

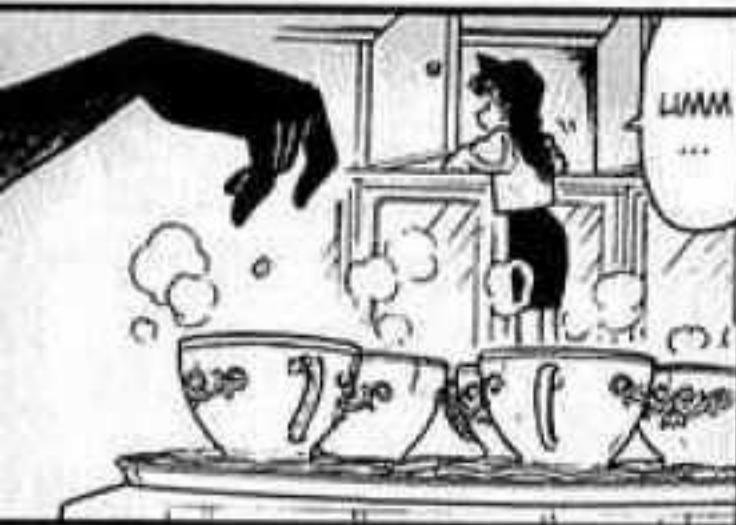
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The Encroaching Shadow











.....

THE ACCIDENT, TWO YEARS AGO...

YEAH... PLEASE TELL US ABOUT IT...

IT MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS MURDER!

WHAT!?!?

WH,



THERE WAS A STORM THAT DAY...

IT WAS AN UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT...



ONE OF US WENT OFF TO FIND HER, IN A RUBBER BOAT...

THAT ISLAND WAS SO SMALL THAT IT DISAPPEARED UNDER THE HIGH TIDE...

ONCE IT STARTED, MOST OF US GOT BACK TO THE CRUISER, BUT MISS REIKA NEVER DID...

THAT DAY, WE'D DROPPED ANCHOR NEAR A SMALL ISLAND, AND WENT OFF SEPARATELY TO HAVE FUN..... NOT KNOWING THAT A STORM WAS COMING...



W-WELL...

WHO WAS SHE?

BUT THE ONE WHO HAD GONE OUT TO FIND HER ORIGINALLY NEVER CAME BACK... WE FOUND HER BODY THREE DAYS LATER...

MISS REIKA WAS FOUND A FEW HOURS LATER, BY NIKAIKIDOU, WHO HAD GONE FISHING IN ANOTHER BOAT,



OH, FOUND IT!

YONE-SAN?



I HOPE IT'S SAFE...

I FORGOT THAT I BOUGHT SOME 5 YEARS AGO...



YONE-SAN?

HUH?



DUNNO...

I WONDER WHY NIKAIKIDOU WAS KILLED...



WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH ANYTHING...

YOU GUYS WERE SAYING THERE WAS AN ACCIDENT...

HUH?



HEY... WHAT HAPPENED TWO YEARS AGO?

HE WAS SO SET ON MAKING MISS REIKA HIS OWN...



HER HUSBAND WAS ALREADY CHOSEN, TWO YEARS AGO...

BECAUSE I HEARD NIKAIKIDOU-SAN SAY...



YOU MUST BE TIRED FROM EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED...

I'M SORRY, I SUDDENLY GOT SLEEPY...

YOU'RE ALREADY TIRED!?



WE'LL SEARCH THE FIRST FLOOR...

KAY...

LIE DOWN ON THIS SOFA FOR A BIT! I'LL WATCH YOU.

WE'LL TAKE THE SECOND...



ふふふふ



I HOPE YAEKO IS SATISFIED...

SHE DIED, TRYING TO SAVE MISS REIKA...



HE WAS PROBABLY GOING TO USE THE FACT THAT HE SAVED HER TO REEL HER IN... ALTHOUGH I DON'T KNOW HOW WELL THAT WOULD HAVE WORKED...

BUT WHY WOULD NIKAIKOU SAY THAT HER HUSBAND WAS ALREADY CHOSEN...?



YO-YONE-SAN...

MY GRAND-DAUGHTER, YAEKO...



HOW ABOUT YOU!?

NO...

NO, NOT HERE!!

DID YOU FIND HER!?



HOPE WE DON'T FIND A CORPSE...

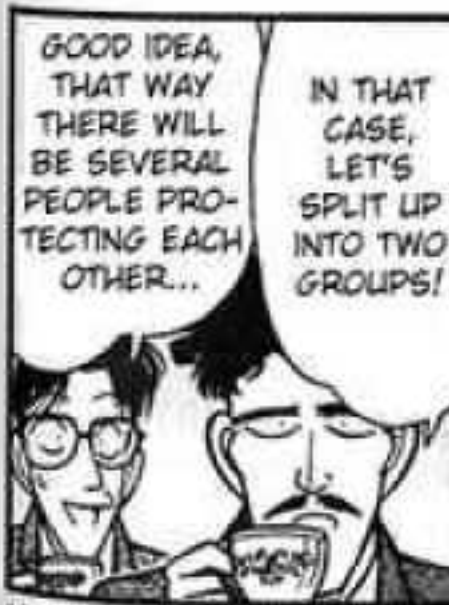
MISS REIKA...

WHERE DID SHE GO?



YEAH...

