

Fruits Basket

TOKYOPOP



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Natsuki Takaya

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Natsuki Takaya

Manga
Romance/Comedy
US \$9.99
CAN \$12.50
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Fruits Basket™

A family with an ancient curse...
And the girl who will change their lives forever...

Tohru Honda was an orphan with no place to go until the mysterious Sohma family offered her a place to call home. Now her ordinary high school life is turned upside down as she's introduced to the Sohma's world of magical curses and family secrets. Discover for yourself the Secret of the Zodiac, and find out why Fruits Basket has won the hearts of readers the world over!



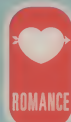
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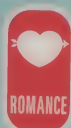


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Fruits Basket

Volume 1



Natsuki Takaya

Fruits Basket™

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Fruits Basket™

What exactly is *Fruits Basket*? It doesn't fit into the ordinary manga categories, but then, it's not an ordinary manga. Take two parts drama, one part comedy, add a spoonful of romance and a pinch of magic and you're partway there, but...something about *Fruits Basket* is special. What that special ingredient is, you'll have to discover for yourself. But to help you get started, here's a brief history of the series.

Natsuki Takaya's *Fruits Basket* (or "*Furuba*" as it's known to fans) began its life in the pages of *Hana to Yume* magazine, the shojo manga anthology from Japanese publisher Hakusensha that is also home to *Kare Kano* and *Angel Sanctuary*. This wasn't the first time Takaya-sensei worked with the publisher. Since the early '90s she has created a steady flow of series and short stories for Hakusensha's various anthologies. Her two biggest pre-Fruits series were *Geneimusou*, a dark fantasy romance, and *Tsubasa O Mitsu Mono* (*Those with Wings*), a story about an orphaned thief in a totalitarian future. When *Fruits Basket* premiered in 1999, it took Takaya-sensei to new levels of success.

2001 was a big year for *Furuba*. The series became a huge fan-favorite in Japan, jumping to the top of manga sales. Takaya-sensei won one of the manga world's highest recognitions, the prestigious Kodansha Manga Award (she won for Shojo manga the same year Ken Akamatsu won the shonen award for *Love Hina*!). And beginning that summer, Hakusensha and TV Tokyo teamed up to turn *Fruits Basket* into a 26 episode anime series.

An established hit in Japan, "*Furuba fever*" quickly spread throughout the American fan community. In 2002 the anime was released in English by FUNimation (see the interview with voice actress Laura Bailey at the back of the book!), but for several years the manga remained in limbo. We conducted a poll on TOKYOPOP.com in which fans could send in their wish list of manga series they'd like to see translated. *Fruits Basket* didn't just top the poll—it DOMINATED. Now, at long last, the English manga is here!

TOKYOPOP's presentation of *Fruits Basket* is published in the original right-to-left format with original sound effects retained to preserve the art. Also retained are "honorifics," the suffixes used with characters names. At the back of each book you'll find bonus features and exclusive interviews—look for some big surprises in the books to come! Future volumes will also include a special Reader Feedback section with letters, fan art and more. Please send us your pictures, questions, poetry, or whatever Furuba inspires you to send and we'll try to include it!

Fruits Basket Fan Mail
c/o TOKYOPOP
5900 Wilshire Blvd.
Suite 2000
Los Angeles, CA 90036

We look forward to hearing from you, and we hope you'll enjoy the #1 most wanted manga in America!



Fruits Basket

Chapter 1

*This is where the fun begins...

Let's get this show on the road, shall we?

WOW...

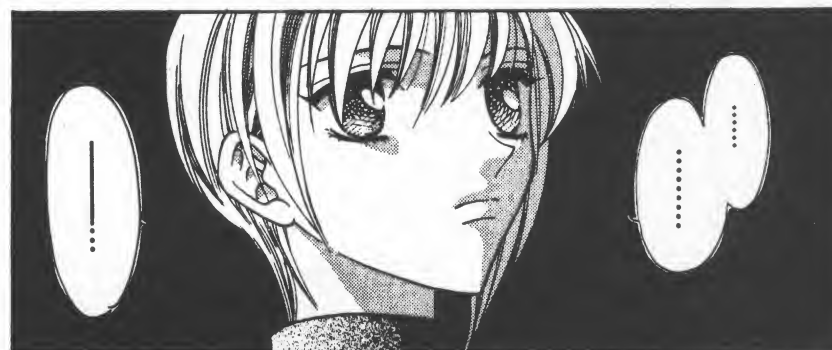
IT LOOKS LIKE TODAY'S GOING TO BE ANOTHER HOT ONE.

I'M NOT FORGETTING ANYTHING, AM I?

OKAY, MOM, YOU'RE IN CHARGE WHILE I'M GONE.

Gramma!

Omake Theater 1: Life in the Sohma Household, pre- Tohru





IT'S SO PEACEFUL.

WOW,
JUST LOOK
AT THIS
PLACE!

I DIDN'T
KNOW THAT
THERE WAS
A HOUSE
HERE.

A GIRL...
OUT HERE?
MY, MY...

HELLO!

I'M
SORRY FOR
TRESPASSING!
I JUST SAW
THESE AND--

A high
school girl,
no less!

There
still is!

PLEASE,
CONTINUE.
I MERELY SET
THEM THERE
TO DRY.

OH...
HOW CUTE!

HELLO, WHAT'S
THIS? I MUST
BE SEEING
THINGS.



I'M
OFF!

THIS MAY,
MY MOTHER
PASSED AWAY.
SHE RAISED ME
BY HERSELF, SO
WHEN SHE WAS
GONE, SO WAS
MY HOME.

AND NOW I
LIVE ALONE
IN THIS TENT.
IT'S A LONG
STORY.

I HAVE SOME
TIME BEFORE
SCHOOL,
SO I THINK
I'LL EXPLORE
THE AREA.

I CAN'T
SAY MY
LIFE IS
EASY...

...BUT I MAKE
OUT OKAY.
NO MATTER
WHAT HAPPENS
IN LIFE...

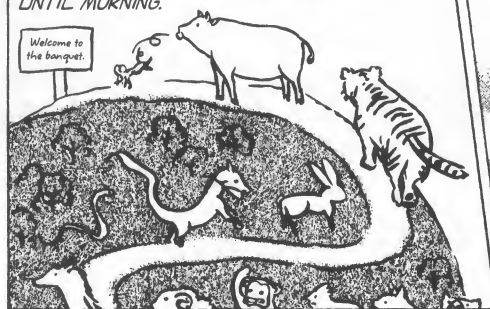
GOOD
MORNING!
MY NAME IS
TOHRU HONDA.

...I NEVER
LET IT GET
ME DOWN.
THAT'S ME--
EVER THE
OPTIMIST!



AFTER HIM FOLLOWED THE OX, THE TIGER, AND ALL THE REST, AND TOGETHER THEY FEASTED UNTIL MORNING.

THE NEXT DAY, THE RAT RODE ON THE BACK OF THE OX AND NIMBLY LANDED BEFORE THE BANQUET HALL.



ALL EXCEPT FOR THE CAT, WHO HAD BEEN TRICKED.

POOR THING! POOR, POOR, POOR CAT...

WHY ARE YOU CRYING, TOHRI?



...I'M INVITING YOU ALL TO MY BANQUET TOMORROW. DON'T BE LATE!



Her mother still had long hair.





SO-
SOHMA-
KUN...!

G-GOOD MORNING!

MORNING.

ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT,
HONDA-SAN?

MY
COUSIN
DIDN'T DO
ANYTHING
TO YOU,
DID HE?

HMPH!
YOU MUST
ALWAYS MAKE
ME OUT TO BE
A PERVERT?

HONDA-
SAN!

WELL?!

1-D

EXPLAIN
YOURSELF!



I WISH I COULD
SEE THE
EXPRESSION
ON HIS FACE
IF HE HEARD
YOU SAY THAT.

IS
THAT
SO...?



SO, YOU
WERE BORN
IN THE YEAR
OF THE DOG?

WHAT?

Oh
nothing.

I KNEW
I FELT
CONNECTED
TO YOU.
CAN'T YOU
FEEL IT?



I KNOW!
I'LL STOP
BEING A DOG
AND BE
A CAT!

Whatever.
I'm tired.

She means
that she'll stop being
Year of the Dog,
and become
Year of the Cat.

THAT'S
HOW MUCH
I LIKE THE
CAT.



OKAY, THAT
HURT. WHAT
DO YOU HAVE
IN THERE, A
DICTIONARY?

REALLY.
MUST YOU
ALWAYS ACT
LIKE SUCH A
LECH?

I'M A
"DOG"
TOO,
YOU--

TWO OF
THEM.

...
S
E
E
...

WH-WHAT IS THIS?
THREATENING US WITH
YOUR GANGSTER
BUDDY, HUH? DON'T
THINK WE'RE THROUGH
WITH YOU JUST
BECAUSE OF
THIS YANKEE!

LI-O-CHAN,
HANA-CHAN...

I thought
Yankee girls
were out of
fashion!

Well,
have
a good
morning!

I COULD



*
*
*
THEM WITH
ELECTRO-
POISON
WAVES...

HANAJIMA,
DON'T ZAP
ANYONE.

OH,
YOU
POOR
THING.

YOU
SAVED
ME.

There,
there.

YOU'RE
YUKI-
KUN'S
CLASS-
MATE?

TOHRU
TOLD YOU
IT WAS A
COINCIDENCE,
DIDN'T SHE?

STOP
FANTASIZING
AND GET
A LIFE.

DON'T
YOU THINK
YOU'RE
OVER-
REACTING?

IT'S
JUST A
COINCIDENCE!

WELL?!

WHY DID
YOU AND
YUKI COME
TO SCHOOL
TOGETHER?
GIVE US A
FULL AND
COMPLETE
EXPLANATION!

Full AND
complete!

That's
right!

Yeah!
Yeah!

LOOK,
YOU! JUST
BECAUSE
SOHMA-KUN
IS SO KIND
AS TO HANG
OUT WITH
YOU...

...IT'S NO
REASON FOR
YOU TO GET A
SWELLED
HEAD!

HEY!

...HE MAY JUST
BE A FIRST-YEAR
STUDENT, BUT
HE'S ALREADY
THE REIGNING
"PRINCE" AT
OUR SCHOOL.

THE
CHARMING
YUKI
SOHMA-
KUN...

QUIET
IN THE
HALLS!

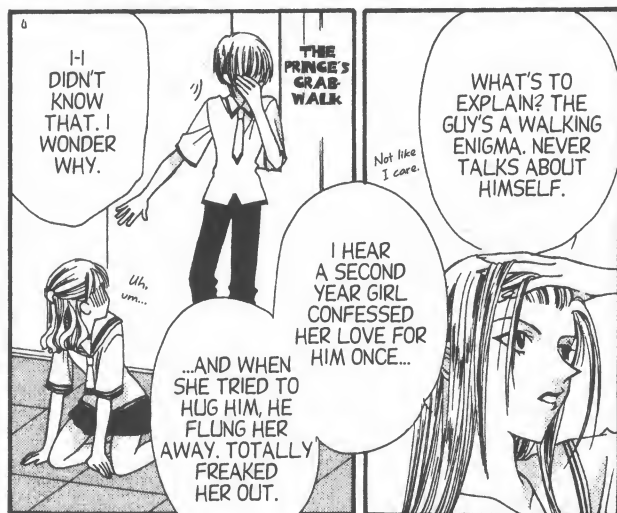
THAT'S
RIGHT.

OVERREACTING?
IF COINCIDENCES
LIKE THAT
WERE LEGAL,
WE WOULDN'T
NEED THE
POLICE!

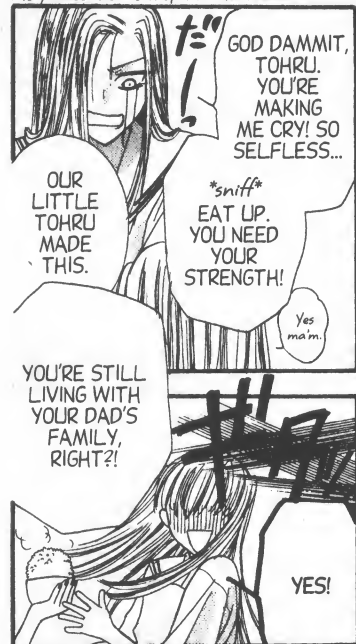
YOU
IDIOT!

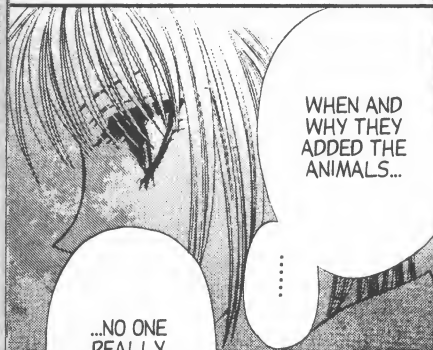
**Fruits Basket
Number 1:**

Hello!
Nice to meet
you, I'm Takaya.
To those of you
who have been
waiting--and
to those of you
who haven't been
waiting, too--
I am proud to
present Fruits
Basket Volume 1.
It's a new world,
different from
my last manga,
"Tsubasa," but I
think you'll find
similarities, too.
(Because I'm
drawing all the
people, basically.
Even if the details
are different, I
am still me!) But
if there were any
parts in "Tsubasa"
that were weird
or confusing to
you, I blame my
lack of sleep. Ah,
sleep. I remember
sleep. Maybe I
should try that
again one day...?
In the meantime,
please enjoy Fruits
Basket Vol. 1!



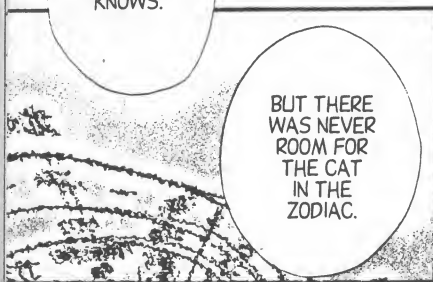
The Yankee has a soft spot for her friends.





WHEN AND WHY THEY ADDED THE ANIMALS...

...NO ONE REALLY KNOWS.



BUT THERE WAS NEVER ROOM FOR THE CAT IN THE ZODIAC.



AND IT'S BETTER THAT WAY.

THE CAT WOULD THROW OFF EVERYTHING.

THE CAT REALLY IS A FOOL.



LATER, ASTROLOGERS COMBINED IT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF YIN-YANG, THE FIVE ELEMENTS AND SYMMETRY IN ORDER TO TELL FORTUNES.

IT WAS USED FOR CALENDARS AND CLOCKS.

ANIMALS HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT?

NO.



WE WERE JUST LOOKING AT HIS CHINESE ZODIAC ORNAMENTS.

OH, NO! HE WAS WONDERFUL.

DID I HEAR CORRECTLY THAT YOU WISHED YOU WERE BORN YEAR OF THE CAT?



IT'S I WHO SHOULD APOLOGIZE. PLEASE FORGIVE MY COUSIN'S RUDENESS.

SOHMA-KUN! I'M SORRY ABOUT THIS MORNING!



HUH?

Bad nature...?

DID YOU KNOW...

...THAT THE CHINESE ZODIAC IS ACTUALLY A TIMEKEEPING SYSTEM OF TENS AND TWELVES?



THE CAT IS A FOOL.

AND HE HAS A BAD NATURE.

ER...I WAS ECCENTRIC WHEN I WAS LITTLE.

I SEE...



EVENTUALLY,
THE FAMILY
DECIDED I
SHOULD
STAY WITH
GRANDPA.

Mommy,
can I have
candy?

My
parents
are
staying
at my
place.

Quiet!
Calm
down.

Our
house
is so
small.

THERE WERE
ARGUMENTS
ABOUT WHO
WOULD TAKE
ME IN. I'M SURE
THEY HAD THEIR
REASONS.

She's too young
to get married.

SHE
WAS MY
CHEERFUL
PROTECTOR.

IT NEVER
OCCURRED
TO ME THAT
SHE COULD
DIE.

...I PROMISED
TO PAY MY
EXPENSES
MYSELF.

I'm
Tohru.

Thank
you,
Kyoko-
san.

I'm
TOHRU,
grandpa's
niece's
ready.

Kyoko-
san.

GRANDPA
LIVES
OFF A
PENSION,
SO...

I THOUGHT
IT WOULD
BE NICE TO
REMODEL
THE HOUSE
BEFORE THEY
ARRIVE.

MY DAUGHTER'S
FAMILY IS COMING TO
LIVE WITH US.

Good,
good!

Yes,
yes!

BUT
FOUR
MONTHS
LATER...

THAT
WAS IN
MAY.

I COULDN'T
BEAR TO
TROUBLE
THEM FOR
HOWEVER
MANY
MONTHS
IT MAY
TAKE TO
REMODEL!

UO-CHAN
LIVES IN
A SMALL
APARTMENT,
AND HANA-
CHAN IS IN
A FAMILY
OF FIVE.

DURING THE
REMODELING,
I'LL BE STAYING
AT THEIR PLACE.

I'M SORRY BUT
COULD YOU STAY
WITH A FRIEND
DURING THAT TIME?



MY HEAD
IS SPINNING JUST
FROM BEING
AROUND HIM

DON'T...

GET A
SWELLED
HEAD!

DON'T TAKE
ADVANTAGE
OF SOHMA-KUN'S
KINDNESS!



I WON'T!

"YOU SHOULDN'T
OVEREXERT
YOURSELF."



MY FATHER DIED
OF ILLNESS WHEN
I WAS THREE.

MOM WORKED
AND WORKED TO
SUPPORT US.

To-h-ru-
chaaaaaaaan.
Mama wants
sukiyaki.

MOM WAS
ALWAYS
THERE
FOR ME.



Okay.

SOHMA-KUN,
PLEASE
DON'T
WORRY ON
MY BEHALF.

BECAUSE
I'M SURE
MOM HAD
IT MUCH,
MUCH
WORSE.



SINCE SHE GOT HERE, WORK SURE HAS GOTTEN EASIER.

I'LL NEVER GIVE UP!

I CAN'T LET IT GET TO ME. I WILL NOT ALLOW FOR SADNESS. MY HOME IS MY CASTLE.

MY HOME IS MY CASTLE!



THAT'S BECAUSE YOU PUT PICKLES IN CURRY.

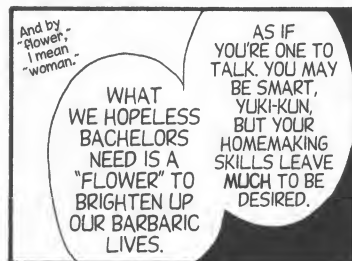
BUT YOU HATE MY COOKING.



SIGH TAKE-OUT FOOD EVERY NIGHT IS NO WAY TO LIVE.

MY, MY, LOOK AT THE TIME. I ALMOST FORGOT ABOUT DINNER.

THEN YOU MAKE DINNER, SHIGURE.



And by "flower" I mean "woman."

WHAT WE HOPELESS BACHELORS NEED IS A "FLOWER" TO BRIGHTEN UP OUR BARBARIC LIVES.

AS IF YOU'RE ONE TO TALK. YOU MAY BE SMART, YUKI-KUN, BUT YOUR HOMEMAKING SKILLS LEAVE MUCH TO BE DESIRED.



I can't get through.

ER...MISS, COULD YOU HURRY UP AND MOVE THESE?

YES, SIR! SORRY SIR!

EVEN IF INSTEAD OF DOOR-TO-DOOR SALESMEN...

Eh?! A high school girl?!

...I'M VISITED BY MOSQUITOES AND SLUGS!

EVEN IF A SIMPLE STORM THREATENS TO BLOW MY HOUSE AWAY, LIKE THE OTHER DAY!

EVEN IF IT MEANS HAVING NO MONEY AND LIVING IN A TENT THAT YOU BOUGHT ON SALE!



