

MEET ONE OF JAPAN'S MOST POPULAR CHARACTERS OF ALL TIME—THE ONE-EYED MONSTER BOY

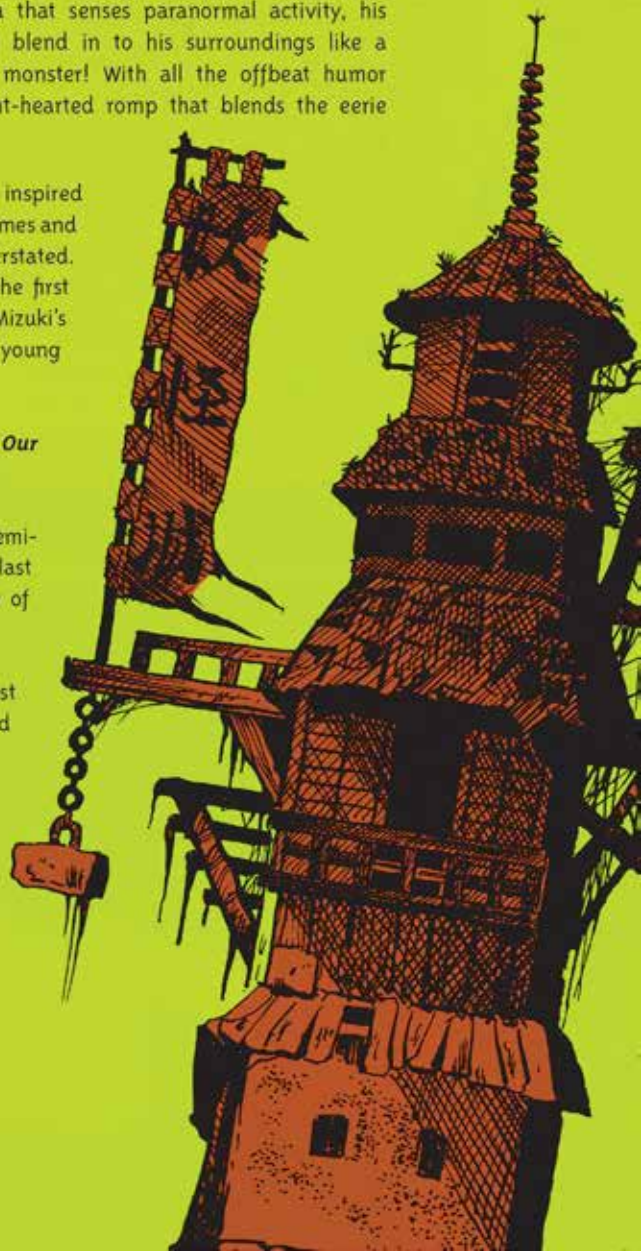
Kitaro is just like any other boy, except for a few small differences: he only has one eye, his hair acts like an antenna that senses paranormal activity, his *geta* sandals are jet-powered, and he can blend in to his surroundings like a chameleon. Oh, and he's a *yokai*, a spirit monster! With all the offbeat humor of an Addams Family story, *Kitaro* is a light-hearted romp that blends the eerie with the comic.

Originally created in 1959, Mizuki's *Kitaro* has inspired half a dozen TV shows, plus numerous video games and films, and its cultural importance cannot be overstated. Presented to North American audiences for the first time in this lavish format, *Kitaro* is Shigeru Mizuki's most famous creation, a cultural landmark for young and old alike.

Praise for Shigeru Mizuki's *Onward Toward Our Noble Deaths*:

"A masterful, searing and unforgettable semi-autobiographical manga that presents the last days of World War II from the point of view of Japanese infantrymen."—*NPR*

"Shigeru Mizuki is one of Japan's greatest illustrators, a master of both realism and manga."—*The Globe and Mail*







This book is presented in the traditional Japanese manner and is meant to be read from right to left. The cover at the opposite end is considered the front of the book.

To begin reading, please flip over and start at the other end, making your way “backward” through the book, starting at the top right corner and reading the panels (and the word balloons) from right to left. Continue on to the next row and repeat.

FUTAKUCHI ONNA

The Futakuchi Onna has two mouths, and both of them are hungry. While she may look dainty and sweet from the front, hidden behind her luxurious hair is a second gaping maw ready to swallow you whole. Her reach never exceeds her grasp—her serpent-like hair can stretch to over 650 feet and snatch things to feed her ravenous hunger.



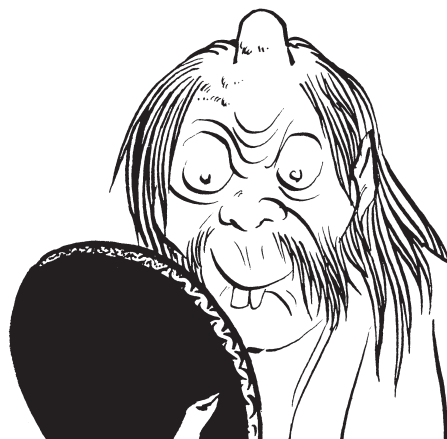
KAMAITACHI

Most commonly depicted as a trio of weasels, this Kamaitachi is just one guy but with an awfully big mouth. The master of the whirlwind, when Kamaitachi puts his lips together to blow it is time for Kitaro to take a spin. The Kamaitachi traditional attack hits you three times in an instant—first knocking you down, then cutting you, then healing you—leaving you undamaged but in terrible pain.



KAGAMI JIJI

Born of ancient temple mirrors that have been abandoned and forgotten, the Kagami Jiji knows the secrets of the land beyond the reflecting glass. Lonely and lustful, he kidnaps pretty, young girls and takes them into his mirror world. The old man of the mirror has no true form, but his soul is tied to the mirror that gave him birth. Shatter the mirror and his captives go free.



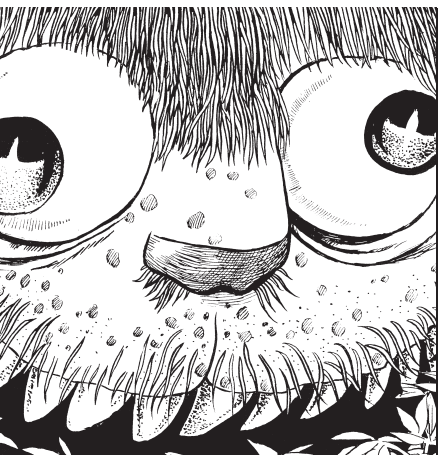


BRIGADOON EFFECT

Named after a folkloric Scottish village that appears for only one day every hundred years, the Brigadoon Effect refers to any location that is unstuck in time.

OBAKE DARUMA

This yokai looks like a traditional roly-poly Daruma doll that sprouted arms and legs, but that is where the resemblance ends. Instead of a wise sage of endurance, the Obaque Daruma lives in the hidden 4th floor of buildings and solves problems only a yokai can handle. He does not cause too much trouble, but if you cross him he has a secret attack—a bellyful of little buddies, made from his own organs.



TANTANBO

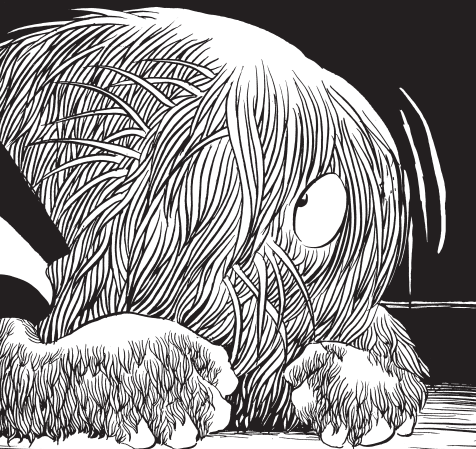
This giant head is a dangerous cousin of the Tokushima prefecture yokai Okamuro. Whereas Okamuro is content just to poke out of doors and surprise people, Tantanbo is more ambitious. He wants to put his giant mouth to good use. Tantanbo may be just a head, but he has a variety of weapons at his disposal. From his missile spit to his flash beam eyes, Tantanbo is a force to be reckoned with.

ZEUGLODON

With the head of a whale, and the body of a yeti, Zeuglodon (also known as the South Sea Monster) is a legendary monster from New Guinea. Like many mythical yokai, the Zeuglodon's blood is said to grant immortality. However, that immortality comes at a price.



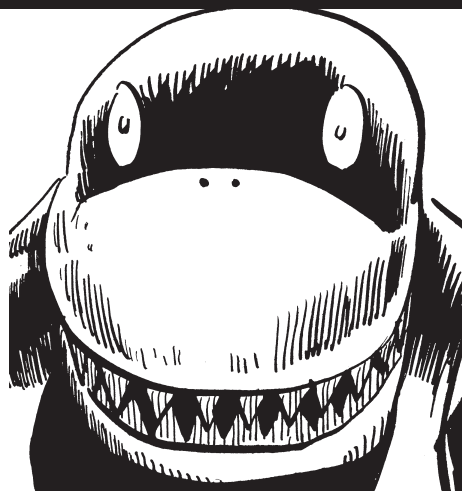
KAIJU KITARO



The blood of the Zeuglodon did not turn Kitaro immortal, just into a brainless, giant monster bent on destroying Tokyo. Almost as good, right?

MECHA ZEUGLODON

In a country attacked by giant monsters as often as Japan, it only makes good sense to build a giant robot for defense. The remote-controlled Mecha Zeuglodon tackles Kaiju Kitaro in one of the first Giant Robot vs. Monster battles in history.



