

DONG HUA CHUN BARBERSHOP 東華春理髮廳

* Winner of the 2009 Government Information Office Comic Award

* The first comic book from Taiwan to be adapted for television

The proprietor of a small-town barbershop comes to grips with his past when a teenage girl appears at his doorstep bringing news of the father who abandoned him nearly three decades ago.

Just shy of middle age, Hua is the second-generation proprietor of a small-town barbershop. His only employee is a young assistant who has just been released from prison on parole. The name of the barbershop, Dong Hua Chun, brings together the names of Hua and his parents, but, ironically, his family is not so whole as the name would imply – on Hua's tenth birthday, his father abandoned him and his mother without even saying goodbye.

Now, nearly 30 years later, Hua receives an apologetic letter from his father. In the letter he explains that he is dying, and begs Hua to look after his teenage daughter after he is gone. By coincidence, the half-sister Hua never knew existed arrives at the barbershop the same day, initiating profound changes for Hua and his understanding of his past.

Dong Hua Chun Barbershop is the seminal work from comic book maestro Ruan Guang-Min. The first volume was published in 2010 to widespread critical acclaim, and was later followed by a television adaptation. Now, twelve years later, the second one has been published, continuing the emotional authenticity, warmth, and humor of the original.



Publisher: Yuan-Liou

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Rights contact:

booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com

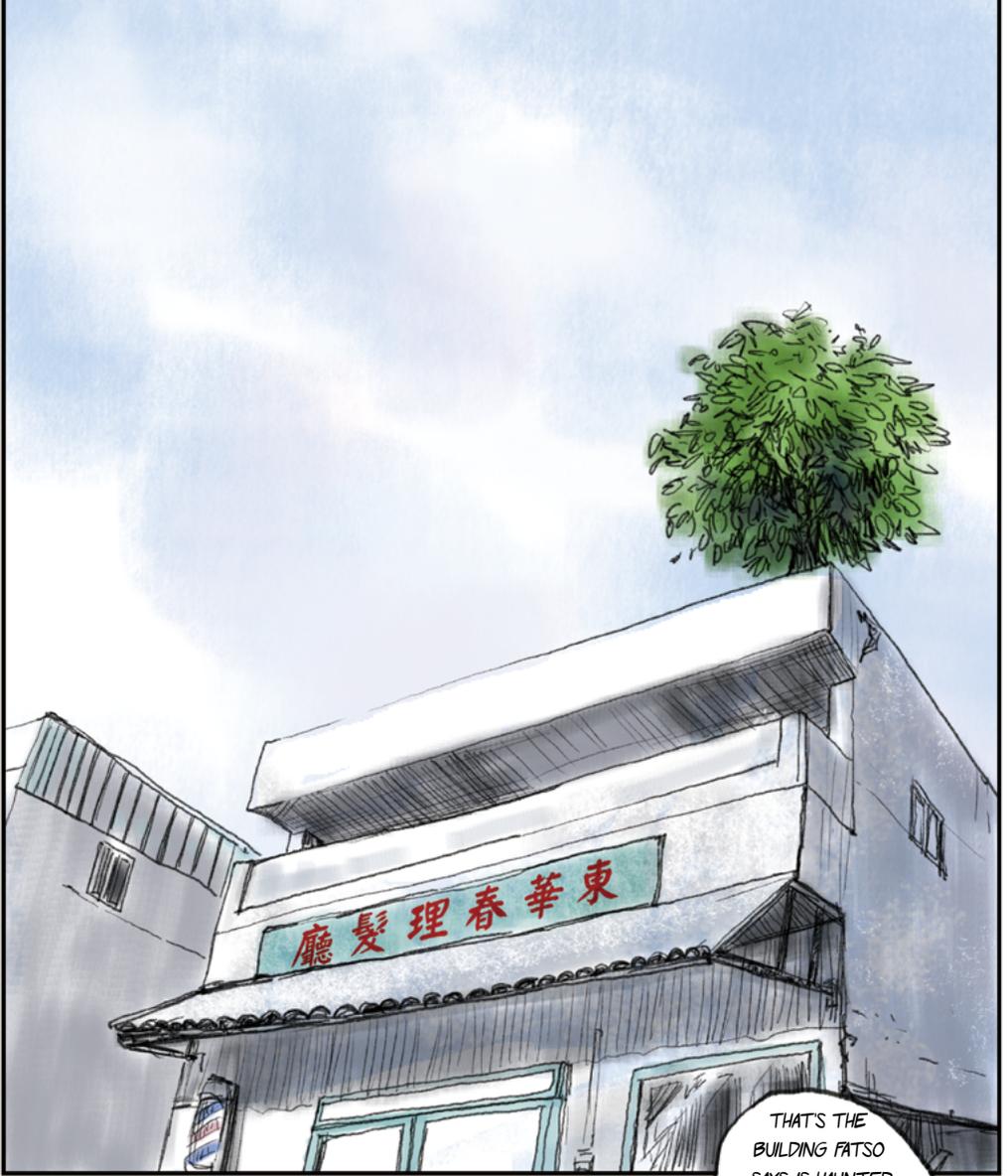
Pages: 220 / 220

Volume: 2 (END)

Rights sold: German
(Chinabooks)

Ruan Guang-Min 阮光民

Ruan Guang-Min studied advertising and interior decorating in school. After a stint in the military, he worked as an assistant to comic book artist Lai Yu-Hsien. His first work to receive recognition was a comic book adaptation of the TV show *Friends*, which told a moving story about a group of young people from the countryside struggling to make a living in Taipei. Conversely, his comic books *Dong Hua Chun Barbershop* and *The Corner Store* have both been adapted for television. *The Corner Store* has been translated into Japanese and Arabic, and the English rights have been sold for his graphic novel adaptation of Wu Ming-Yi's *The Illusionist on the Skywalk*.

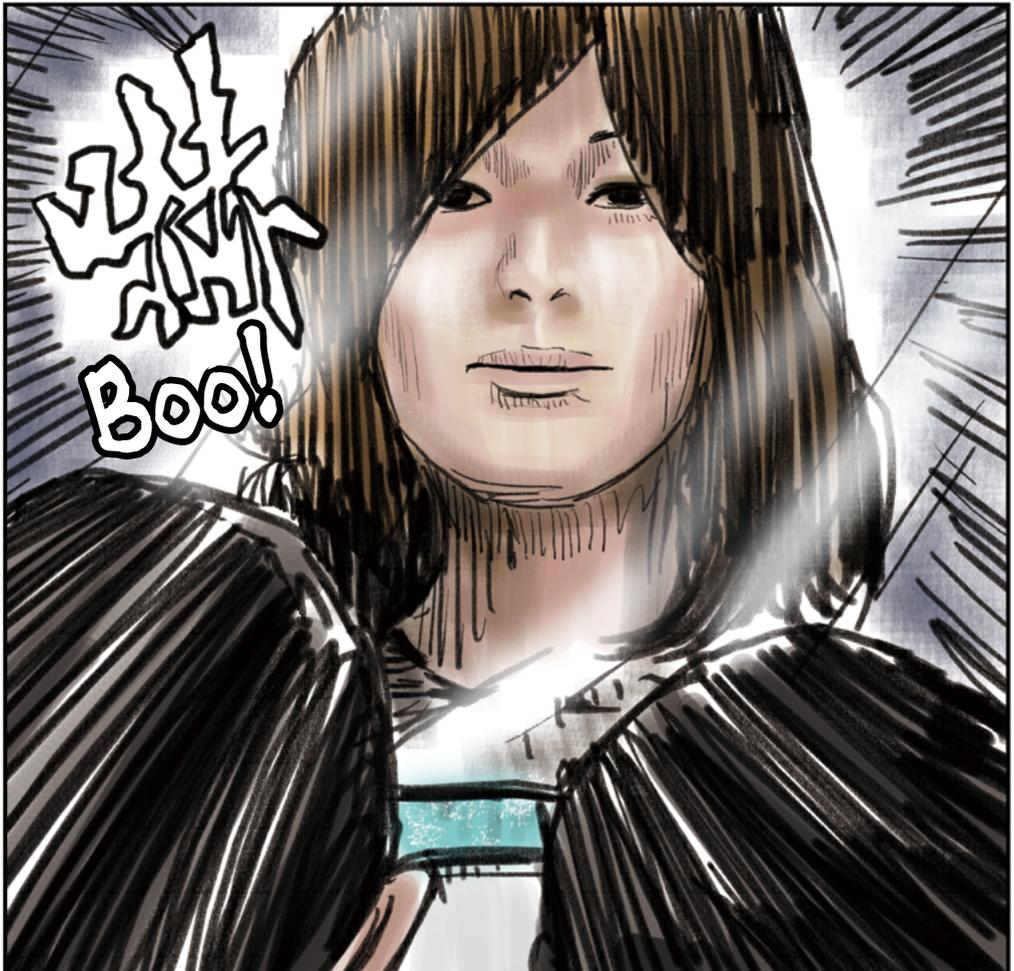


THAT'S THE
BUILDING FATSO
SAYS IS HAUNTED
IT SURE LOOKS
SPOOKY. WHAT DO YOU
SAY WE HAVE A LOOK
INSIDE?



ARE YOU
SERIOUS?
... OK, BUT YOU
GO FIRST.

