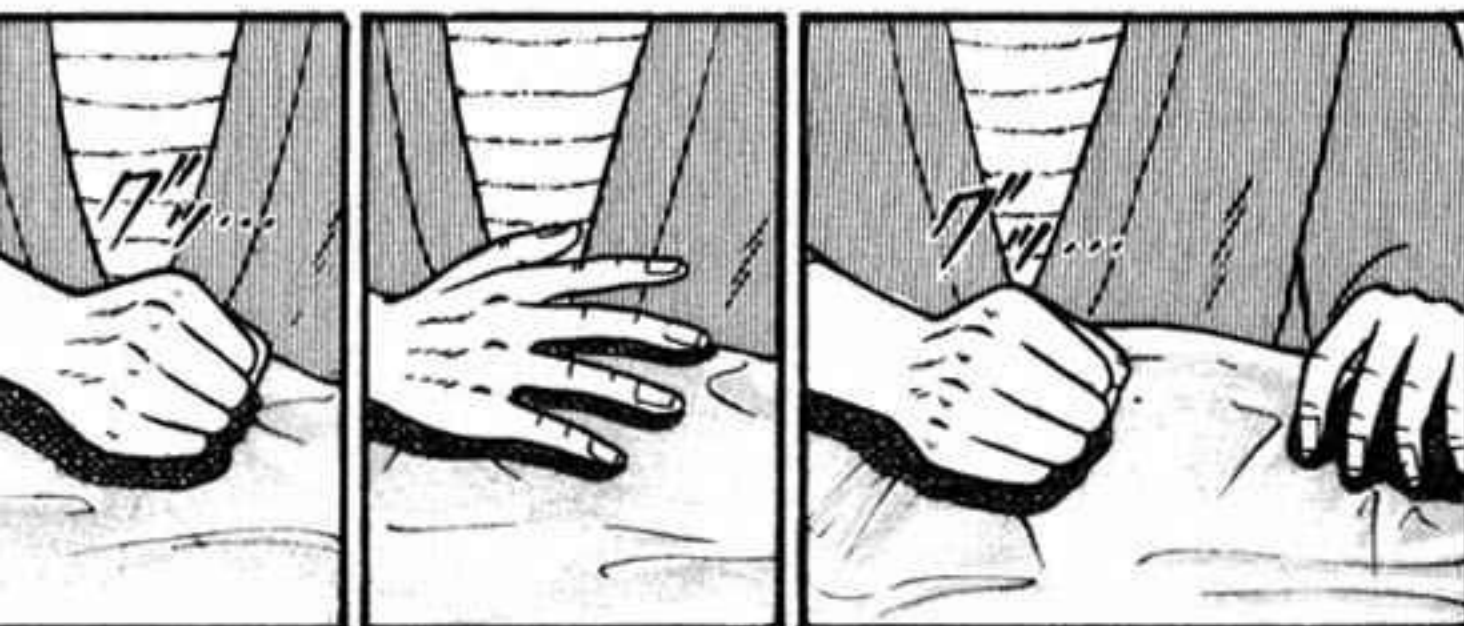






CHAPTER 63 - MEANINGLESS

第63話 犬死





PROMISE ME
THAT YOU'LL NEVER
TRY TO THROW YOUR
LIFE AWAY SO
EASILY LIKE
THAT, AGAIN!