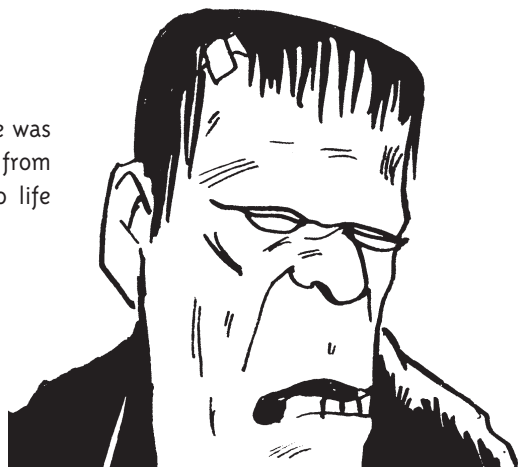


WEREWOLF

Widespread in European folklore, the werewolf transforms during a full moon to feast on human flesh. Although this werewolf seems more comfortable in a suit and tie than romping through the wilderness.

FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER

One of the most famous monsters in the world, but he was never given a name. The Monster was stitched together from corpses by Victor Frankenstein, and then brought to life through a mysterious process.



THE BACKBEARD

An American yokai, Backbeard is a giant eye with a body formed from shadow and smog. His massive bulk and clutching tendrils are only part of his horror. Do not look Backbeard in the eye—he can cause vertigo with a glance. Backbeard is the leader of the Western yokai, and one of Kitaro's most powerful enemies.



WITCH

The mistress of maleficium, this is a traditional witch of the oldest school—flying broomstick, pointed hat, warts and all. She fights on the side of the Western yokai.



NURIKABE

If you are wandering the streets at night, and suddenly find a wall in front of you that wasn't there before—a wall you can't seem to walk around no matter how far you go—you have probably just encountered the yokai Nurikabe. Hailing from Fukuoka prefecture, Nurikabe doesn't say much but is one of Kitaro's biggest supporters. Kitaro brings him in whenever there is sizable work to be done. Nurikabe is both strong and flexible. He looks like rock, but he's actually made of blacktop tar.



DRACULA

A monster that needs no introduction, this is the famous Transylvanian Count Dracula himself. A bloodsucker of high pedigree.



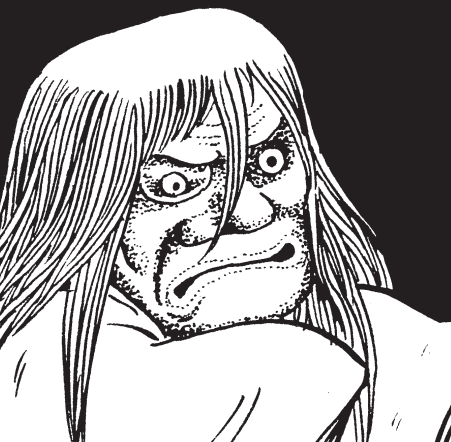


KONNAKI JIJI

The body of a baby. The face of an old man. Konnaki Jiji is one of Kitaro's most bizarre looking allies. And one of the most dangerous. This yokai from Tokushima prefecture hides his withered face and cries like a lost, innocent baby. When a good Samaritan (or a bad guy!) picks him up, he increases his weight to up to two tons, crushing the poor soul with the weight of a boulder. If you see a wailing baby where it shouldn't be, think twice before lending a hand! Or at least check its face to ensure an old man isn't staring back at you.

ITTAMOMEN

This yokai from Kagoshima prefecture is a friend of the wind who flies freely through the air. Its favorite attack is to swoop down, wrap around the necks of enemies, and choke their life out. Watch out for that wisp of white! But Ittamomen is not entirely sinister—it's always there when Kitaro and his gang needs a ride. Ittamomen's body is a single strip of cotton and impervious to most harm. In all the world it fears only fire and scissors.



SUNAKAKE BABA

Deep in the woods of Nara prefecture, the yokai Sunakake Baba lurks to fling sand from her hair on unwitting passers-by. Why does she do this? No one knows. The ways of the yokai are dark and mysterious. Sunakake Baba does more than just irritate people by throwing sand on them. She is one of Kitaro's staunchest allies, and plays a special role in his life. She is the landlord of the Yokai Apartments where Kitaro lives with his father, Medama Oyaji.

HYAKUME

In Hyakume's case, the name says it all. "Hyakume" means "one hundred eyes" and that's pretty much what you get with this grotesque yokai. Hyakume only comes out at night. With that many eyes, the sun is blinding and it is hard to find sunglasses that fit.



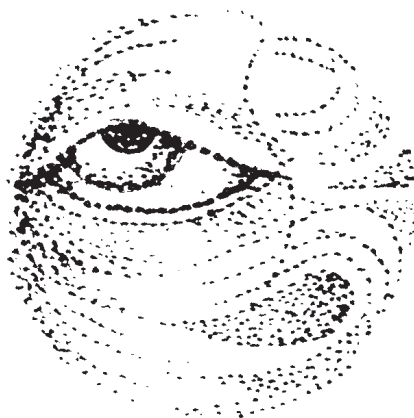
SUIKO

A sweet tasting water spirit, the suiko tempts children to drink it and then possesses their bodies from the inside. Suiko are as mutable as liquid, and can transform into clouds or mist. But they share the same weakness of all liquids—suiko can be frozen solid. The best way to trap a suiko is inside a clay jar, where it will pass the ages waiting for someone foolish enough to crack the seal and take a sip.



KYUKETSU-KI

Growing deep under the Earth's surface, the vast, blood sucking tree called the kyuketsu-ki sends its spores to the surface to plant seeds in human bodies and feed off their blood. It has something in common with another bloodsucker—the kyuketsu-ki's name is a pun on the Japanese word for vampire. The kyuketsu-ki is originally misidentified as a nobiagari, a type of yokai that stretches when you look at it, but Kitaro soon discovers the truth.





LA SEINE

A vampire from France who came to test his powers against the famous Kitaro and sample Japanese blood. La Seine takes his name from the Seine River that flows through Paris.

YASHA

A soul-swallowing night demon, Yasha is more than just a handsome face crowned with fine, flowing hair. His guitar and sweet voice charms the souls right out of children's bodies like a Japanese Pied Piper. If you ever seen the Yasha's true form, watch out. You'll find yourself in a hairy situation.



NEKO SENIN

Neko Senin is a 1,200-year old man who mastered the secret of immortality by separating his soul from his body. To protect his body, he hid it deep inside an ancient burial mound. His soul he placed inside of a cat, moving from cat to cat across the centuries to become a cat immortal.

YOKAI GLOSSARY ZACH DAVISSON

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF SOME OF THE KEY YOKAI PLAYERS IN THIS VOLUME

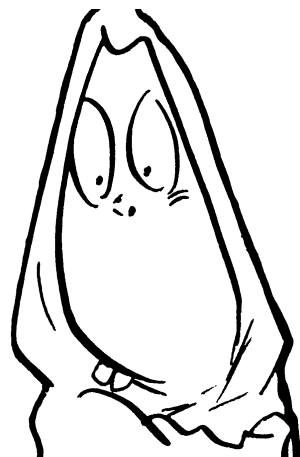


MEDAMA OYAJI

Kitaro's father. An eyeball that rolled from his own jellified corpse, Medama Oyaji willed himself back to life so he could keep an eye on his newborn baby Kitaro, the last of the Ghost Tribe. He rides around in Kitaro's empty eye socket and is always ready to lend a hand. Medama Oyaji is a scholar extraordinary on all things yokai with centuries of experience and contacts in the yokai world. He advises Kitaro on problems that inevitably arise, and pulls the boy out of scrapes when Kitaro has gotten in over his head. Medama Oyaji likes nothing better to kick back and relax, soaking in a teacup bath.

NEZUMI OTOKO

Half yokai. Half human. All scoundrel. Nezumi Otoko is over 360 years old and boasts that he has never seen the inside of a bathtub. His greatest weapon is his stench—his breath alone can knock you out cold. In spite of his tattered appearance, he claims to be a degreed scholar from Yokai University. But I wouldn't trust a word he says. Deceitful. Conniving. Greedy. Nezumi Otoko is also one of Kitaro's best friends—the kind of friend that would sell Kitaro out for the price of a candy bar. But despite Nezumi Otoko's most Machiavellian mechanizations, he always seems to end up on the right side in the end.



142 Nishi Chofu is a station in the Chofu area of western Tokyo, where Mizuki has lived for a number of years.

148 The Sai Riverbed is said to be the head of the underworld's Sanzu River, and is the place where children who die before their parents are punished and tormented for their lack of filial piety.

157 The characters in the Japanese name (*Kikaigashima*) are “Demon”, “World” and “Island”.

159 Ad: Yokai Wanted, Destination: Kikai Island, Remuneration: One gold piece, Place: Tama Cemetery, Date/Time: April 1, 12:00 a.m.

159 Known as “*Ittan Momen*” in Japanese, Ittamomen appears to be a strip of cotton approximately ten metres long.

175 *Yamato* was a World War II battleship, one of the most powerful ships ever built. Designed to fight the US fleet, it was hit by at least eleven torpedos and sunk south of the Japanese island of Kyushu.

243 Kannon-zaki is a small peninsula in Yokosuka, Kanagawa Prefecture, about eighty kilometres south of Tokyo.

295 The Hedgehog was an anti-submarine munition developed during World War II.

310 A *daruma* is a round doll, usually painted red with a beard and made from papier-maché, that is thought to bring luck and make wishes come true. The *daruma* usually has unpainted eyes: one is filled in when the owner makes a wish or goal, and the other is filled in when the wish comes true or the goal is met.