OKAY!

THEN IT HIT ME...

I'M GOING TO START LIVING BY MYSELF SOMEDAY, ANYWAY.

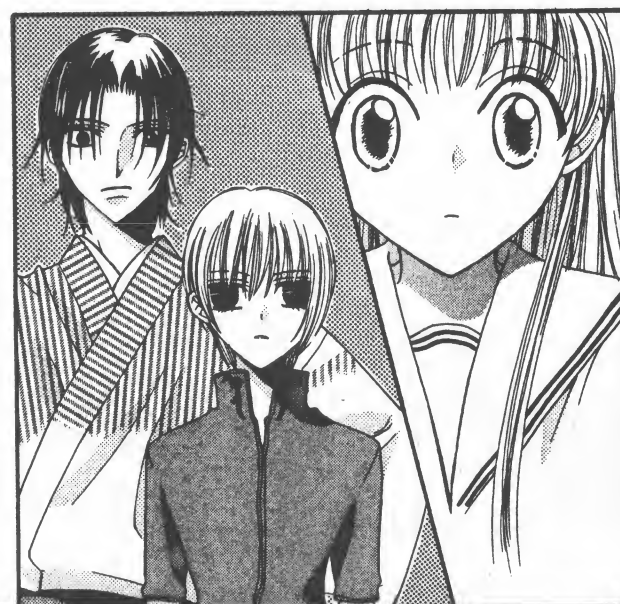
WHY DON'T I JUST START NOW?!



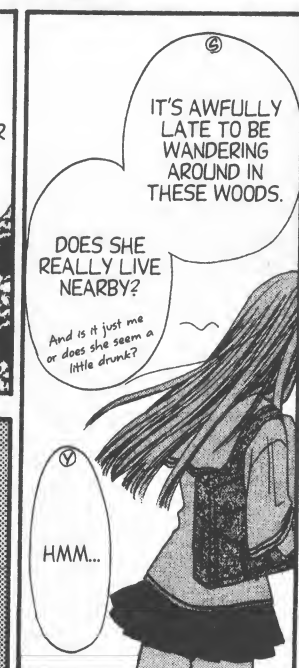
THAT'S RIGHT! YOU MAKE YOUR OWN LUCK. IT'S ALL IN HOW YOU THINK ABOUT THINGS.

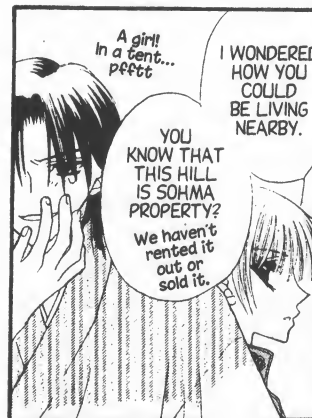
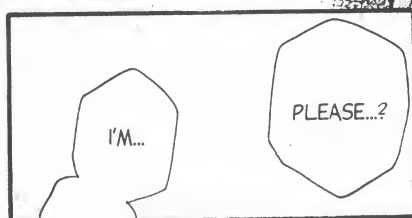
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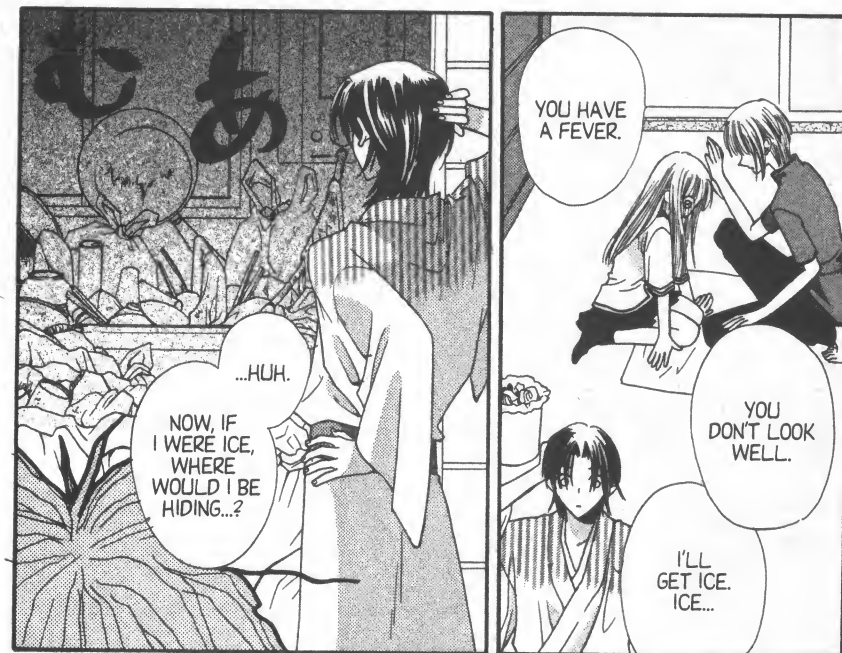
I get mail from people who started with "Furuba" asking me to introduce myself, so here I go:
 Natsuki Takaya (pen name) /
 July 7th/Cancer/
 Blood type A/
 Tokyo (I moved) /
 left-handed.
 People say that left-handers are natural students—not me! I couldn't study. I didn't ever feel like it, and when I did study, my grades stayed the same anyway. I like games and music and I'm not that interested in talking about myself. It's way more fun to talk about my favorite things and favorite characters. Like, "Pikachu is adorable!" (Ha ha!)



*Tohru is usually a boy's name.







↑ Drawn with my right hand.





OKAY?

LET'S
COME
BACK
WHEN
IT'S
LIGHT
OUT.

IF
THERE'S
ANOTHER
LANDSLIDE
AND YOU GET
HURT...

...YOUR
MOTHER
WILL BE IN
EVEN MORE
PAIN.



AGAIN.

I LOST
MY HOME
AGAIN. MY
CASTLE...



I'M
SORRY...

IT'S
PROBABLY
FATIGUE.
YOU'VE BEEN
PUSHING
YOURSELF
TOO HARD.

YUKI-KUN'S
LOOKING FOR
SOME ICE
RIGHT NOW.

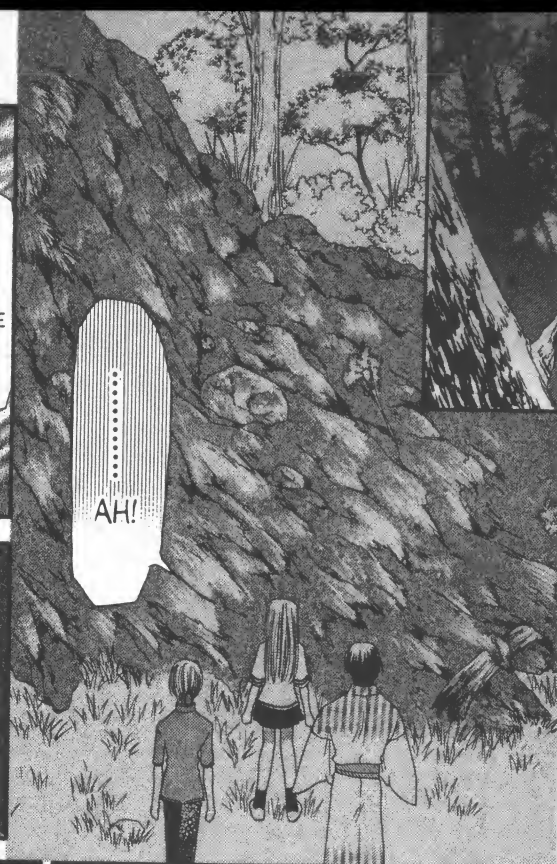


TH-
TH-
THIS IS
TERRIBLE
...

MY
PICTURE
OF MOTHER
WAS IN
THAT
TENT!

MOM!

HONDA-
SAN?



AH!



SHE'S
IN PAIN!

MOM...!

I HAVE
TO SAVE
HER!

BUT,
BUT--
MOM!

BUT!

HONDA-SAN,
CALM DOWN.
YOU'RE NOT
WELL.



I DIDN'T SEE HER BACK AS SHE LEFT FOR WORK.

...I FORGOT TO TELL HER TO COME HOME SAFE.

SHE WORKED SO HARD, AND...



...I CAN STILL MAKE IT UP TO MY MOM.

BUT IT'S NOT TOO LATE! EVEN WITH MY GRADES AND MY HOUSE BEING BLOWN AWAY...



...SO I'LL GRADUATE... FOR HER.

SHE WANTED ME TO FINISH HIGH SCHOOL...

...BUT I CAN LIVE THE LIFE SHE WANTED FOR ME.

I CAN'T BRING HER BACK...



I MISSED OUT ON A LOT OF OPPORTUNITIES BECAUSE OF IT.

SO I WANT YOU TO GO TO HIGH SCHOOL AND HAVE FUN FOR ME.

I failed all the tests. And it was lousy being stuck with all the grad-lings?

SHE WANTED A BETTER LIFE FOR ME.

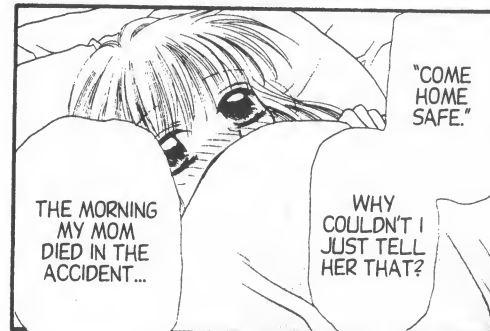


TELL ME, ABOUT IT.

YOU POOR CHILD.

NO. I'VE BEEN THROUGH...

DOES IT HURT?



THE MORNING MY MOM DIED IN THE ACCIDENT...

"COME HOME SAFE."

WHY COULDN'T I JUST TELL HER THAT?

...WORSE.

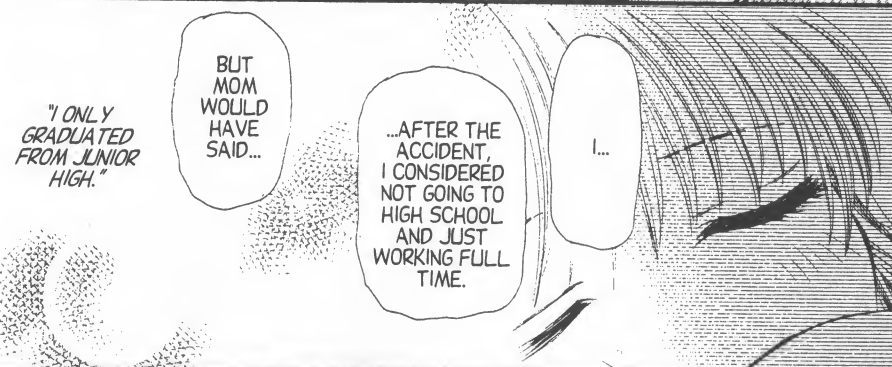


I ALWAYS DID-EXCEPT THAT ONCE.

THAT WAS THE ONLY MORNING I DIDN'T TELL HER, "COME HOME SAFE."

I STAYED UP ALL NIGHT STUDYING AND I OVER-SLEPT.

...I HAD A QUIZ.



"I ONLY GRADUATED FROM JUNIOR HIGH."

BUT MOM WOULD HAVE SAID...

...AFTER THE ACCIDENT, I CONSIDERED NOT GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL AND JUST WORKING FULL TIME.

I...



...BUT YOUR SPIRIT IS DIFFERENT FROM TOHRU-KUN'S. THERE'S REALLY NO COMPARISON.

WELL, YOU ARE SPOILED...



AND IF YOU THINK THAT'S INCREDIBLE...

...THEN YOU REALLY DON'T APPRECIATE TOHRU-KUN.



...I'M ACTING LIKE A SPOILED BRAT.

IT'S PATHETIC.



CAN YOU TAKE CARE OF HER? I'M GOING OUT.

ALONE?

SHOULD I GO WITH YOU? IT'S TOO MUCH TO DO ALONE.

WHERE? DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE GOING TO GO DIG UP HER THINGS?



YOU'RE RIGHT.



WERE YOU LISTENING?

IS SHE ASLEEP?



I'VE ALWAYS WANTED...

...TO RUN AWAY FROM THE SOHMA FAMILY.

INCREDIBLE? HOW?



I COULD HAVE GONE TO THE WOODS,

BUT I ONLY HAD THE COURAGE TO RUN AS FAR AS ANOTHER SOHMA HOUSE.

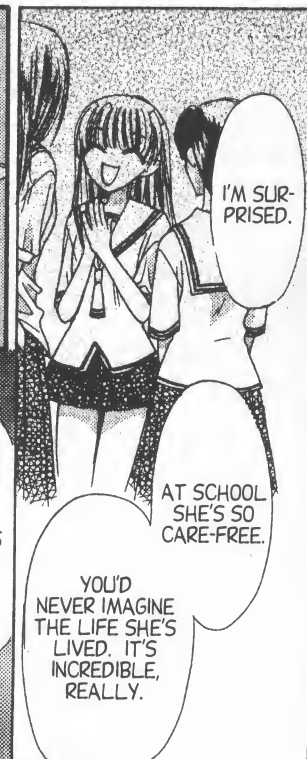
I COULD HAVE LIVED IN A TENT LIKE HONDA-SAN...



THIS IS NO TIME TO... LOSE TO...

THAT'S MY GOAL.

...A FEVER...



I'M SURPRISED.

AT SCHOOL SHE'S SO CARE-FREE.

YOU'D NEVER IMAGINE THE LIFE SHE'S LIVED. IT'S INCREDIBLE, REALLY.



"...YOU'LL
CATCH UP."

"YOU DON'T
HAVE TO
PUSH
YOURSELF
SO HARD."

"YOU
HAVE A
FEVER
AGAIN."

"SOMEDAY..."

"TOHRU,
YOU MUST
ALWAYS BE
YOURSELF."

BUT...

...THIS TIME,
IF I DON'T
PUSH MYSELF
A LITTLE...

...I'LL
DIE
ALONE.

"...AND DO
THINGS AT
YOUR OWN
PACE."

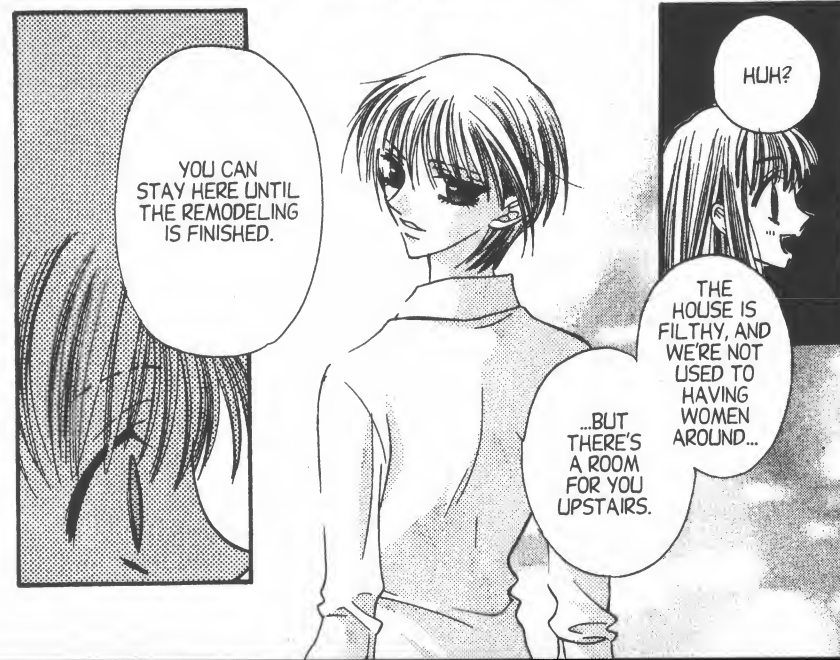


I NEVER
SAID...

...I WAS
GOING
ALONE.

...TOHRU.

BE
CAREFUL.







カラ...

COME TO
THINK OF IT,
WHERE ARE
SOHMA-KUN'S
PARENTS?

Are
they living
somewhere
else?

IT'S ALL
TOO GOOD TO
BE TRUE.

I HOPE MY
STAYING
HERE
DOESN'T
CAUSE
THEM TOO
MUCH
TROUBLE.

SUDDENLY,
I WAS
LIVING IN
SOHMA-KUN'S
HOUSE.

And
even
borrowing
his
clothes!

IT FELT
LIKE A
DREAM.

It
really is
stuffy in
here.

I'll
open the
window.



ARE
YOU SURE
IT'S OKAY FOR
HER TO STAY
WITH US?
SHE IS A
GIRL.

YOU
REALIZE I
WAS KIDDING
ABOUT THE
"FLOWER."

YOU WERE
JUMPING
FOR JOY
JUST A
MINUTE
AGO.

SOME-
HOW...

EVERYTHING
WILL BE
FINE, AS
LONG AS SHE
DOESN'T HUG
ANYONE.

DON'T
WORRY.

"TOHRU,
YOU MUST
ALWAYS
BE YOUR-
SELF."

SOHMA-KUN...

...REALLY IS
A MYSTERY.

...IT ALL
HAPPENED
SO FAST.

Like I
said...

I'll
do my best!
I am at the
mercy of your
hospitality.



YOU'RE
TOO
WEAK.



The ceiling...
Is he hurt...?
Wh-who...
Well, hello,
orange-head...

Confused



WHEN ARE
YOU GOING
TO LEARN?

SERI-
OUSLY...
MUST
YOU BREAK
SOMETHING
EVERYTIME
YOU COME
HOME?



BRACE
YOURSELF!

NO--

P-PLEASE
STOP!



WHY YOU!
IF YOU
THINK I'M
THE SAME
AS BEFORE,
YOU'RE IN
FOR A WORLD
OF PAIN!

TODAY
I'M TAKING
YOU DOWN!



...RAT-
BOY?

ARE YOU
READY
FOR ME
TO BREAK
YOUR
NECK...



EH?

...YO.



Ah!

...I'M SO SORRY, ARE YOU OKAY? EXCUSE ME...



YUKI-KUN?

I HEARD THE NOISE...

IS KYO BACK?

....



CAN'T WE DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT IDIOT?

OH MY.

"...AND WAS ALWAYS TRYING TO CATCH THE RAT."

....



AH!

AH?!

HYAAAAH!



AH!

"AND..."



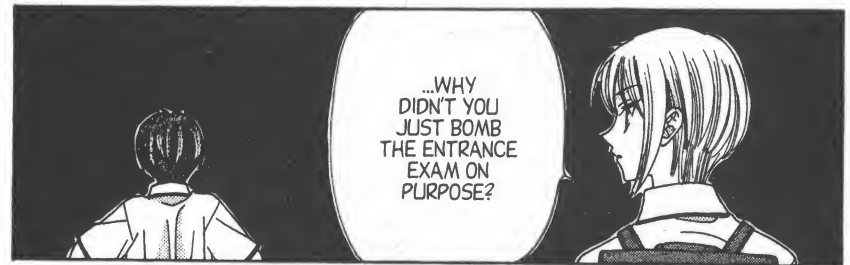
...WAS ANGRY THAT HE HAD BEEN DECEIVED...

...THE CAT, UNABLE TO ATTEND THE BANQUET...

AAAAHHH!

Chapter 2

Omake Theater 2: It's part of his charm.



Number 3:

Now I'm going to talk about games. I once wrote that I wouldn't play *Sakura Wars 2*... well, I played it. And... **IT WAS AWESOME!** I'm hooked. Seriously, it's really good. And I ended up playing the first one, too (because I was so obsessed). It's weird that I'm more into *SW2* than some of the games I worked on!

(Of course, I do all the best endings.)