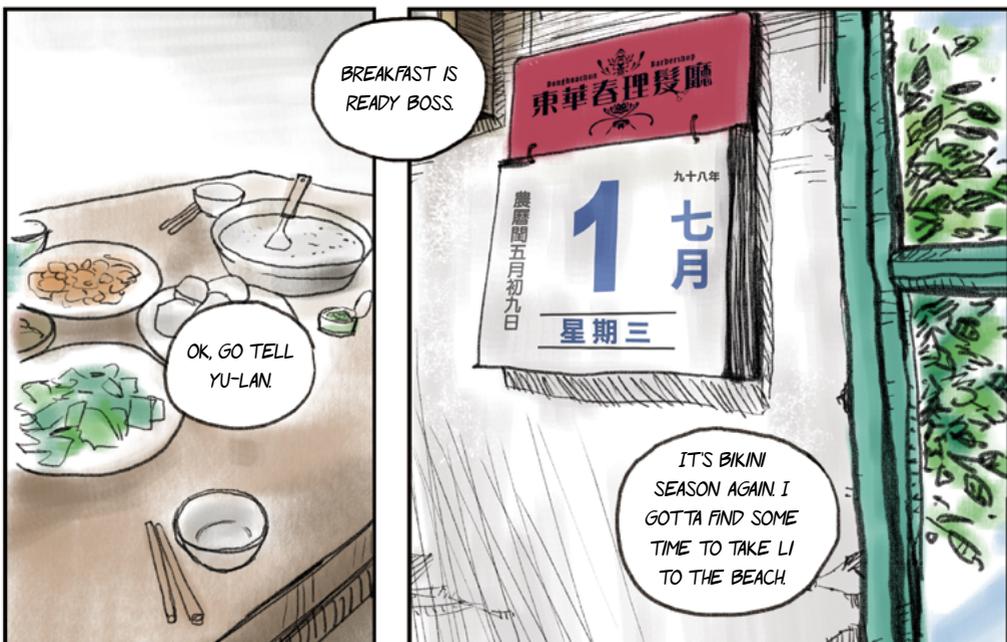
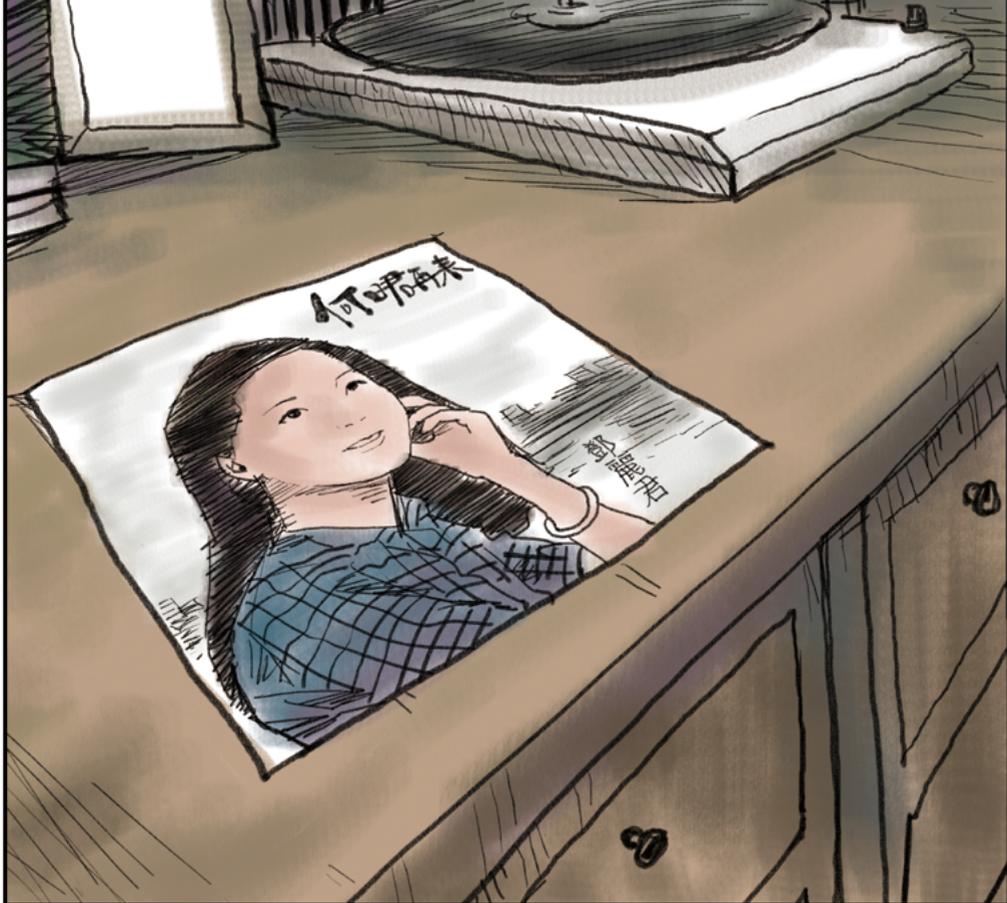
UH..





SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA MESS WITH THESE LITTLE PUNKS—SHOW 'EM WHAT THE GROWNUPS ARE MADE OF







LOOK, THE WHITE SANDALWOOD ON THE ROOF HAS BLOSSOMED.

HUA, LET'S PICK A FEW AND TAKE THEM TO FATHER'S GRAVE.



YES, FOR REAL.

FOR REAL?

OH YEAH HE SPOKE TO ME IN A DREAM THE OTHER NIGHT HE SAYS BUSINESS IS GOOD IN THE AFTERLIFE SO GOOD HE NEEDS AN ASSISTANT



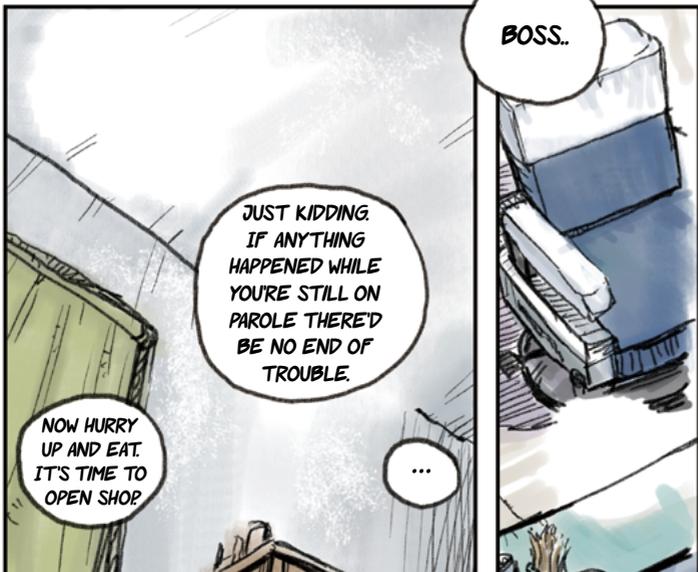
YOU SPRAYED ALL OVER ME! DISGUSTING!

<COUGH!>
<COUGH!>

LI COULD DO IT. WE'LL JUST BURN HIM UP AND SEND HIM TO DAD



SOUNDS GOOD

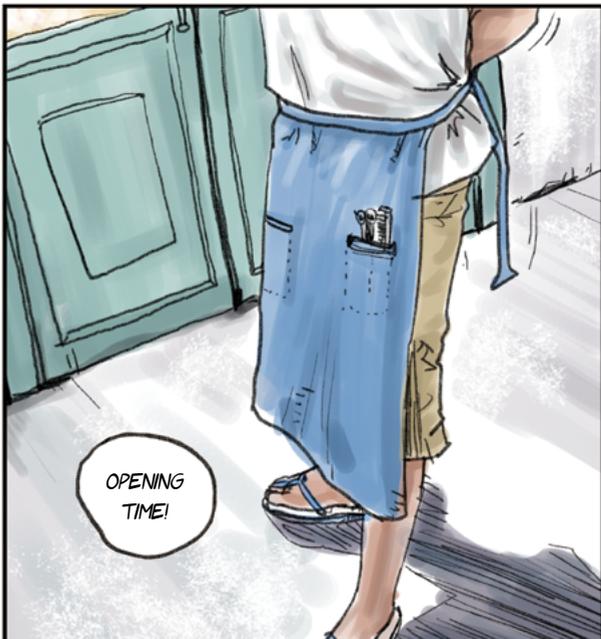


BOSS..

JUST KIDDING. IF ANYTHING HAPPENED WHILE YOU'RE STILL ON PAROLE THERE'D BE NO END OF TROUBLE.

NOW HURRY UP AND EAT. IT'S TIME TO OPEN SHOP

...



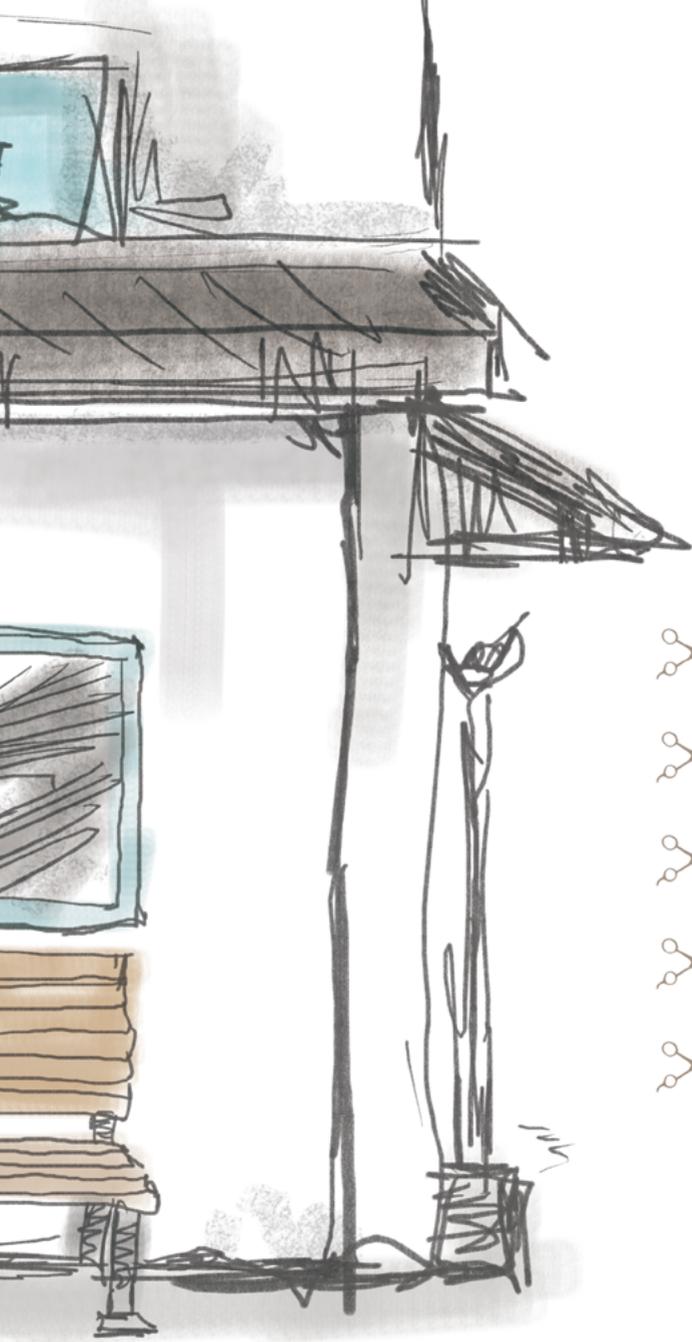
DonghuaChua Barbershop

東華春理髮廳 1



作者

阮光民



cut.1 The Note



cut.2 Brother-Sister Lunch



cut.3 The White Sandalwood
on the Roof



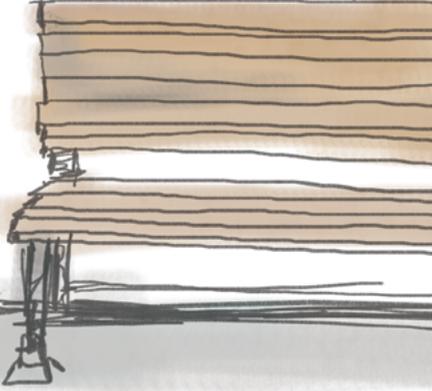
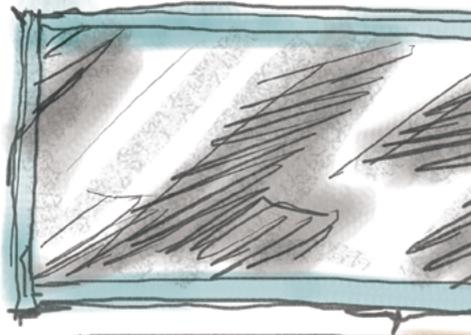
cut.4 Dark Alley