312 The character for the number four can be read as “*shi*”, the same reading as the character for the word “death”.

327 Shikoku is the smallest of the four main islands of Japan, south of the main island of Honshu.

362 The sacred rope Nezumi Otoko is making is a “*shimenawa*”, a braided straw rope used for ritual purification and to mark sacred places in Shintoism. The sacred streamers— “*gohei*” or “*shime*”—are pieces of white paper cut into strips and hung from the shimenawa ropes to symbolize purity.

378 The *tanuki* is a raccoon dog famous in Japanese folklore for its mischievousness and its ability to change shape.

NOTES

8 Article: Three more dead. The strange illness spreading through Tokyo is very similar to an outbreak in Paris, France.

20 *Gomoku* (also known as GoBang or Five-In-A-Row) is a game played with black and white stones on a Go board. The object of the game is to get an unbroken row of five stones in any direction.

22 The “ge ge ge” of the song and of Kitaro’s Japanese title *Ge Ge Ge no Kitaro* comes from Shigeru Mizuki’s own childhood nickname. As a boy, he was unable to pronounce his given name, and ended up calling himself “Gegeru”. The name stuck and was generally shortened to “Gege”. *Kitaro* was originally called *Kitaro of the Graveyard* with the “ge ge ge” only appearing in the song in praise of Kitaro, but when the manga was turned into an animated TV series in 1968, sponsors thought “Graveyard” was too scary for a kids show, so the program became *Ge Ge Ge no Kitaro*. The title of the manga was changed to *Ge Ge Ge no Kitaro* to match in November 1967 while the show was in production.

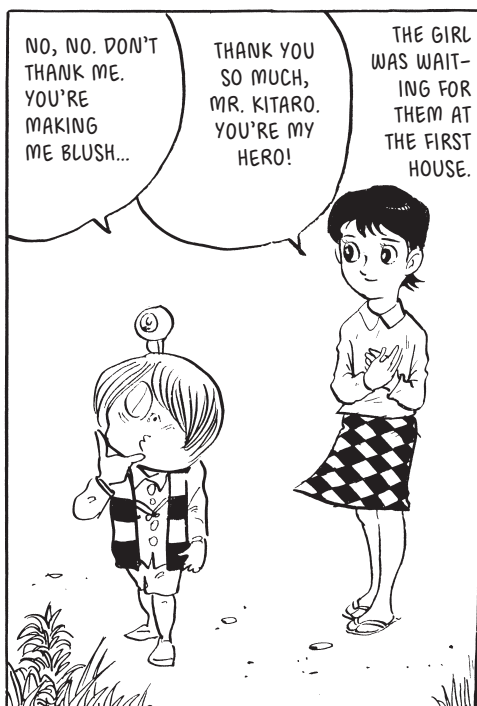
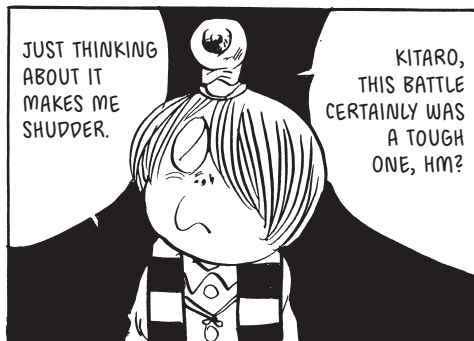
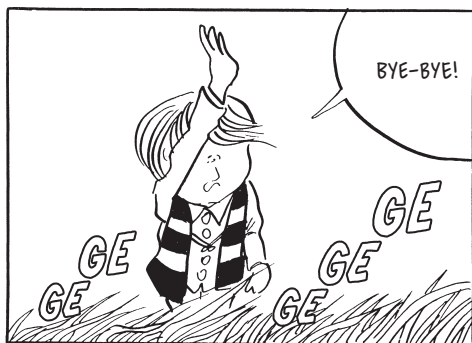
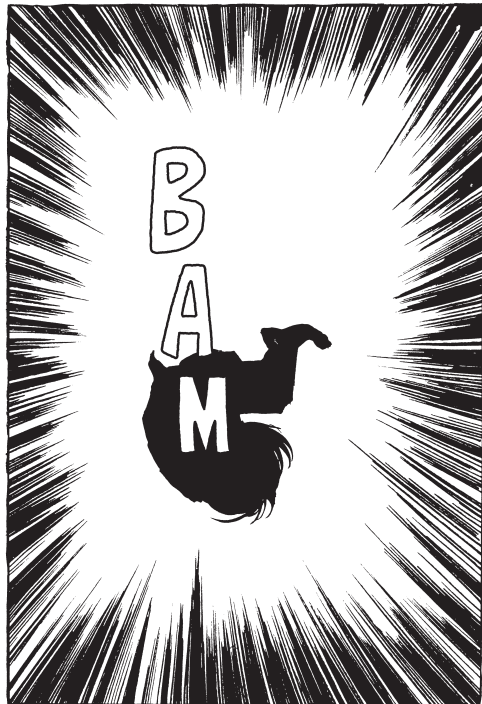
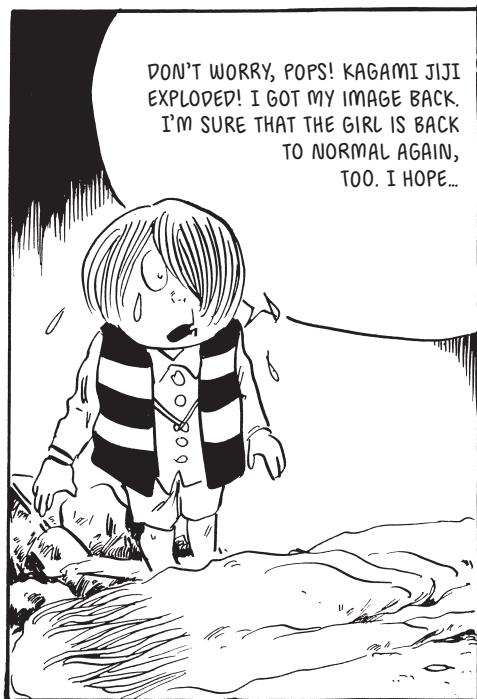
61 A *shamisen* is a three-stringed instrument, the cover of which is made out of cat skin (or dog skin for cheaper student instruments).

86 Donpei has placed the bat in the alcove, a space usually reserved for the display of beautiful and valuable objects.

98 The traditional *suiko* is often confused with the *kappa* (water-dwelling yokai known for their love of eating children and cucumbers) due to their similar appearance, but the *suiko* is larger, fiercer and much more likely to take a person’s life. However, the *suiko* Mizuki depicts here has little in common with this standard interpretation of the yokai, aside from the shared ability to possess people.

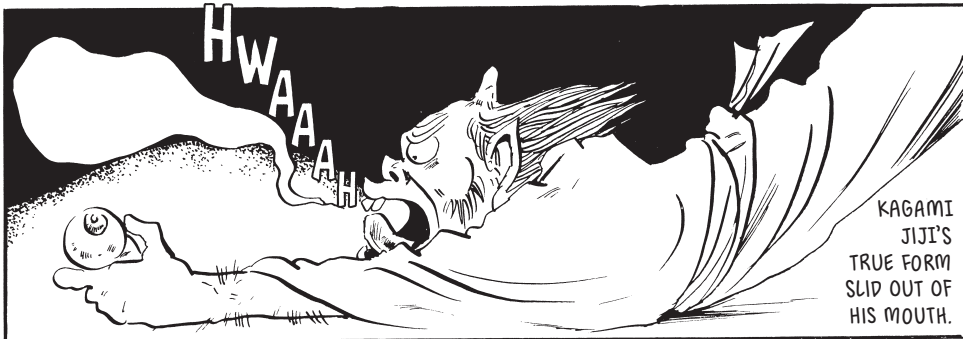
122 The Dragon King’s palace (*ryugu-jo*) is the mythical palace of the dragon god at the bottom of the sea, which appears often in Japanese folklore.

131 Momotaro is a hero from a Japanese fairytale often translated as “Peach Boy”. Momotaro comes to earth in a giant peach floating down a river where a poor, old childless couple live. When she and her husband open the peach to eat it, they discover the baby boy and adopt him as their son. When Momotaro grows up, he goes off to fight the demons terrorizing a far-off island, teaming up with a dog, a monkey, and a pheasant, who use their various talents to help him defeat the demons. He returns home with the spoils of his victory to provide a comfortable life for his old parents.

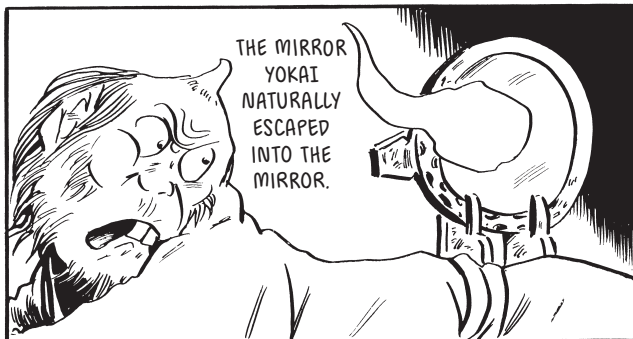




THE MOMENT
KAGAMI JIJI GRABBED
HIS FATHER, KITARO
ATTACKED.



KAGAMI
JIJI'S
TRUE FORM
SLID OUT OF
HIS MOUTH.



THE MIRROR
YOKAI
NATURALLY
ESCAPED
INTO THE
MIRROR.

