

There They Were:
Kokone and Maruko

I can't believe
this girl...

...and then Alpha...

...and so
Alpha...

...but Alpha...

Why don't
you talk
more about
yourself?

I've heard
enough about
this "Alpha".

Ack, was I speaking
too sharply!?

Ah.....
Um....
But....

I wonder if
it's just that time...

....I'm probably
giving you a bad
impression of her, but...

.....I know
I talk too
much about
Alpha, so...

I think that Alpha...



"I'm Koumiishi.
I'm a student."



"I'm Putaro."



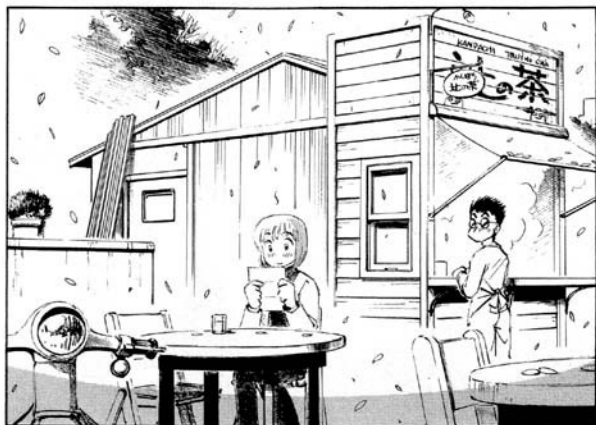
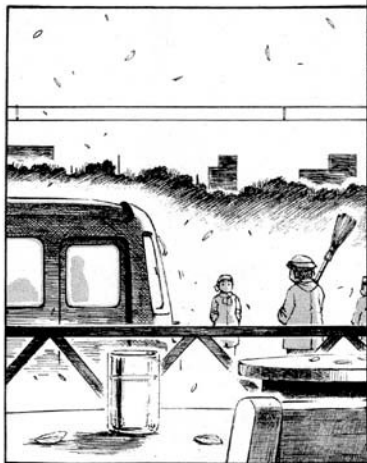












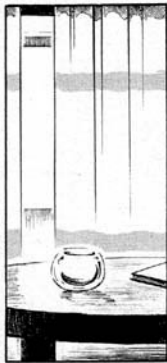
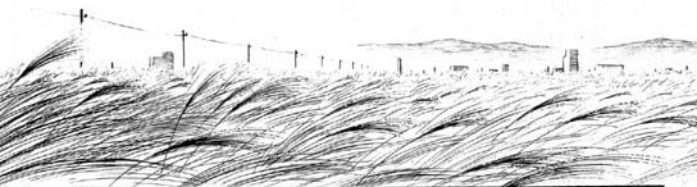


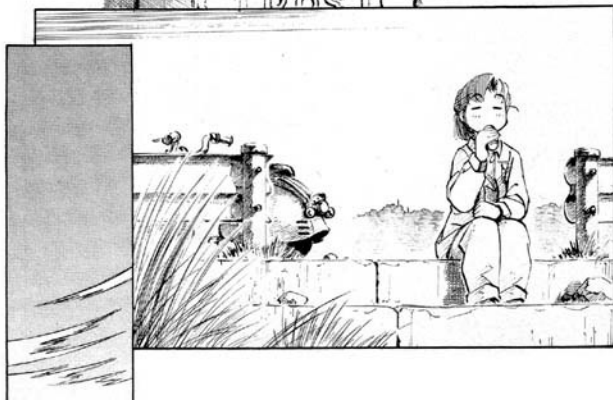
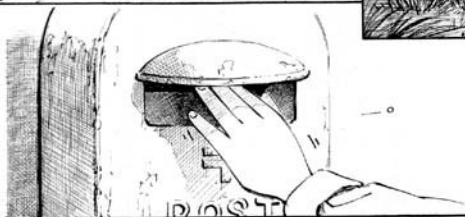