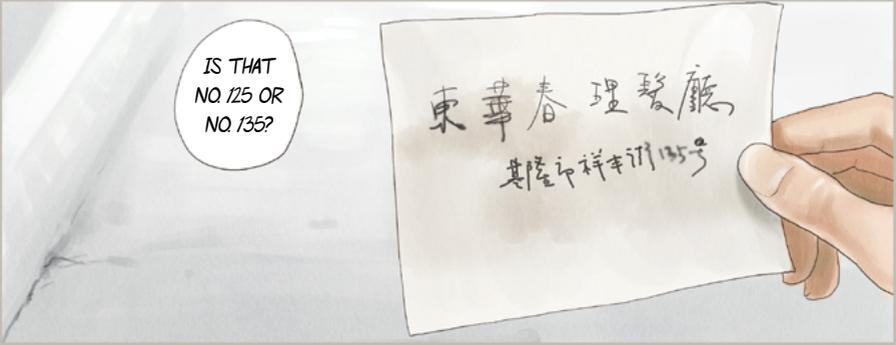
cut.5 The Other Package

廣東華春理髮廳

29



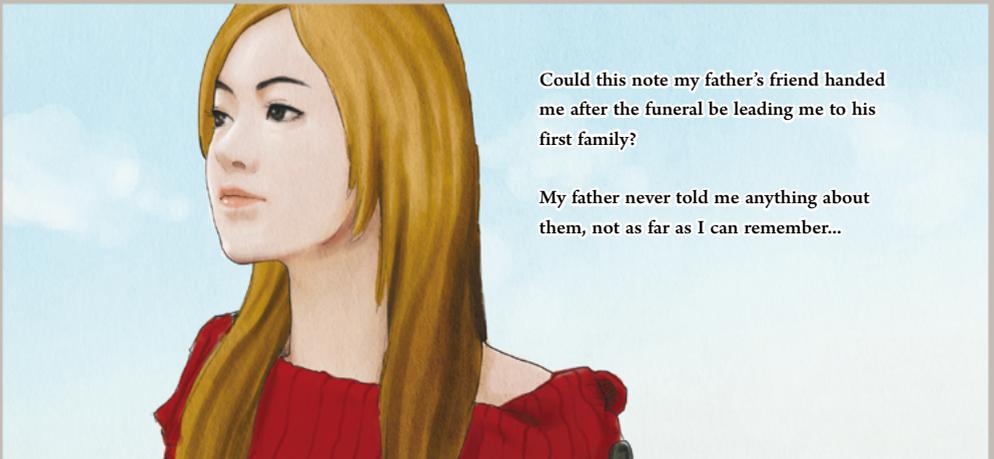
陳華 73年9月.



I've got to find this address.

But my mind is about as blurry
as the writing on this note.

I'm not sure...

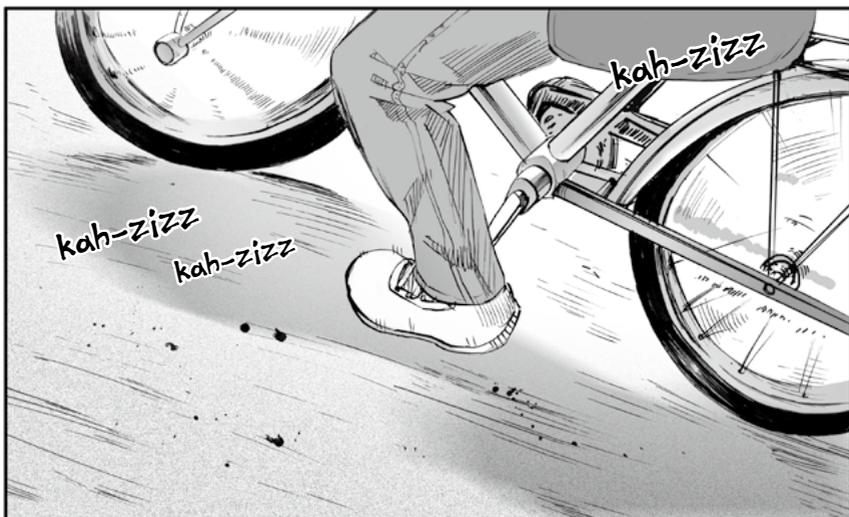


Could this note my father's friend handed me after the funeral be leading me to his first family?

My father never told me anything about them, not as far as I can remember...

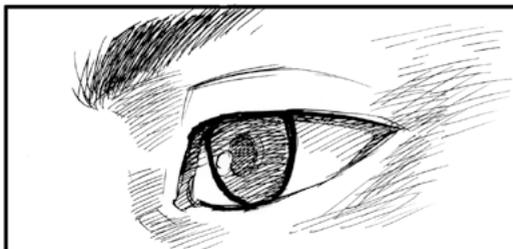


CUT.1 The Note



I'm still not used to having
this kind of freedom.

It's still hard to believe this
is really happening.



It all happened so fast.
Three months.

You look up one moment
and one season has passed
into the next.

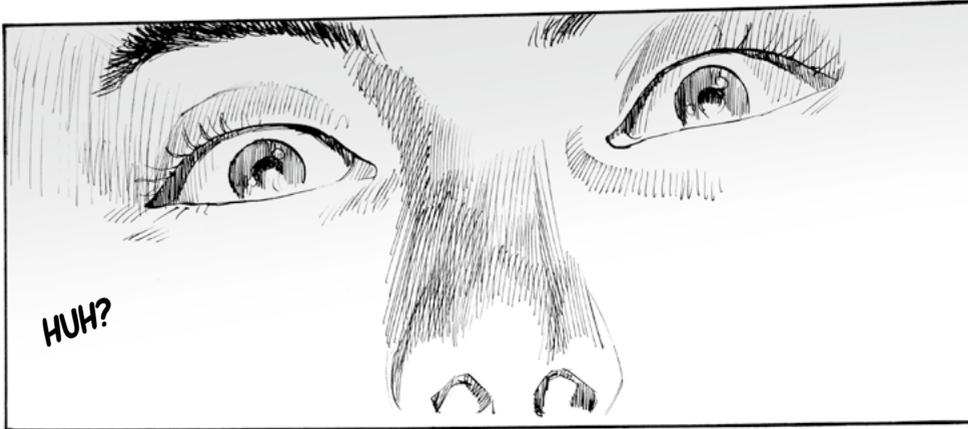
Maybe it's because I'm no longer
surrounded by chain-link and barbed wire.

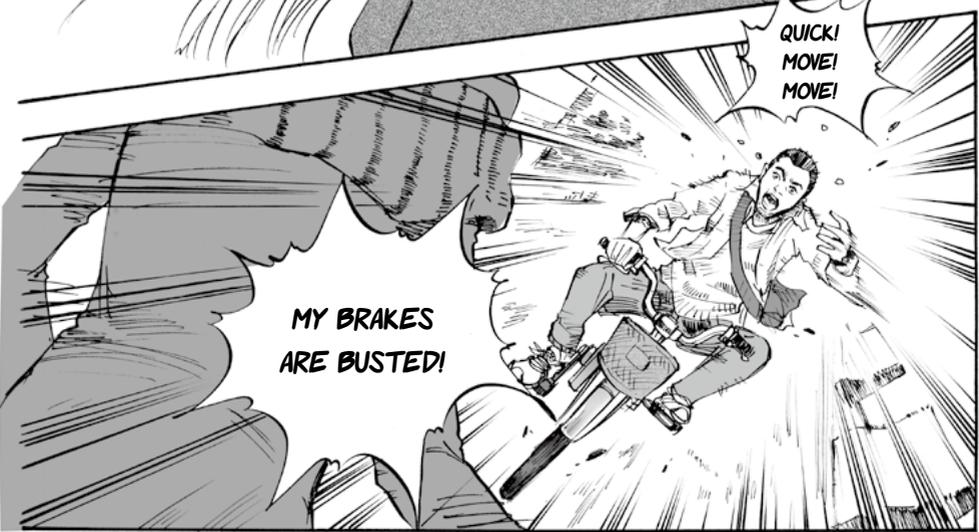
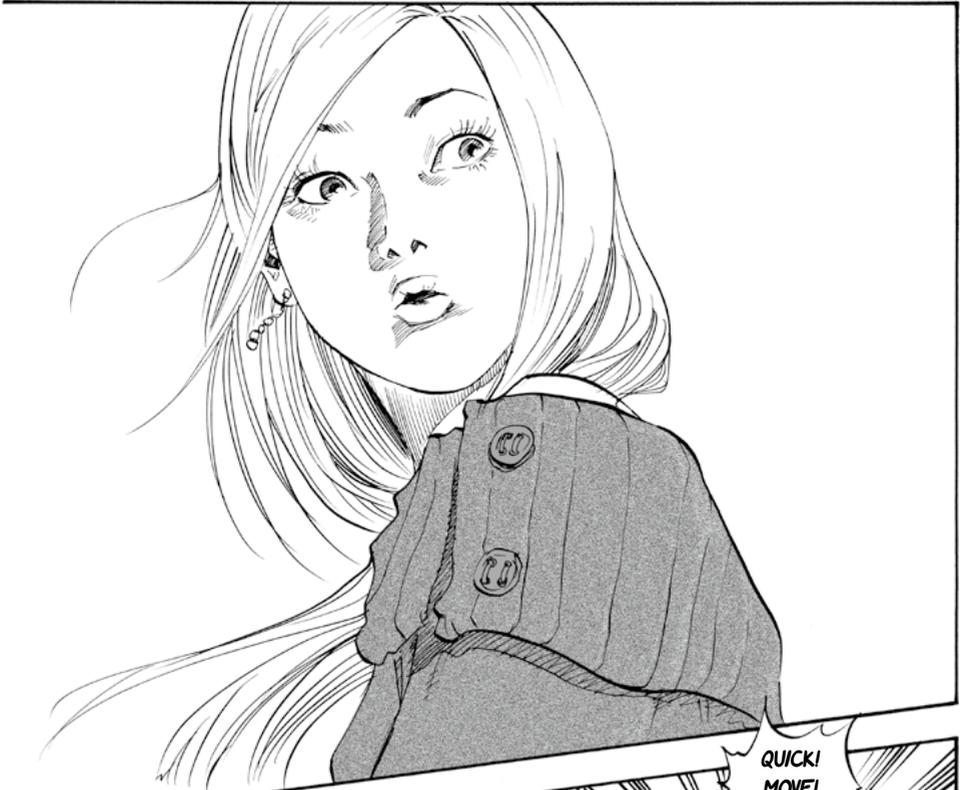
There's nothing to block the flow of time.



OH MAN, IT'S
EIGHT O'CLOCK!
I BETTER HURRY
UP AND GET
BREAKFAST FOR
THE BOSS.

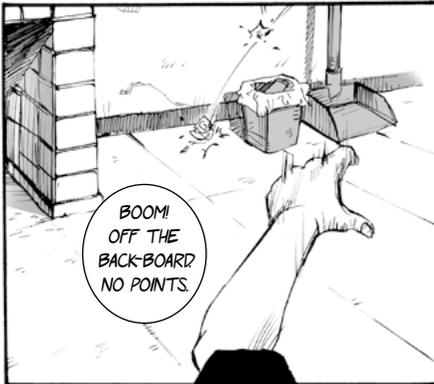




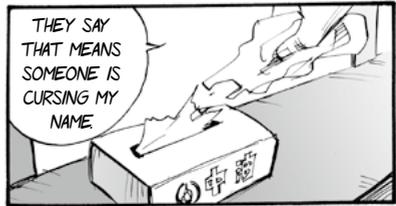




Aah-choo!



BOOM!
OFF THE
BACK-BOARD
NO POINTS.



THEY SAY
THAT MEANS
SOMEONE IS
CURSING MY
NAME





SORRY WE NOW RETURN TO OUR SUPER-HIP HAIRSTYLE MAKEOVER.