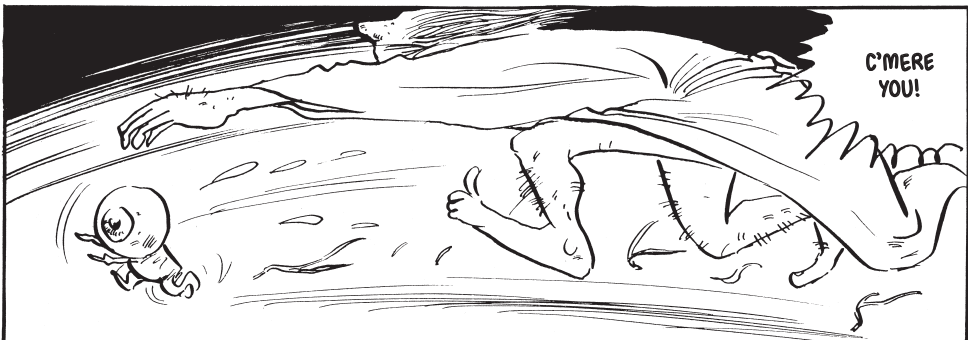
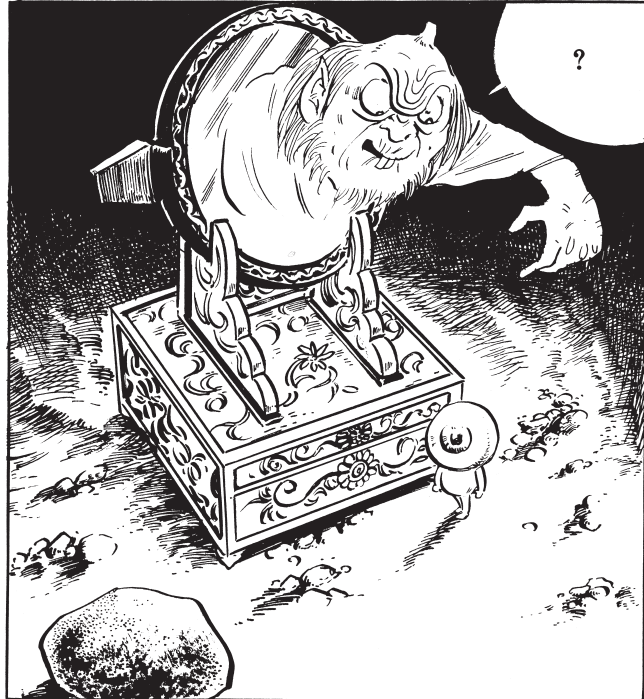
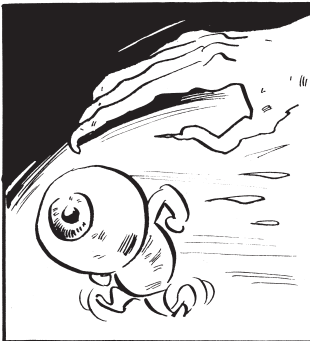
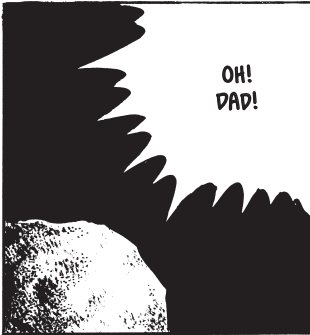
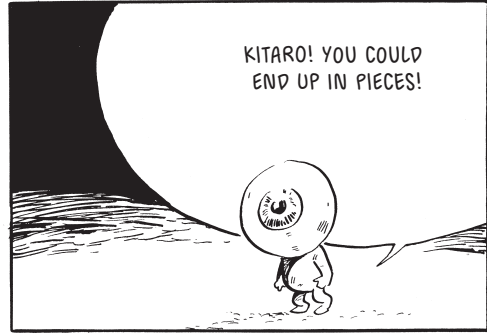
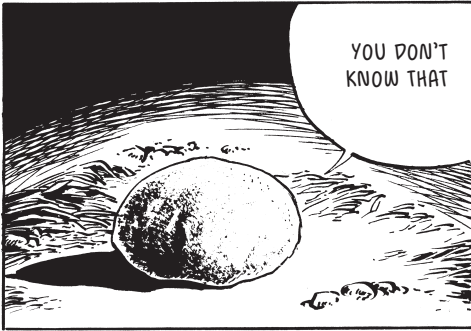
WHEN KITARO PONCED, THE
YOKAI FLED THE OLD MAN'S
BODY, WHICH WAS NOTHING
MORE THAN A BORROWED
SHELL. AS SOON AS
KAGAMI JIJI WAS OUT,
KITARO JUMPED IN AND
TOOK HIS PLACE.

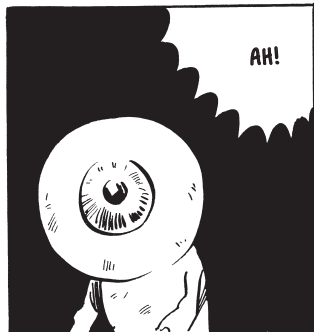


AAH!
KITARO,
STOP!

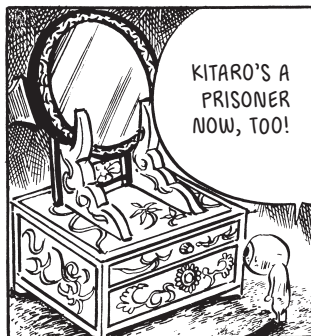


KITARO LEAPT
UP AND
SMASHED
THE
MIRROR.

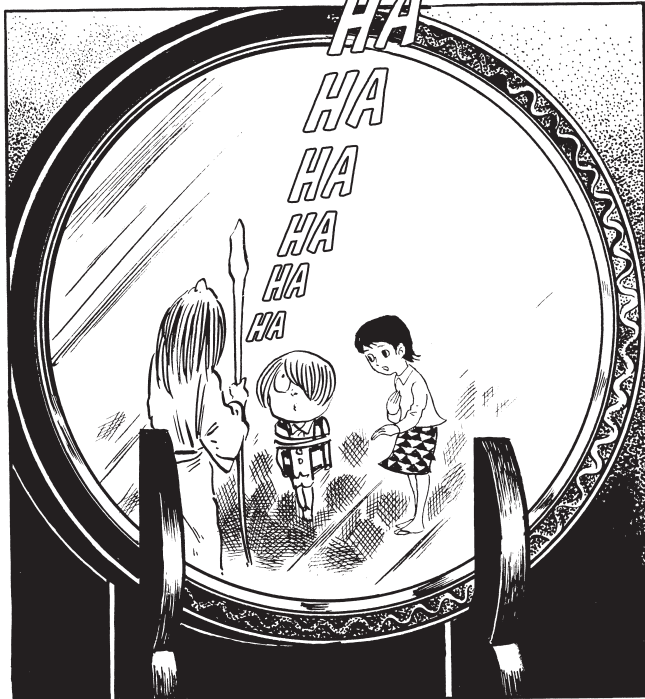




AH!



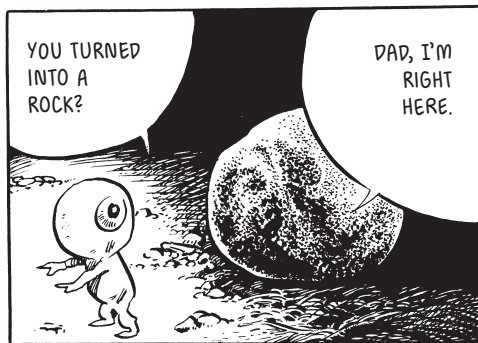
KITARO'S A
PRISONER
NOW, TOO!



HE TOOK MY IMAGE,
SO I'M GOING TO
SMASH THE MIRROR
WITH THIS ROCK AND
TRY TO GET IT BACK.

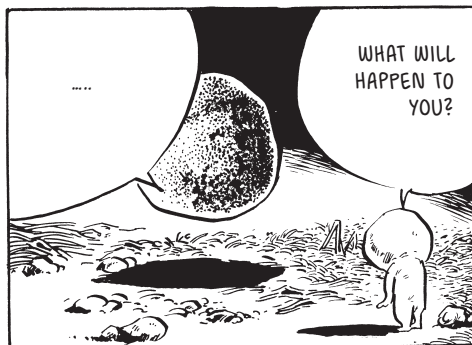


NO, I'M
JUST
HOLDING
THE ROCK.

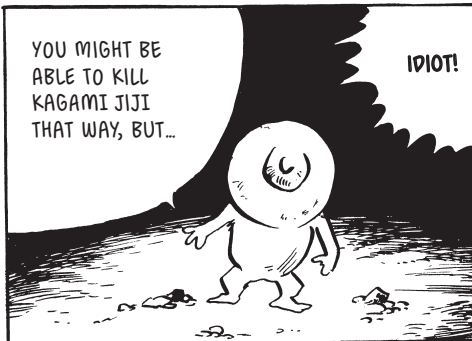


YOU TURNED
INTO A
ROCK?

DAD, I'M
RIGHT
HERE.