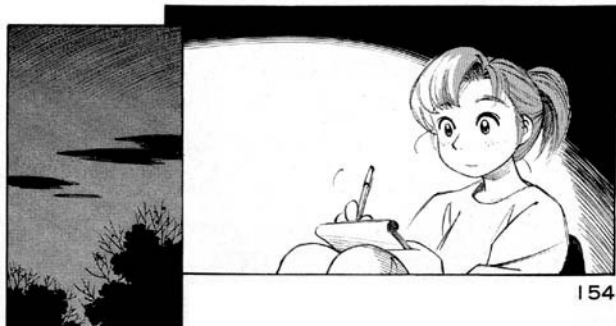








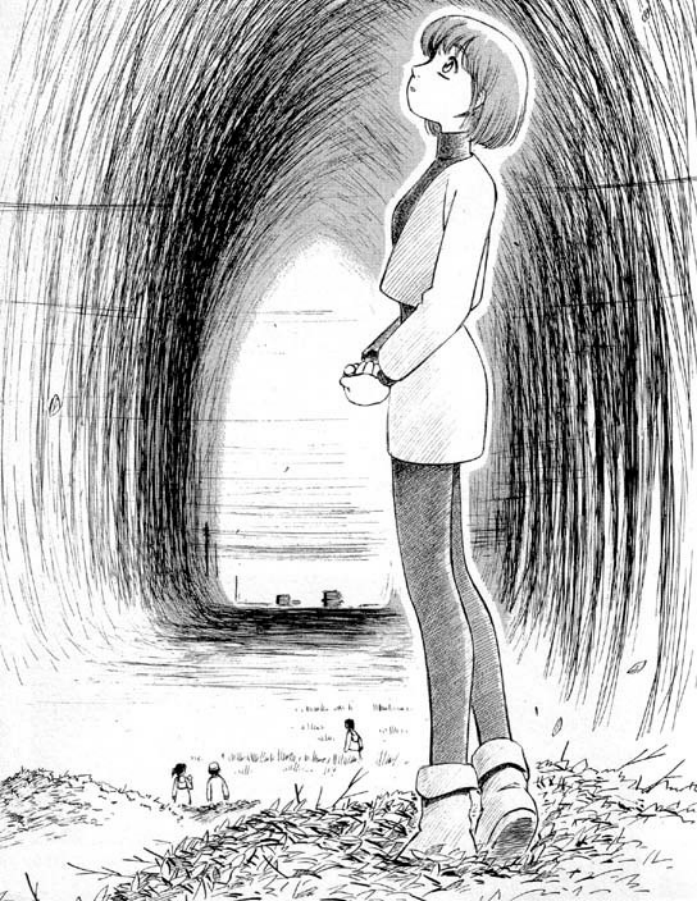




Chapter 54 Musashino Communications

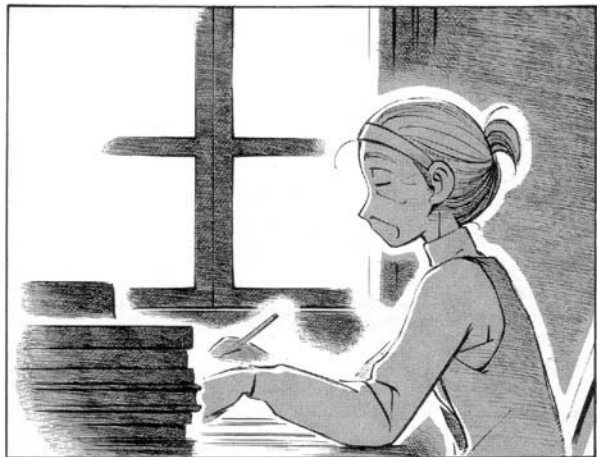
第54話

武蔵野通信



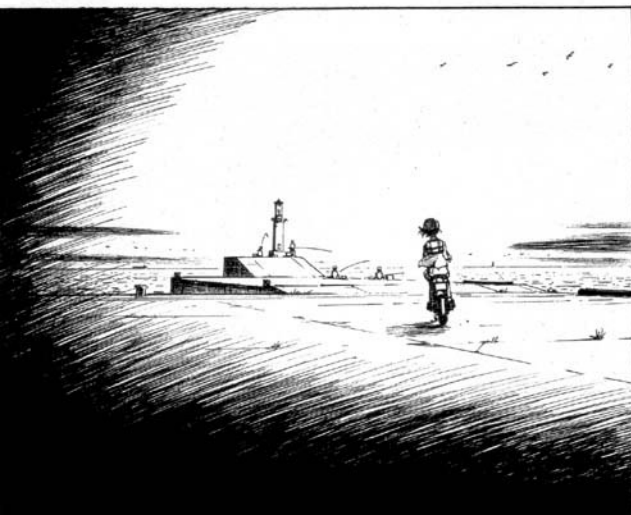








With this,
I wonder how far I can go
and how much I can see?

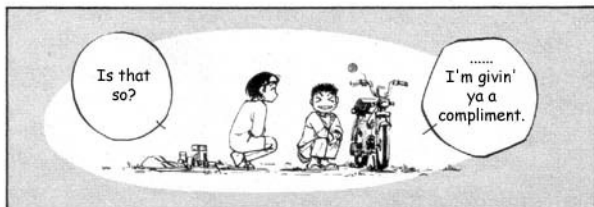


Riding on my bike,
my world grew ten times larger.













Ah....
This one
is good.



.....
Ultramarine.

I like this
color. Let's
go with it.



So you're
saying this
paint has a
good grip,
huh?

Perfect!

Better be
sure before
ya use these
paints.

Ya can't
do it over
later.

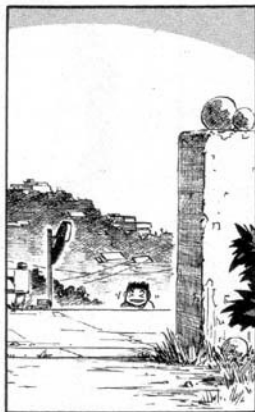


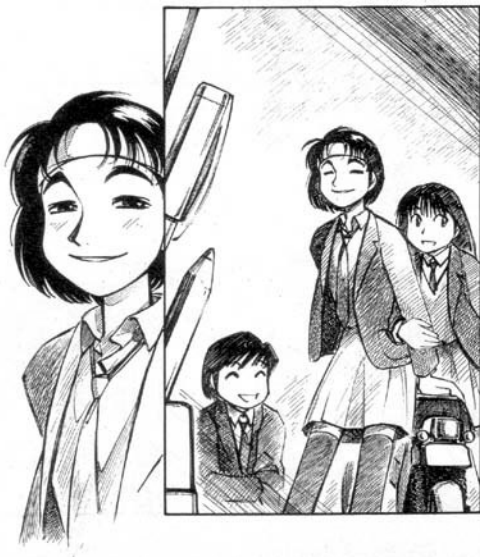
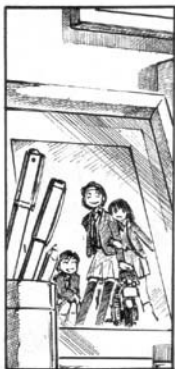




These are
all the blue
paints I have,
though.

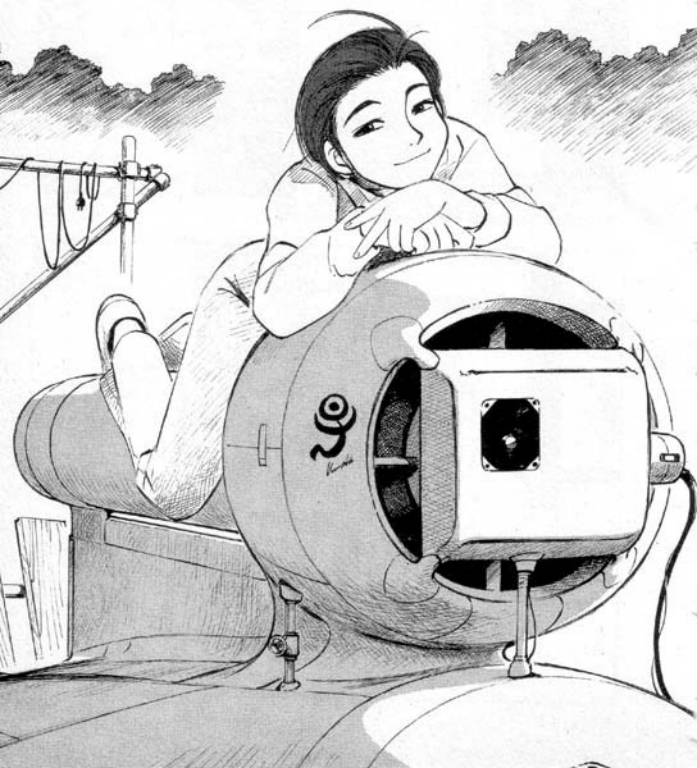
Senpai!
I brought it!

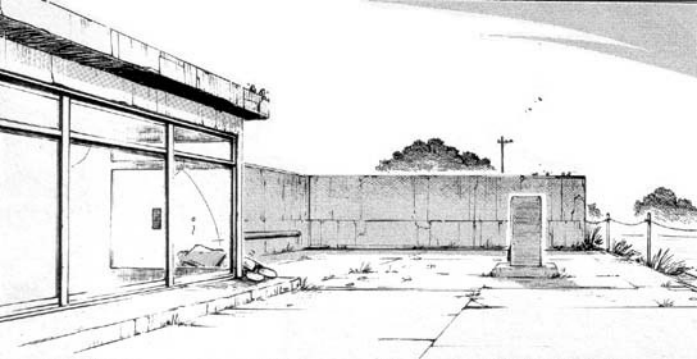







第53話 先生のマーク
Chapter 53 Sensei's Mark







This height...
Ah...it's the
same dream as
always.

I see...
I must have
fallen asleep
like that.

The wind
is cool...

It's a
good thing
I closed
the shop.

I'll have
to drink that
milk-liqueur
only before
going to bed.



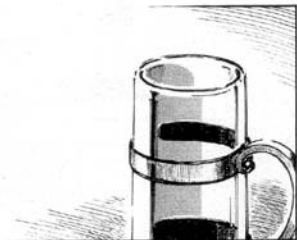
.....
What?



Too much...
Definitely...

Ohhh...













Maybe,
with this liqueur...