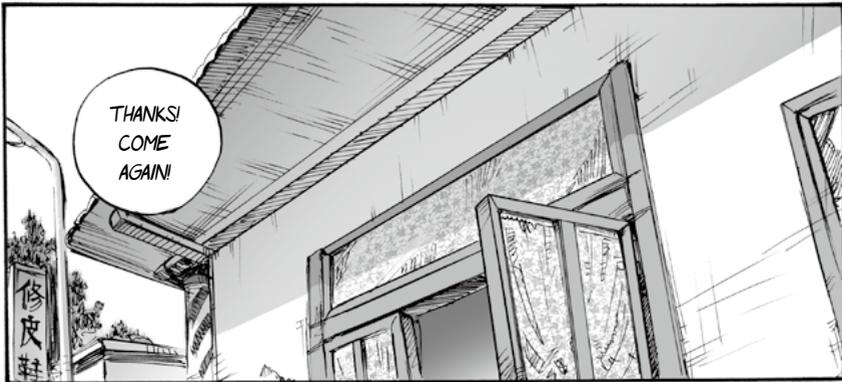
農曆五月二十八日
1 星期

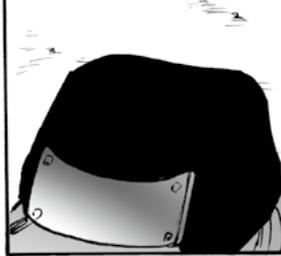
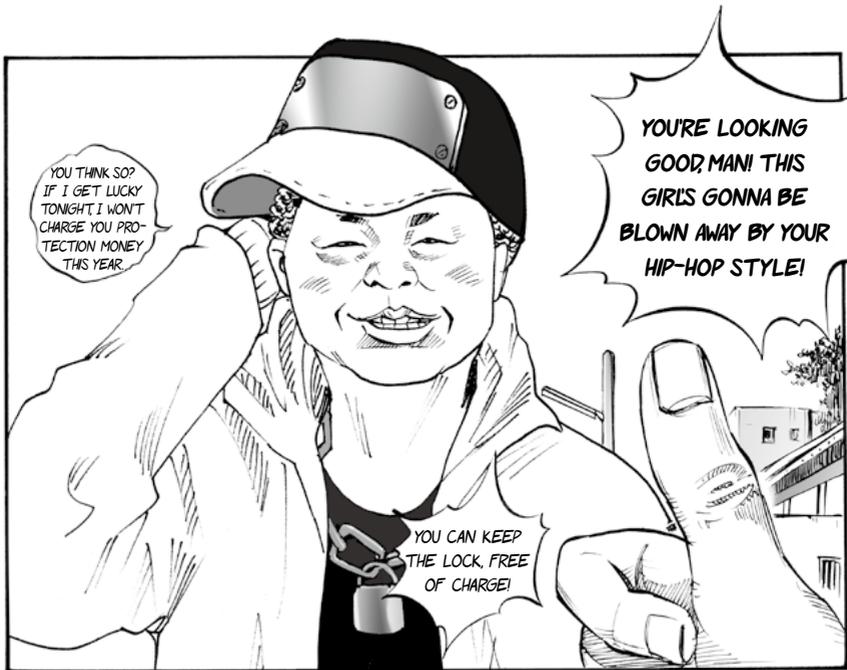
北斗拳



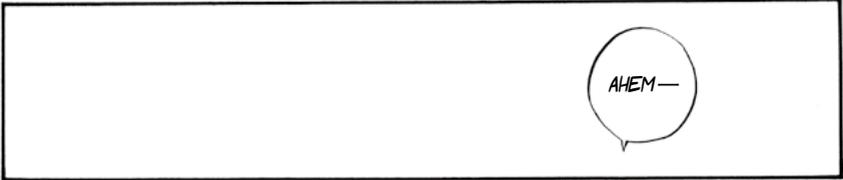
Oh my god!
Did I do that?
I can practically see my reflection!

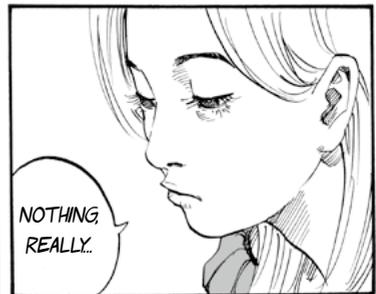
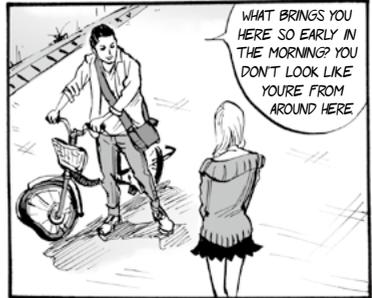
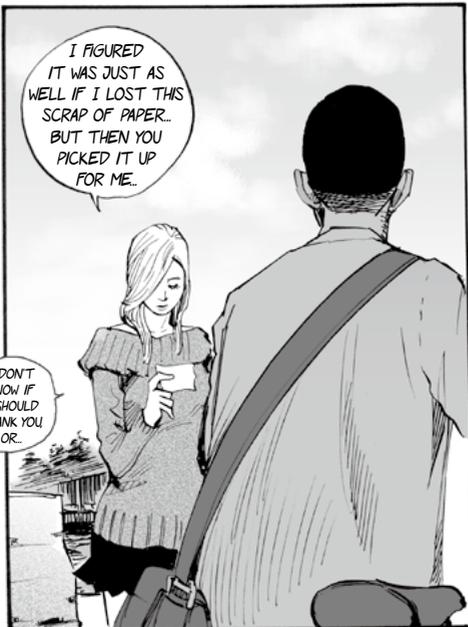


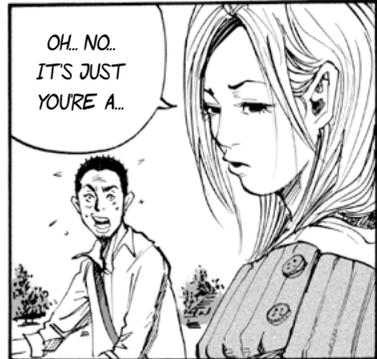
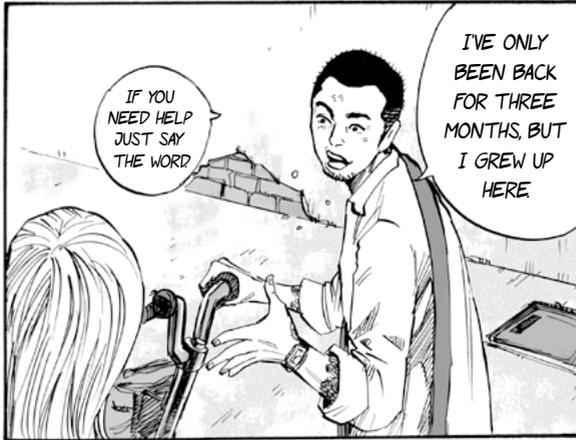


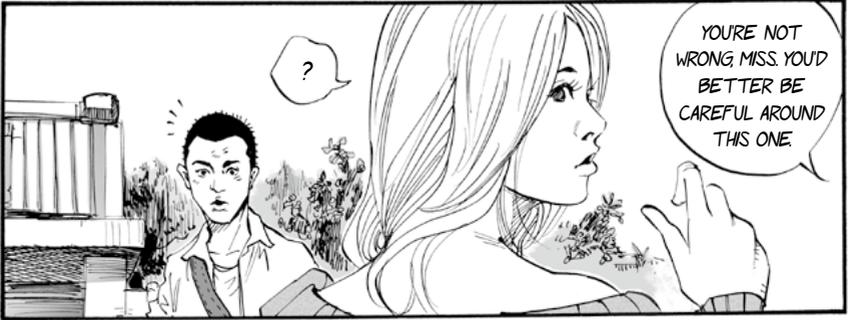


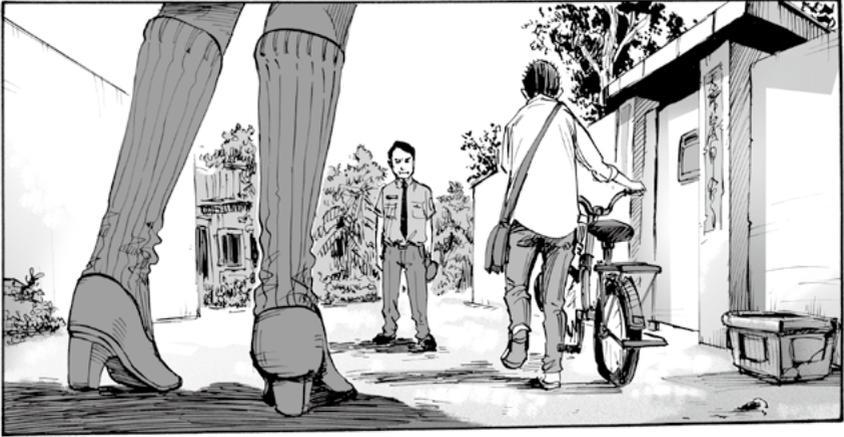


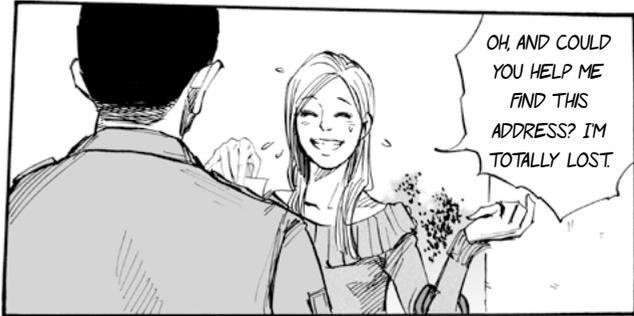
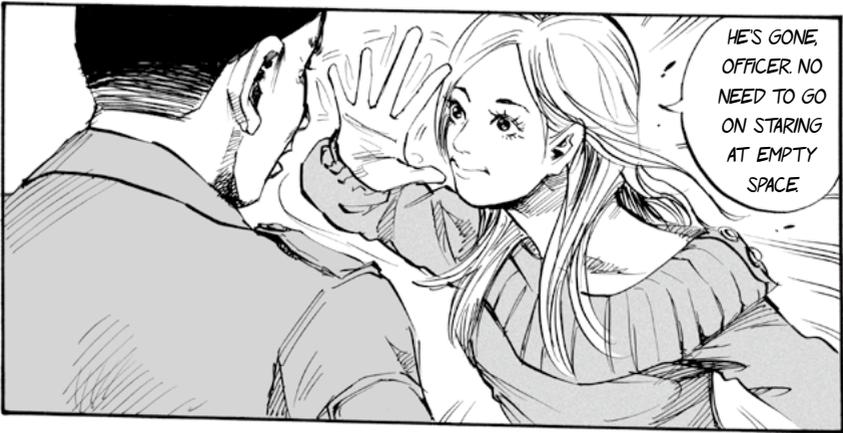