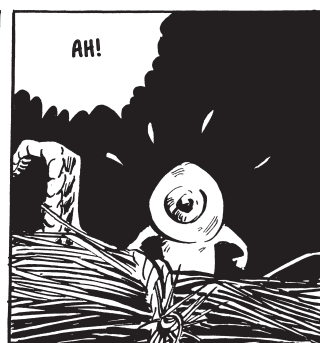
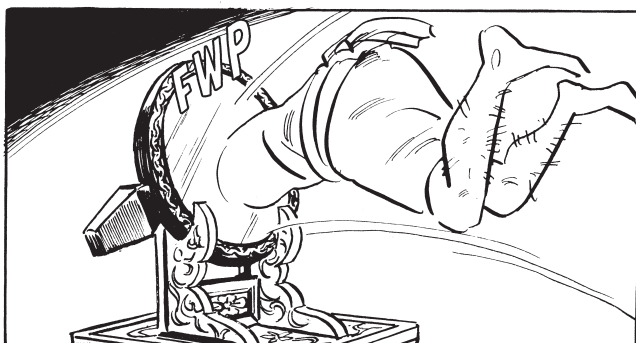
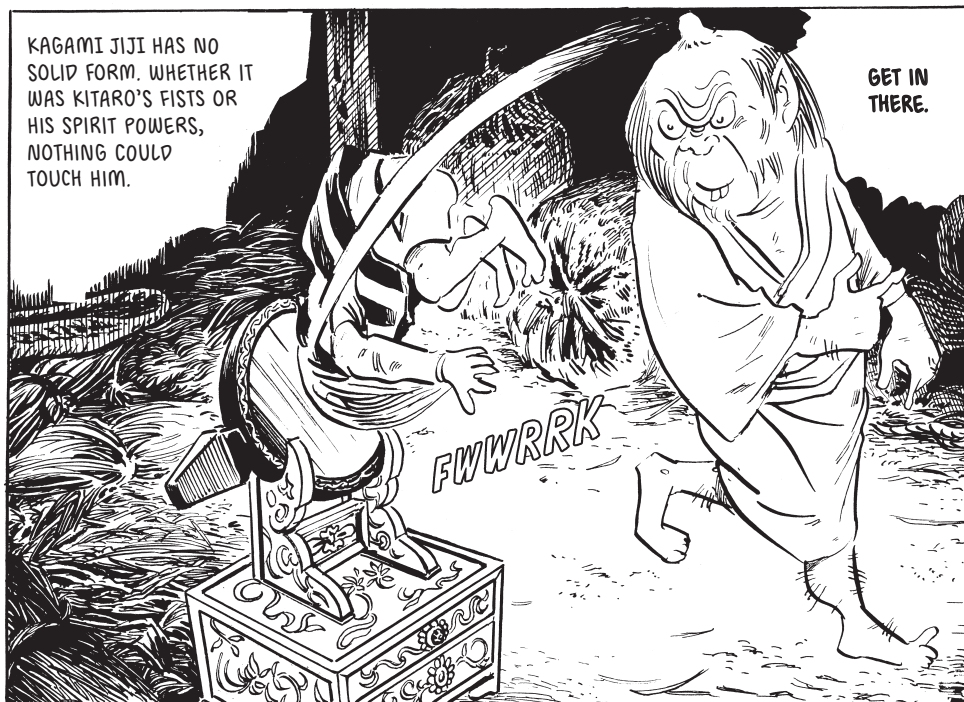
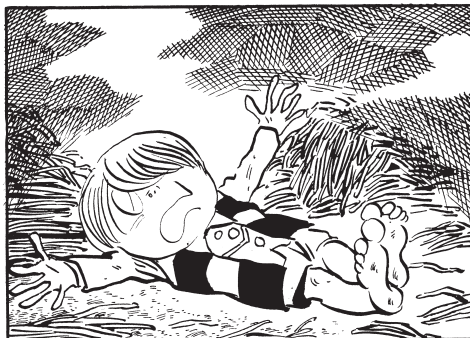


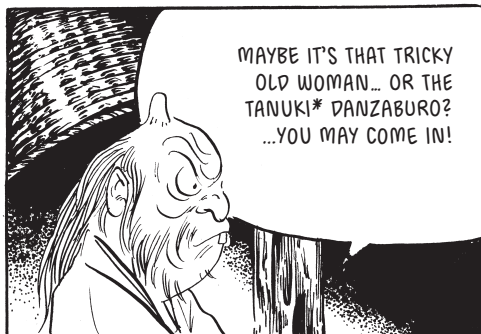
WHAT WILL
HAPPEN TO
YOU?



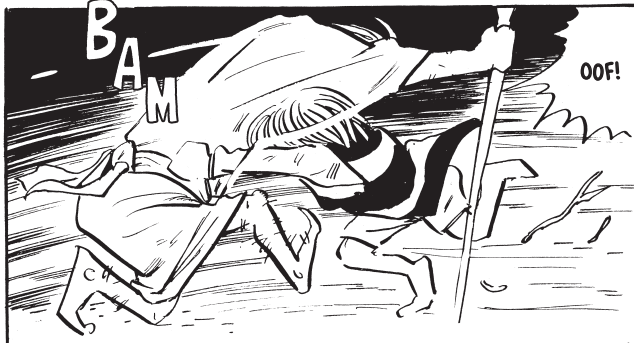
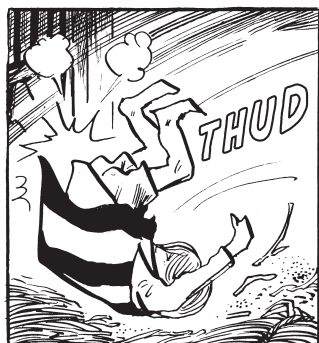
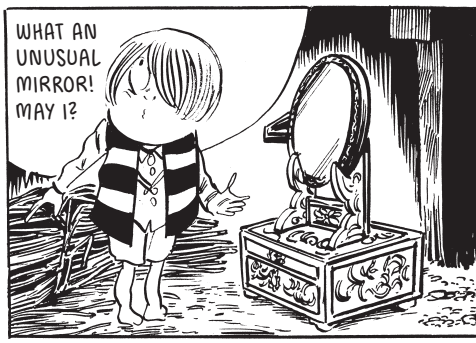
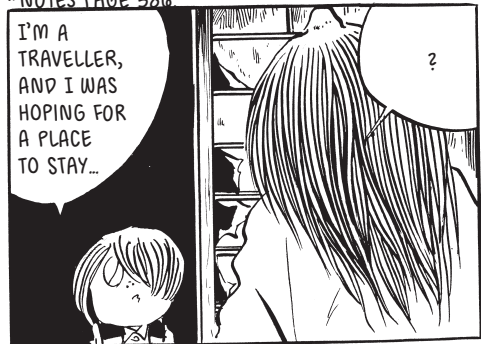
YOU MIGHT BE
ABLE TO KILL
KAGAMI JIJI
THAT WAY, BUT...

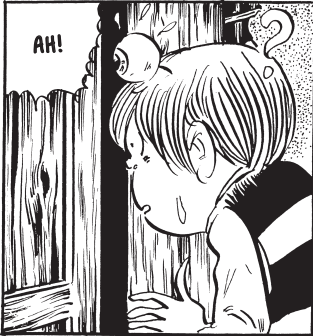
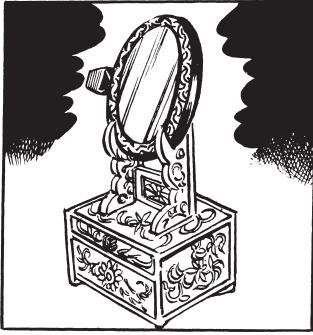
IDIOT!

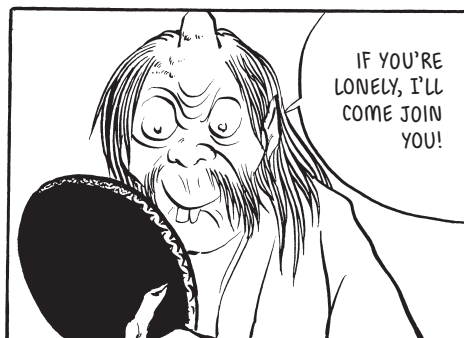
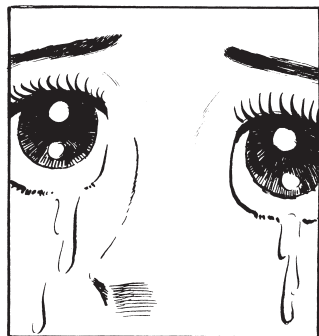
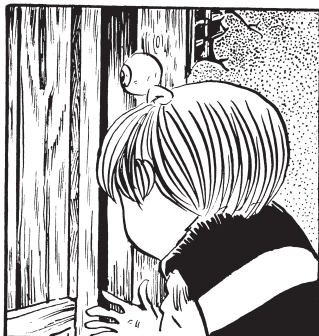




*NOTES PAGE 386





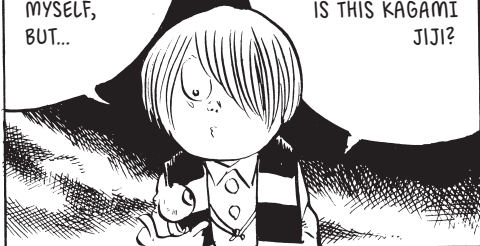


FROM WHAT I HEAR, HE LIVES IN A
MIRROR, AND LEGEND HAS IT THAT IF
YOU BREAK THE MIRROR, HE'LL DIE.



I DON'T KNOW
FOR SURE,
MYSELF,
BUT...

FATHER, WHAT
KIND OF YOKAI
IS THIS KAGAMI
JIJI?