MAKE ME
A PROMISE,
HERE,

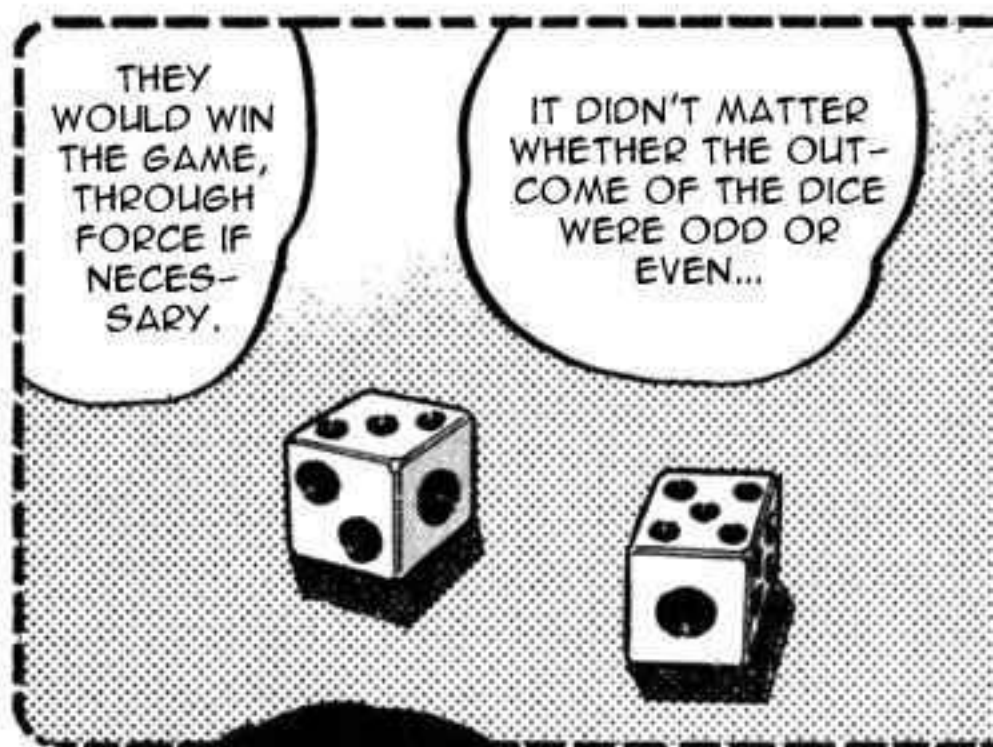
EVEN SO,
THOUGH
...



THERE WAS
NO LONGER
ANYTHING THAT
YOU COULD DO
TO STOP THEM.
IT WAS
ABSOLUTELY
DISGRACEFUL
...

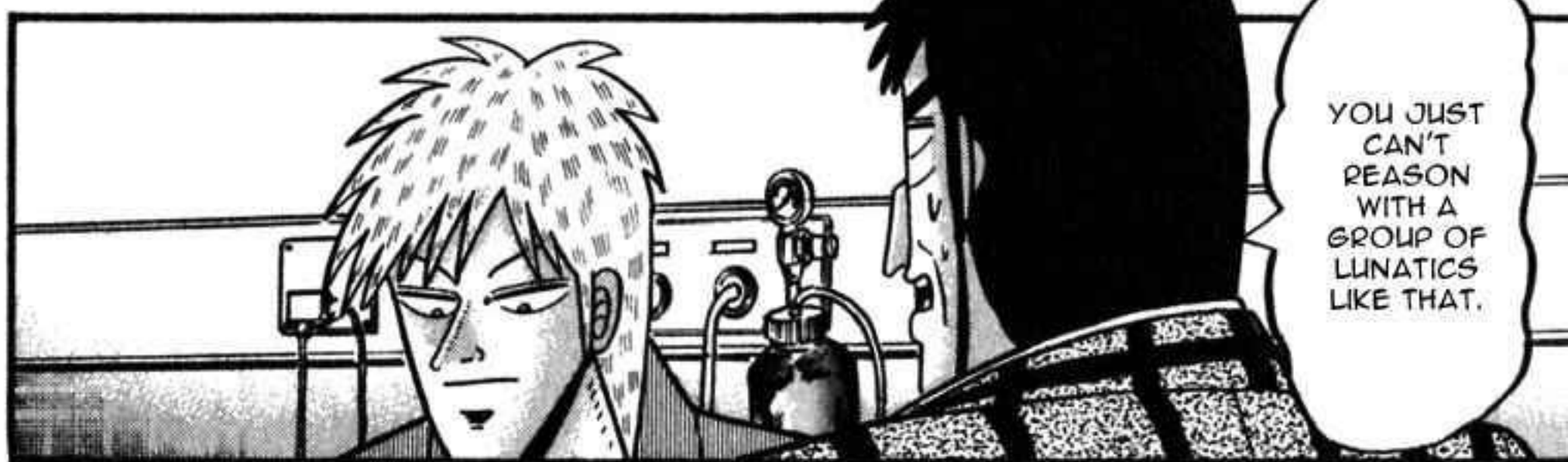
ONCE THEY
BROUGHT
SWORDS INTO
IT AND STARTED
HACKING AWAY
AT YOUR
SHOULDER...