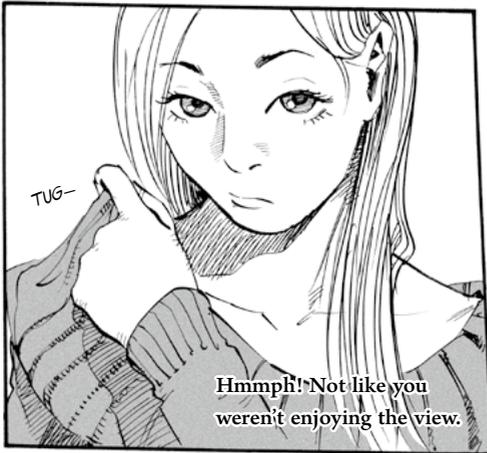
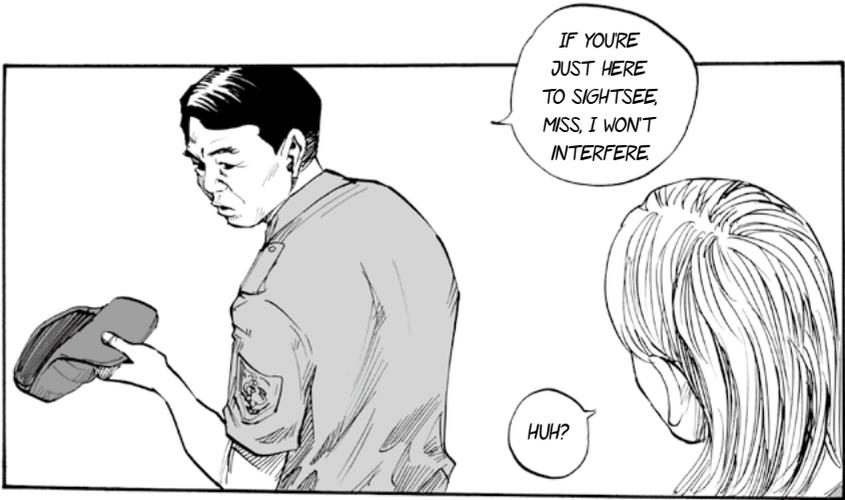






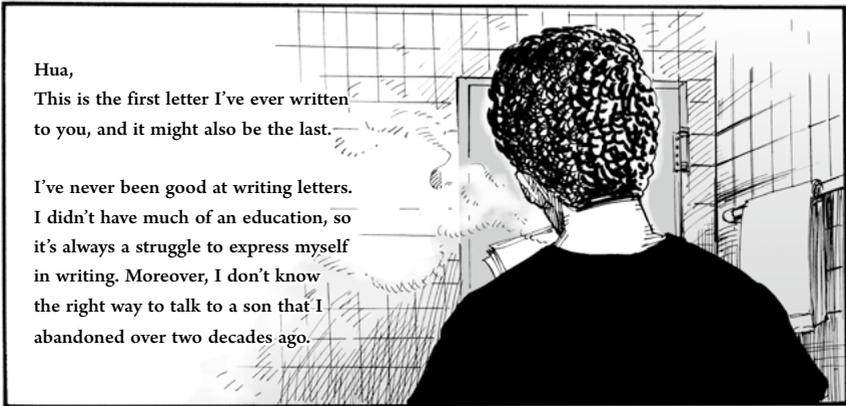
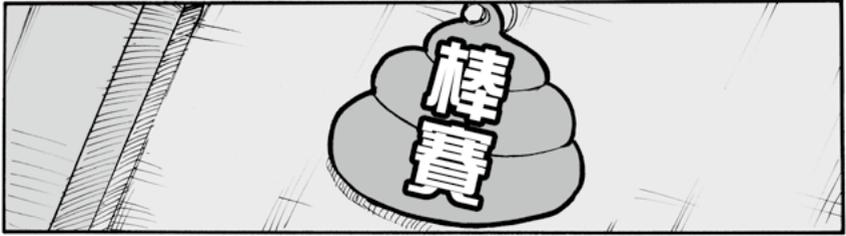






Two
wierdos
already,
and I just
arrived...







EVEN IF THE WHOLE ISLAND WAS SINKING INTO THE SEA, YOU STILL WOULDN'T HAVE COME TO FACE ME.



HMPHI! YOU STILL HAD THE STRENGTH TO WRITE A LETTER BUT YOU COULDN'T BE BOTHERED TO TELL ME TO MY FACE.

MOM WAS RIGHT. YOU WERE JUST A COWARD.

A BUNCH OF WORDS ON PAPER WEREN'T GOING TO TALK BACK TO YOU, IS THAT IT? SURELY A DYING MAN WOULD WANT TO SEE HIS SON.

I always wanted to have my own family, maybe because my parents died when I was still young. I started fixing up this house when I was just 19.

The three of us watched it happen. Me, your mother, and you, still in your mother's belly. Repairs, painting, decorating, until the day I hung up the sign. I still remember it clear as day, even though I can barely see at all anymore.



I borrowed one part of each of our names – Chen Chen-DONG, Chen Hsiao-HUA, and Yen Hsiu-CHUN – and named the shop Dong Hua Chun.

You were born two months after we opened shop, and then I received my draft and left to be a soldier.

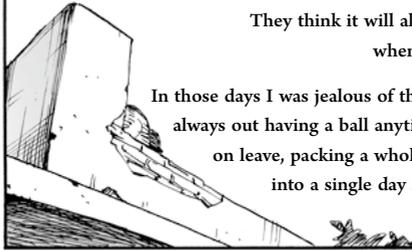
In fact, I was happy.
But I couldn't see it.
My eyes were clouded by
my desire to go out and
fool around. I saw myself
as a kite that wanted to
fly free, and you and your
mother were the string
that tied me down.



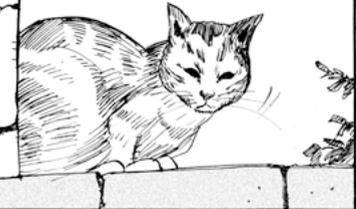
People are strange. They often take for granted the
very thing that brings them the most happiness.

They think it will always be there
when they need it.

In those days I was jealous of the single guys,
always out having a ball anytime they were
on leave, packing a whole week of fun
into a single day if they had to.



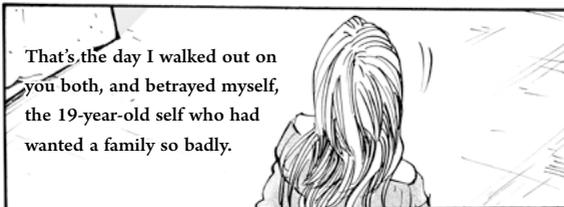
But I had to head home
to take up my scissors
and make a living.
I had to raise a kid.
I always reported back
to my unit exhausted
to begin another
round of training.



You'll probably
never forget your
tenth birthday.

I'll never forget
either.

That's the day I walked out on
you both, and betrayed myself,
the 19-year-old self who had
wanted a family so badly.



In Taiwanese, we call our
wife our "hand-in-hand".

Only by living hand-in-
hand can you make a
family whole. But,
of course, it also
means your hands
are tied. Your
mother did her
best to hold
onto my hand
and protect our
family. But I was
always shaking
off her grip on me.

At first I told her lies.
Then I started yelling at
her. I hurt the people
who loved me.

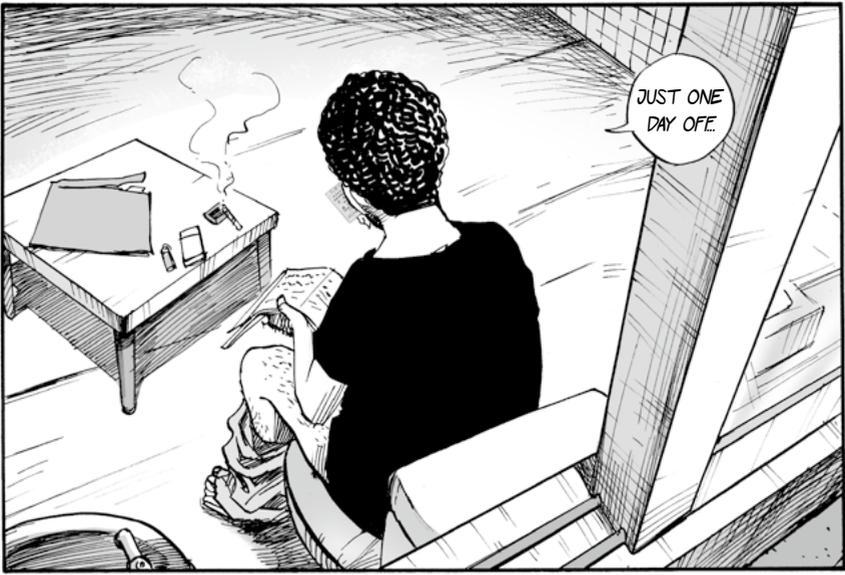


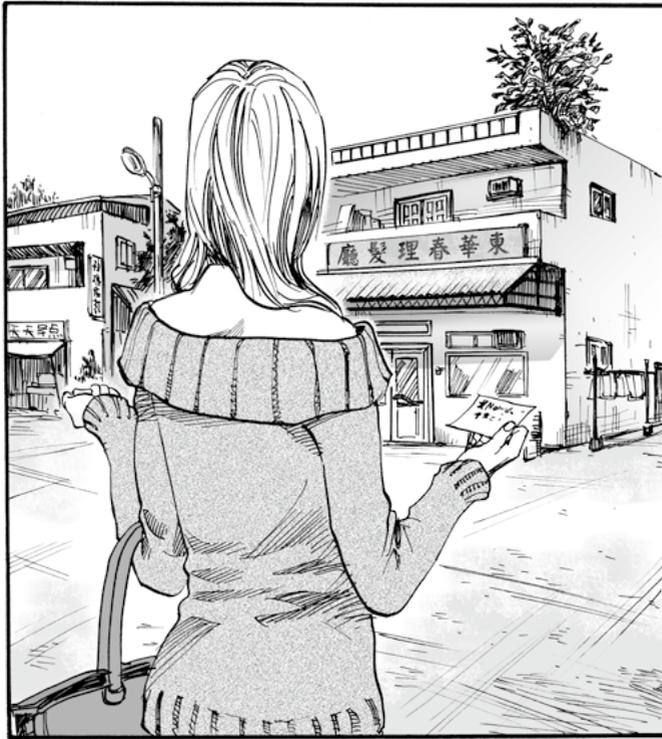
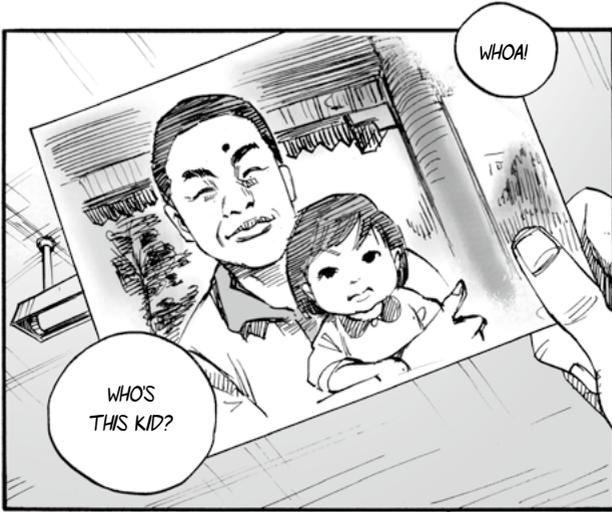


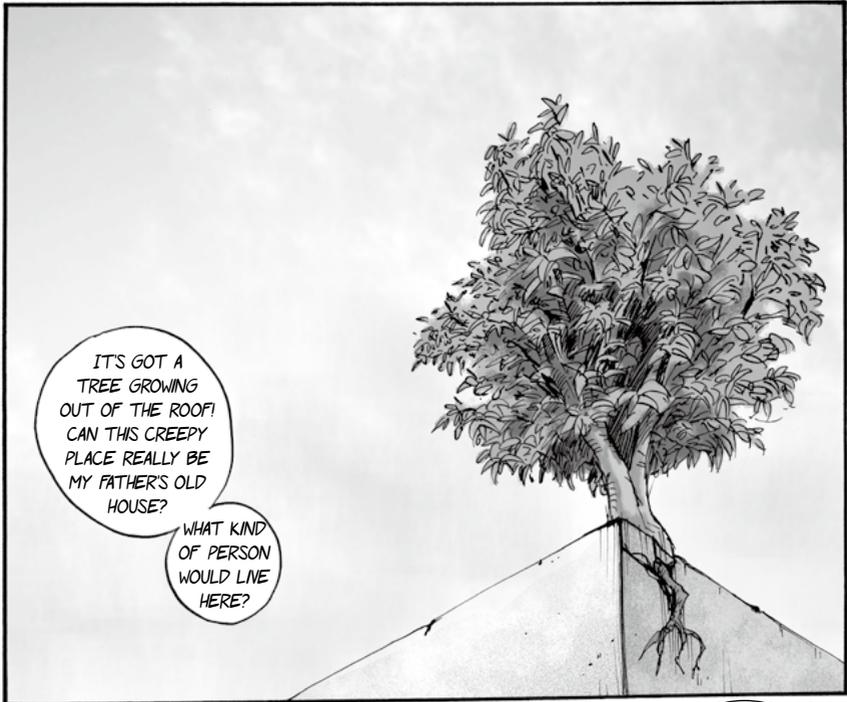
Hua, I am sorry for what I did. I was too weak, and I left you halfway through the journey. I wasn't there to see you to the final stop.