It's also weird that K-chan (who has been a *Sakura Wars* fan from the beginning of time and is in love with Ren and Ohgami-san) and I are now having success with those two characters' storylines.

K-chan: thank you always for everything!



ULTRA SPECIAL BLAH BLAH BLAH, NUMBER 1

I got a letter from some smart aleck reminding me, "Didn't you say you wouldn't use English titles?" Well... I guess I did say that... And, actually, this book did have a Japanese title at first. But things happened (nothing really big) and it became "Fruits Basket." Sometimes that's just how it works.



THEY'RE ALL ANIMALS!

HUH?

Heavy animals...!



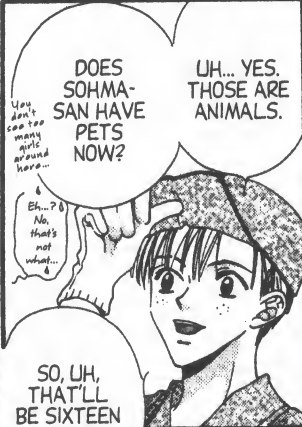
AAAAH--!

GREAT! NOW HOW ARE WE GONNA EXPLAIN THIS MESS?



WELL, THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE.

AH HA HA! WHAT A SMART DOG!



DOES SOHMA-SAN HAVE PETS NOW?

UH... YES. THOSE ARE ANIMALS.

You don't see too many girls around here...

Eh...? No, that's not what...

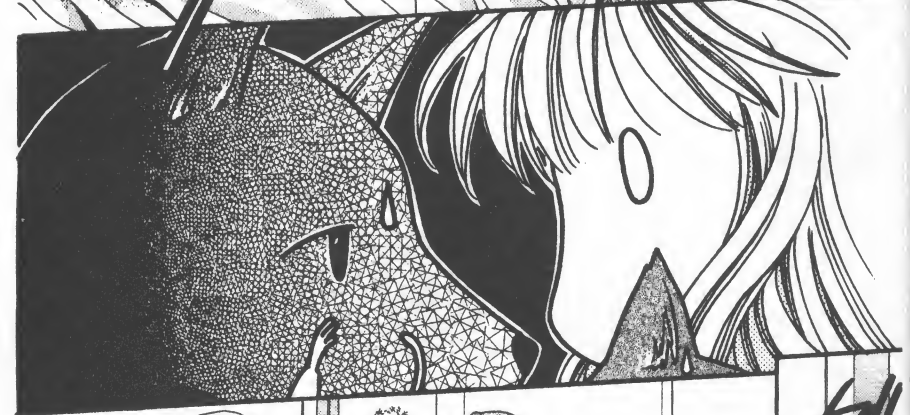
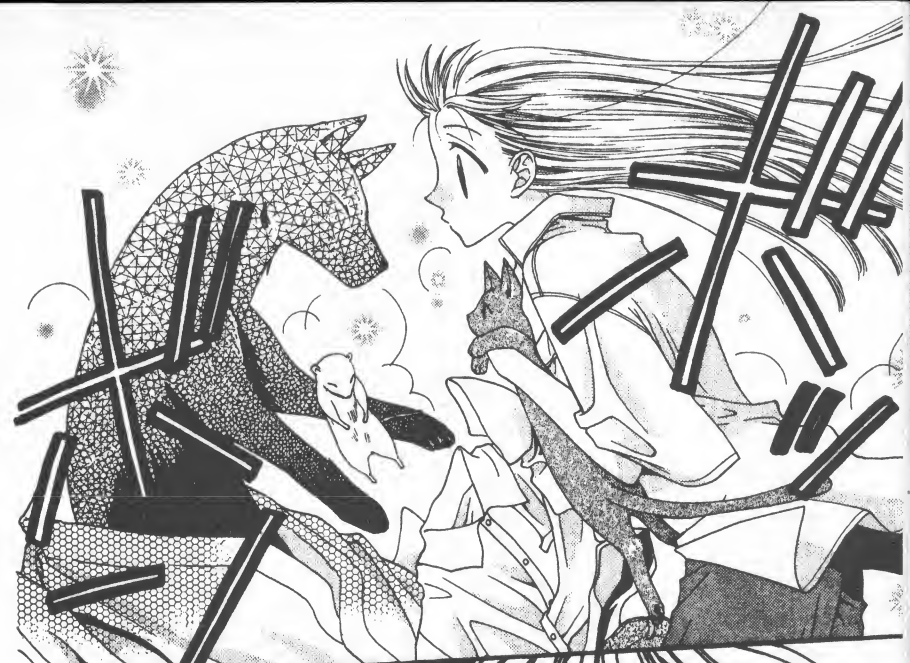
SO, UH, THAT'LL BE SIXTEEN HUNDRED YE--



DON'T BLAME ME. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO GOT US INTO IT STUPID CAT.



Shi's wallet



SOHMA-SAAAAAN?

HELLO? CHOPPAYA DELIVERY
DID SOMEBODY ORDER BREAKFAST?



FOR
HUNDREDS
OF YEARS,
THE SOHMA
FAMILY...

OX, TIGER,
RABBIT,
DRAGON,
SNAKE...

...HORSE,
SHEEP,
MONKEY,
ROOSTER,
AND BOAR.

YES...
JUST
LIKE THE
CHINESE
ZODIAC.

WE DON'T HAVE
ANY SPECIAL
POWERS OR
ANYTHING--

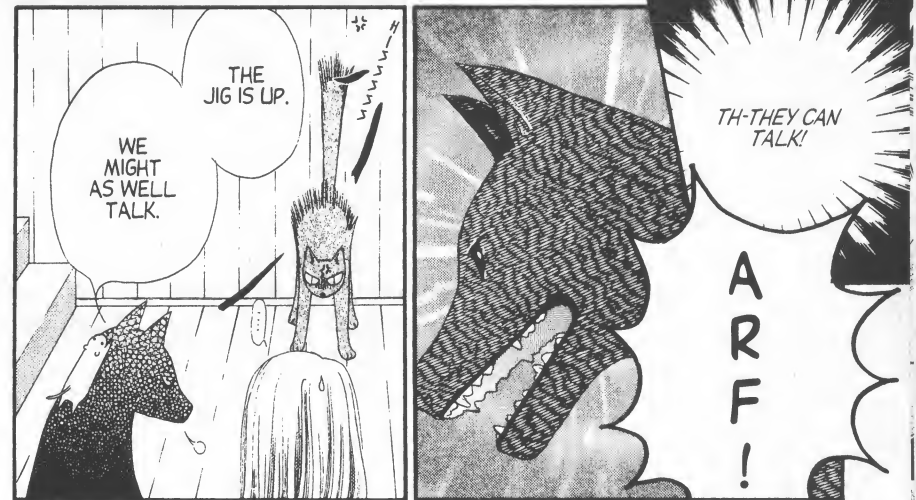
...HAS BEEN
POSSESSED
BY TWELVE
VENGEFUL
SPIRITS THAT
CORRESPOND
TO THE
ZODIAC.



AFTER
SOME TIME,
WE CHANGE
BACK INTO
HUMANS.

...BUT WHEN
OUR BODIES ARE
WEAK, AND, FOR
SOME REASON,
WHEN WE'RE
HUGGED BY
SOMEONE OF
THE OPPOSITE
GENDER, WE
TRANSFORM.

WELL,
WE CAN
COMMUNICATE
WITH OUR
RESPECTIVE
ANIMALS...



THE
JIG IS UP.

WE
MIGHT
AS WELL
TALK.

TH- THEY CAN
TALK!

A
R
F
!



AND
THERE ARE
TEN OTHERS
IN THE SOHMA
FAMILY WHO
ARE ALSO
POSSESSED.

IN A
NUT-
SHELL...

WE'RE
POSSESSED
BY THEIR
VENGEFUL
SPIRITS.

...I'M
THE DOG,
YUKI'S THE
RAT...

...AND
KYO
SOHMA
IS THE
CAT.



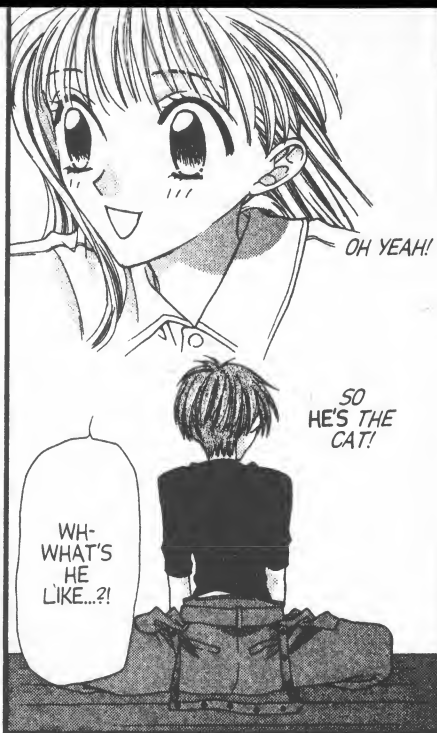
What a disgrace!

HE SPENDS ALL HIS TIME STUDYING MARTIAL ARTS, BUT HE DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE YOU WERE RIGHT BEHIND HIM!

Kyo's such an idiot!

HE SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST FELT YOUR PRESENCE!

I HOPE HE PLANS ON TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS MESS.



OH YEAH!

SO HE'S THE CAT!

WH-WHAT'S HE LIKE...?!



I CAN'T HELP IT IF PEOPLE COME SNEAKING UP ON ME!

WHAT'S SHE... WHAT'S A GIRL DOING HERE, ANYWAY?!

EH?

HA, HA, HA! HE'S LIKE A LOVESTRUCK FOOL-- HE ONLY HAS EYES FOR YUKI-KUN!

SHUT UP! DON'T SAY IT LIKE THAT!



Eek!
Eek!
Eek!

BUT THEN WE'RE COMPLETELY NAKED.



THEY'RE POSSESSED BY THE SPIRITS OF THE ZODIAC.

I'VE LEARNED A TERRIBLE SECRET.

SOHMA-KUN DIDN'T WANT ANYONE TO FIND OUT.

THAT'S WHY HE PUSHED AWAY THE SECOND YEAR WHO TRIED TO HUG HIM.

YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO BE A CAT. WHAT DO YOU THINK NOW THAT YOU'VE MET HIM IN PERSON?

BY THE WAY, TOHRU-KUN.

Whisper
whisper



FEELING BETTER?

SORRY ABOUT THAT. DIDN'T MEAN TO SHOW YOU THINGS YOU WEREN'T READY FOR.

I'M GETTING THERE.



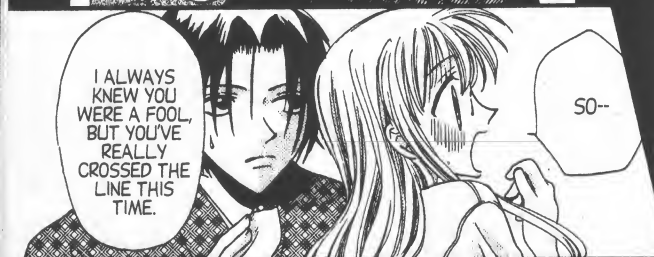
TOHRU-KUN,
YOU'RE BLEED-
ING!

Huh?

BLEEDING?!

...

AH.



I ALWAYS
KNEW YOU
WERE A FOOL,
BUT YOU'VE
REALLY
CROSSED THE
LINE THIS
TIME.

SO--



...KYO.

JUST THIS
ONCE I'LL
OVERLOOK
YOUR
STUPIDITY...

...AND GIVE
YOU A REAL
FIGHT...

MAKE
THIS
WORTH
MY
TIME.



YOU'RE AN
OUTCAST,
REMEMBER?

WHETHER
THERE'S A
WOMAN IN THIS
HOUSE OR NOT IS
NONE OF YOUR
CONCERN.

WATCH
YOUR
MOUTH.

WHAT
SHOULD
I DO? WE
HAVEN'T
EVEN MET
AND HE'S
MAD AT
ME!



WHACK?

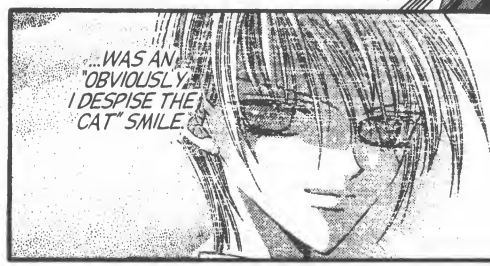


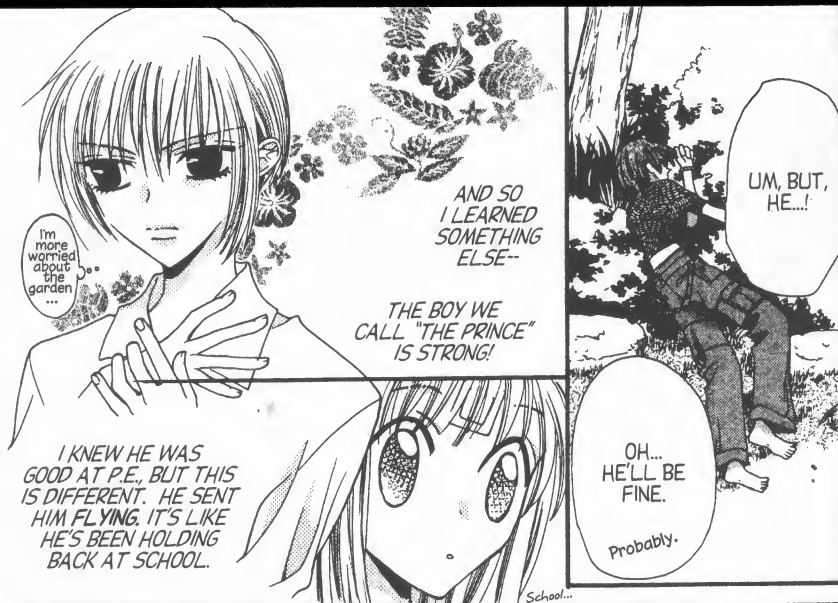
...



...UP!

SHUT...







YOU COULD AT LEAST FIX THE ROOF.

I'M GOING TO SCHOOL TOO.

STUPID CAT.



I HAVE NO SUCH PLANS.

LAST TIME THERE WERE TOO MANY PEOPLE INVOLVED-- WE HAD TO TAKE STEPS.



SHUT UP!



KYO-KUN, LOOK AFTER THINGS WHILE WE'RE GONE.

AND PLEASE, DON'T DISAPPEAR AGAIN.

OH, AND DO APOLOGIZE TO TOHRU-KUN LATER.



...I MUST TELL AKITO-SAN, THE HEAD OF THE SOHMA FAMILY, WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE.

BUT FOR MY PART...



THE SOHMA FAMILY SECRET HAS BEEN REVEALED.



YES, YES YOU MADE A PROMISE TO YOUR MOTHER.

I'M SORRY ABOUT THIS...

...BUT I HAVE TO GET TO SCHOOL.



A LITTLE CHATTY THIS MORNING, AREN'T YOU? YOU TOLD HER A LOT ABOUT US.

Well, I'm off.



YOU PLAN ON HAVING HONDA-SAN'S MEMORIES SUPPRESSED, DON'T YOU?

LIKE THE LAST TIME.



HEAD OF THE FAMILY... HE MUST BE A VERY IMPORTANT PERSON.

OF COURSE. I UNDERSTAND.

KEEP
DOOR
CLOSED



YOU
DIDN'T
TELL
THEM, DID
YOU?

YOUR
FRIENDS.

ABOUT US?



HONDA-
SAN.



NO,
IT'S NOT
THAT.

I...WOULD
NEVER TELL
ANYONE!

MY MOM
ALWAYS TOLD ME
THAT GOSSIPING
IS WRONG!



WHAT KIND
OF PERSON
WAS HER
MOTHER
...?

No,
I told
you
that's
not it.

I'm pretty sure
my mom did
stuff like
that.

I PROMISE!
I'LL SIGN
MY NAME IN
BLOOD OR BURN
MYSELF WITH
A CIGARETTE OR
ANYTHING YOU
WANT!

TELL
THEM...? NO.

I
DIDN'T-!



AM I
MAKING YOU
NERVOUS?! I'M
A LIABILITY,
AREN'T I?!

PITY YOU
WASHED
YOUR
UNIFORM.

OH
NO...

THE MUD
LOOKED
SO GOOD
ON YOU.



YOU LOOKED
TERRIBLE.
WHERE DID
YOU FALL,
ANYWAY?

In
a pig
pen??

THANK
GODNESS...

...I WAS
ABLE TO
BORROW
THE
SCHOOL'S
WASHING
MACHINE.



I-I'M
GOING
TO GO
CHANGE
IN THE
LOCKER
ROOM.

I can't
tell her
I'm staying
in the
Prince's
house.

What
a lame
put-
down.

THE
PRINCE
IS LATE
TODAY, TOO.
NO WONDER
THEY'RE
MORE
SUSPICIOUS
THAN
USUAL.

THANK
YOU, HANA-
CHAN.

Eheh!
That's
okay.

You
want me
to go with
you?



...

YOU WOULD
BE FORCED
TO LIVE
ALONE.

I CANNOT
DEFY AKITO'S
WISHES.

WHAT HE
DECIDES IS
WHAT MUST
BE DONE.

SOHMA-
KUN...?



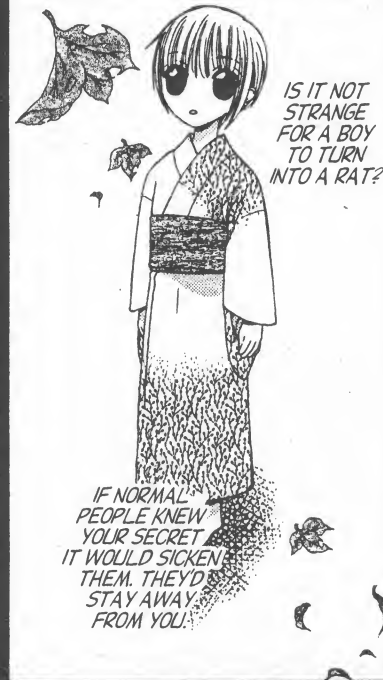
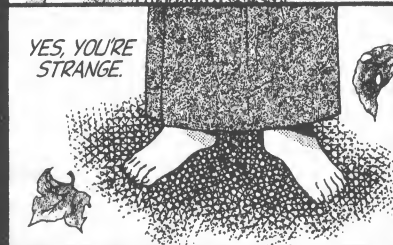
SO...
I'M SORRY.



AKITO.

AM I SO STRANGE
THAT WE HAVE
TO ERASE PEOPLE'S
MEMORIES TO
HIDE IT?

YES, YOU'RE
STRANGE.



IS IT NOT
STRANGE
FOR A BOY
TO TURN
INTO A RAT?

IF NORMAL
PEOPLE KNEW
YOUR SECRET
IT WOULD SICKEN
THEM. THEY'D
STAY AWAY
FROM YOU.



...BUT YOUR
MEMORIES
MIGHT HAVE TO
BE ERASED.

Huh
?!

I'M SORRY...

YOU'RE GOING
TO ALL THIS
TROUBLE TO
KEEP OUR
SECRET. BUT
IT MAY NOT
BE ENOUGH.

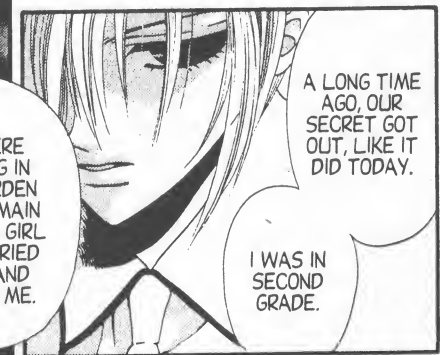


IT CAUSED
SUCH A
COMMOTION THAT
EVENTUALLY THEY
HAD TO SUPPRESS
THE MEMORIES
OF EVERYONE
WHO WAS
THERE.