...AND
INSANE.



THEY
WOULD WIN
THE GAME,
THROUGH
FORCE IF NECES-
SARY.

IT DIDN'T MATTER
WHETHER THE OUT-
COME OF THE DICE
WERE ODD OR
EVEN...



YOU JUST
CAN'T
REASON
WITH A
GROUP OF
LUNATICS
LIKE THAT.



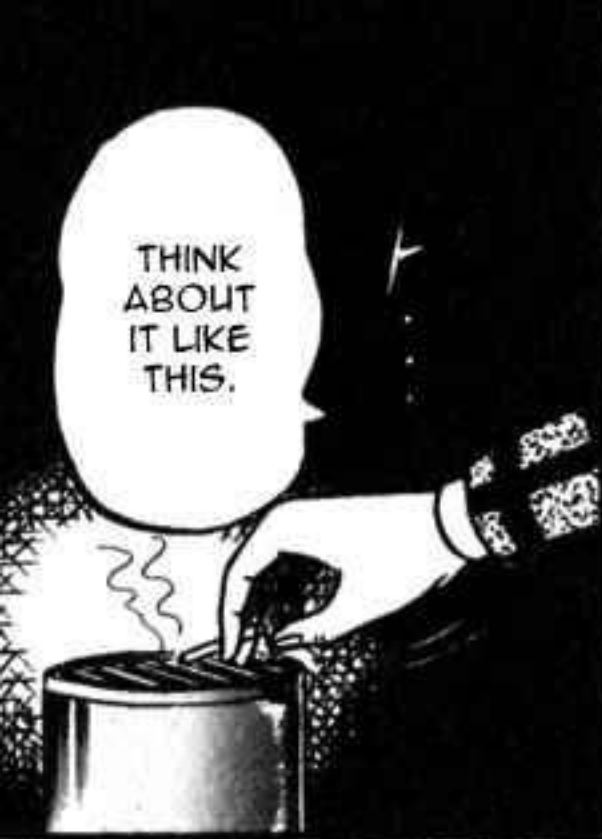
ALTHOUGH,
I SUPPOSE
I CAN UNDER-
STAND
...

THAT
WOULD
SEEM TO
ME LIKE
COMMON
SENSE.



NO MATTER
WHAT YOU
TRY TO DO,
YOU WILL
STILL FAIL.

AGAINST
SUCH A LARGE
GROUP OF
PEOPLE WHO
WOULD STOP AT
NOTHING TO
GET WHAT
THEY WANT
...



THINK ABOUT IT LIKE THIS.



IN FACT, THE WAY IT REALLY PANS OUT IS QUITE THE OPPOSITE!

BUT THE TRUTH IS, THAT'S NOT HOW IT IS AT ALL!



...THAT, ON THE SURFACE, IT MIGHT SEEM LIKE RUNNING AWAY.



IF YOUR HOUSE IS BURNING TO THE GROUND ...

...YOU HAVE TO GET AWAY FROM IT!

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GET BITTEN BY A RABID DOG ...

...YOU HAVE TO GET OUT OF IT!



I GUESS THERE'S JUST TIMES WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE RUNNING BLINDLY FORWARD WITHOUT ANY SENSE OF WHERE YOU'RE HEADED.



THAT'S WHAT ANYONE WOULD SAY! SO WHAT SENSE IS THERE IN STUBBORNLY SITTING IN THE HOUSE AS IT BURNS AROUND YOU?!

HM-HMM ...





THOSE
WERE JUST
EMPTY
WORDS.

...
AKAGI
...!



...THAT'S
AS FAR AS
I AGREE WITH
WHAT YOU SAID,
YASUOKA-
SAN.

BUT
THE
FACT
OF THE
MATTER
IS...



YOU NEVER
KNOW WHAT
WILL HAPPEN
AFTER THIS
UNTIL YOU
TRY AND
SEE.