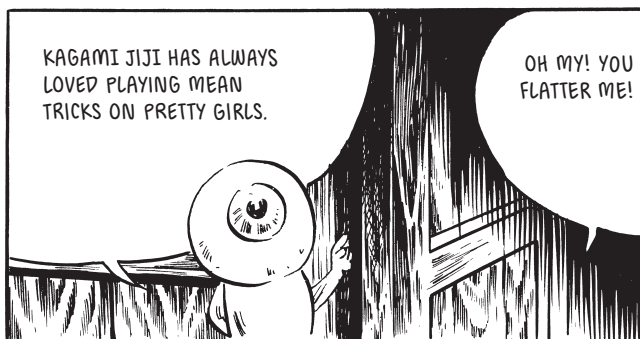
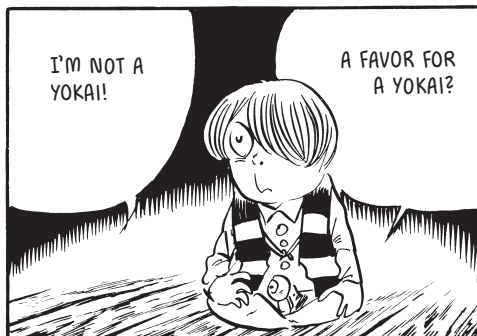
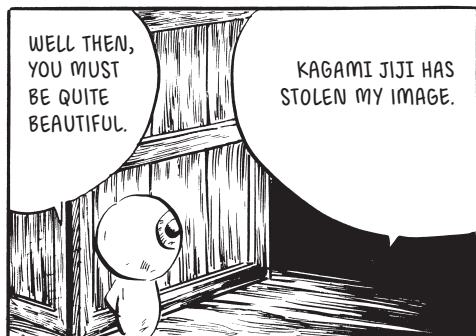
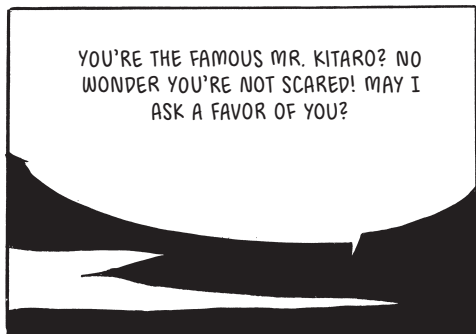
THERE!

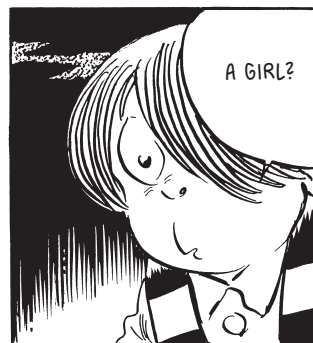
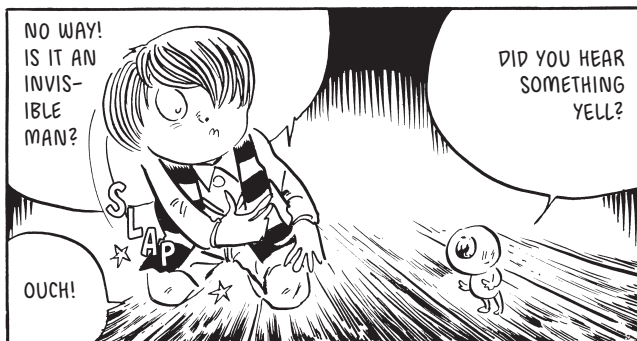
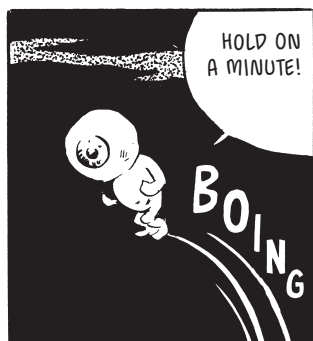
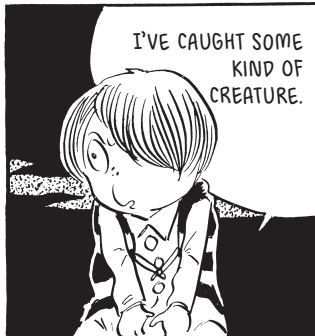
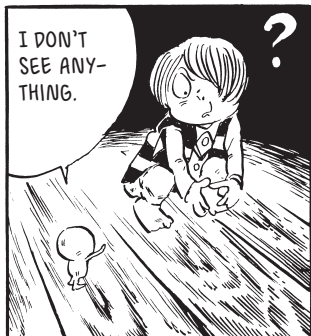
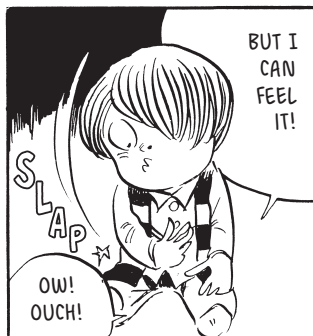
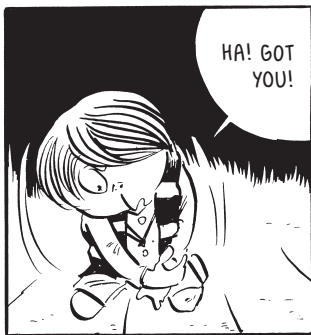


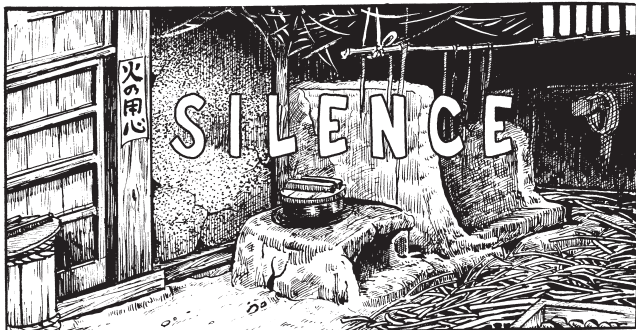
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE



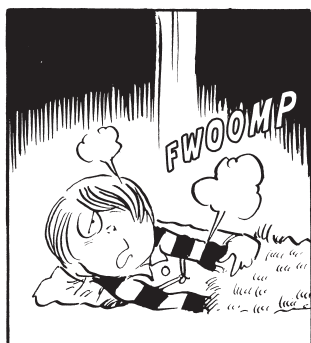
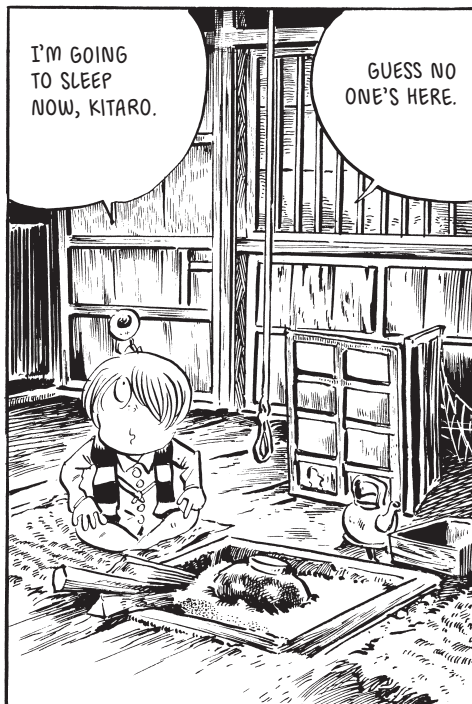
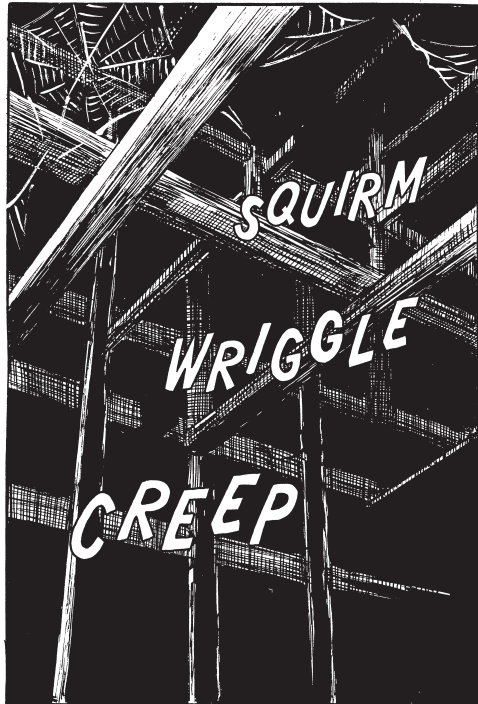
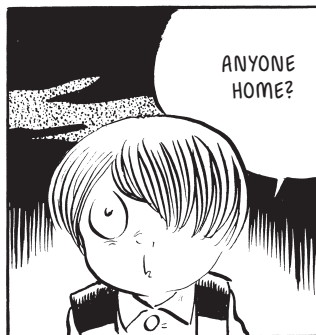