AKITO
...



I SAY "ERASED,"
BUT IT'S MORE
LIKE HYPNOSIS.



WE WERE
PLAYING IN
THE GARDEN
AT THE MAIN
HOUSE. A GIRL
GOT CARRIED
AWAY AND
HUGGED ME.

A LONG TIME
AGO, OUR
SECRET GOT
OUT, LIKE IT
DID TODAY.

I WAS IN
SECOND
GRADE.

PLEASE,
DO WHATEVER
WILL MAKE YOUR
FAMILY MOST
COMFORTABLE.

I FOUND OUT
SUCH A BIG
SECRET...

...THAT
YOU HAVE
TO TALK TO THE
HEAD OF YOUR
FAMILY ABOUT
IT. YOU CAN'T
HELP IT.

I'LL BE
SAD TO FORGET,
THOUGH.

THERE IS
ONE THING--
PLEASE...
IF MY
MEMORIES
ARE
ERASED...

...WILL
YOU STILL
BE MY
FRIEND?

THEY TOOK ME
INTO THEIR HOUSE
UNCONDITIONALLY
WHEN THEY FOUND
OUT I WAS LIVING
IN A TENT.

I WAS SO
VERY HAPPY.

BUT...
I'LL BEAR
WITH IT.



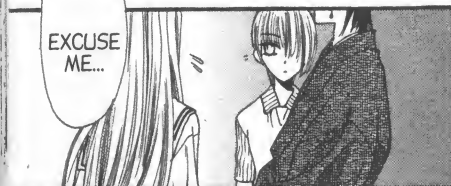






NOOO...
DON'T
BE
SILLY!

REALLY,
YUKI-KUN.
YOU MUST
LEARN TO
BE MORE
TRUSTING OF
PEOPLE--



EXCUSE
ME...



UM...
IT'S
STRANGE
TO SAY
THIS
AGAIN,
BUT...

...I AM
AT YOUR
MERCY.

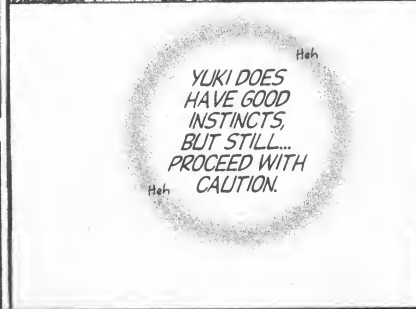
THANK
YOU ONCE
AGAIN FOR
TAKING CARE
OF ME.



I'LL
TRUST THIS
TOHRU-SAN.



THIS MAY
EVEN PROVE
FORTUITOUS
FOR YUKI AND
KYO...AND
FOR ME.



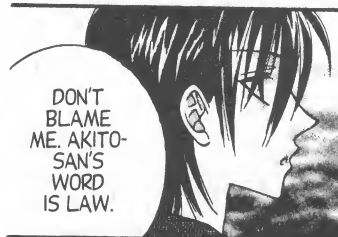
YUKI DOES
HAVE GOOD
INSTINCTS,
BUT STILL...
PROCEED WITH
CAUTION.



HE WANTS
KYO-KUN TO
STAY HERE,
TOO.

I WON'T
LOSE MY
MEMORIES!

THERE
IS ONE
MORE
THING--



DON'T
BLAME
ME. AKITO-
SAN'S
WORD
IS LAW.



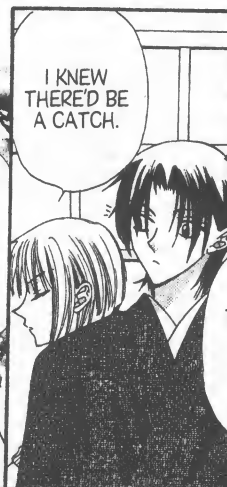
I HAVE TO
LIVE UNDER
THE SAME
ROOF AS
THAT DAMN
YUKI?!

WHAT?



BUT TO
INVOLVE
TOHRU...

YOU AND
AKITO...
AREN'T
SCHEMING
ANYTHING
ARE YOU?

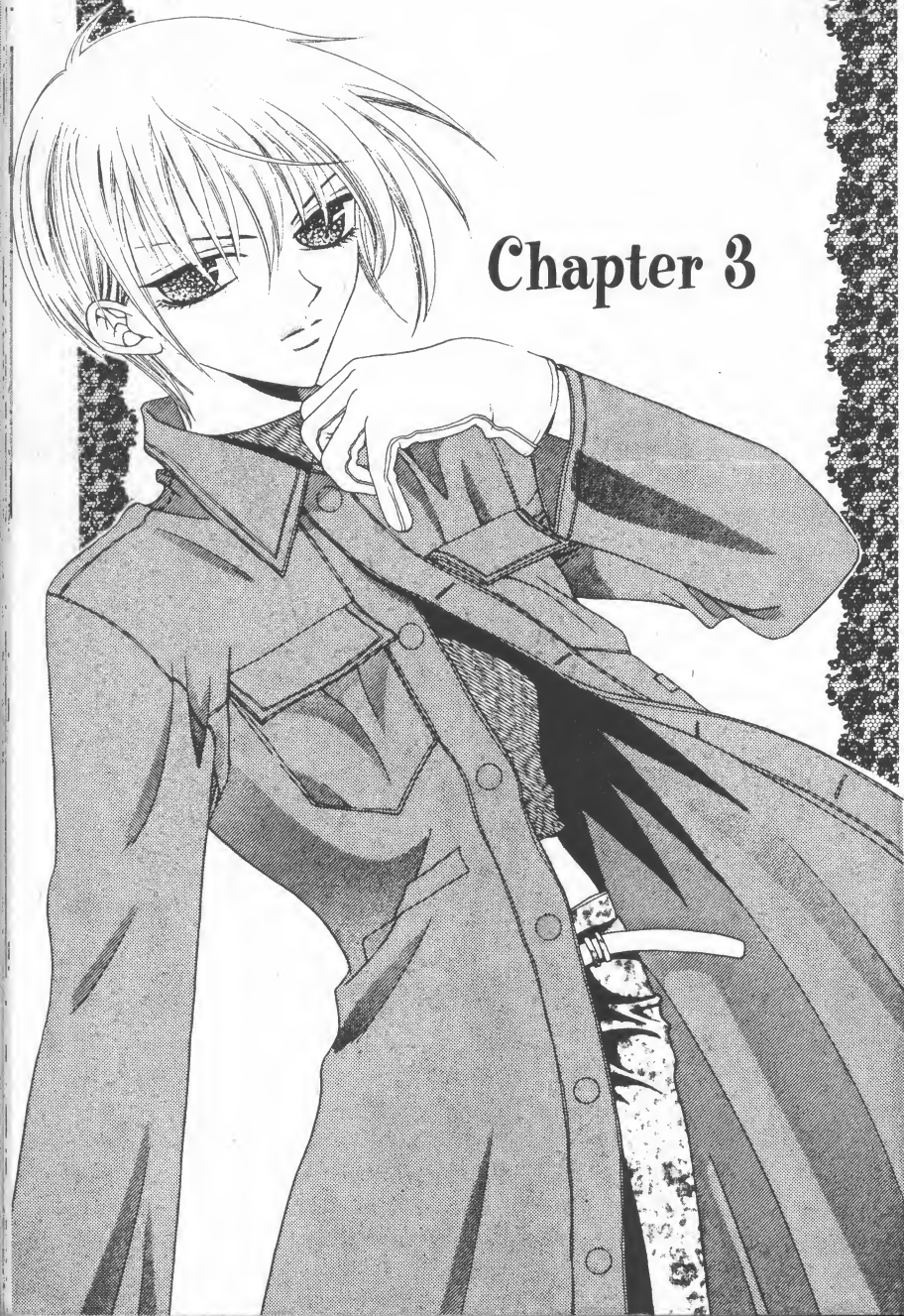


I KNEW
THERE'D BE
A CATCH.

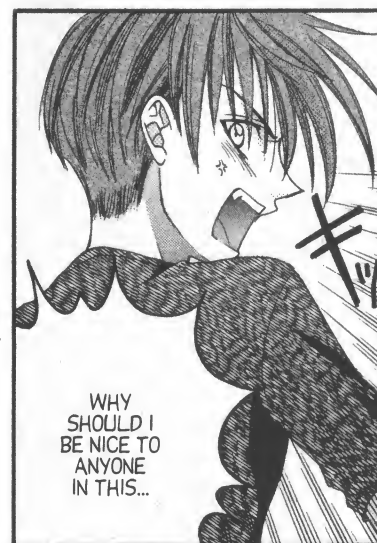


YOU'VE
GOT TO BE
KIDDING ME!
DAMNIT,
AKITO!

HE'S
TRYING TO
COLLAR
THAT
STUPID
CAT.



Chapter 3



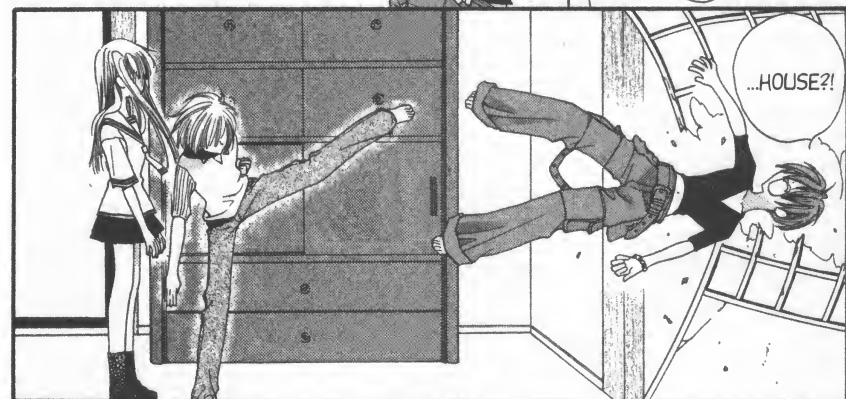
WHY
SHOULD I
BE NICE TO
ANYONE
IN THIS...

I AM
IN DEBT TO
YOU, TOO,
KYO-SAN.



YEAH...

OUR
MERCY
...



...HOUSE?!



...I, TOHRU
HONDA, WAS
TAKEN INTO THE
CARE OF THE
SOHMA FAMILY.

We
gave
away
your
room.

Sleep
on
the
roof.
Um...

ぎゃあ

I just
fixed
this
door!
Fix it
again.

AND THAT
WAS HOW...

ぎゃあ



ULTRA SPECIAL BLAH BLAH BLAH, NUMBER 2

A martial artist has to have a firm body. They have to have muscles. But Yuki and Kyo are scrawny (ha ha). That's just because I don't like drawing muscles very much. I prefer a slender aesthetic for my men. Don't worry too much about it. Not that people had been pointing it out to me; I was just worried about it myself.



JUST LISTEN TO ME FOR A SECOND, KYO!

I knew of one when I was little, but girls weren't allowed.

I can't wait!

SHUT UP!



MAN, YOUR PERSUASIVE SKILLS SUCK!

WELL, YES, NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, I DO-BUT THIS IS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!

DO YOU REALLY GET THAT MUCH ENJOYMENT FROM PLAYING WITH PEOPLE'S LIVES?!

I HATE THIS!



KYO!

NOT HUNGRY!

UM, WELCOME HOME.

DINNER'S--



IT'S LIKE A FAIRY TALE.

YOU WENT OUT EARLIER, TOO, DIDN'T YOU, SOHMA-KUN?

WERE YOU SHOPPING?

...WHO TRANSFORMS INTO THE RAT FROM THE ZODIAC LEGEND.



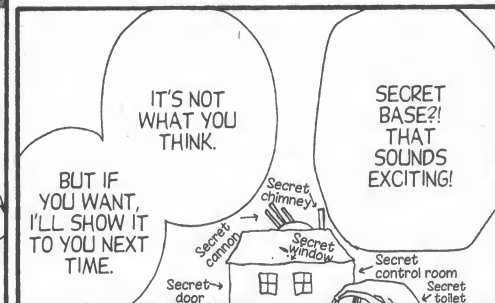
REALLY? ARE YOU SURE?!

I'M SO HAPPY! A SECRET BASE!



OH, I WAS IN THE BACK-YARD.

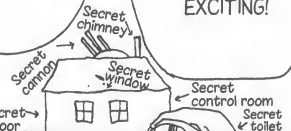
...IN MY SECRET BASE.



IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK.

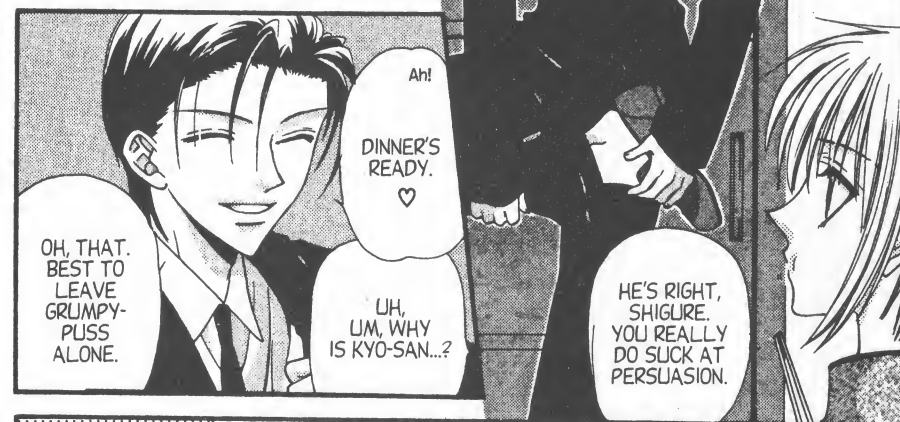
BUT IF YOU WANT, I'LL SHOW IT TO YOU NEXT TIME.

SECRET BASE?! THAT SOUNDS EXCITING!



Number 4:

I finished "Romance of the Three Kingdoms," "Black Matrix" and "Pretty League." My characters were so strong that I won all the battles. I'm happy, but a little dramatic tension would've been nice, too (ha ha). I'll finish "Tokyo Friend" soon, too. It's a shame that all the main characters are guys, it would've been nice to play a girl! The one I'm waiting for now is "Teigaku Graph." (K-chan is looking forward to it more than I am.) I'm looking forward to "Knight R." And "Hey You, Pikachu!" Where will I ever find the time? I'll just sleep less! Then faint.





WHERE?!

LOOK, OVER THERE!
THE GUY WITH
THE ORANGE
HAIR.

WHERE
IS HE?!

HUH?!
THEY DON'T
LOOK ALIKE
AT ALL!

HE'S
CUTE!

IS THAT
HIS NATURAL
COLOR?

HEY, ARE YOU
REALLY SOHMA-
KUN'S COUSIN?!

DO YOU
GUYS GET
ALONG?!

HE'S
GETTING
SCARED..!

ANYWAY,
I THINK KYO-
SAN HATES
ME.

IT'S
KIND OF
SAD.

I FINALLY
MET THE CAT
FROM THE
ZODIAC...

SIP



TRAINING?

LIKE
SITTING UNDER
A WATERFALL
AND WRESTLING
BEARS? THAT
KIND OF
TRAINING?

HMMM...
WELL,
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT...
I GUESS.

THAT
IDIOT.

HE WANTS
TO BEAT
SOHMA-KUN
SO BADLY
THAT HE
WENT
TO THE
MOUNTAINS
TO TRAIN.

IS IT BECAUSE HE
HOLDS A GRUDGE
ABOUT BEING
TRICKED, LIKE IN
THE STORY?

I FEEL
LIKE IT
WOULD BE
WRONG TO
ASK KYO-
SAN.

WHAT IS
HE GOING
TO DO...
WITH HIS
TRAINING?

KYO
WANTS TO
BEAT YUKI-
KUN IN A
FIGHT.

EVER
SINCE
THEY WERE
LITTLE, HE HAS
BEEN KYO'S
RIVAL.



HEY,
WHERE
ARE YOU
GOING?

LET'S
TALK!

HANA-CHAN IS
VERY POWERFUL
TO SENSE THINGS
NO ONE ELSE CAN.
BUT I HAVE TO
ADMIT, I NEVER
UNDERSTAND HER
WAVE REPORT!

SOHMA-
KUN?



KYO!

SOHMA-KUN,
WHAT'S
WRONG?



JUST....
CHILL,
OKAY?

LET
GO!



OW!
THAT
HURTS!

KUGAAGAH!



I'M
SORRY,
SEMPAI.
HE IS MY
COUSIN, BUT
WE'RE NOT
CLOSE.



I DON'T
EVEN SPEAK
TO HIM.

That
smile...

HIS
HAIR IS
CERTAINLY
INTERESTING.



YUKI-KUN!

IS IT
TRUE YOUR
COUSIN JUST
TRANSFERRED
HERE?
INTRODUCE
US!



THE SAME,
THE VERY
SAME...

I FEEL
THE SAME
WAVES FROM
HIM AS I DO
FROM YUKI
SOHMA.

THESE WAVES
I SENSE...
WHAT DO
THEY MEAN?



SO
DIFFERENT
FROM THE
OTHERS...
ALMOST
INHUMAN...

Hey,
that's
rude.



IT'S A
LITTLE
LIKE KYOKO-
SAN'S HAIR
COLOR.

Kyoko-san's Mother

THEY'RE
THE SAME.

NOW
THAT YOU
MENTION IT,
IT IS.



IF YOU
ACT LIKE
AN IDIOT,
IT CAUSES
PROBLEMS
FOR ME.

HEY.

USE
YOUR
HEAD,
WILL
YOU?



I WANT
OUT OF
THE SOHMA
CAGE, EVEN
JUST A
LITTLE.

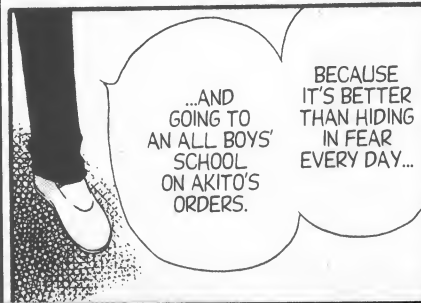
I CAN'T
UNDERSTAND
WHY YOU WANT
SO BADLY TO
LIVE IN THAT
CAGE.



ARE YOU
INSANE?

WHY
DO YOU
GO TO A
SCHOOL...

... THAT'S
CRAWLING
WITH
GIRLS?



BECAUSE
IT'S BETTER
THAN HIDING
IN FEAR
EVERY DAY...

...AND
GOING TO
AN ALL BOYS'
SCHOOL
ON AKITO'S
ORDERS.



LEAVE
ME
ALONE!

EEEEK!!

STOP!
THIS IS THE
SECOND
FLOOR!



SPECIAL?
HE'S A
FREAK!
THIS
IS THE
SECOND
FLOOR!

PROS
AND
CONS

OOOH!
HOW DARE
HE PICK ON
A GIRL!

DID
YOU SEE
THAT?!
JUST LIKE
SOHMA-
KUN'S
COUSIN
TO BE
SPECIAL!

A
M
A
Z
I
N
G
!



Ha ha! It's not every
day you see a guy
jump out the second
floor window.

INTERESTING
GUY.



...BEAT YOU!

BECOME ONE OF THE ZODIAC?

NO!

YOU MUSTN'T....!

I WILL...



P-PEOPLE GET IN TROUBLE FOR FIGHTING IN SCHOOL....

...BUT YOU CAN'T KEEP FIGHTING.

I KNOW YOU'RE ANGRY...

I'M SORRY!



...A RAT WOULD NEVER UNDERSTAND!

YOU...

I'LL BEAT YOU AND BECOME ONE OF THE ZODIAC!