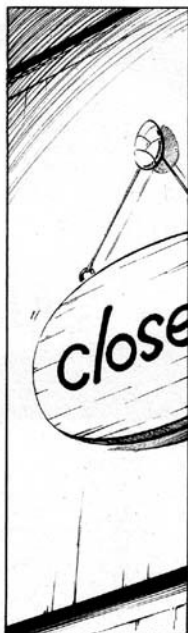


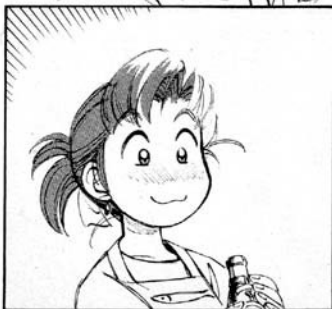
Here we go!
Somehow, I have
a good feeling
about this.



I hate
the way even
café au lait
makes me go
all numb.

I might be able to
accustom myself
to milk!







Liqueur?

"Ah, that's right.
About the package.
It contains
a bottle of
liqueur."

"This is a coffee liqueur.
You mix it with milk
before drinking."

"You told me before
that you can't drink
milk, but are trying to
get accustomed to it."



You're forgetting
the most important
thing about milk
and me.

The taste
isn't the
problem,
Kokone...

"It's very sweet,
so I'm certain
that you will
like it, Alpha."



I haven't
gotten any
mail in
some time.
This is from
Kokone.

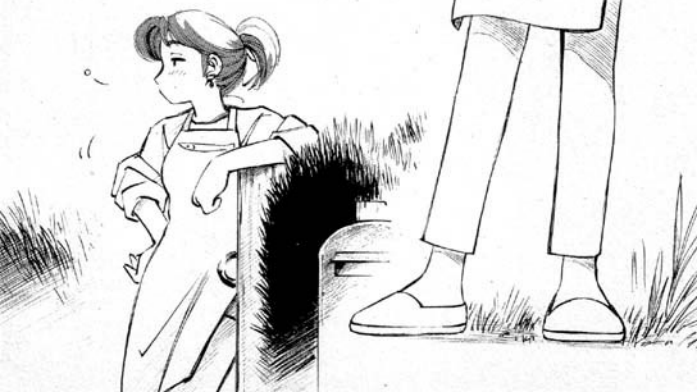
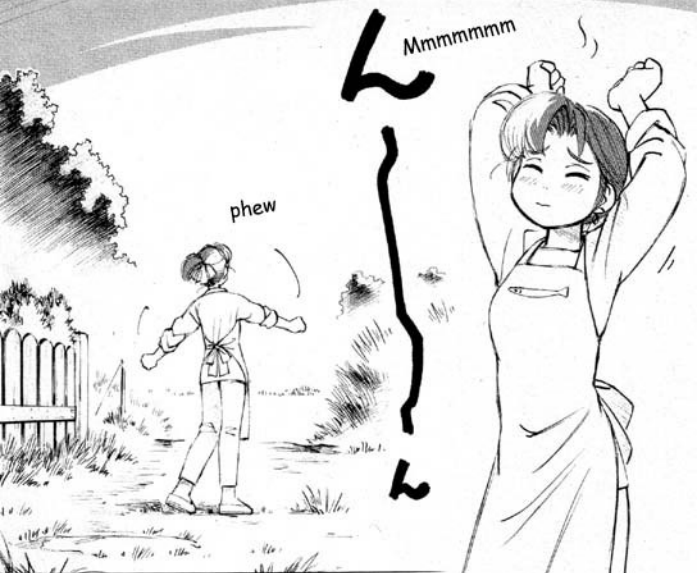
ding



For some
reason, she
doesn't
mention the
package until
the very end.

As always,
she's written
a really long
letter.







第52話

NIGHTBIRD



I feel a
breeze.

It carries
the smell
of the
Pacific.



We aren't
at the ocean
yet.

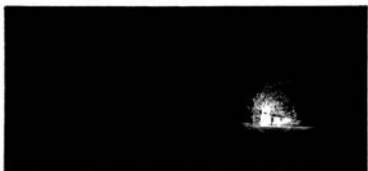






The store shrinks
in the distance.

Once again, the universe
becomes nothing but
a line of dots.



I try
walking with
the light off.

The old
guy from
Yuzawa
was right.

But now
I find this
route
interesting.









I walk
along
with only
them to
guide me.



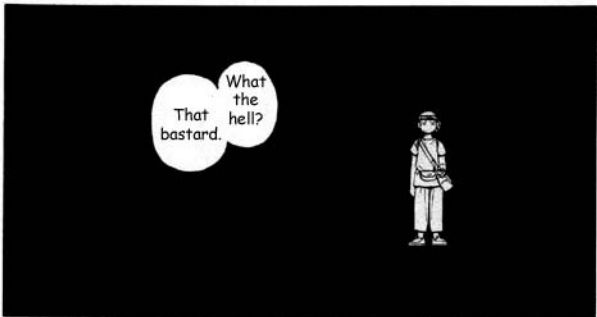
After then,
I have
nothing
but the dim
fluorescent
lights to
rely on.



Bit by bit,
a strange
feeling
overcomes
me.



This is
not good.



Kamas has been
sleeping inside
my bag ever
since we left
the sea.



The
lights...
They're
dim...



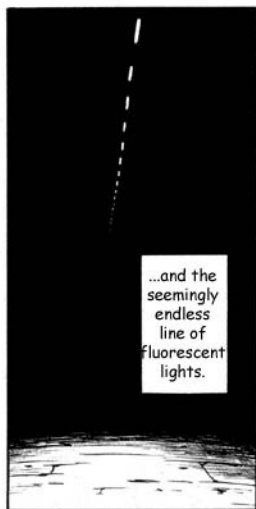
I wonder if he
just sees me as an
easy way to get a
ride?



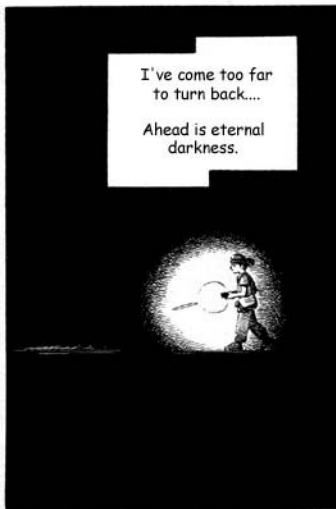


He said
the tunnel is
more than
10km long.

There
ain't a single
person goin'
this way!



...and the
seemingly
endless
line of
fluorescent
lights.



I've come too far
to turn back....

Ahead is eternal
darkness.

"Really?
Maybe I'll
go that
way, then."

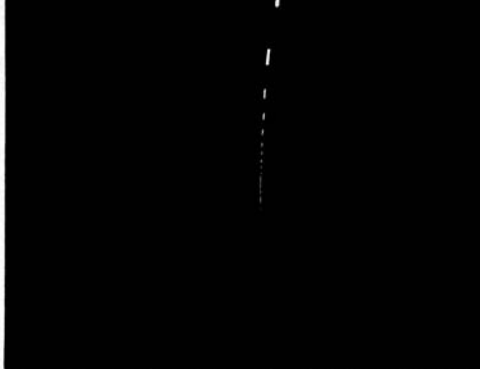


"That reminds me.
There's a big tunnel
over that way. Most
people crossing Mikuni
pass take it!"