It takes only a second to abandon someone, but you'll pay for it with a lifetime of being abandoned.







IT'S GOT A TREE GROWING OUT OF THE ROOF! CAN THIS CREEPY PLACE REALLY BE MY FATHER'S OLD HOUSE?

WHAT KIND OF PERSON WOULD LIVE HERE?



Originally, I planned to live out my life alone. Operate a hair salon out of my house. Live life.

THE LONGER I STAND HERE, THE MORE I FEEL LIKE IT HAS TO BE HAUNTED. COULD I EVER CALL A PLACE LIKE THIS HOME?

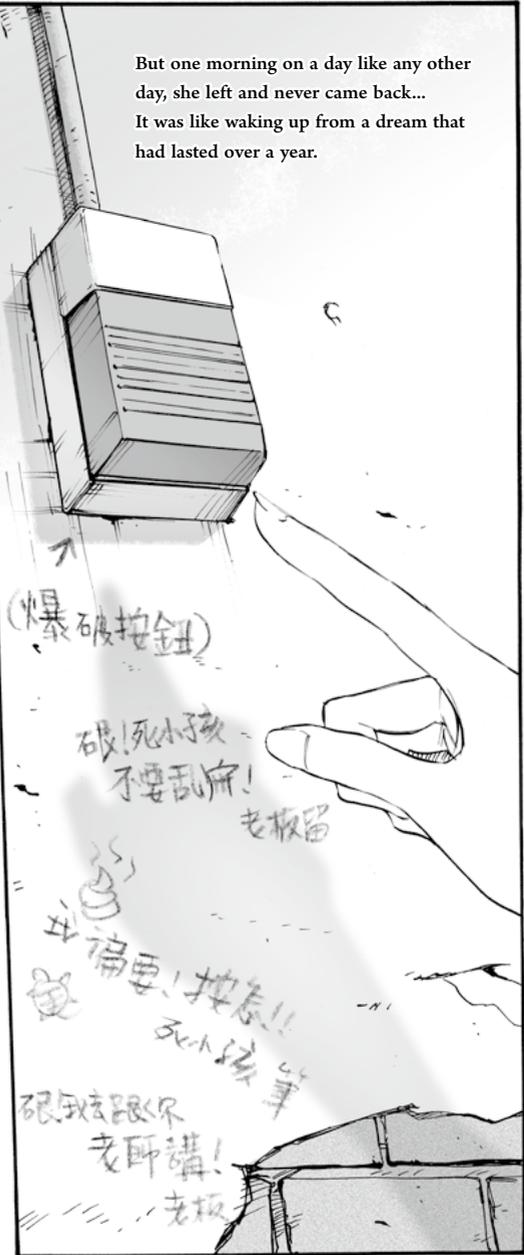
But I couldn't take the loneliness. The cracks in my heart seemed to get bigger and bigger. When I was 39, a divorcee walked into my shop smelling like a white sandalwood flower.

She started coming by regularly, and soon we were together.



And the thing
that woke me up
was the sound of
crying from the
crib next to my bed.

But one morning on a day like any other
day, she left and never came back...
It was like waking up from a dream that
had lasted over a year.

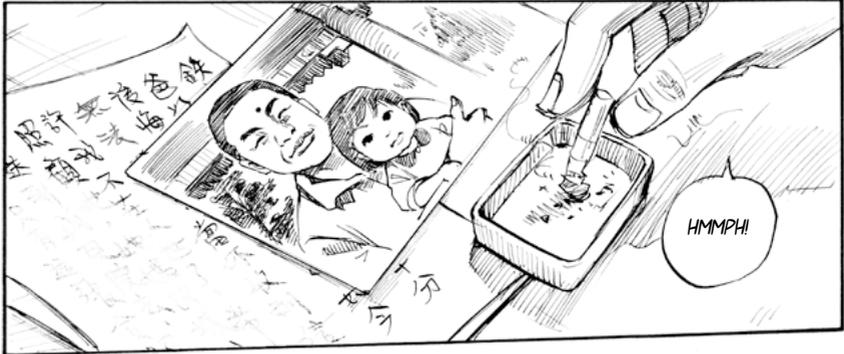




She's your little sister.



Everything you
need to know
about her is in
the enclosed
envelope.
Please, I beg you,
take care of her
after I'm gone.
I'm sorry to add
more trouble to
your life.



HMMPH!



... A LITTLE
SISTER 20 YEARS
YOUNGER THAN ME
HOW DID HE THINK
I'D BE OK WITH
THAT?

HMMPH!
EVEN AFTER
YOU'RE DEAD
YOU'RE STILL
MESSING WITH
MY LIFE.

HE'S BEEN GONE
FOR DECADES AND
THE FIRST LETTER
HE SENDS IS TO ASK
ME TO CARE FOR
SOMEONE ELSE'S
KID.



20 YEARS!
SHE COULD
BE MY
DAUGHTER.



I MUST HAVE BEEN
A REAL BASTARD IN
A FORMER LIFE. OR
MAYBE I JUST OWED
YOU A LOT OF MONEY
THAT'S THE ONLY WAY
TO EXPLAIN IT.

KARMA'S
A BITCH.
SERIOUSLY.



WHAT IF I HAD
MET HER WHEN
SHE WAS YOUNGER?
WHAT KIND OF BIG
BROTHER WOULD I
HAVE BEEN?

布拉德 Brother's imagination 的異想世界 第一話

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<SOB>

MOVED TO TEARS

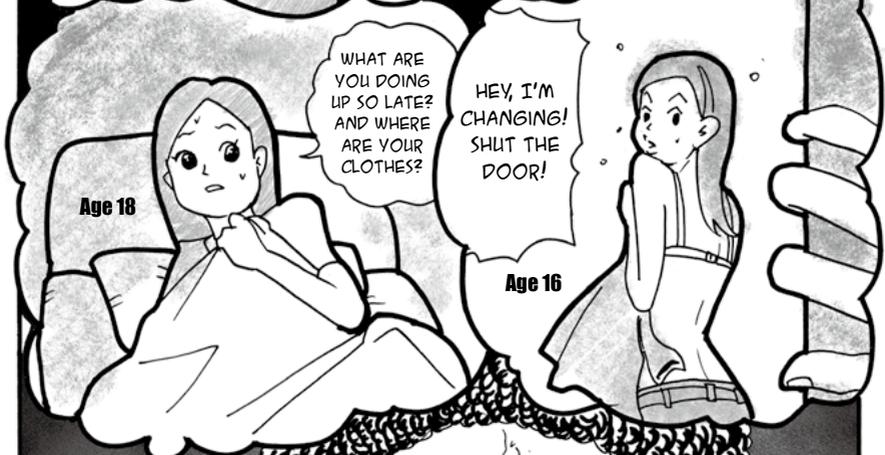
I KNIT THIS FOR YOU IN CLASS!

CAN YOU HELP ME WITH MY MATH HOMEWORK?

NO PROBLEM!

Age 13

Age 8



Age 18

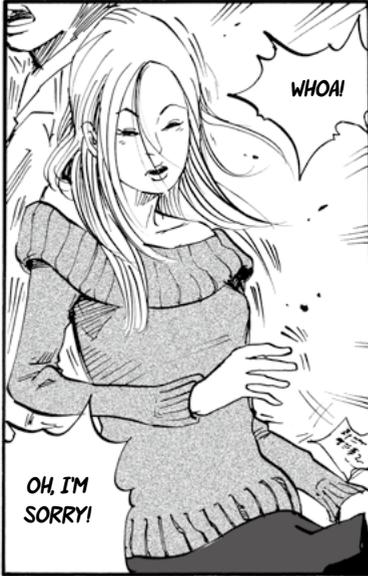
WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP SO LATE? AND WHERE ARE YOUR CLOTHES?

HEY, I'M CHANGING! SHUT THE DOOR!

Age 16

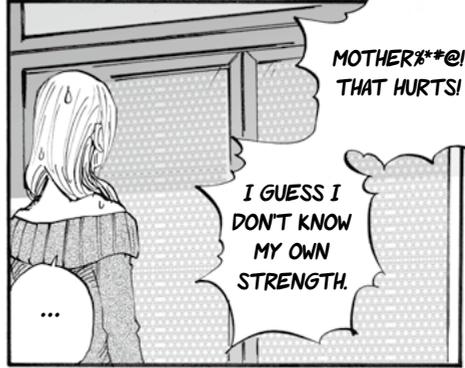
No... no... no...
What am I doing?!





WHOA!

OH, I'M
SORRY!



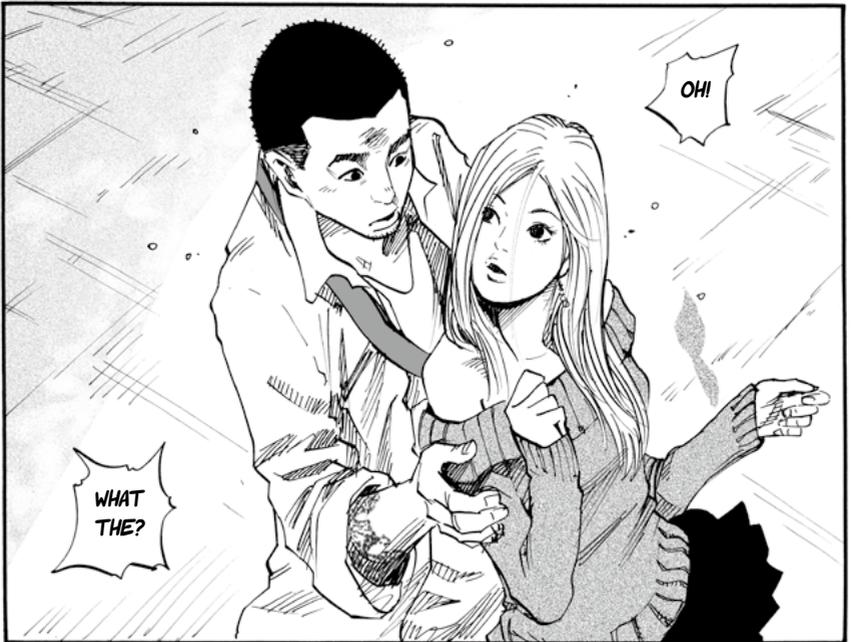
MOTHER**@!
THAT HURTS!