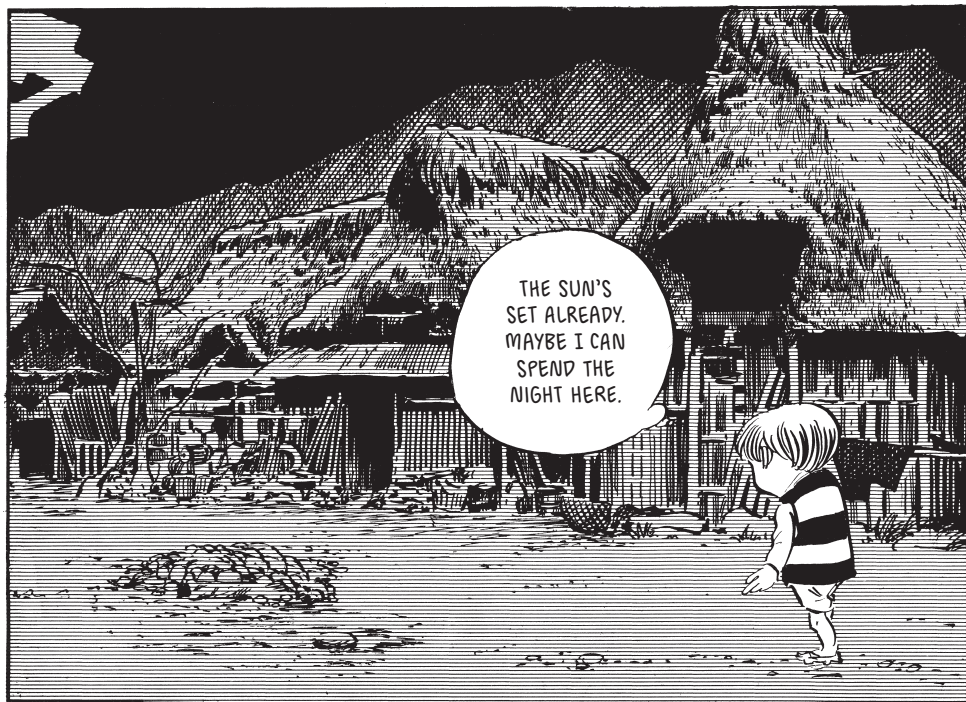
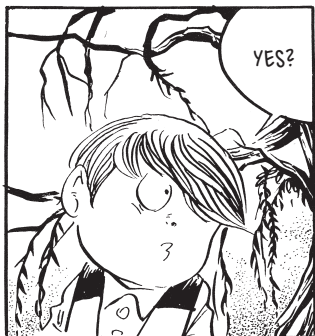


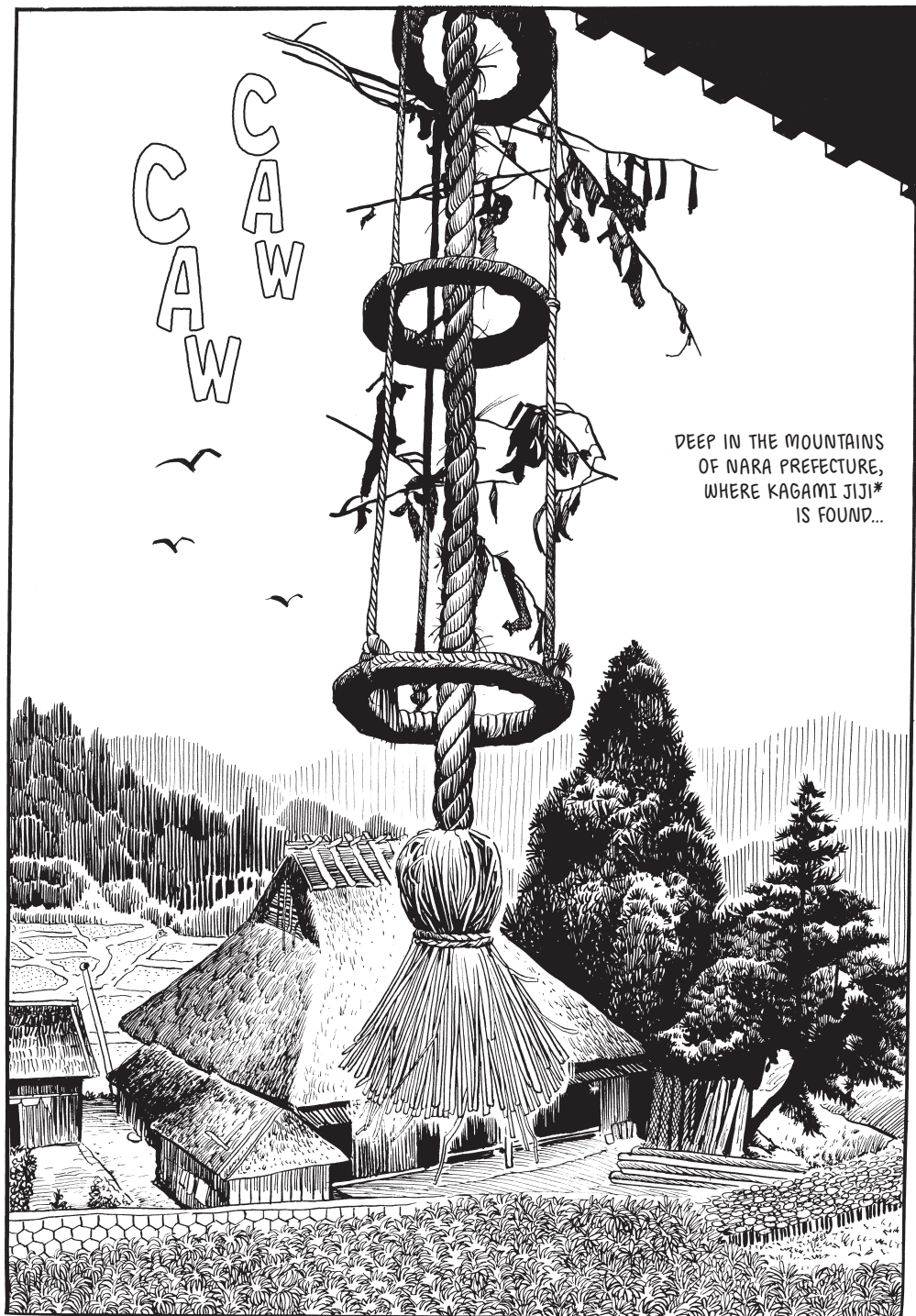




SIGN: BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE.

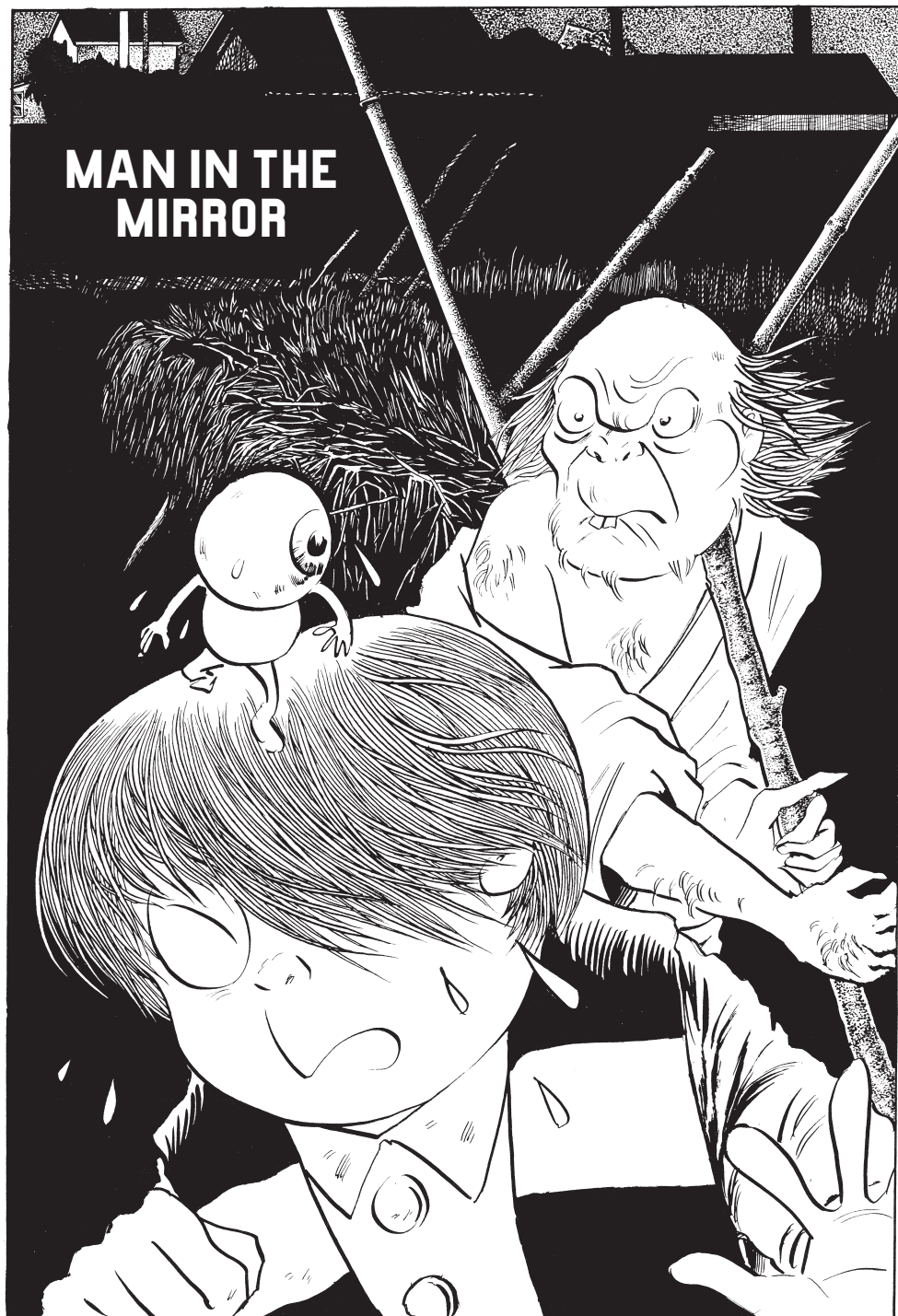


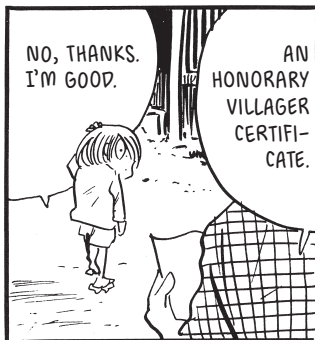
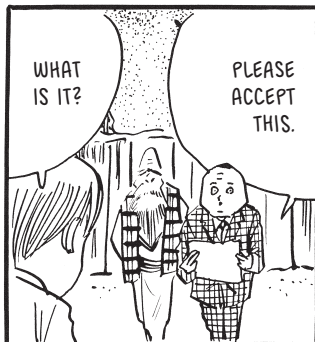