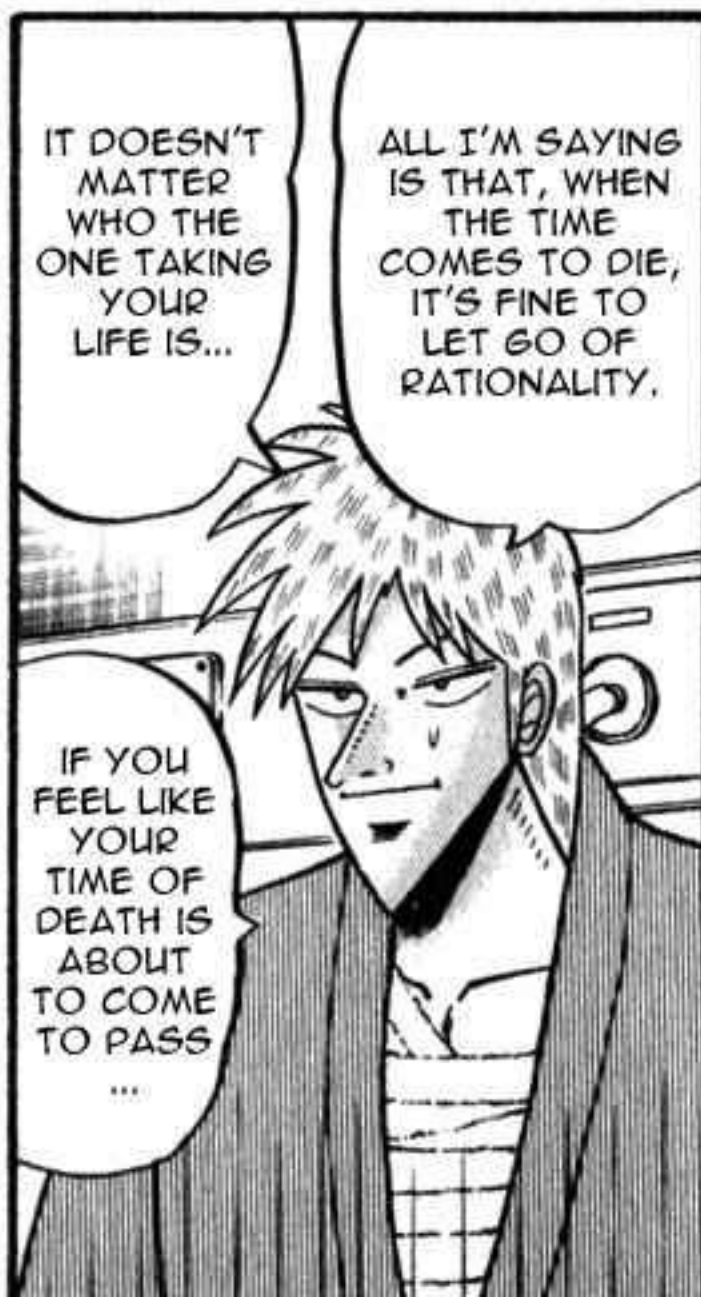


WHAT'S
REALLY THE
POINT OF
CONTINUING
TO GO ON
ONCE YOU'VE
LOST YOUR
PRIDE?



...IT'S
FINE TO
JUST
LAY
DOWN
AND
DIE.