I WON'T BE SHUNNED BY THE SOHMA FAMILY ANY LONGER!

ONE OF THE ZODIAC...

THIS TIME...

...I WILL BEAT YOU!!



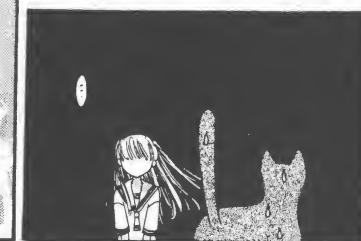
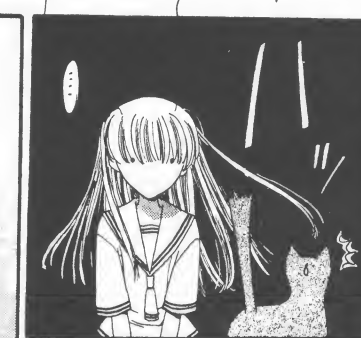
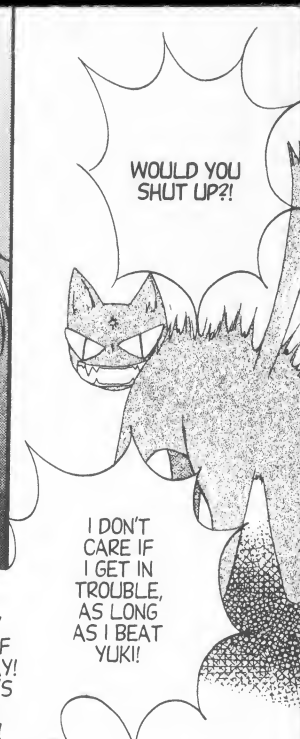
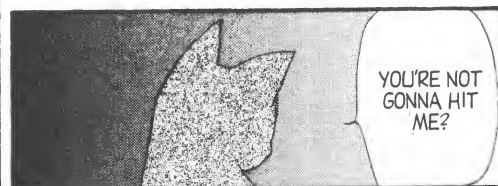
Ah! There they are!



I MEANT
IT.

I REALLY
WAS
CRYING.

WHEN GOD AND THE
TWELVE ANIMALS
WERE ENJOYING THE
BANQUET ON THE
FAR OFF MOUNTAIN...





AND?

YOU CUT
YOUR FIRST
DAY OF
CLASS?

LET ME
GUESS. YOU
TRIED TO
FIGHT YUKI-
KUN AND
LOST. AGAIN.



NO,
REALLY,
JUST NOW...
THIS CORNER...
OUCH!

IT HURT
SO MUCH
I STARTED
CRYING.

O W !

IF I DIDN'T
KNOW BETTER,
I'D SAY YOU RAN
INTO IT ON
PURPOSE.

Trying to
trick them
about her tears.

Now, now,
don't
spoil her
cover-up.



...TO
HER.

I
ONLY
EVER
SAY...

...REALLY
MEAN
THINGS...



I...

IT'S
ONLY THE
THIRD DAY.
THINK OF IT
AS MORE
TRAINING.

...I WANT
TO LEAVE
THIS
HOUSE.



POOR THING--
SLEEPING
SOUNDLY
UNAWARE OF
THE DECEIT.

...THE CAT
WAS DREAMING
OF A BANQUET
THE NEXT DAY
THAT WOULD
NEVER HAPPEN.

I LIKED
HIM SO MUCH
THAT IF THERE
WAS A YEAR OF THE
CAT CLUB I WOULD
HAVE JOINED.

WHAT
SHOULD
I DO
NOW?

BUT HE
HATES
ME.

Punishing herself




AH!
THERE
SHE IS.

I'M PICKING
UP TOHRU-
KUN'S
WAVES!

Oh!

WHAT
ARE YOU DOING
THERE? CLASS
IS ABOUT TO--

TOHRUUU!



YOU MAY
BE A BLACK
BELT FIGHTER,
BUT YOU'RE
STILL A WHITE
BELT IN
DEALING WITH
PEOPLE.

IF YOU
DON'T, YOU'LL
NEVER BE ABLE
TO CARE ABOUT
ANYONE BUT
YOURSELF.

YOU'RE
MISSING
MY POINT.
IT'S THE
SAME AS
INTERACTING
WITH PEOPLE.

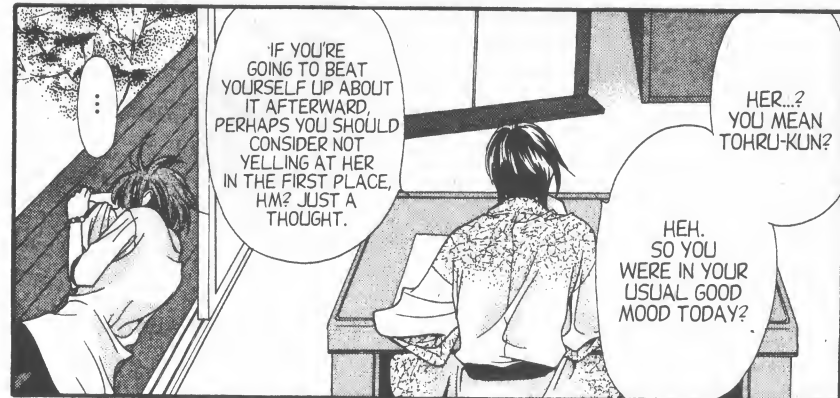
BUT
TRAINING
FOR THAT
ISN'T IN THE
MOUNTAINS--
IT HAS TO
BE IN TOWN
WHERE
PEOPLE
LIVE.

MINGLING WITH
PEOPLE, HURTING
THEM, GETTING
HURT BY THEM...

THAT'S HOW
YOU LEARN
ABOUT OTHERS...
AND ABOUT
YOURSELF.

...DON'T
RUN AWAY.
KEEP
TRAINING.


FOR THE
SAKE OF THE
GIRL WHO
WILL ONE
DAY TELL
YOU SHE
LOVES YOU...



IF YOU'RE
GOING TO BEAT
YOURSELF UP ABOUT
IT AFTERWARD,
PERHAPS YOU SHOULD
CONSIDER NOT
YELLING AT HER
IN THE FIRST PLACE,
HM? JUST A
THOUGHT.

HER...?
YOU MEAN
TOHRU-KUN?

HEH.
SO YOU
WERE IN YOUR
USUAL GOOD
MOOD TODAY?



FOR
EXAMPLE,
AS A MARTIAL
ARTIST, YOU
HAVE THE
STRENGTH TO
BREAK THE
TABLE WITH
YOUR FIST.

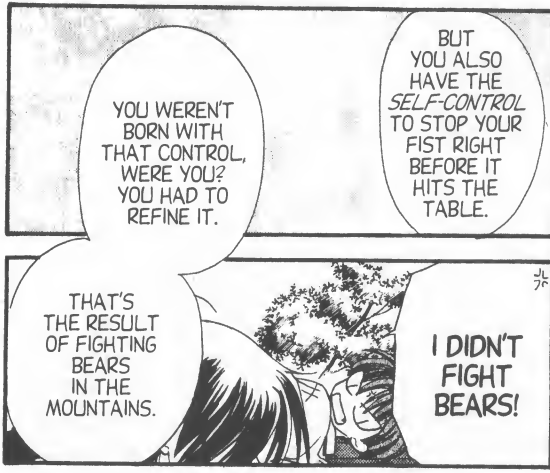
PEOPLE
AREN'T
BORN
SOCIAL.
SURE IT
COMES
EASIER TO
SOME
PEOPLE...

...BUT MOST
PEOPLE, LIKE
YOU, NEED TO
WORK AT IT.
SOME MORE
THAN OTHERS.
YOU'RE JUST
INEXPERIENCED.



I CAN'T
HELP IT.

I'M...



YOU WEREN'T
BORN WITH
THAT CONTROL,
WERE YOU?
YOU HAD TO
REFINE IT.

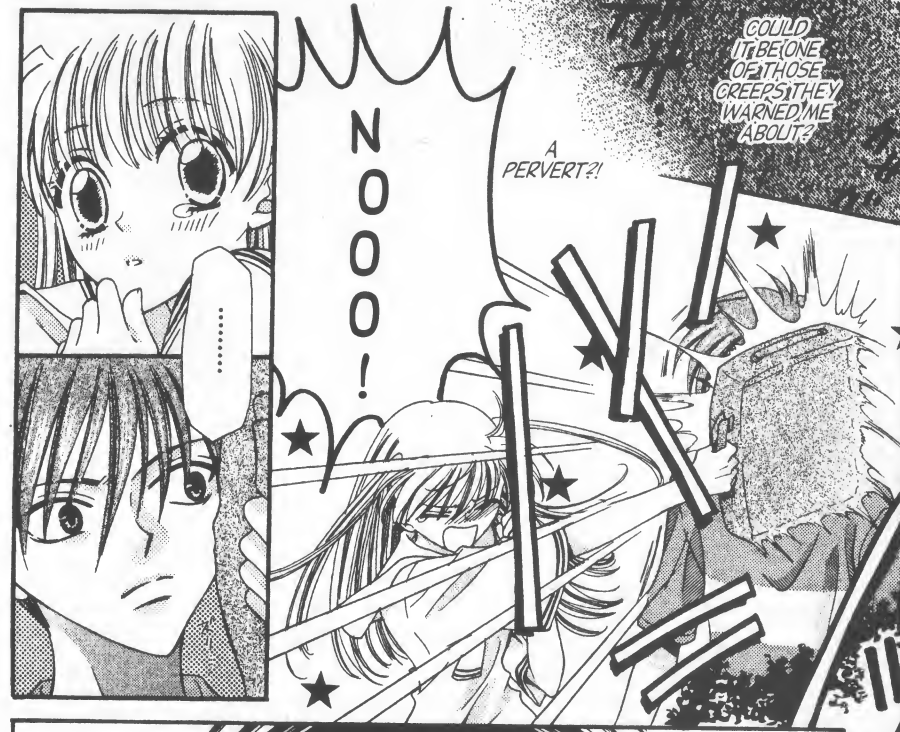
BUT
YOU ALSO
HAVE THE
SELF-CONTROL
TO STOP YOUR
FIST RIGHT
BEFORE IT
HITS THE
TABLE.

THAT'S
THE RESULT
OF FIGHTING
BEARS
IN THE
MOUNTAINS.

I DIDN'T
FIGHT
BEARS!

...NOT
MADE FOR
INTERACTING
WITH PEOPLE.





IT'S TRUE.
I...

...I WANTED
TO BE BORN
IN THE YEAR
OF THE CAT.

HUH?

"IF A
GIRL
TOLD
YOU..."

I MEAN,
UM, I...

...SHE
LOVED
YOU."

...I WANT
TO BE
FRIENDS.

"AND IF
SOMEONE
DID, WHAT
WOULD
YOU DO?"

!!

...MAYBE HE
WAS TRYING
TO APOLOGIZE
FOR HURTING
ME. MAY

AND
BACK
THEN...

IS THAT
WHY HE'S
HERE?

Gasp

UH,
UM...

OH--
I WASN'T MAD.
I HIT YOU WITH
MY BAG BECAUSE
I THOUGHT
YOU WERE A
PERVERT!

I'VE
ALWAYS
LOVED THE
CAT FROM
THE ZODIAC!

A per-
vert?
!

I MEAN,
I'D NEVER
BE MAD
AT YOU.

HOW
COULD
I BE?
I LOVE
YOU.

...TRYING TO
APOLOGIZE
FOR TODAY?

IS HE...



KYO-KUN
AND
TOHRU
SITTING
IN A TREE...
K... I... S--

You know
how it goes.



YESTERDAY
WAS A
FLUKE.
IT WON'T
HAPPEN
AGAIN!
EVER!

OKAY.



I'M JUST HAPPY
THAT YOU'RE
EATING MY FOOD.

DO YOU
LIKE IT?!

HUH?
UH...



SOMEONE
SINCERE WHO
SPEAKS FROM
THE HEART.

A GOOD PERSON.

SO, KYO-KUN...
I HEAR YOU
WALKED OUR
LITTLE TOHRU
HOME. HOW WAS
YOUR DATE?



...I'VE STARTED
TO UNDERSTAND
KYO-KUN.

HE'S MORE
AWKWARD THAN
MOST...

THAT'S
STU-!

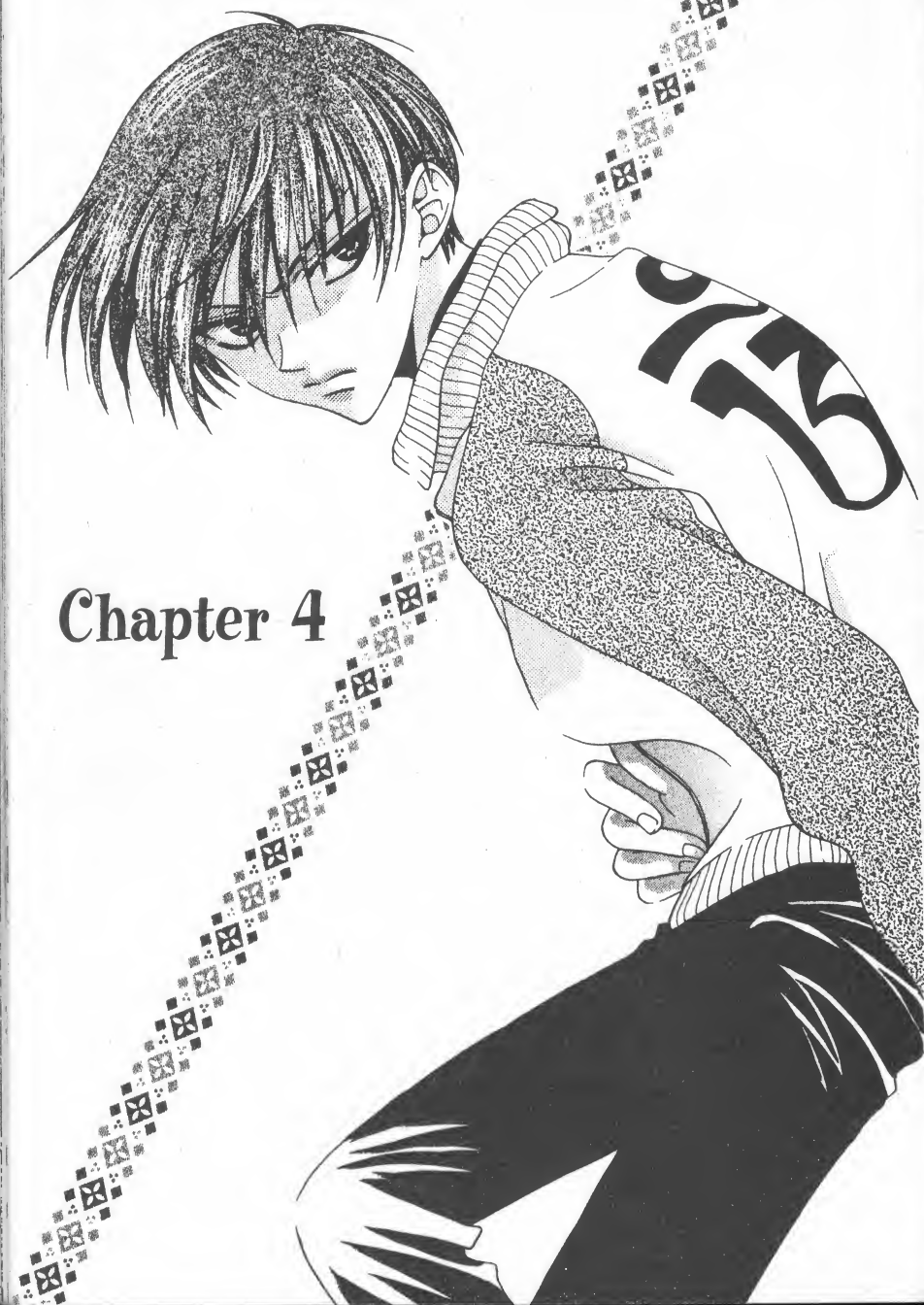
IT'S
NOT THAT
GREAT.

SOMEHOW...

...BUT
DEEP DOWN,
HE'S A NICE
PERSON.

BEING
A CAT.

Chapter 4



AND SO KYO AND I BECAME FRIENDS...

THINGS SHOULD BE A LOT HAPPIER AROUND THE SOHMA HOUSE FROM NOW ON. Well, hopefully-- but you never can tell.

Number 5:

"How do you name your characters in video games?" I'm asked. Well, I usually put in my own name. I stopped for a while, but then I started doing it again. Of course, I say "my own name," but Natsuki Takaya is a pen name (laugh). If it was my real name, then, yeah, I might think it was a little embarrassing. I don't think it's bad though. Because it's my game to enjoy my own way. So now, when I become friends with people in the game "Tokyo Friend," they call me "Takayan."



For rules on how to play Dai Hin Min visit www.TOKYOPOP.com and click on Fruit Basket!



ULTRA SPECIAL BLAH BLAH BLAH, NUMBER 3:

When I drew Uo-chan, people asked me, "Sensei, did you used to be a Yankee?" Well, I wasn't a Yankee, but I wasn't exactly an honor student, either. Most people don't understand about Hana-chan's "poison waves," either. Apparently there's a video game called "Pange Reef" with poison waves, but I didn't play it until after I'd started the manga.





BUT FIGHTING IS BAD. I'M SURE OF THAT.

YOU BASTARD-I'LL TAKE YOU DOWN!

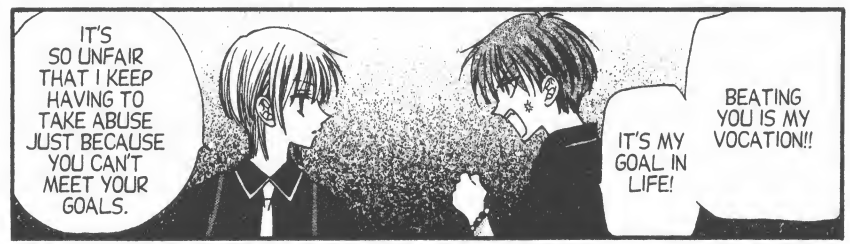
THAT WOULD BE WONDERFUL FOR THE CAT!

I DON'T KNOW HOW THAT WOULD WORK, BUT...

...CAT COULD BE PART OF THE CHINESE ZODIAC AFTER ALL?

UM, KYO-KUN...

SAY YOUR PRAYERS, HEARTLESS RAT!



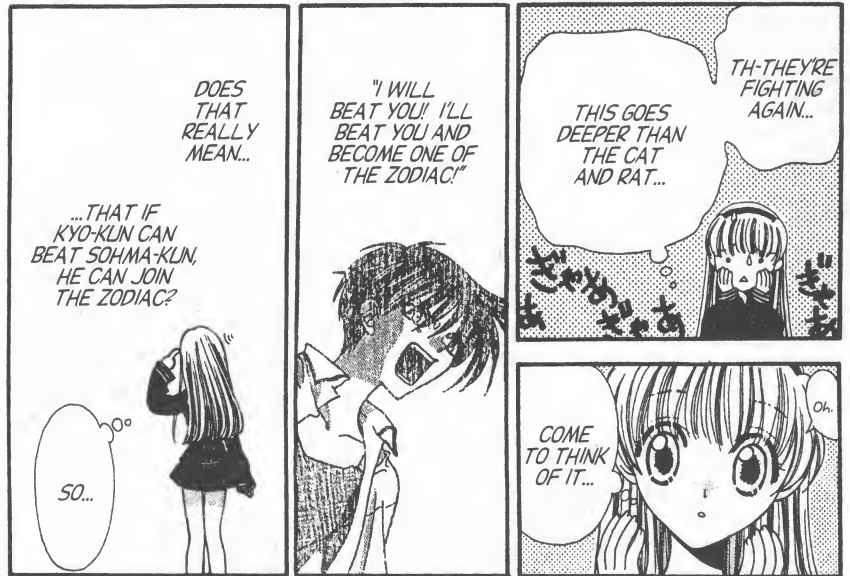
IT'S SO UNFAIR THAT I KEEP HAVING TO TAKE ABUSE JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN'T MEET YOUR GOALS.