I GUESS I
DON'T KNOW
MY OWN
STRENGTH.

...



OH FORGET
IT! I SHOULD
JUST GET
OUT OF
HERE.

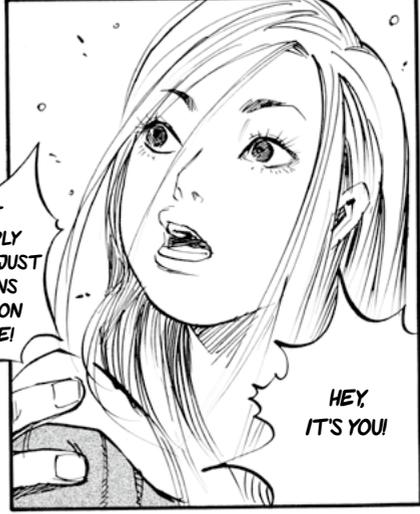


OHI!

WHAT
THE?

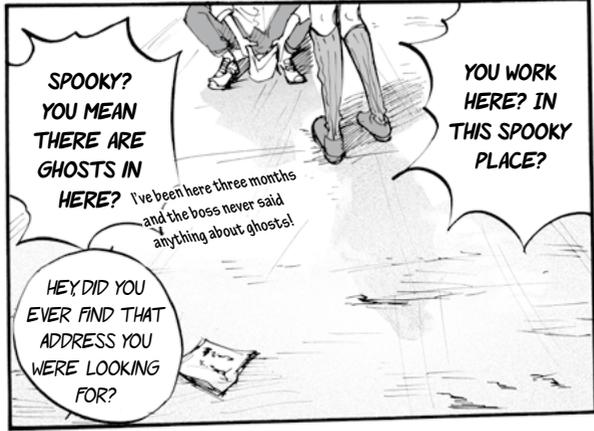


HEH, HEH.
WHAT A
COINCIDENCE.
ARE YOU LOST
AGAIN?



THAT
FRIENDLY
GUY WHO JUST
HAPPENS
TO BE ON
PAROLE!

HEY,
IT'S YOU!



SPOOKY?
YOU MEAN
THERE ARE
GHOSTS IN
HERE?

I've been here three months
and the boss never said
anything about ghosts!

YOU WORK
HERE? IN
THIS SPOOKY
PLACE?

HEY, DID YOU
EVER FIND THAT
ADDRESS YOU
WERE LOOKING
FOR?



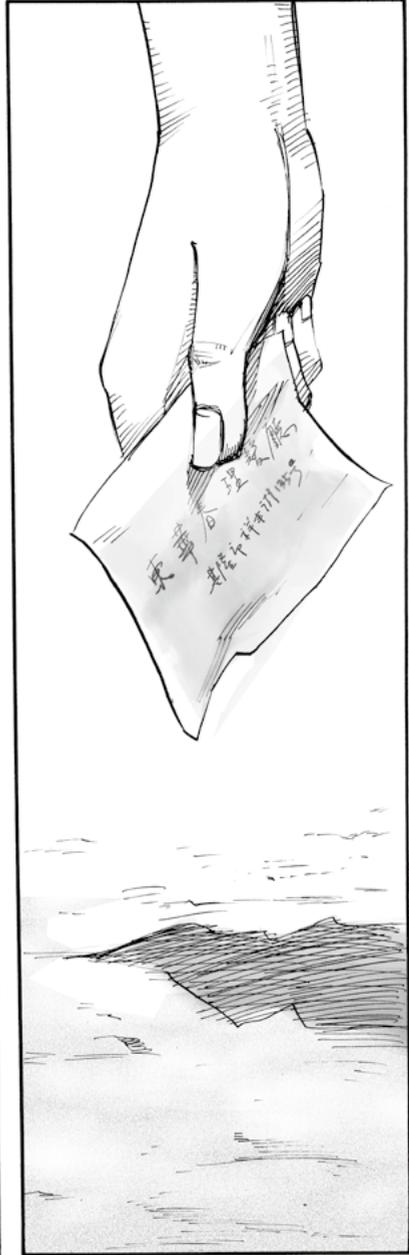
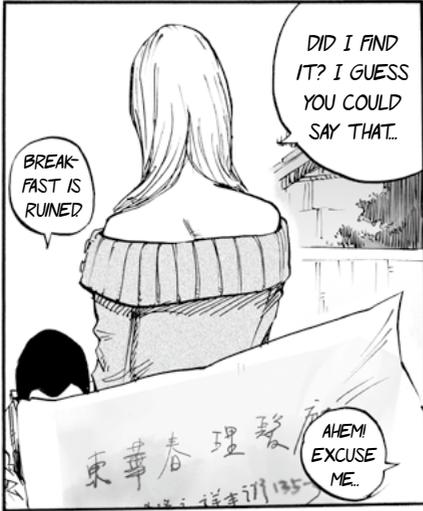
OH CRAP!
THE BOSS'
BREAKFAST...

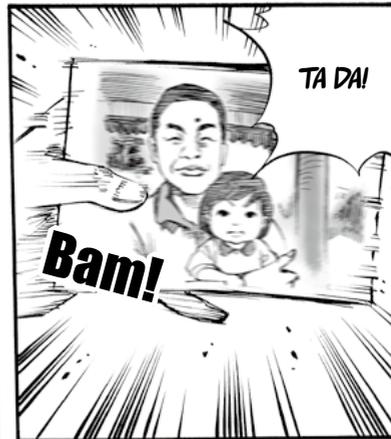
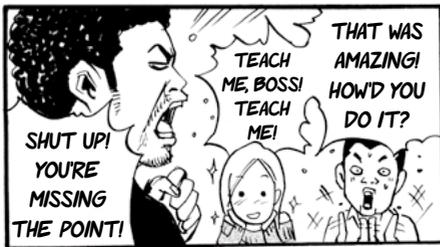
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?

ME? OH,
I WORK
AT THIS
BARBER
SHOP.



...

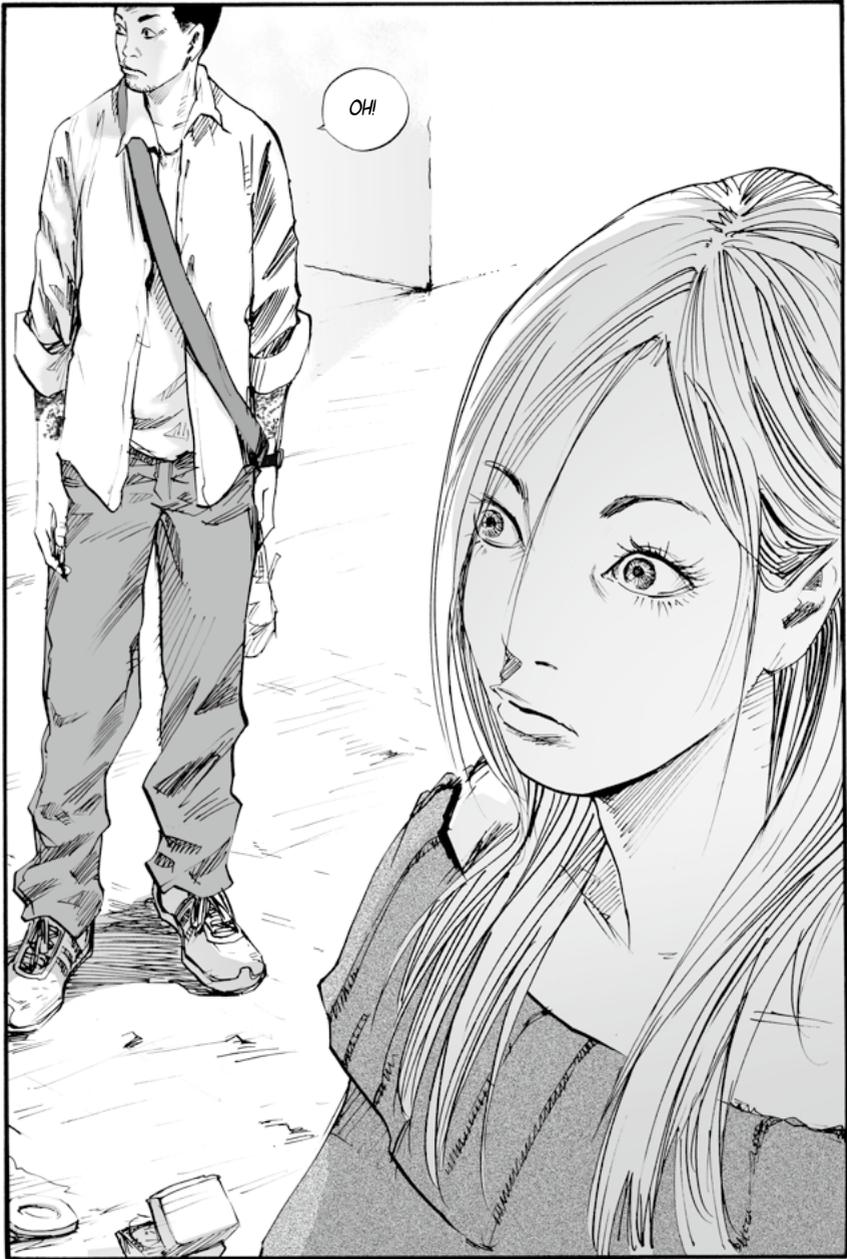


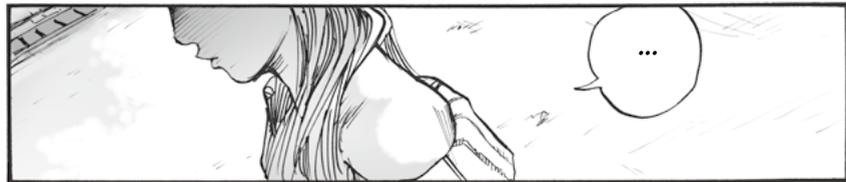






... YOUR DAD AND
MY DAD ARE THE
SAME DUDE.







... WAS STILL OCCUPIED BY HIS EX-WIFE'S FAMILY WHAT AM I TO MAKE OF THAT?

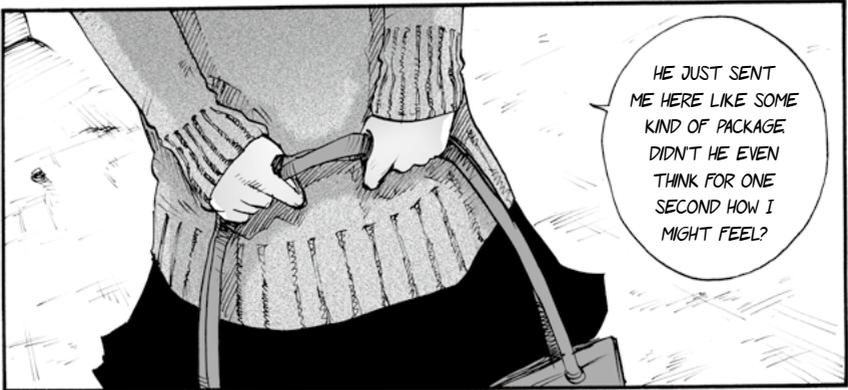


I HAD NO IDEA THAT THE "OLD HOME" HE WAS SENDING ME TO..

NO ONE TOLD ME ANYTHING. HE JUST SAID I HAD TO FIND THIS ADDRESS..



...



HE JUST SENT ME HERE LIKE SOME KIND OF PACKAGE. DIDN'T HE EVEN THINK FOR ONE SECOND HOW I MIGHT FEEL?