I CAN'T BELIEVE WE STILL CAN'T FIND HER...



GOOD IDEA, THAT WAY THERE WILL BE SEVERAL PEOPLE PROTECTING EACH OTHER...

IN THAT CASE, LET'S SPLIT UP INTO TWO GROUPS!

THE KILLER MIGHT EVEN BE ONE OF US...

BUT WHAT IF THE KILLER ATTACKS AGAIN?...

LET'S SEARCH THE HOUSE AGAIN, JUST TO BE SURE...

ANYWAY, WE HAVE TO FIND HER FIRST!



.....



RIGHT...

THEN, RIGHT AFTER WE FINISH THE COFFEE...



B-BREAKING GLASS!?



HUH? WHAT WAS THAT NOISE...?



TING



IT'S CLOSE!!



HEHE HE...

WE JUST GOT HERE...

WHO TURNED OFF THE LIGHTS!?



THAT SOMEBODY BESIDES US HAS SNUCK IN HERE...

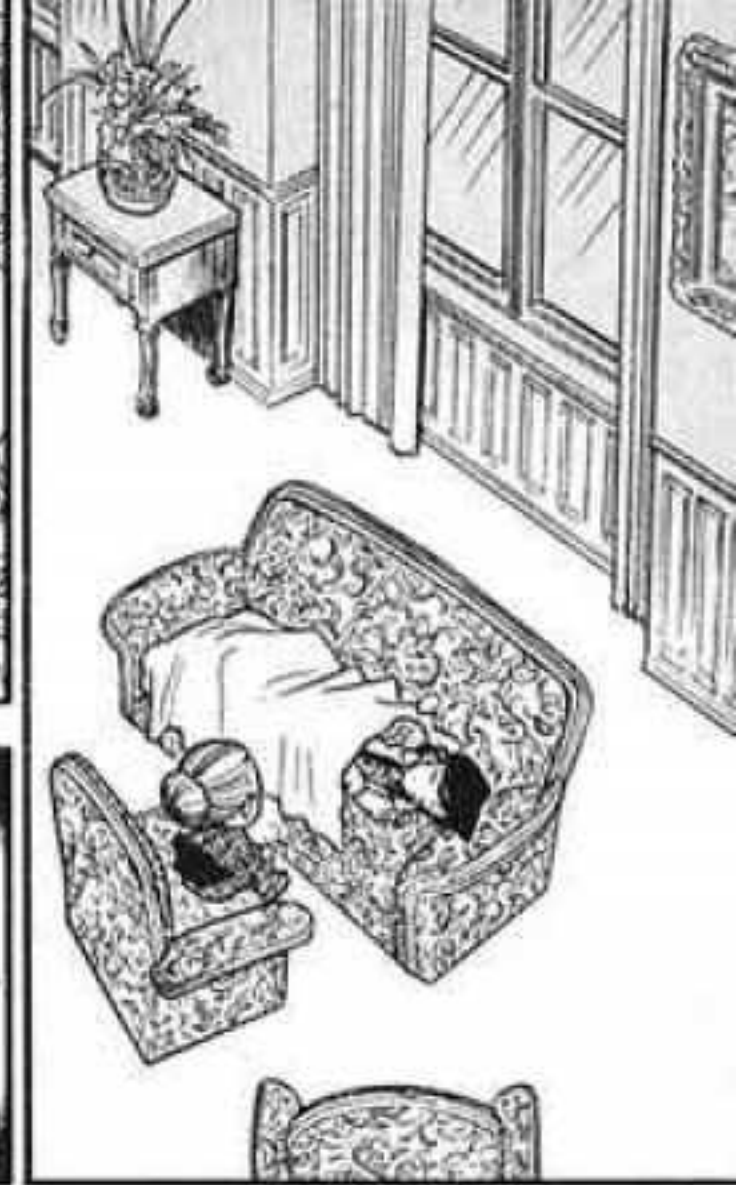
NOW WE KNOW FOR SURE...



OH!



YAEKO...



SO SHE MUST BE IN THE FOREST...

WE'VE SEARCHED THE ENTIRE FIRST FLOOR NOW...



OR HERE...

HMM, NOT HERE...



IN THE WEST HALL-WAY!!



WHERE'S THE BREAKER!?

MAYBE SOMETHING HAPPENED UPSTAIRS!!



A BLACK OUT?

HUH?



WHAT'S HE DOING...?

WHO IS THIS?...



ALONE !!!

RAN IS...



WATER?



MOVE...

I CAN'T...



B-BAS-TARD...

WHETHER THAT WAS MISS REIKA OR SOMEBODY WE DON'T KNOW, I CAN'T TELL...



YOU WON'T GET AWAY!!

MI-MIFU-NE...



RIGHT THROUGH THIS WINDOW!!

SEEING AS WE WERE SEARCHING THE WHOLE HOUSE, HE PROBABLY RAN OUT OF HIDING PLACES, SO HE KILLED THE LIGHTS AND ESCAPED...



STOP THEM!!

W-WAIT!!

R-RIGHT!!



YOU ALL RAN OUT WITH PALE FACES, SO I CHASED YOU!

YO-YONE-SAN, WHY ARE YOU HERE?

H-HEY, THAT MEANS...



A LOT OF PEOPLE GET LOST IN THESE WOODS...

DAMN, LOST THEM!!





CONAN
!?