BEATING YOU IS MY VOCATION!! IT'S MY GOAL IN LIFE!



AND THAT REVOLTING THOUGHT PROCESS OF YOURS PISSES ME OFF.

THAT CONDESCENDING ATTITUDE OF YOURS REALLY PISSES ME OFF!!



DOES THAT REALLY MEAN...

...THAT IF KYO-KUN CAN BEAT SOHMA-KUN, HE CAN JOIN THE ZODIAC?

SO...

"I WILL BEAT YOU! I'LL BEAT YOU AND BECOME ONE OF THE ZODIAC!"

TH-THEY'RE FIGHTING AGAIN... THIS GOES DEEPER THAN THE CAT AND RAT...

COME TO THINK OF IT...

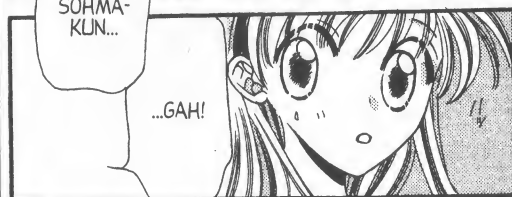


WHY CAN'T I BEAT HIM?



AH...

SO-SOHMA-KUN...



...GAH!



I KEEP GETTING BEATEN.

I MUST SEEM SO PATHETIC.

Sigh



I'M FINE, JUST GO. LEAVE ME ALONE!

AS IF I'D BE SO STUPID.

KYO-KLIN, DID YOU BITE YOUR TONGUE...?



WHY... DO YOU...?

...NO... I MEAN...

AH...



!!



YOU KNOW...



...I'M REALLY GETTING SICK OF LOOKING AT YOU.





COULD IT...

...BE?

LOOK AT THAT BEAUTIFUL PERSON OVER THERE.

I CAN'T TELL IF IT'S A GIRL OR A BOY.

OH, YOU'RE SUCH A GAWKER!

あはは



YOU AND KYO-KUN ARE SO KIND...!

YEAH... IT'S DANGEROUS FOR A GIRL TO BE OUT ALONE AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT.

THANK YOU SO MUCH.



Y-YOU CAME ALL THE WAY HERE TO PICK ME UP?!

SOHMA-KUN...!

HEY... YOU MUST BE TIRED.



MUST BE IN A BAD MOOD.

NOTHING.

EH?

ANYWAY, SHOULDN'T YOU BE LEAVING? YOU HAVE WORK TODAY.



"I'M REALLY GETTING SICK OF LOOKING AT YOU."



HE WENT PRETTY HARD ON ME TODAY.

OW!



GOOD WORK.

HEY, OVER HERE, TANIGAWA-SAN.

...IS SO SENSITIVE ABOUT WHAT OTHERS THINK ABOUT HIM.

HE MUST KEEP ALL HIS FEELINGS LOCKED UP INSIDE OF HIM.

SOHMA-KUN...



I ALWAYS WANTED TO HAVE A "NORMAL" LIFE, SURROUNDED BY "NORMAL" PEOPLE.

SO I APPLIED TO A CO-ED SCHOOL AND LEFT HOME.

WHEN I WAS AT THE MAIN HOUSE...

...IT FELT LIKE I WAS IN A CAGE, ALWAYS BEING WATCHED BY THE FAMILY AND AKITO.



I CUT MYSELF OFF FROM OTHER PEOPLE...

...BECAUSE I'M AFRAID OF GETTING HURT. AND...

I DON'T MEAN TO TURN THEM AWAY.

BUT SOME PART OF ME CAN'T DEAL WITH PEOPLE.

I JUST WOUND UP IN ANOTHER SOHMA HOUSE.

BUT I COULDN'T GET OUT OF THE CAGE AFTER ALL.

AND I STILL CAN'T ASSOCIATE WITH "NORMAL" PEOPLE.



Stop flirting and go home, you kids!



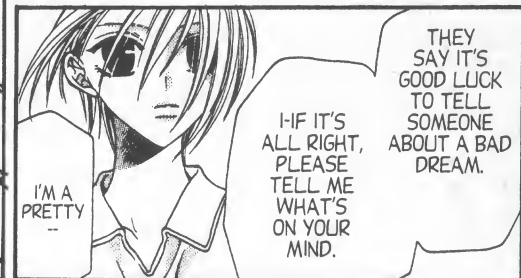
...SOMETHING WEIGHING ON YOUR MIND, YOU CAN TALK TO ME, OKAY?

SOHMA-KUN, UM, IF THERE'S EVER...

AH...

HUH?

WELL, SHALL WE GO?



I'M A PRETTY --

IF IT'S ALL RIGHT, PLEASE TELL ME WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND.

THEY SAY IT'S GOOD LUCK TO TELL SOMEONE ABOUT A BAD DREAM.



NO, IT'S MY FAULT FOR HAVING THIS "CONDITION."

I'M A PRETTY GOOD LISTENER.

BUT THEN, I'LL PROBABLY JUST MAKE YOUR PROBLEMS WORSE.



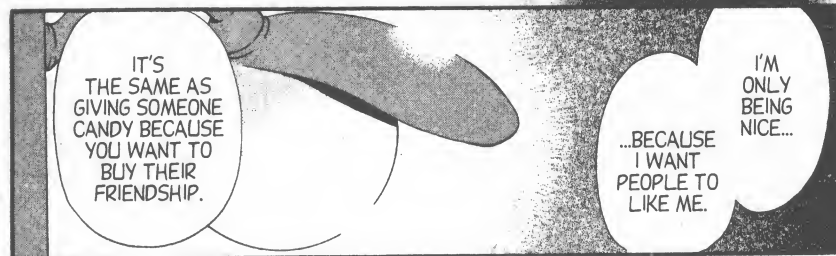
THEY SAY
YOU'RE VERY
KIND.

YOU HAVE
POWER TO
ATTRACT
PEOPLE TOO,
SOHMA-KUN.

LOTS OF
GIRLS LIKE
YOU.

WHAT
DOES THAT
MAKE ME,
WHO WANTS
TO RUN
AWAY FROM IT
ALL?

I
WONDER.



IT'S
THE SAME AS
GIVING SOMEONE
CANDY BECAUSE
YOU WANT TO
BUY THEIR
FRIENDSHIP.

...BECAUSE
I WANT
PEOPLE TO
LIKE ME.

I'M
ONLY
BEING
NICE...



SOH--!

MAYBE
I'M A
HYPOCRITE.

MY BEING
NICE IS
ENTIRELY
SELFISH.

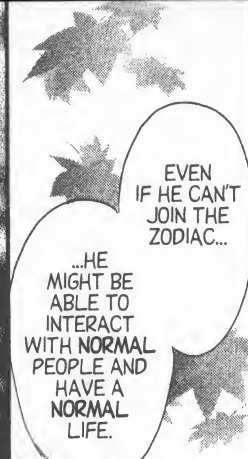


THAT'S
WHY
I GET
ANNOYED...

...WISHED I
COULD BE
LIKE THAT
TOO.



...WHEN
I LOOK
AT KYO, WHO
WANTS TO BE
A SOHMA.



EVEN
IF HE CAN'T
JOIN THE
ZODIAC...

...HE
MIGHT BE
ABLE TO
INTERACT
WITH NORMAL
PEOPLE AND
HAVE A
NORMAL
LIFE.



THAT'S
WHY...



...I'VE
ALWAYS...



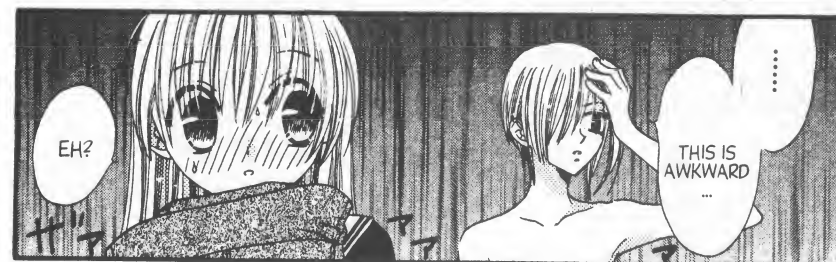
...BECAUSE
I'M LIKE
THIS.

THE
HESITATION
AND FEAR
WON'T GO
AWAY.



BUT...
KYO IS
DIFFERENT.
HE MIGHT BE
EXTREMELY
SHY...

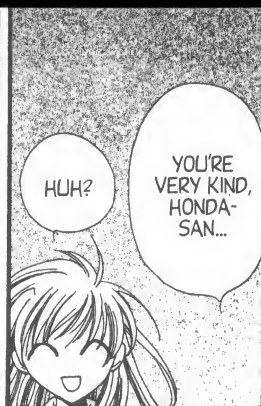
...BUT IF HE
GETS USED TO
BEING AROUND
PEOPLE, I THINK
HE'S THE TYPE
THAT ATTRACTS
OTHERS...THAT
HAS MANY
FRIENDS.





THAT'S THE FIRST TIME ANYONE'S EVER TOLD ME THAT!

EH... EEHH?! BUT...!



HUH?

YOU'RE VERY KIND, HONDA-SAN...



NO, WITH HONDA-SAN IT'S GENUINE.

Expression of happiness mixed with agitation.

HOW DO I BE SURE THAT I'M NOT JUST ACTING KIND SO THAT PEOPLE WILL THINK I'M A GOOD PERSON?!

I'M SO HAPPY... OH! BUT-- BUT--



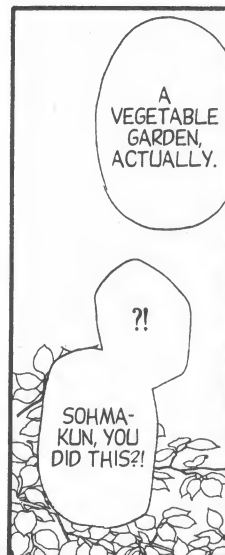
SELFISH INSTINCTS, I GUESS.

WHEN WE'RE BORN, ALL WE HAVE ARE DESIRES FOR FOOD AND MATERIAL THINGS.

...IT'S BETTER TO TRUST PEOPLE THAN TO DOUBT THEM.

MOM TOLD ME...

SHE SAID THAT PEOPLE AREN'T BORN WITH KIND HEARTS.



A VEGETABLE GARDEN, ACTUALLY.

?!

SOHMA-KUN, YOU DID THIS?!



A FARM?

SOHMA-KUN, IS SOMETHING WRONG?

AH.



I GET IT! YOU CAME HERE TO PROTECT YOUR BASE FROM THE TYPHOON!

IT'S WONDERFUL!



PLEASE LET ME HELP!



YES.

THIS IS MY SECRET BASE.



AH...
NO...!

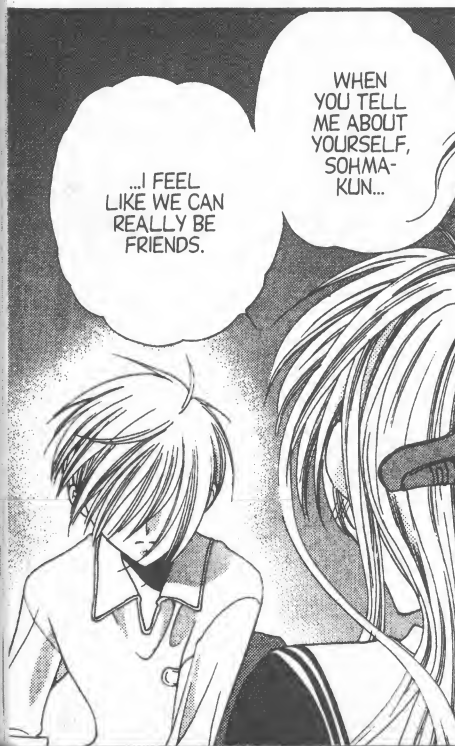
AM
I BEING TOO
WEIRD FOR
YOU NOW?



DON'T!
I'M HAPPY
THAT YOU
OPENED UP
TO ME.

...PATHETIC
FOR WHINING
TO YOU LIKE
THAT.

NO...
I JUST
FEEL
SO...



...I FEEL
LIKE WE CAN
REALLY BE
FRIENDS.

WHEN
YOU TELL
ME ABOUT
YOURSELF,
SOHMA-
KUN...

...AND
I JUST
WANT TO
SMILE.

IT'S
THAT
KIND OF
KINDNESS.



YOUR
KINDNESS
IS LIKE A
CANDLE,
SOHMA-
KUN.

I CAN
FEEL IT
LIGHT
UP...



BUT SHE
SAID THAT
KINDNESS
IS SOMETHING
THAT GROWS
INSIDE
OF EACH
PERSON'S
BODY...

THAT'S WHY
KINDNESS IS
DIFFERENT FOR
EVERY PERSON.

...BUT IT'S UP
TO US TO
NURTURE THAT
KINDNESS
IN OUR
HEARTS.



...SO IT'S EASY
TO MISUNDERSTAND
WHEN OTHERS ARE
TRYING TO BE KIND
TO YOU!

"WE'RE ALL
BORN WITH
SELFISH DESIRES,
SO WE CAN ALL
RELATE TO THOSE
FEELINGS IN
OTHERS."

"BUT
KINDNESS IS
SOMETHING MADE
INDIVIDUALLY BY
EACH PERSON..."



... WHEN
I THOUGHT
OF ALL THE
DIFFERENT
SHAPES OF
HUMAN KINDNESS--
IMAGINING THEM
AS ROUND
OR SQUARE...

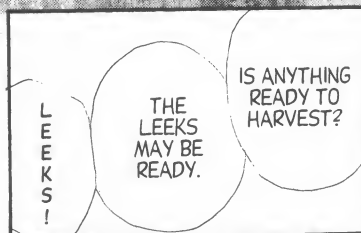
...I GOT
REALLY
EXCITED.

MOM
TAUGHT
ME THAT
PEOPLE'S
DIFFERENCES
ARE SOME-
THING TO
CELEBRATE.

"BUT
TOHRU..."



...WILL
BE YOUR
STRENGTH.



LEEK
S!

THE
LEEK
S MAY
BE
READY.

IS ANYTHING
READY TO
HARVEST?

YES, BUT
AT WHAT
COST?

WE
PROTECTED
IT TO THE
VERY END!

It seems it's actually better to harvest them in the second year.



HONDA-
SAN.

LEEK
S,
LEEK
S...



I'M SORRY!
I'LL KEEP
PROTECTING
YOUR BASE!

ふはあ、



NO,
NOT
AT...

I'M
SORRY.
I'M BEING
RUDE...



...
ALL
...



TOHRI...

...BELIEVE IN
PEOPLE.

DOLBITING
IS EASY--
ANYONE
CAN DO IT.

I'M
SURE
THAT...

TOHRI,
BE SOMEONE
WHO CAN
BELIEVE.



IF ONLY HE COULD SMILE LIKE THAT AT SCHOOL ONE DAY.

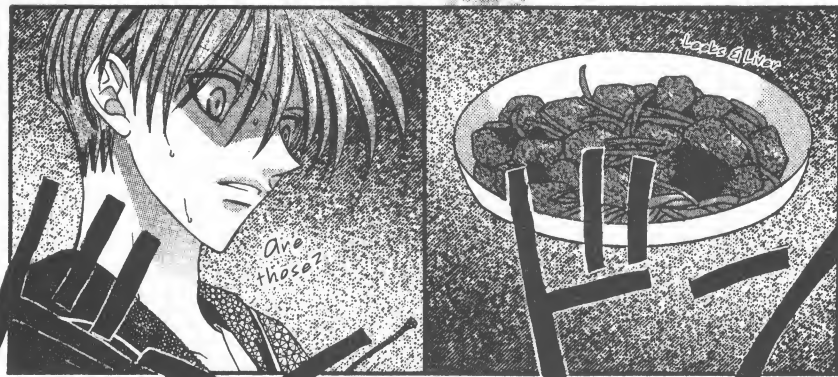
HE'D BE EVEN MORE POPULAR.



FOR THE FIRST TIME...

...I FEEL LIKE I'M SEEING HIS TRUE SMILE.

If we don't go home and dry off...
...we'll catch cold.



Are those?

Looks like



BUT... I'LL DO MY BEST.

I FELT A LITTLE ASHAMED.

I DID, BUT YOU WERE ALL HAVING SO MUCH FUN.



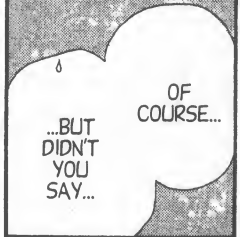
...I WANT TO BE ABLE TO GET ALONG WELL WITH OTHERS.

EVEN IF IT'S JUST A LITTLE AT A TIME...

REALLY?



HEY, NEXT TIME I THINK I'LL TRY PLAYING DAI HIN MIN...



...BUT DIDN'T YOU SAY...

OF COURSE...



OKAY.



HANA-CHAN AND UO-CHAN ARE REALLY GREAT PEOPLE!

I'M PROUD TO HAVE THEM AS MY FRIENDS!



I THINK YOU'LL BE REALLY GOOD AT IT, AND I KNOW THEY'D WELCOME A CHALLENGE.



IF THEY COULD UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER, MAYBE THEY COULD BE FRIENDS.



Yuki-kun... Kyo-kun'll die if you keep that up.



OH? WHO WOULD THAT BE?

Ah... I'LL GET IT.

ding dong



I'M SORRY! I'LL HURRY AND MAKE YOU SOME SOUP.

By the way, this is Sunday.



I HATE LEEKS!

IT'S NOT ONLY LEEKS.

YOU HATE SPRING ONIONS AND MISO, TOO, DON'T YOU?

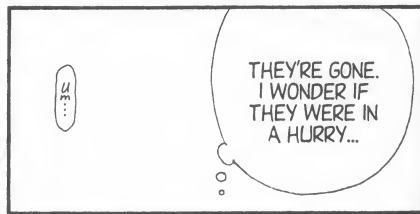


Chapter 5



YOU'RE TOHRU HONDA-SAN...

AREN'T YOU?



UM...!



...THAT KYO-KUN IS HERE?

UM, IS IT TRUE...



ULTRA SPECIAL BLAH BLAH BLAH, NUMBER 4.

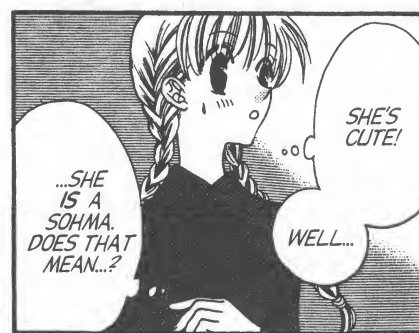
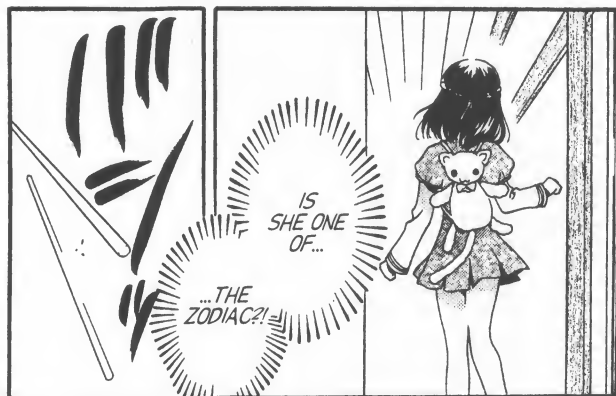
I couldn't help wanting to draw a girl like Kagura. So I'm pleased (ha ha). I thought the opinions on her would be divided between, "She's hilarious!" and "Why does she hit him? That's so mean!" and I was right. She hits him because she loves him. It's the ultimate expression of love (ha ha).