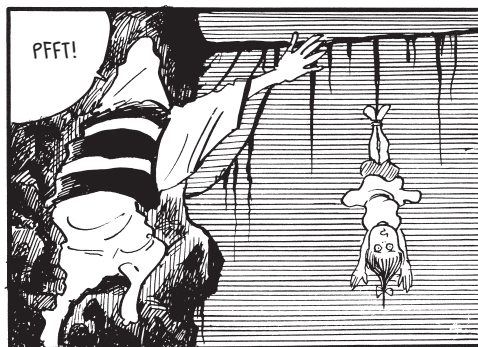
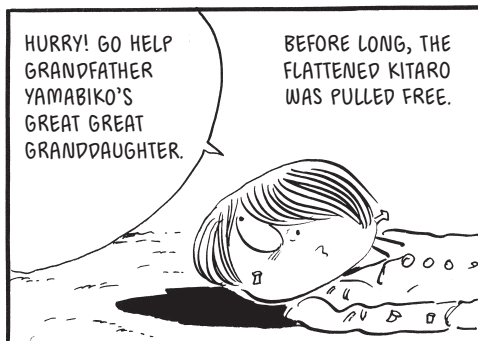
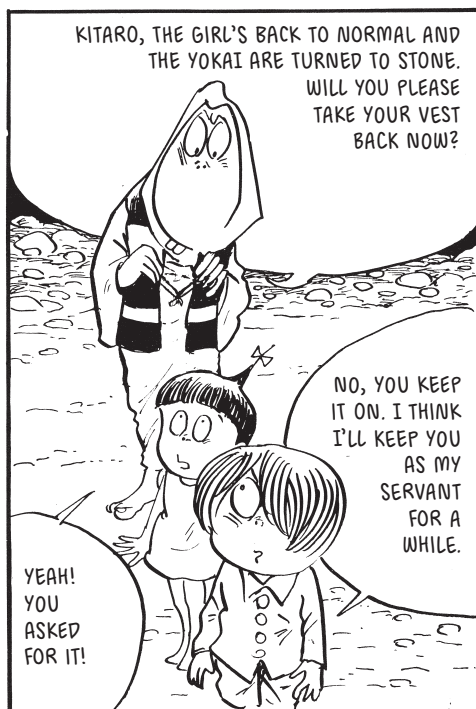
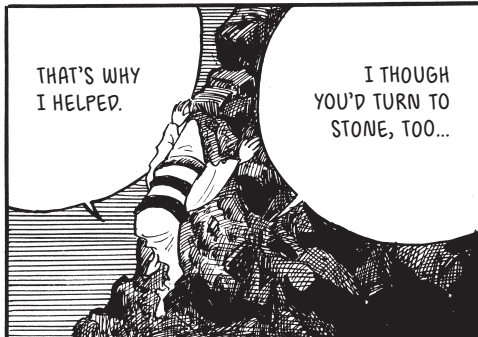
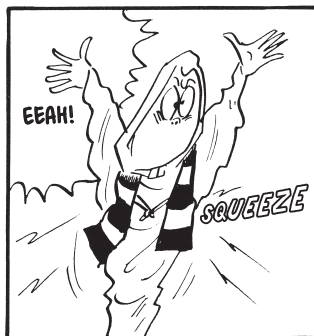
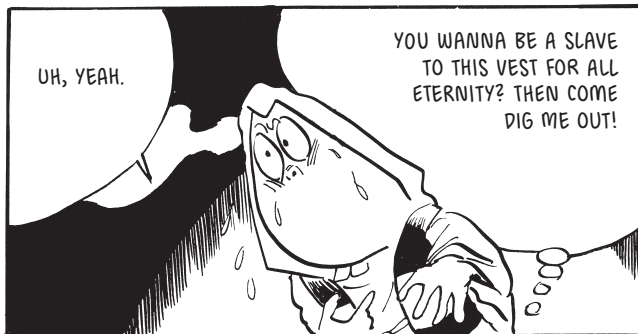


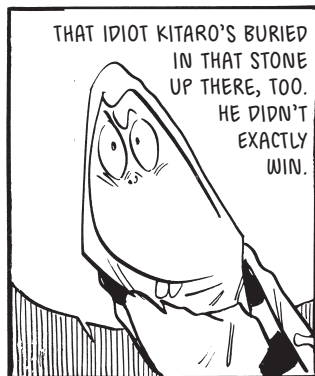
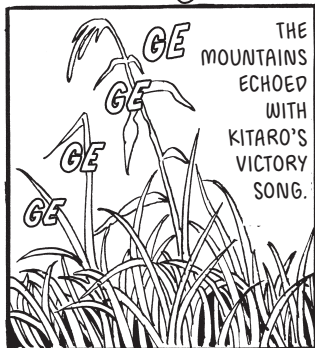
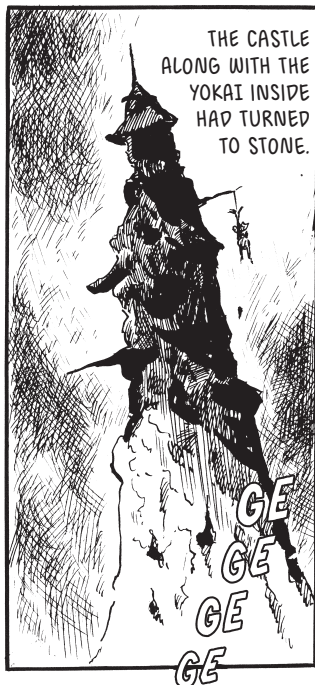
DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS
OF NARA PREFECTURE,
WHERE KAGAMI JIJI*
IS FOUND...

*SEE YOKAI GLOSSARY PAGE 396.

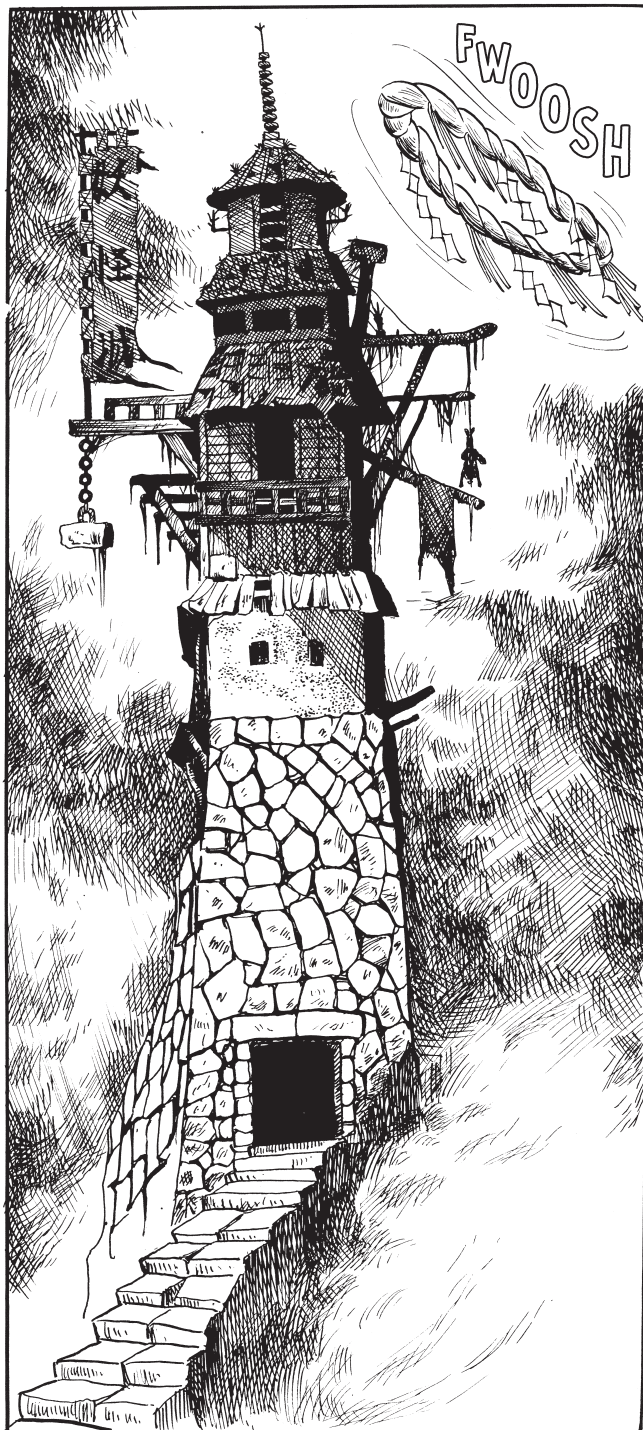












KITARO WAS SQUEEZING HIM SO TIGHTLY THROUGH THE VEST, NEZUMI OTOKO HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO GET TO WORK MAKING A NEW SACRED ROPE.



"TWIST TWENTY-FOUR TIMES, TWENTY-FOUR STRANDS OF STRAW, ATTACH TWENTY-FOUR SACRED STREAMERS*. PUT IN THE TAIL OF A NEWT, AND THE OIL OF A POISONOUS MOTH.



*SEE NOTES PAGE 386.

"PLACE ON THE YOKAI CASTLE BEFORE THE FIRST CROW OF THE ROOSTER." THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE EASY.



THE VICE-LIKE VEST FORCED NEZUMI OTOKO TO OBEY KITARO. AIMING FOR THE ROOF OF THE CASTLE, HE SWUNG THE ROPE...