"Here, use
this light!
I'll sell it to
you cheap!"





The main
event is
crossing the
mountains.

Between
Niigata
and the
country of
Gunma.



Damn
it...

But an old
man near
Yuzawa
tricked me.



.....
It's
cold.



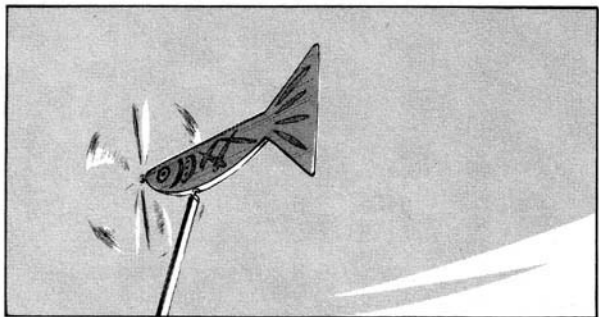
I wonder
if it's like this
everywhere...





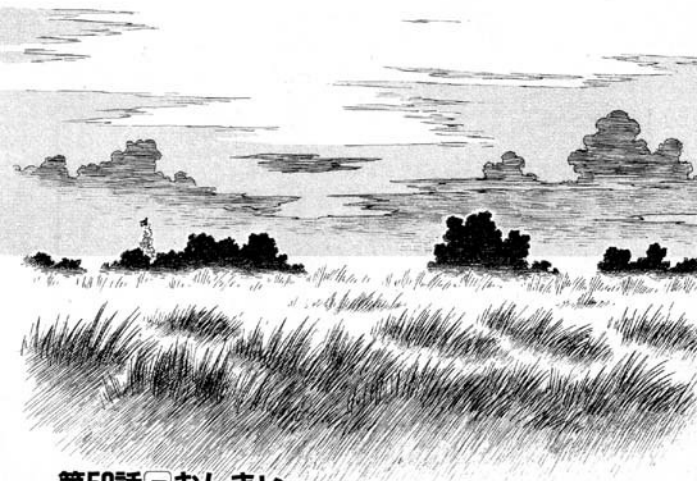
Chapter 51 Hole in the Mountain
第51話 やまのあな





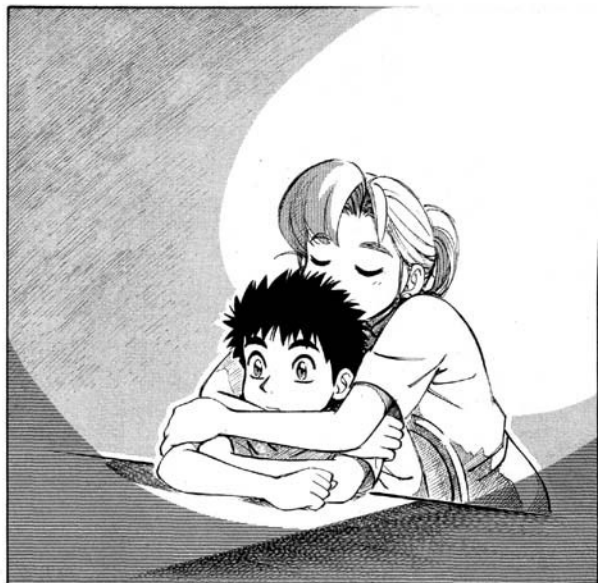
The flow of time carries everyone along,
moment by moment.

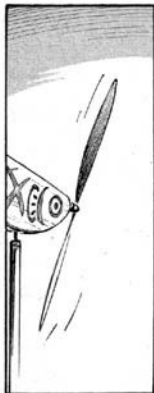
It never stops.



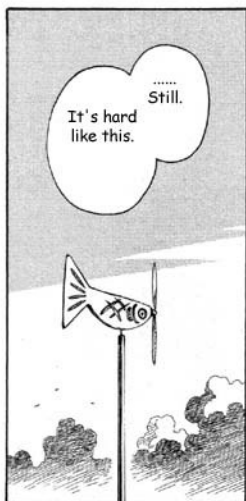
第50話  おしまい
Chapter 50: End



















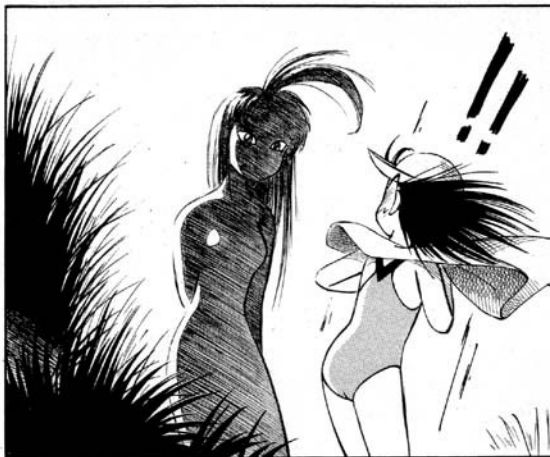




She
couldn't
move a
muscle.



Suddenly,
there she was,
standing right
beside her.



Makki
had met
the Misago
once
before,
but...





You can't
really
swim in
the bay,
can you?

But when it's
almost evening
and the cicadas
are chirping...



But in an open
spot by a river...
As she was crossing
a bridge...



So she
headed back
after less
than ten
minutes.



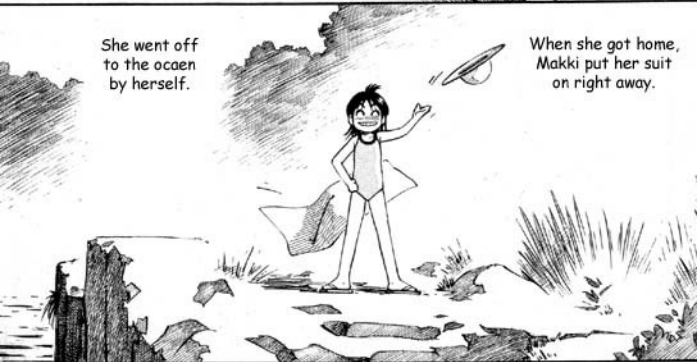


Auntie
bought me a
bathing suit
in Minamimachi.

Makki too.



She went off
to the ocean
by herself.



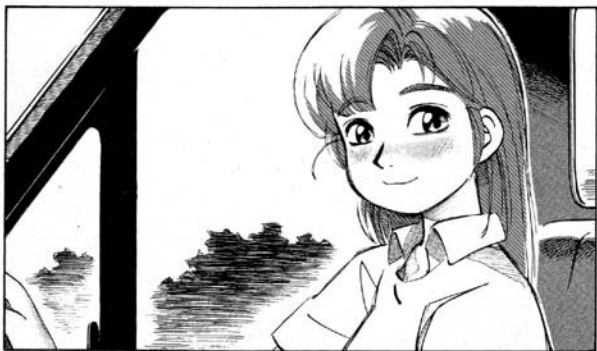
When she got home,
Makki put her suit
on right away.