Omake Theater 3: Are you kidding or are you serious?



Number 6:

I have the Internet now. I feel weird about the Internet. I think it's a world that's there but not, and fake but real; I don't know what to call it (ha ha). It reminds me of "Soul Hackers." Yeah! I'm about half way through that game right now. Oh, no... I'm bubbling again—stay on target! I'm really getting into surfing around and checking out people's home pages. Home pages, huh...? I think I'd like to make one of my own, but I don't know how. If someone started one for me...? (ha ha) My home page would probably just talk about video games all the time!

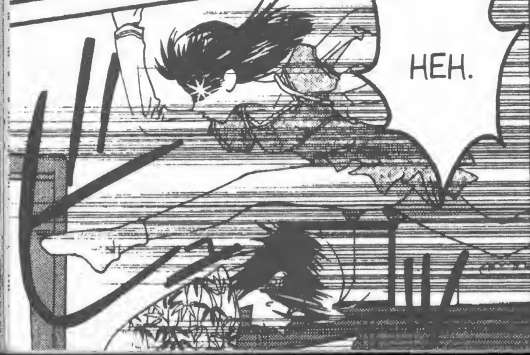




I
Missed
you!



...HUH?



HEH.



KYO-KUN!



WHERE
DID
YOU
GO...
...FOR
FOUR
MONTHS?

WHY
DIDN'T
YOU
CALL...?

...MISSED
...



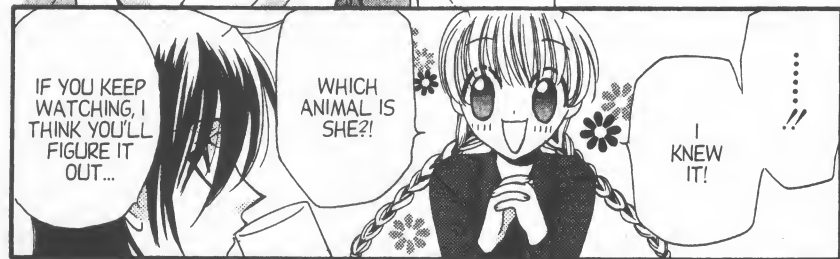
KYO-KUN!



KA...



KAGURA...





WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT?!

BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO BE MARRIED!

BUT IT'S KYO-KUN'S FAULT, TOO.

I WONDER WHICH ANIMAL SHE IS?

DISAPPEARING FOR FOUR MONTHS WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A PHONE CALL!

WHY THE HELL WOULD I CALL YOU?



YOU WOULD.

WHO WOULD DO SUCH A TERRIBLE THING?!

KYO-KUN...?
YOU'RE SO BATTERED!

WHO DID THIS?



Although Kyo's not officially a member of the zodiac.

BUT MARRIAGE BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE ZODIAC IS THE MOST WONDERFUL THING IN THE WORLD!

WHO ELSE CAN UNDERSTAND THE PAIN OF BEING POSSESSED BY A VENGEFUL SPIRIT?

AND BETTER STILL...

CONGRATULATIONS.

THAT'S SO GREAT THAT YOU FOUND SOMEONE TO BE YOUR WIFE.

YOU'RE ENGAGED?!

That's wonderful!

CUT-IT-OUT!!

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU THREATENED ME!

WHEN WE WERE LITTLE, HE SAID HE'D MAKE ME HIS BRIDE.



I'M SORRY!

BIT NIPPY, ISN'T IT?

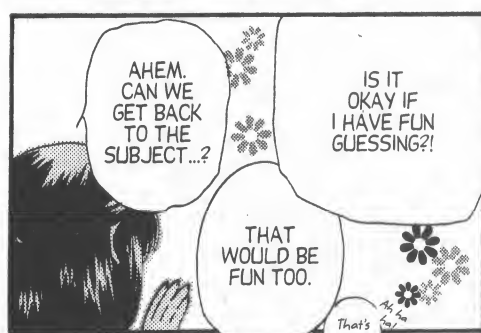
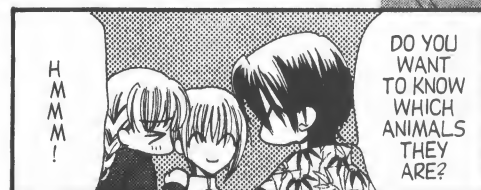
ANYBODY FEEL A DRAFT?

SHE'S CHANGED AGAIN.

SO SHE'S ONE OF THE CHINESE ZODIAC...

I'M SORRY.

I WAS SO TOUCHED AT BEING ABLE TO SEE KYO-KUN THAT I WAS HAPPY WITH ALL MY MIGHT!





THAT'S...

I'LL
STAND
BY HI--

... ENOUGH!



HIS
TRUE...

...
FORM?

....
?

KEEP
TALKING
LIKE
THAT...

...AND I'LL
NEVER
FORGIVE
YOU!



EH...?

YOU'RE
MY RIVAL?!

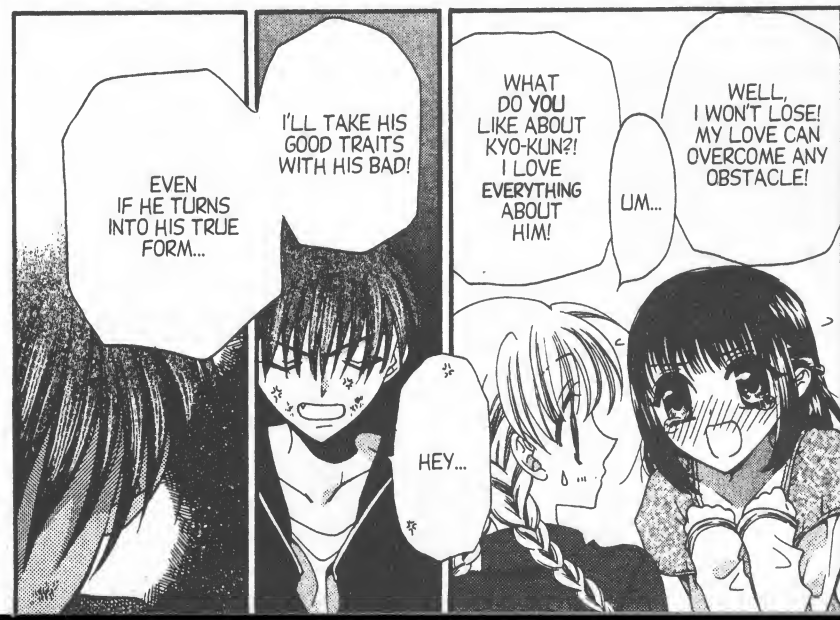
NO...

KYO-
KUN SURE
CAVES
UNDER
PRESSURE
...



You're a
fan of the
cat!

BUT YOU
LIKE KYO-KUN
TOO, RIGHT
TOHRU-KUN?



EVEN
IF HE TURNS
INTO HIS TRUE
FORM...

I'LL TAKE HIS
GOOD TRAITS
WITH HIS BAD!

WHAT
DO YOU
LIKE ABOUT
KYO-KUN?!
I LOVE
EVERYTHING
ABOUT
HIM!

WELL,
I WON'T LOSE!
MY LOVE CAN
OVERCOME ANY
OBSTACLE!

UM...

HEY...



I KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHING...

I FORGOT TO DRY MY UNIFORM.

CLUNK

SOME-ONE'S ON THE ROOF?



WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP THERE?

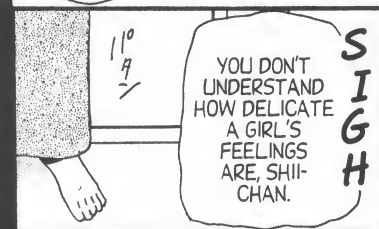
KYO-KUN!

WAH?!



IF IT'S GOING TO BE THIS WAY, THEN I'LL MAKE HIM MINE TONIGHT!

YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO LEAVE YOUR ROOM UNTIL MORNING. Try not to break anything.



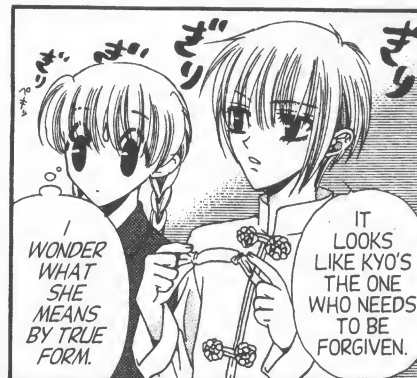
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW DELICATE A GIRL'S FEELINGS ARE, SHII-CHAN.

SIGH



EVEN I...

...KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE JEALOUS.



I WONDER WHAT SHE MEANS BY TRUE FORM.

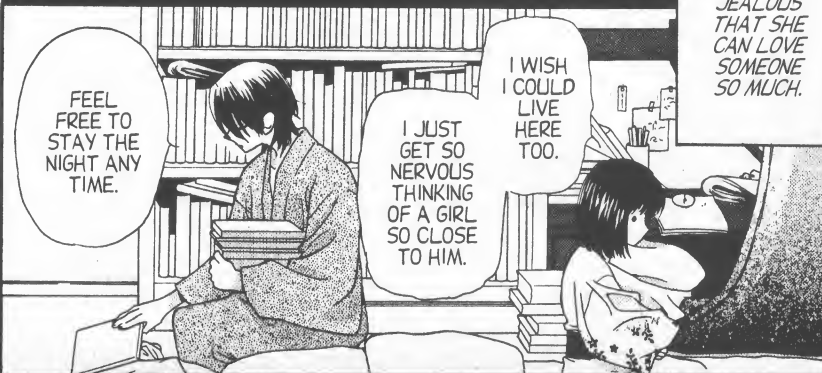
IT LOOKS LIKE KYO'S THE ONE WHO NEEDS TO BE FORGIVEN.



...IT REALLY SEEMS LIKE KAGURA-SAN LOVES KYO-KUN SO MUCH SHE CAN'T STAND IT.

BUT PUTTING THAT ASIDE...

I HAVEN'T EVEN HAD MY FIRST LOVE...



FEEL FREE TO STAY THE NIGHT ANY TIME.

I WISH I COULD LIVE HERE TOO.

I JUST GET SO NERVOUS THINKING OF A GIRL SO CLOSE TO HIM.

...SO I'M A LITTLE JEALOUS THAT SHE CAN LOVE SOMEONE SO MUCH.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU'LL NEVER FORGIVE ME?!

OWWWWWW!



WAS IT
HARD...?
BEING ALL
BY YOUR-
SELF?

YEAH.
SHIGURE
TOLD
YOU?

ISN'T
IT YOUR
DREAM
TO BEAT
SOHMA-KUN?

YOU EVEN
RAN AWAY
TO TRAIN
FOR IT.



MASTER
TRAINED ME
SINCE I WAS
LITTLE!

MASTER
IS A SOHMA
TOO, BUT
ONE WHO
UNDERSTANDS
HOW I FEEL.

TRAINING
IN THE
MOUNTAINS
WAS HARD,
BUT...



MASTER...
SAN? HE
MUST BE
STRONG.

MASTER
WAS WITH
ME!

I
WASN'T
BY
MYSELF.



Pah!

OF
COURSE!

EVEN THAT
DAMN YUKI
WOULD BE
TORN APART
BY MASTER!



I'LL NEVER GET
ANY PEACE AS
LONG AS SHE'S
AROUND!

OF COURSE
IT'S BAD!

Never
ever
ever

.....



G
A
S
P!

OH YEAH,
YOU DON'T
HAVE A
ROOM...!

DID
I TAKE YOUR
ROOM?!

THAT'S
NOT IT.

I always
slept
in the
living
room.

KAGURA'S
DOWN
THERE
TONIGHT...

IS IT BAD
THAT SHE'S
HERE?



I THINK IT'S
AMAZING
THAT SHE
CAN LOVE
SOMEONE
SO MUCH.

BESIDES...

...GETTING
MARRIED IS
A GIRL'S
GREATEST
DREAM!

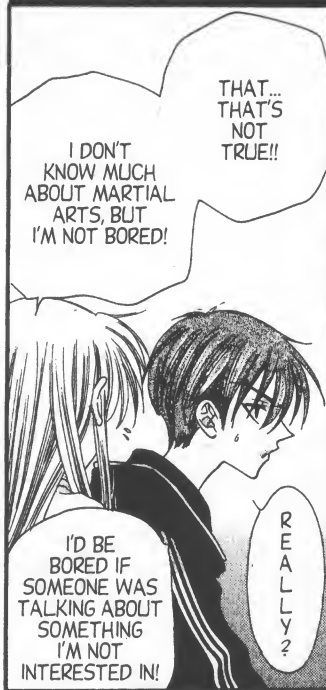
HNNN...?
REALLY...?
WHY...?



I DON'T
UNDER-
STAND
HER.

MARRIAGE OR
WHATEVER--
IT'S INSANE.

IT
DOESN'T
MAKE
ANY
SENSE!



I DON'T
KNOW MUCH
ABOUT MARTIAL
ARTS, BUT
I'M NOT BORED!

THAT...
THAT'S
NOT
TRUE!!

I'D BE
BORED IF
SOMEONE WAS
TALKING ABOUT
SOMETHING
I'M NOT
INTERESTED IN!

REALLY?

Ah!



IT'S ABOUT
MORE THAN
BEATING
SOHMA-KUN.
HE
LOVES
MARTIAL
ARTS.

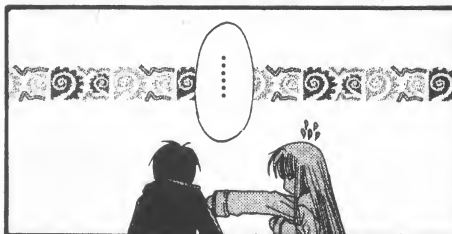
HUH?!

THIS MUST
BE BORING
FOR A GIRL TO
LISTEN TO.

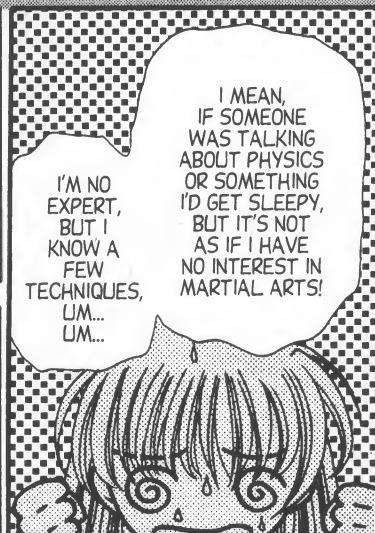


donk

RIGHT
STRAIGHT!



...



I MEAN,
IF SOMEONE
WAS TALKING
ABOUT PHYSICS
OR SOMETHING
I'D GET SLEEPY,
BUT IT'S NOT
AS IF I HAVE
NO INTEREST IN
MARTIAL ARTS!
I'M NO
EXPERT,
BUT I
KNOW A
FEW
TECHNIQUES,
UM...
UM...

I GOT
EXCITED
JUST
THINKING
ABOUT IT!

HE IS
ACTING
LIKE A
LITTLE
BOY.

THIS IS THE
FIRST TIME
I'VE SEEN
KYO-KUN SO
EXCITED.

...I
ALWAYS
LOOKED
FORWARD
TO THE
NEXT
DAY...

SUDDENLY
I WANT
TO FIGHT!

OOHHH!!

...HOW MUCH
STRONGER
I'D BECOME...

...WONDERING
WHAT I
WOULD
LEARN...



THEY'RE
PRETTY
ANIMATED
FOR SO
EARLY
IN THE
MORNING.

I WOULDN'T
HAVE TO TAKE
CARE IF YOU
WOULD
JUST STAY
AWAY!

UNTIL
I SEE
YOU
AGAIN,
TAKE
CARE.



KAGURAAA!

Good! I don't want one!

I WON'T
GIVE YOU
A FAREWELL
KISS, THEN!

KAGURA-
SAN, WATCH
OUT! YOU'RE
ABOUT TO--

CRASH



And
have you
seen my
morning
paper!

INDEED. SO,
HAVE YOU
FIGURED OUT
KAGURA'S
ANIMAL?

NOT YET!



HE SAID
IF, I WATCHED,
I COULD FIGURE
IT OUT, BUT--

KYO-KUN,
YOU IDIOT!



ONCE
AGAIN...

...I'VE SEEN
THE TRUE
KYO-KUN.

HIDDEN
UNDER HIS
SCOWL...

YOU
REALLY
SUCK, YOU
KNOW
THAT?

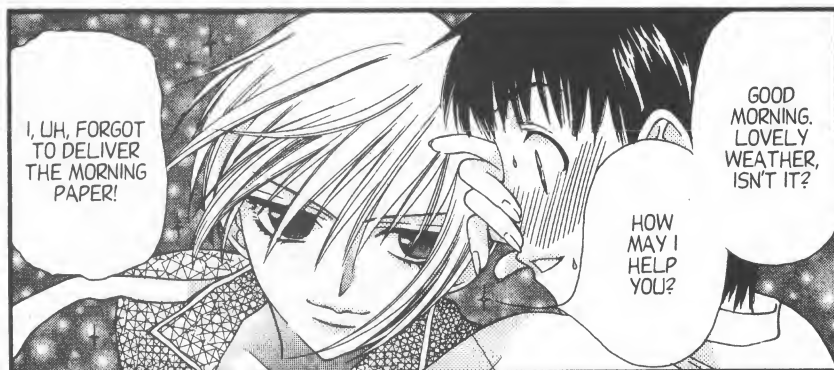
First off,
that's not
a farewell
kiss. Even
I get it
wrong.

It's
like
this.

Eh? Eh?

...IS AN
AWKWARD
SMILE.

I GUESS
THIS IS
GOODBYE.



I, UH, FORGOT
TO DELIVER
THE MORNING
PAPER!

GOOD
MORNING.
LOVELY
WEATHER,
ISN'T IT?

HOW
MAY I
HELP
YOU?



I'M
SORRY

WATCH
WHAT
YOU'RE
DOING,
KAGURA!

Like you're one to talk, Kyo.

I DIDN'T
EXPECT
THERE TO
BE A MAN
THERE!

.....
!!



SOHMA-
KUN HAS A
TWINKLE
IN HIS EYE
TODAY.

*Enchant
his memories
away!*

NICE
SAVE,
YUKI-
KUN!

TH-THAT
WAS
CLOSE.



...Love
you!

GYAH!

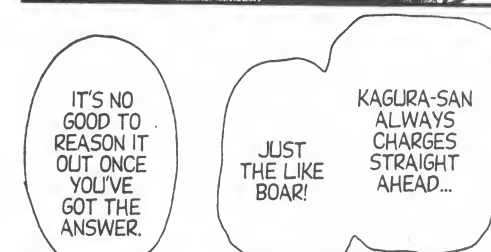
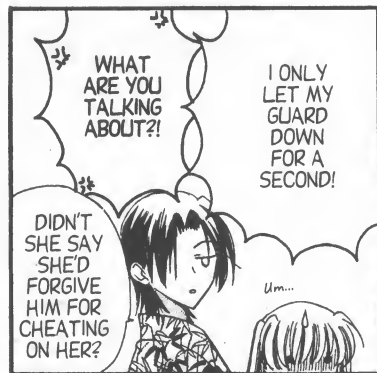
KYO-KUN...

KYO-
KUN,
YOU
JERK!

KYO-
KUN,
I...

AH!

A
MAN!