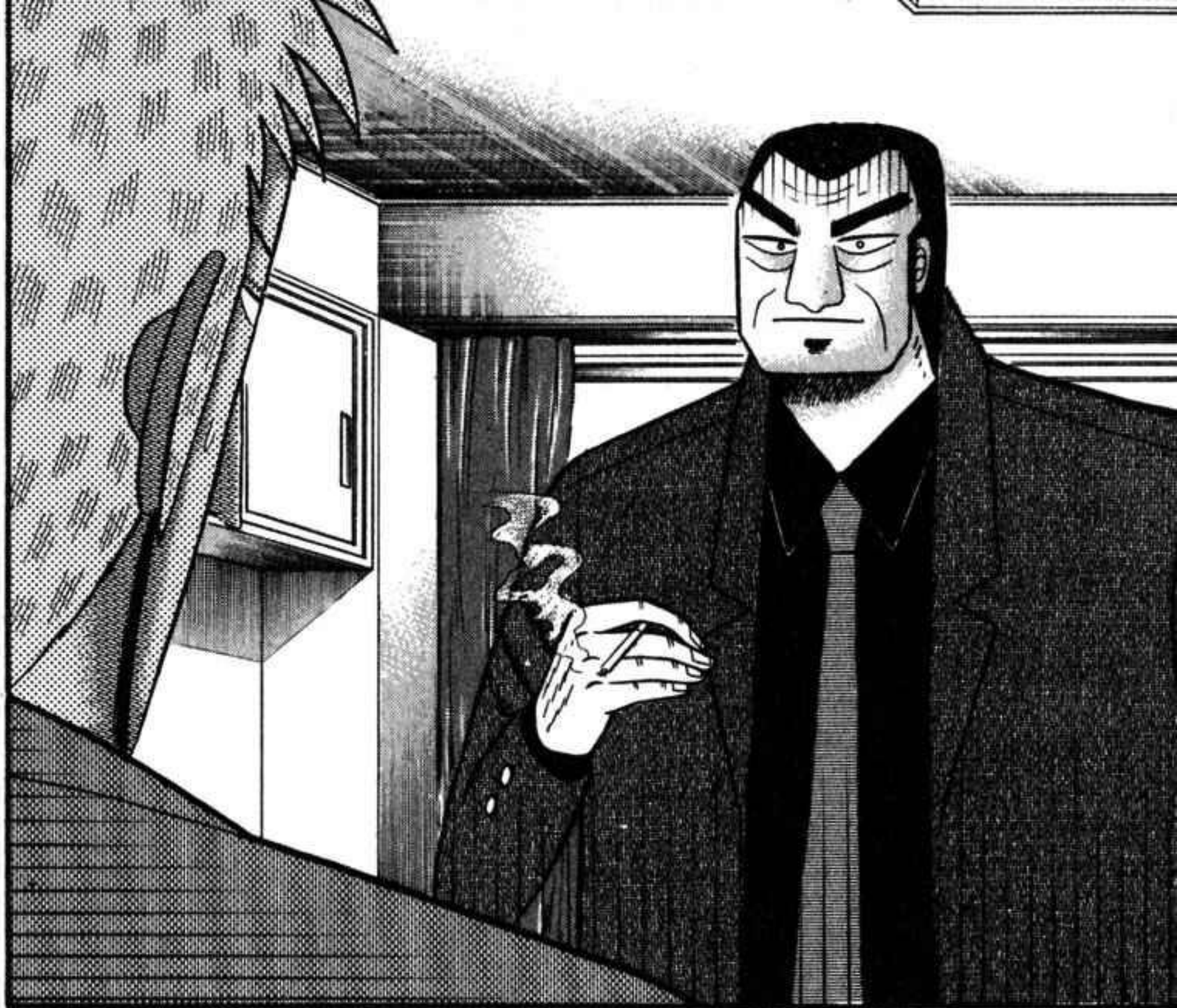
YOU'RE
WRONG!



IT DOESN'T
MATTER
WHO THE
ONE TAKING
YOUR
LIFE IS...

ALL I'M SAYING
IS THAT, WHEN
THE TIME
COMES TO DIE,
IT'S FINE TO
LET GO OF
RATIONALITY.

IF YOU
FEEL LIKE
YOUR
TIME OF
DEATH IS
ABOUT
TO COME
TO PASS
...



IF YOU KEEP
THINKING LIKE
THAT, THERE
WILL NEVER BE
ANY HOPE
FOR YOU.



YOU CAN GET
FURTHER IN LIFE
THAN YOU MIGHT
THINK JUST BY
CONTINUING TO
LIVE!



BUT, IN
THE END,
YOU JUST
FIZZLE
OUT IN
THE AIR.

YOU'RE LIKE A
CRAZY FIREWORK,
GOING THIS WAY
AND THAT, SENDING
SPARKS STREAMING
ALL OVER THE SKY.











...YOU'VE
MANAGED
TO WIN
EVERY
GAMBLE
YOU'VE
TAKEN
PART IN.



AND
WITH JUST
THAT TALENT
ALONE...



YOU WERE
ONLY ABLE TO
WIN THAT WAY
BECAUSE YOUR
OPPONENTS
WERE SO WEAK!



EVEN THOUGH YOU
BEAT DOWN
EVERYONE THAT
CAME YOUR WAY,
ONE AFTER
ANOTHER...

BUT,
IN THE
END
...