Chapter 50 Water Clock

第50話 水の時計











サ

Sssssshhhhhh



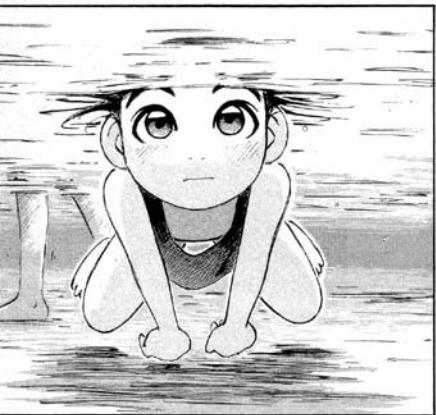
blink

Let's
get out
now.

The tide
is coming in.

It's
cold!





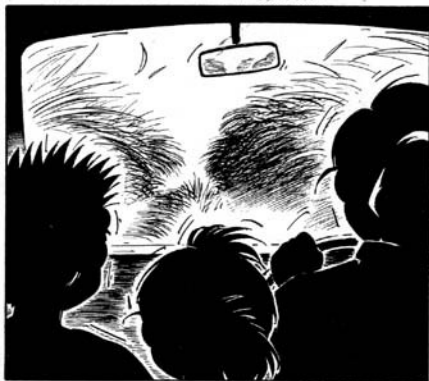


















第49話

あついすな

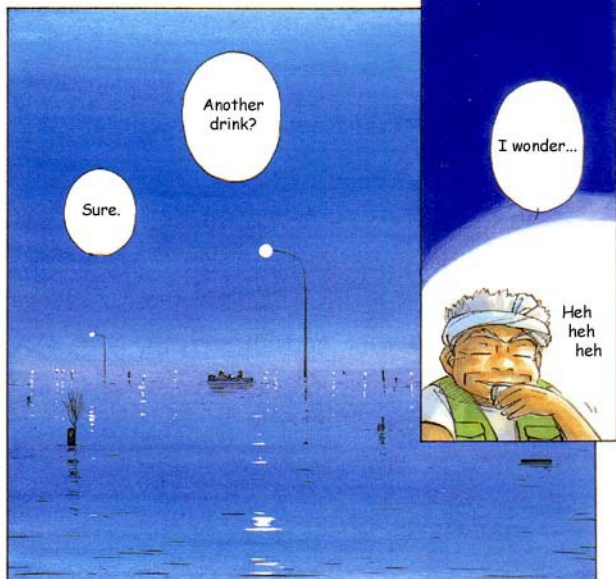
Chapter 49

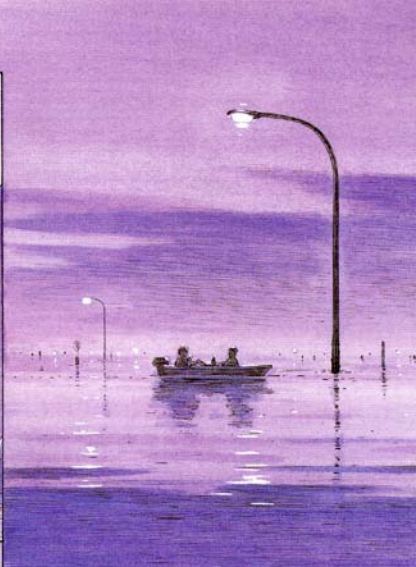
Hot Sand



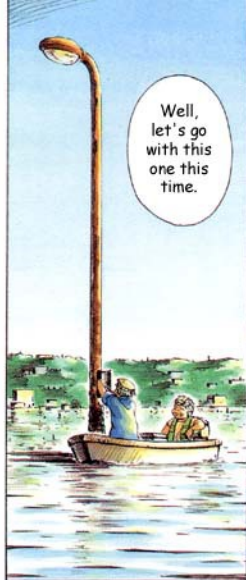


Chapter 48: End
第48話 ■ おしまい

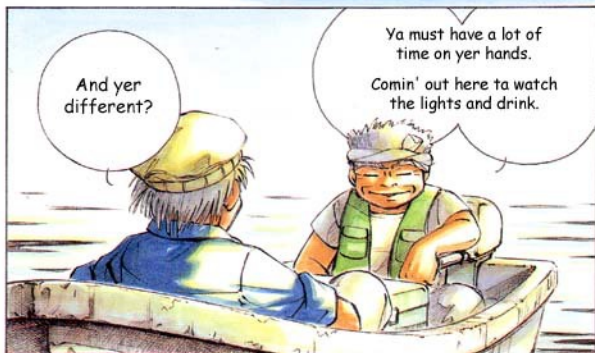






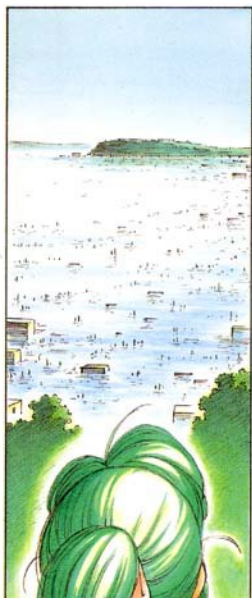


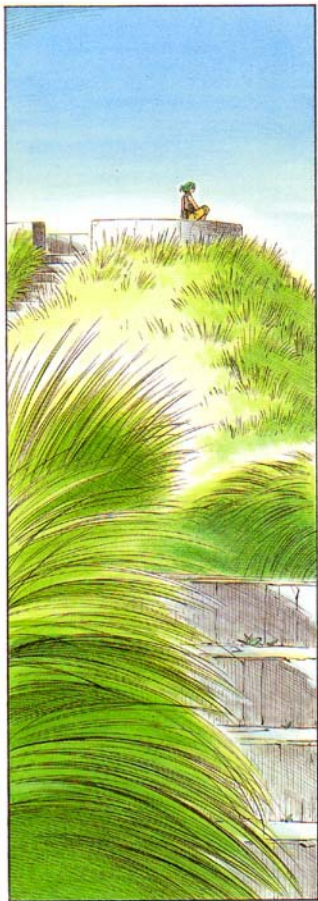
Well,
let's go
with this
one this
time.



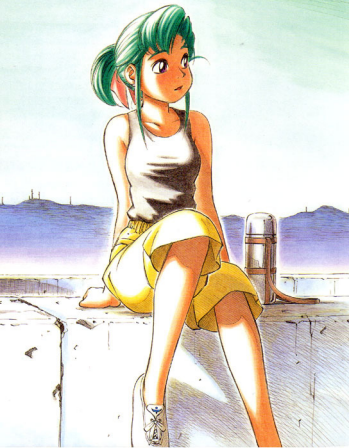
And yer
different?

Ya must have a lot of
time on yer hands.
Comin' out here ta watch
the lights and drink.





Chapter 48 Record III
第48話 レコード・Ⅲ





I'll leave these things
I don't understand
with this answer.

Until the day I do
understand.



Chapter 47: End

第47話 おしまい



It may turn out
to just be a
daydream.

But maybe..



There is a sound
that flows within
my blood.