AND BEFORE HE DIED HE LEFT YOU THIS PAPER SO YOU'D KNOW WHERE TO GO NEXT.

AHEM. HE DID THE RESPONSIBLE THING. HE RAISED YOU.





...

I'M JUST AS SURPRISED AS YOU ARE. I ONLY FOUND OUT ABOUT YOU TODAY.

WHEN HE LEFT ME AND MY MOTHER, ALL HE LEFT US WAS TEARS AND A LOT OF QUESTIONS.

SO MAYBE YOU SHOULD CONSIDER YOU HAD IT PRETTY GOOD.



I'M NOT GOING TO FORCE ANYONE. YOU MAKE YOUR OWN DECISION. YOU CAN STAY OR YOU CAN GO.

SPEAKING HONESTLY I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT YOU. BUT THE GUY WHO SENT THIS PACKAGE IS DEAD, SO THERE'S NO WAY TO RETURN IT.



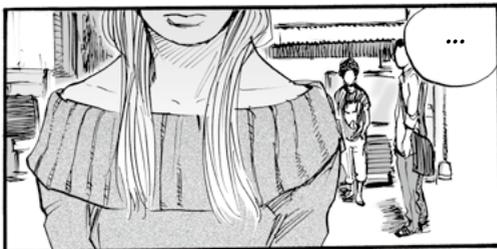
...



THIS PACKAGE HAS ITS OWN TWO LEGS, AFTER ALL.



...





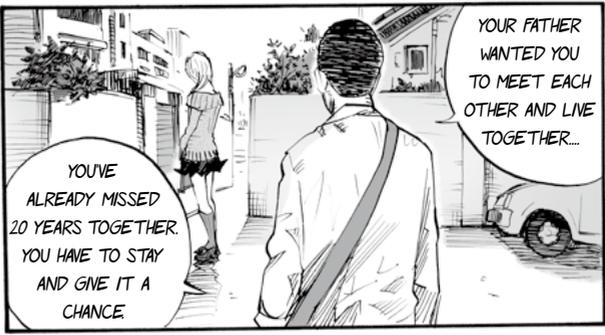
ANYHOW, I DON'T THINK YOU WOULD HAVE COME IF YOU HAD SOMEPLACE ELSE TO GO.

YOU GUYS ARE FAMILY! YOU FINALLY MEET AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, AND NOW YOU WANT TO PRETEND IT NEVER HAPPENED?

EVEN PERFECT STRANGERS CAN BECOME A FAMILY, BUT YOU GUYS SHARE THE SAME BLOOD!



...



YOU'VE ALREADY MISSED 20 YEARS TOGETHER. YOU HAVE TO STAY AND GIVE IT A CHANCE.

YOUR FATHER WANTED YOU TO MEET EACH OTHER AND LIVE TOGETHER...



SORRY! I GOT A LITTLE CARRIED AWAY.

DAMN, YOU GOT A HARD HEAD. THIS THING SPLIT OPEN.

HEY THE HOUSE IS MINE. DON'T TALK AS IF YOU OWN IT.



Bonk!



OH YEAH, RIGHT!
AN ASSISTANT!
I REALLY NEED
AN ASSISTANT!



AREN'T YOU
ALWAYS TELLING
ME YOU'RE
TOO BUSY AND
YOU NEED AN
ASSISTANT?



I NEVER
SAID
ANYTHING
ABOUT AN
ASSISTANT..

ASSIS-
TANT?



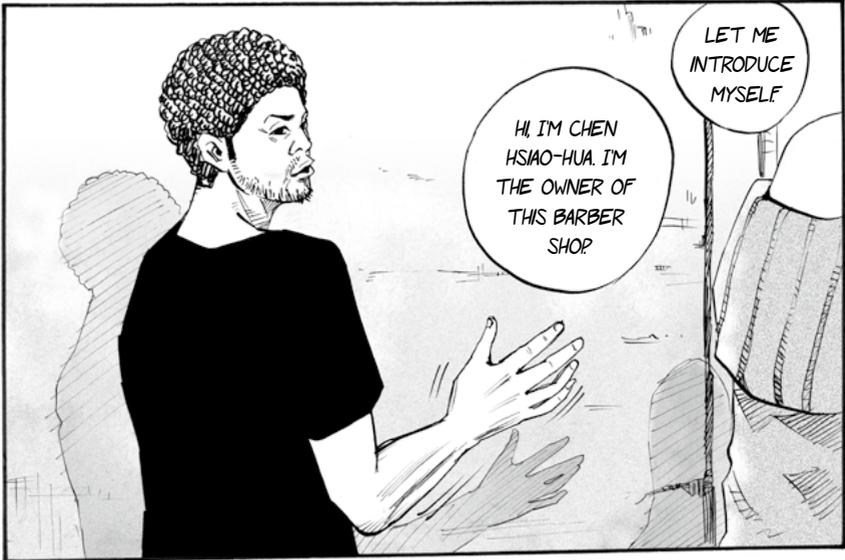
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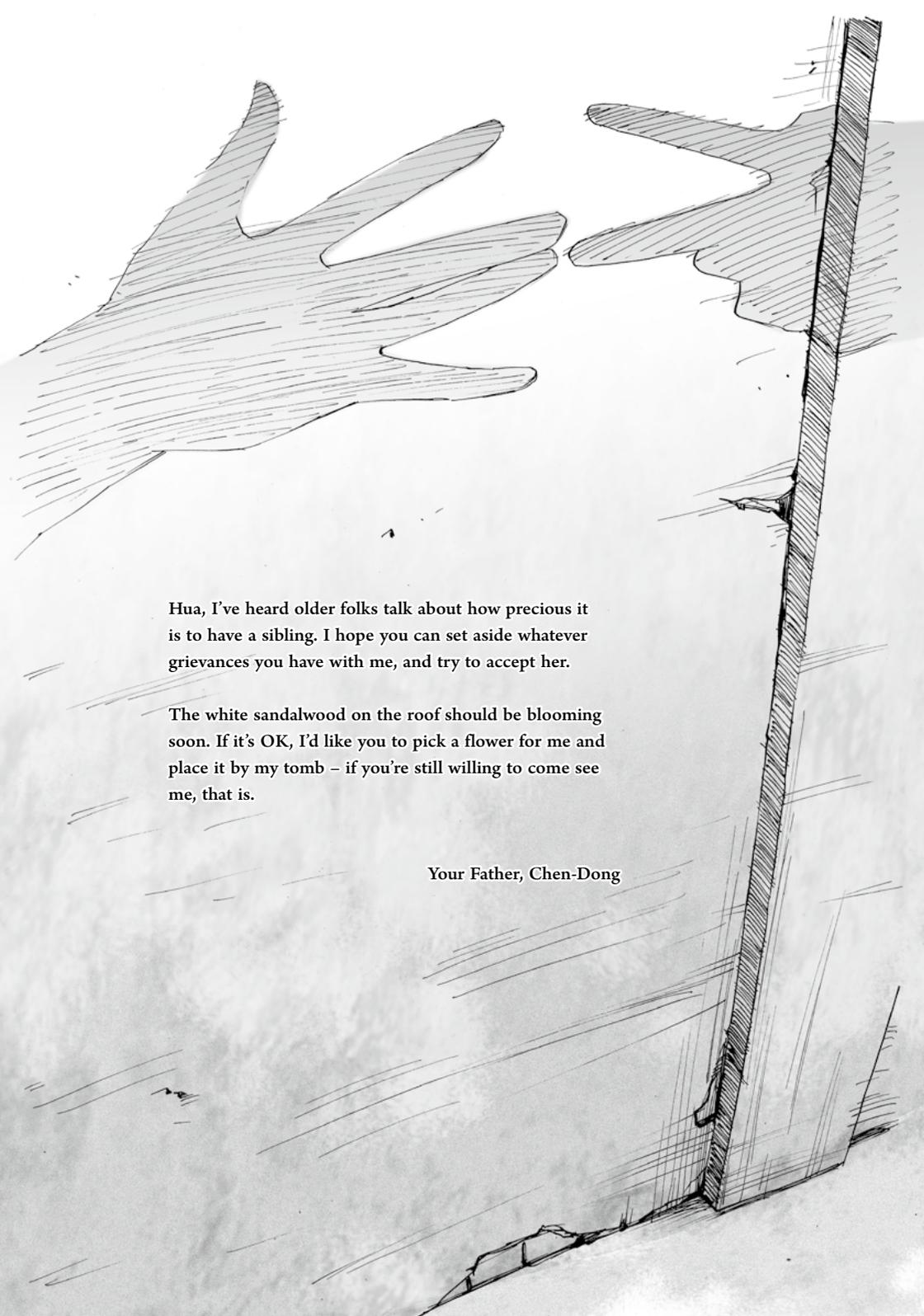
I'D LIKE TO
INVITE YOU TO
JOIN THE TUNG HUA
CHUN BARBERSHOP
TEAM, STARTING
TODAY



AND HEY
YU-LAN..





A pencil sketch of two hands reaching towards each other, one from the left and one from the right. The hands are rendered with fine, parallel lines for shading. To the right of the hands is a vertical line, possibly representing a wall or a post, also drawn with fine lines and some cross-hatching. The background is filled with light, horizontal pencil strokes.

Hua, I've heard older folks talk about how precious it is to have a sibling. I hope you can set aside whatever grievances you have with me, and try to accept her.

The white sandalwood on the roof should be blooming soon. If it's OK, I'd like you to pick a flower for me and place it by my tomb – if you're still willing to come see me, that is.

Your Father, Chen-Dong

人生如戲
過猶不及
相中之音
水中之月
鏡中之象
盡多真假
戲如人生

十三元 莊



Today, I want to see this girl I met online for the first time. Man, was I nervous! She told me to meet her at this Western restaurant at the end of the street, so I figure she must live nearby. Can you imagine? Of all the people out there on the internet, I met a girl from my own town. It must be destiny!



The truth is my work is all about protecting people and helping out. No different than the local district manager when you get down to it. So I really can't understand why I've got so many haters...

Hey everyone, I'm Masha. I'm 25 years old. I know a lot of people in the village talk about me behind my back because I'm the guy who goes around collecting protection money. But hey, that's my job. If they hired a security guard they'd still have to pay money, right?



She was my internet date!

Then it came to me! She had to be the waitress who had been serving me all along.



Was she caught in traffic? Hah! What am I thinking? There's never any traffic in this town.

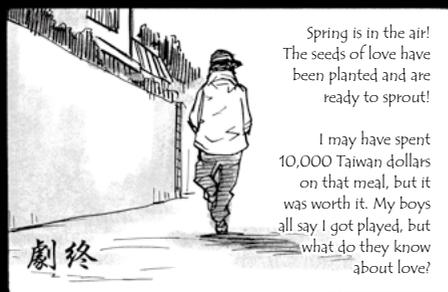


I sat there and ate five steaks, six pieces of cake, and seven cups of coffee, but she never showed up...



Yes! That first date was a total success!

And I think it worked. She smiled - no, not just her - her whole family smiled at me!



劇終 (The End)

Spring is in the air! The seeds of love have been planted and are ready to sprout!

I may have spent 10,000 Taiwan dollars on that meal, but it was worth it. My boys all say I got played, but what do they know about love?



So, to be polite, I took off my hat and nodded her way. I know Hua told me to leave it on, but I'm a gentleman.

Her family must run this place. I was here just last week collecting protection money.