ANY KIND OF
MEANINGLESS
DEATH WOULD
BE FINE BY YOU
IS WHAT YOU
SAY... BUT IF
IT WEREN'T FOR
THOSE EASY
OPPONENTS,
YOU WOULDN'T
HAVE THAT
MINDSET!

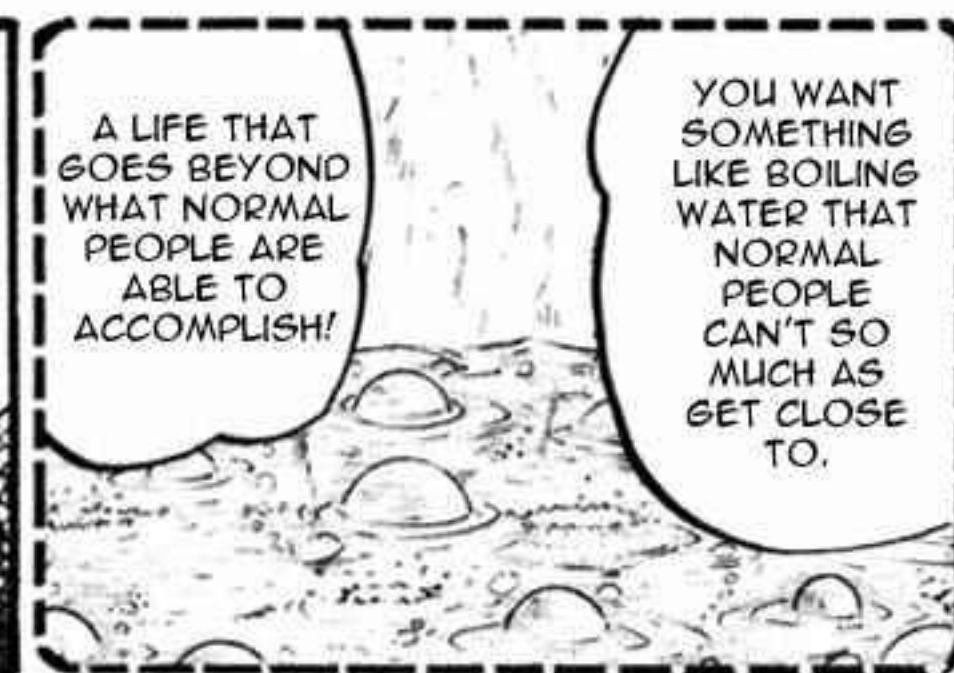
I'D
HAZARD
A GUESS
...

THAT IS
WHY YOU
HAVE GROWN
SO BORED
WITH LIFE!



TO PUT IT ANOTHER
WAY, YOU WERE
ONLY PLAYING
AGAINST EASY
OPPONENTS TO
BEAT THIS WHOLE
TIME.

AND
THUS
...





I KNOW
SOMEONE
WHO CAN
GIVE YOU
THE THRILL
YOU'RE
AFTER!





...IS THE
MAN I WAS
REFERRING
TO.

THE
PERPE-
TRATOR
OF THESE
MURDERS
...



THERE ARE
THESE FREAKISH
MURDERS THAT
ARE HAPPENING
AND HAVE BEEN
POSTED ALL
OVER THE
PRESS AS OF
LATE.



?







IT'S
NOT JUST
HIRAYAMA
...



HUNT
HIM
DOWN!



...
AKAGI!



DO YOU
UNDERSTAND
ME, AKAGI?



I'D IMAGINE
HE'S TAKEN
AT LEAST 5
OR 6 PEOPLE'S
LIVES SO FAR!



HE TAKES
THEM BY
FORCE AND
MAKES THEM
GAMBLE THEIR
LIVES AWAY
FOR HIS
AMUSEMENT!

WHO KNOWS
HOW MANY
PEOPLE HE'S
ALREADY
JOYFULLY
KILLED LIKE
THIS!



YOU'RE
THE ONLY
ONE WHO
CAN!

PUT A STOP TO
THIS MONSTER
ONCE AND FOR
ALL, AKAGI!!



YOU ARE
AIMING TO
TAKE DOWN
THIS MAN-
EATING
TIGER
WHO IS
ON THE
LOOSE!

THIS TIME
AROUND, IT'S
NOT JUST
A MATTER
OF MONEY!

THIS IS
A HUNT!



近代麻雀コミックス

アカギ⑦

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