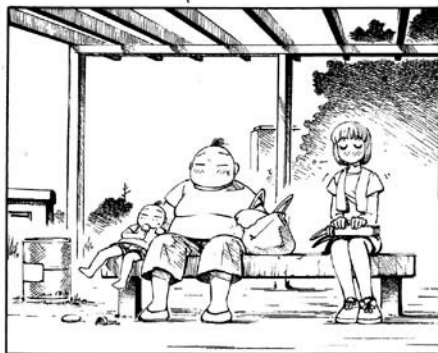
Possibly...

"A-something" isn't just
used for robots.

For example,
music....



I don't know
why, but...



I feel that there
is a connection
between the
A-2 on that record
and my own A-7.



No way
to tell now.

Well, the amp
or the player might
have changed the
sound, though.



Someday,
I'll find a
player and
bring it
here.
Please
take good
care of the
records!



Must
be some
kind of
mania.

What
a fussy
girl.

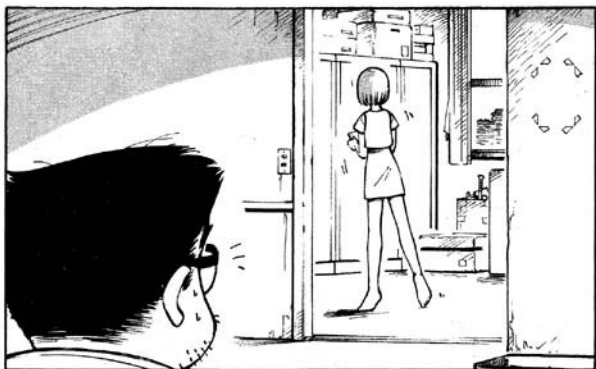


Sure
thing.





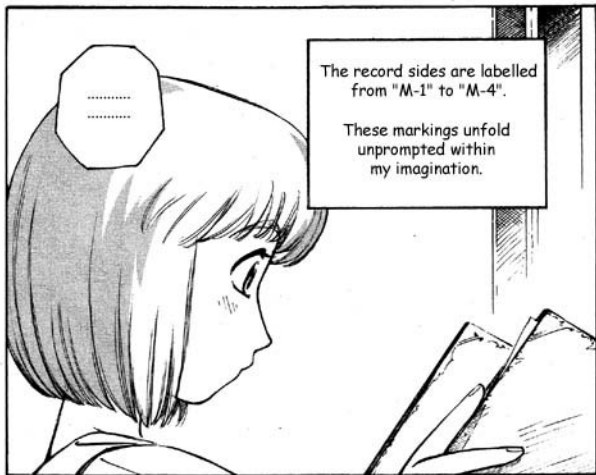






There is no description of the recording on the jacket.

To my eyes, it seems like something produced independently with no thought for sale.



The record sides are labelled from "M-1" to "M-4".

These markings unfold unprompted within my imagination.

Inside are
two ancient
records.



"A-2" is
written on
this old
cardboard
record jacket.

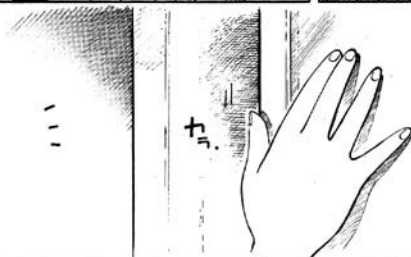
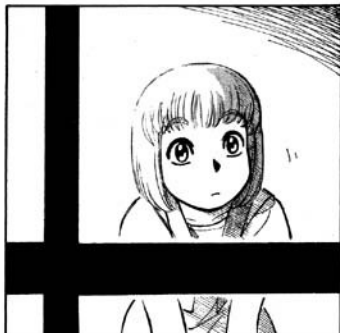


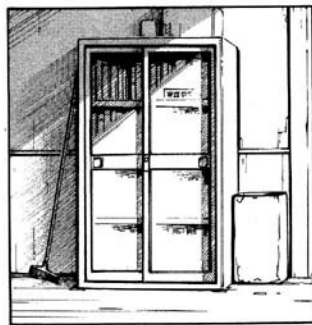
第47話 レコード・Ⅱ
Chapter 47 Record II

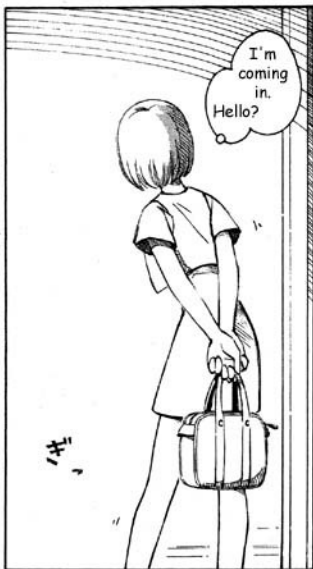


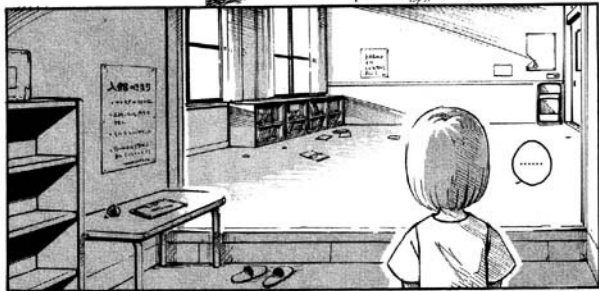
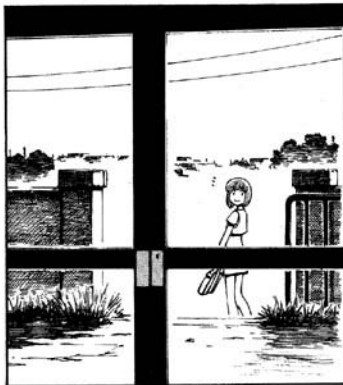












I still don't understand.

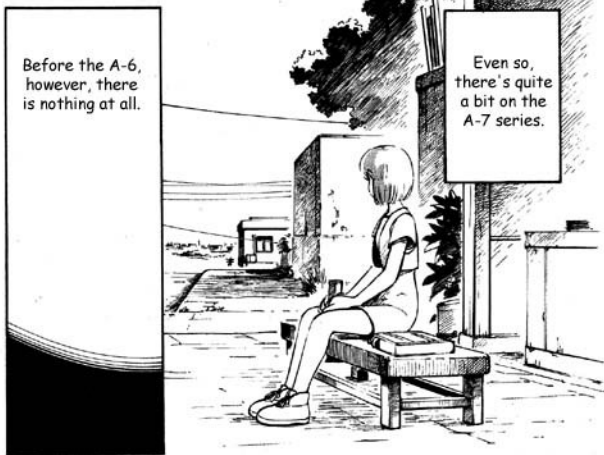


And so, as for this...



Before the A-6, however, there is nothing at all.

Even so, there's quite a bit on the A-7 series.





.....
Wandering
about town.

If I can find a library,
I'll take a look inside.

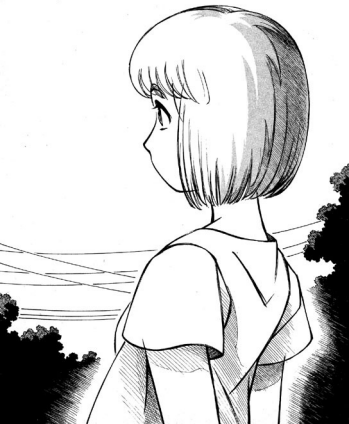
Generally, I'm looking
for books about robots.

There are plenty of books which
collect data on Alpha-type robots.

But I can't seem to find anything like
"stories about the Alpha series"...

第46話 レコード*

Chapter 46 Record



























Hey!

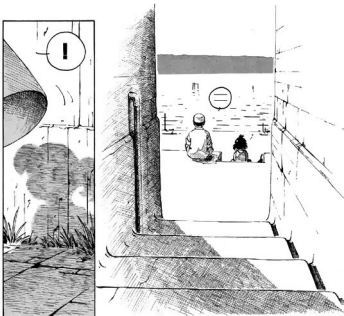
It IS you,
Takahiro.

Ah!
Alpha!!

Eh?

!!







It's not
that I don't
want to go!

Ah!

....Well,
maybe not
tomorrow.
But
sometime
soon.



It's far.

No, I
understand.





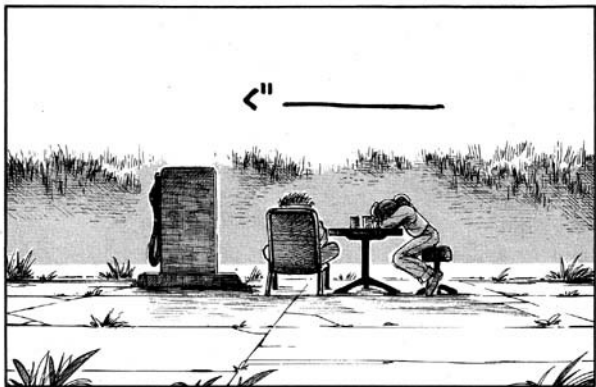





第45話 みんなの船
Chapter 45 Everyone's Ships









Well, Director Alpha.

The shinchu* is in.
Will you try some?

Ah,
yes.

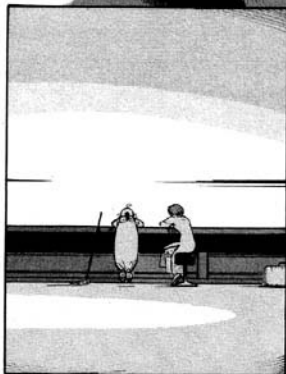
I'll go
with you.

* shinchu - Literally "new tea", shinchu is first flush tea, or the first tea of the season. A symbol of spring.



Are we being
left out?

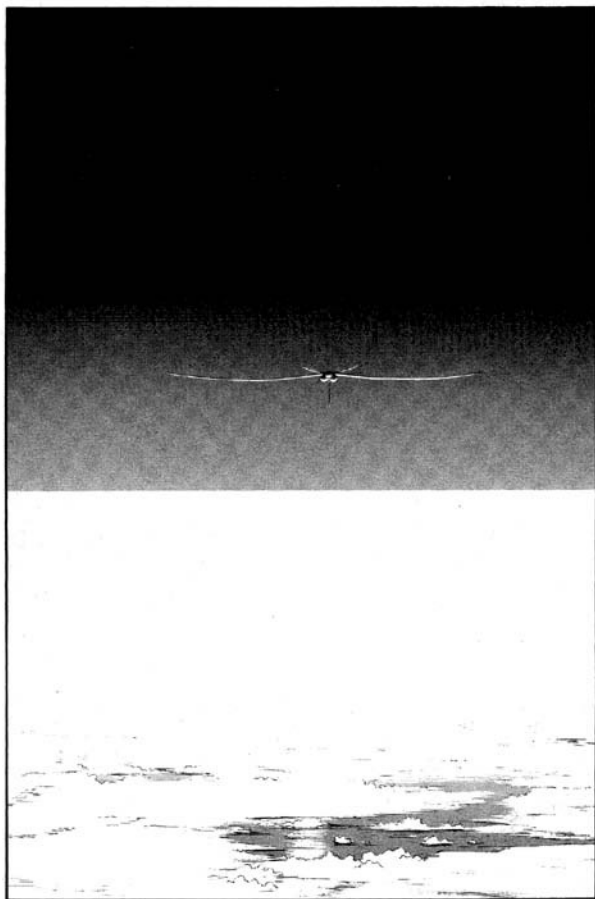
.....
I wonder...



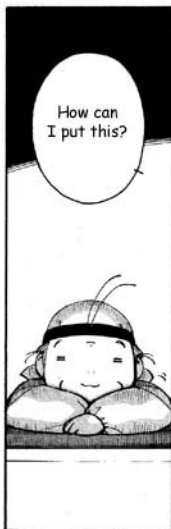
Who can
tell?

.....
Well.

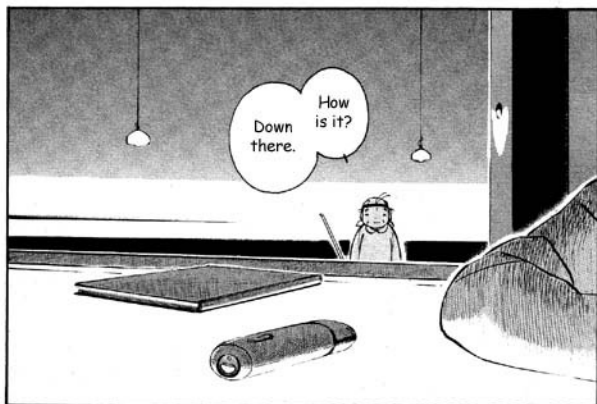


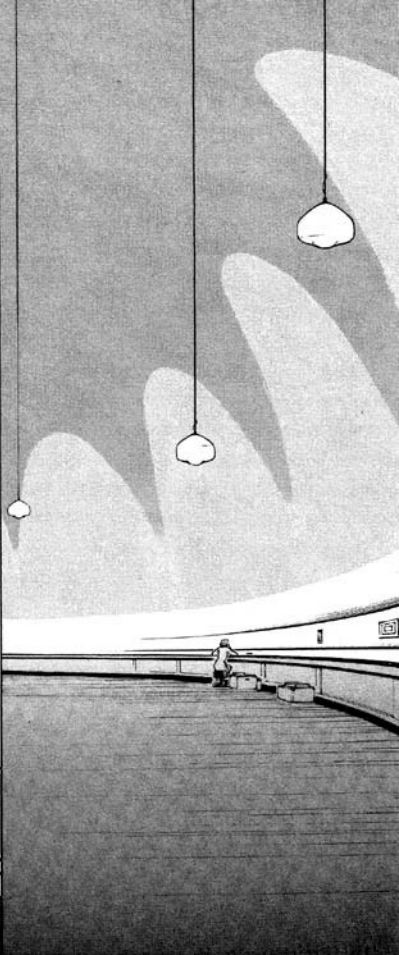


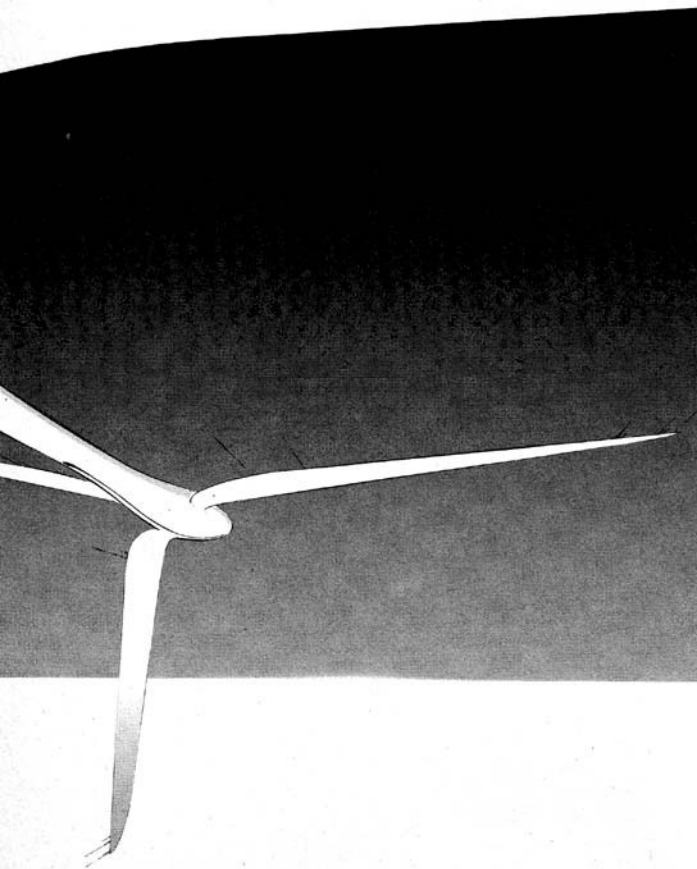








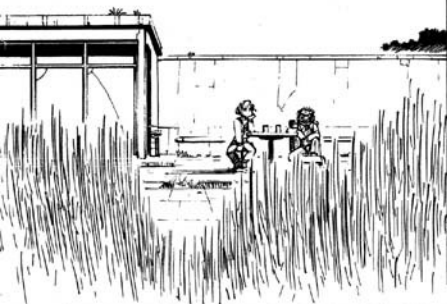








2" — ...



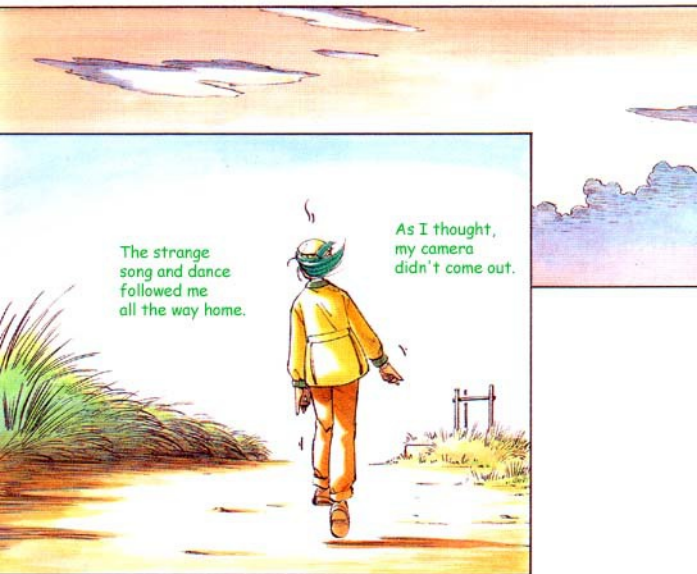
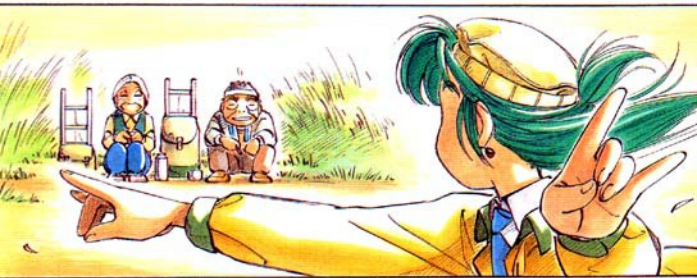
第44話

星の目 人の目

Chapter 44

The Eyes of Stars The Eyes of People





第43話 しまい

Chapter 43: End



As the bump that is me looks about,
I continue walking.

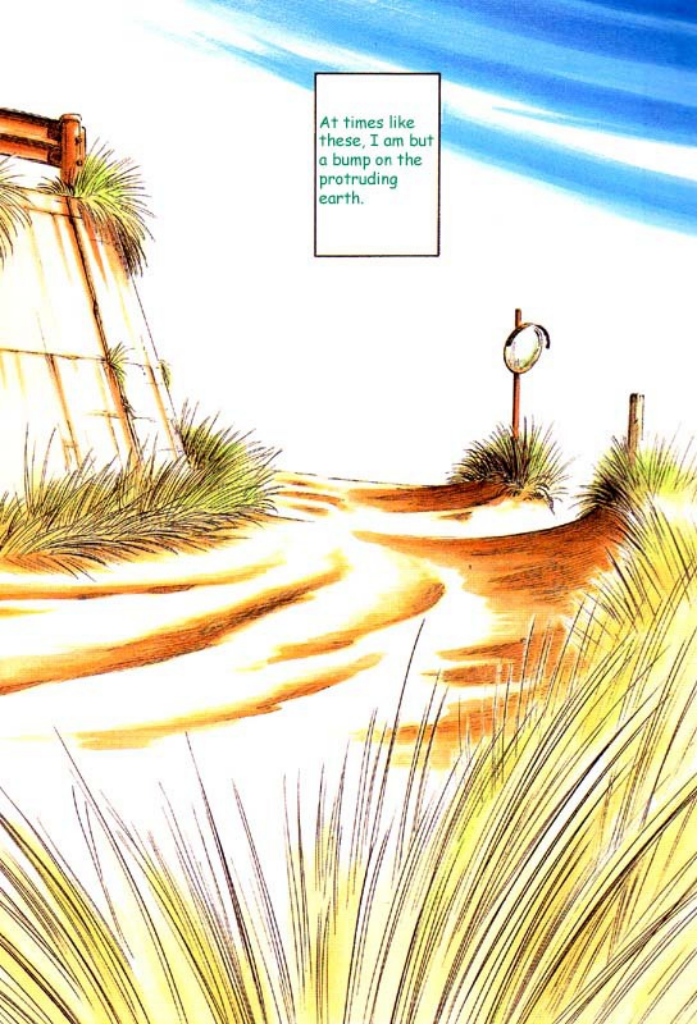
A song comes easily to my lips.

It follows the rythm of my steps.



My arms begin to swing wider.





At times like
these, I am but
a bump on the
protruding
earth.

I slowly wander
about like this.

This place is at
the edge of
sky and earth.

I seem to have chosen
my path.

I wonder where I want
to go today.....



On a day like today,
when I most likely
won't see anything
I want to photograph,
I probably won't
bring it out.



My camera.

*I always take it
with me when I
go out.*



Chapter 43
第43話

Dancing Alone
ひとりおどり