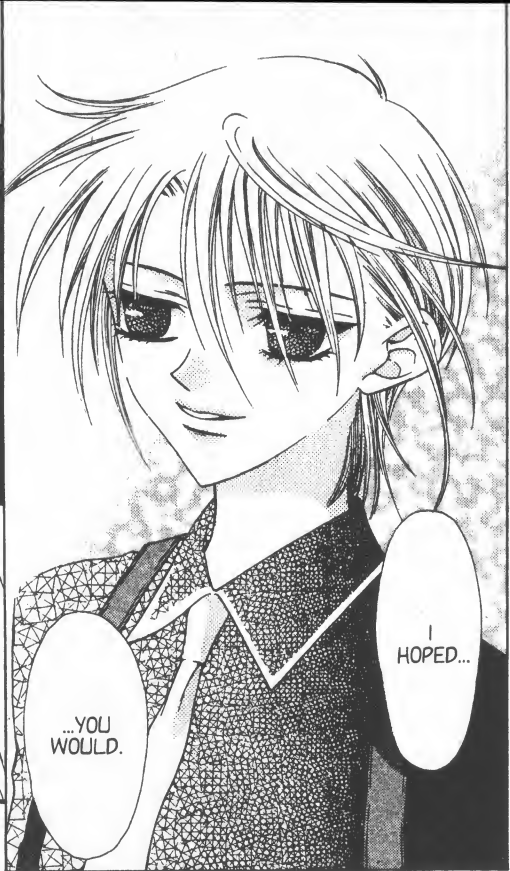


WE'RE GONNA BE LATE.



OH ...

FOR SOME REASON...



...YOU WOULD.

I HOPED...



I WANT TO GET TO KNOW THEM BETTER.

THEIR LIKES AND DISLIKES...

KYO-KUN AND SOHMA-KUN.

PLEASANT TABLE GARDEN

MARTIAL ARTS: THE PASSIONATE SOUL

...I SUDDENLY FEEL INSPIRED!



PUT SOME CLOTHES ON!

KEEP TRAINING, KYO-KUN.

She complimented me...



THANK GOD.

THEY WERE CAUSING SO MUCH TROUBLE THAT I COULDN'T BEGIN MY PLANTING.

The storm has passed.

SEE YOU AGAIN!



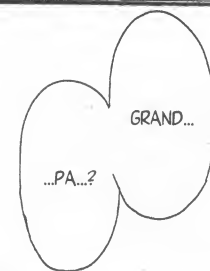
WELL, SEE YOU LATER!

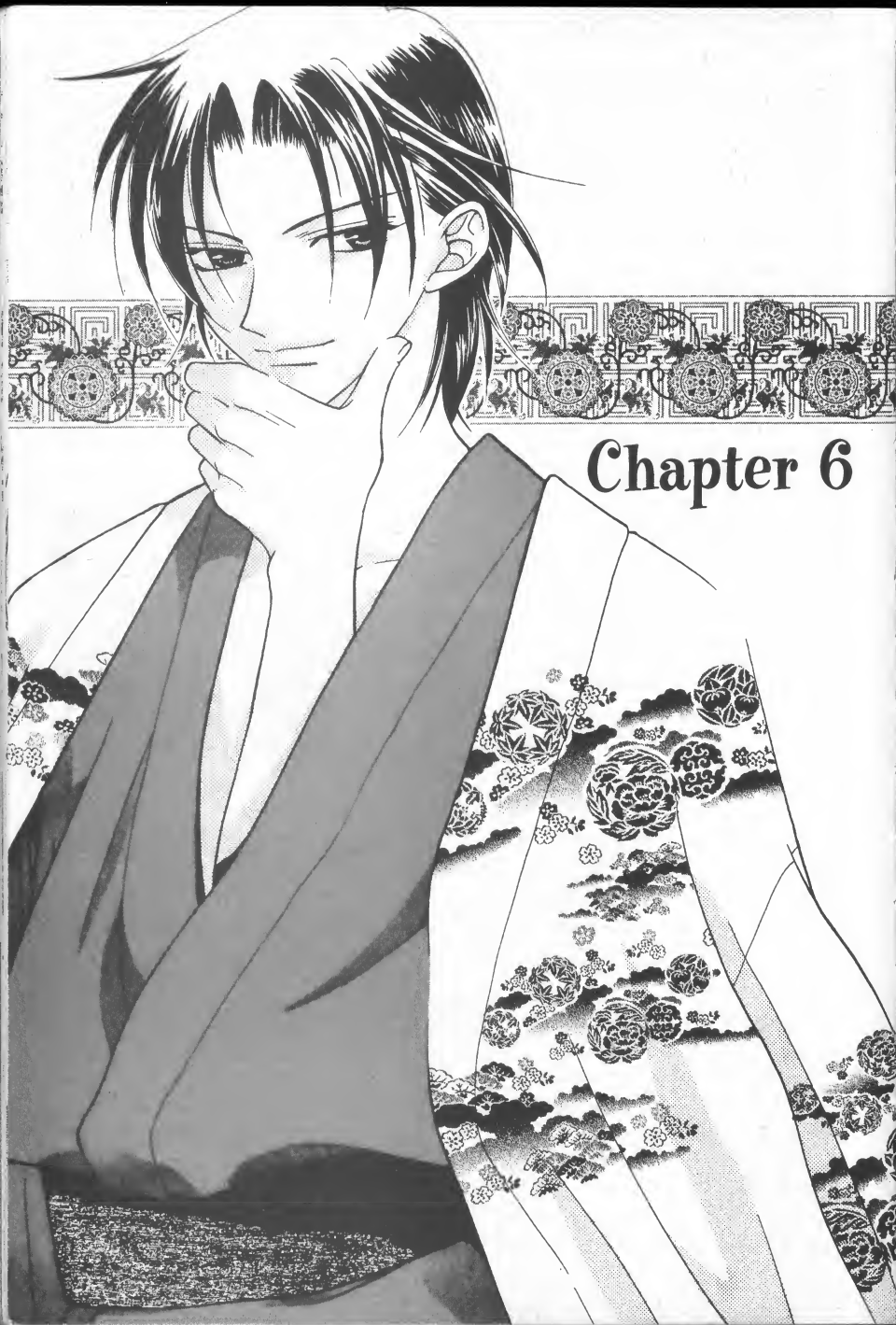
I'LL BRING YOU A GIFT NEXT TIME, KYO-KUN!

STRAWBERRIES?! I LOVE STRAWBERRIES!

YEAH. STRAWBERRIES.

WERE YOU GOING TO PLANT SOMETHING NEW AT YOUR BASE?!

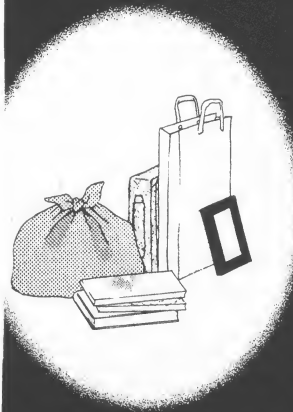




Chapter 6

...BUT I MADE
THE MISTAKE...

...OF THINKING
OF THEM...



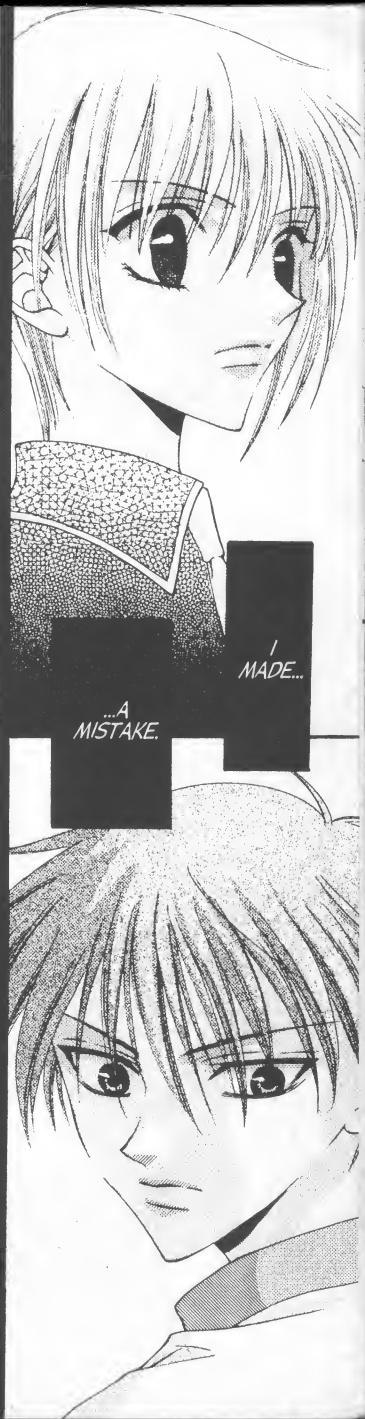
...AS MY
FAMILY.

I WAS
NEVER GOING
TO BE
MORE THAN...

...A
MISTAKE.

I
MADE...

...A
TEMP-
ORARY
GUEST...





I WILL!

I WON'T ALLOW FOR SADNESS.



I'LL TAKE THE SOHMA SECRET TO MY GRAVE. I'LL NEVER TELL ANYONE!

THANK YOU FOR TAKING SUCH GOOD CARE OF US.

NO, I SHOULD THANK YOU...!



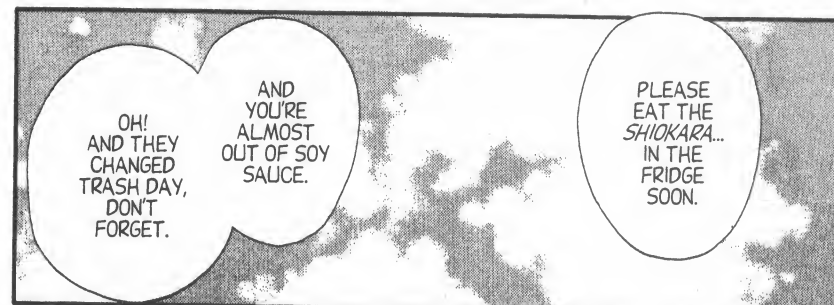
JUST DO YOUR BEST...

...IN YOUR NEW HOME TOO.



I THOUGHT YOU'D STOP HER.

A BIG MISTAKE.



OH! AND THEY CHANGED TRASH DAY, DON'T FORGET.

AND YOU'RE ALMOST OUT OF SOY SAUCE.

PLEASE EAT THE SHIOKARA... IN THE FRIDGE SOON.

*Salted fish guts



YOU'RE FINALLY LEAVING TOMORROW...?

AND... OH! THIS IS MY GRANDFATHER'S ADDRESS.

I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU FOR NOW.

ULTRA SPECIAL BLAH BLAH BLAH, NUMBER 5,

This series is kind of turning into a sitcom, but I don't really think of it as a comedy when I draw it. I mean -- it is funny (Of course I don't mind if people call it a comedy. I love comedies. Especially dry humor). I just kind of feel like, "Oh. Is it?" I have no idea what I'm trying to say.



...I'VE
BEEN
AN OUT-
SIDER.

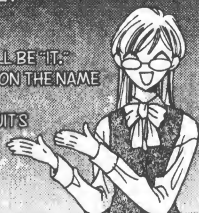
EVER
SINCE
I WAS
LITTLE...

THEY'RE
NOT MY
FAMILY.

LISTEN,
EVERYONE!

FRUITS BASKET

- SIT IN A CIRCLE.
- DECIDE WHO WILL BE "IT."
- GIVE EACH PERSON THE NAME OF A FRUIT.
- WHEN YOUR FRUIT'S NAME IS CALLED CHANCE SEATS.



RECESS!
LET'S ALL
HAVE FUN
PLAYING
TOGETHER.

BOYS
ALWAYS
TEASED ME
BACK THEN.

IT WAS
PROBABLY
JUST
ANOTHER
ONE OF
THEIR
PRANKS.



HONDA,
YOU'RE AN
ONIGIRI...!



*Onigiri =
rice ball

YOU'RE A
BANANA.



YOU'RE AN
APPLE.



CHERRY!

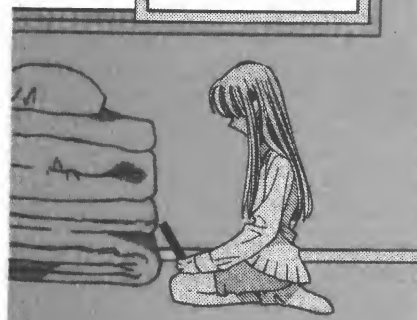
PEAR!

PEACH!



SO WHY DOES
IT FEEL LIKE A
FUNERAL HOME
IN HERE?

I MADE A
MISTAKE.



WHY?

WE
KNEW IT
WAS ONLY
UNTIL THE
REMODELING
WAS
FINISHED.



EH.
IT'S BETTER
THIS
WAY.

IT'S
NOT RIGHT
FOR AN
OUTSIDER TO
BE HERE...

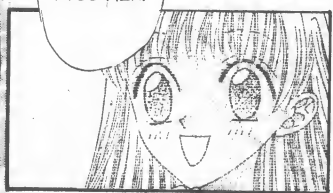
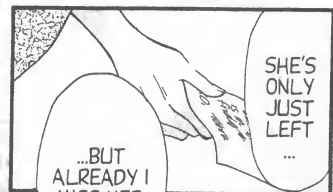
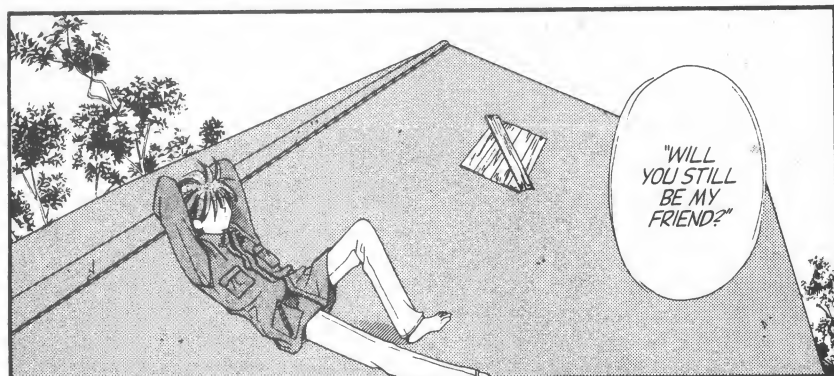
...ANYWAY.

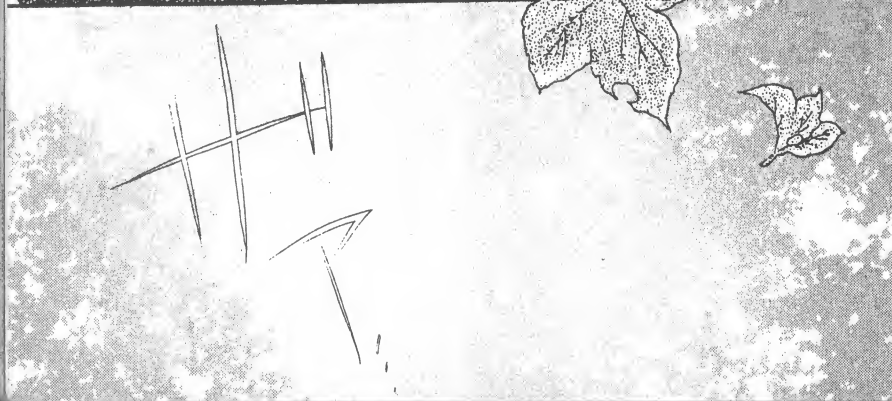


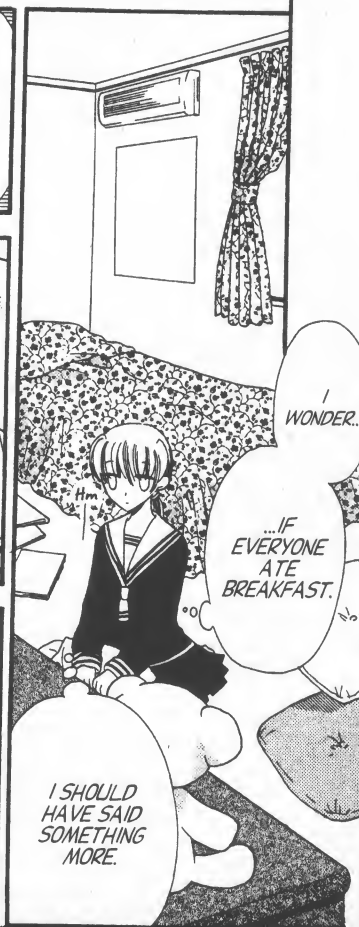
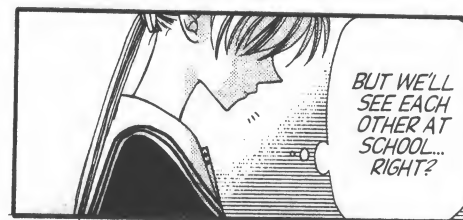
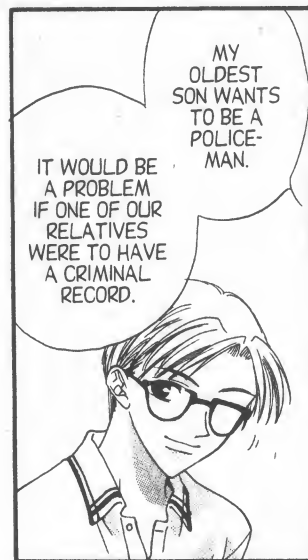
Number 7:

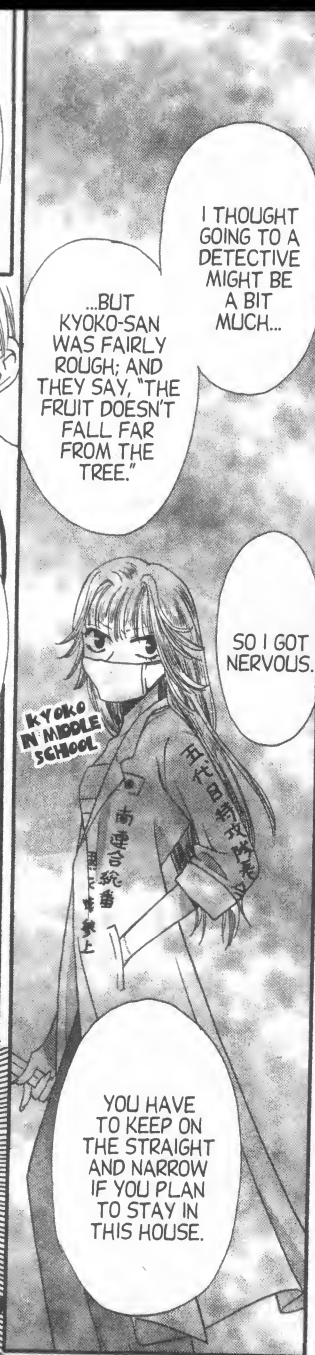
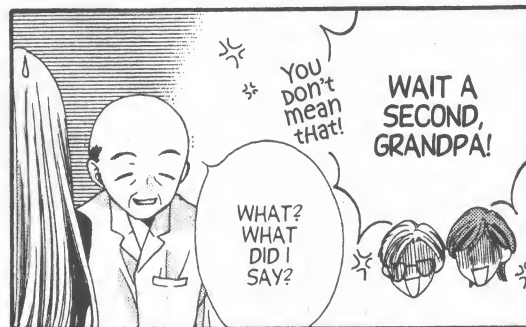
When "Furuba" started in "Hana to Yume Magazine," there was a popularity contest. Here are the results:
 First place... Yuki.
 Second place... Tohru.
 Third place... Kyo.
 Fourth place... Shigure.
 Fifth place... Hana.
 Sixth place... Uo.
 Seventh place... Mama.
 If we do it now, we might have different results. Like, Kyo had only been around for one chapter. No one had a chance to fall in love with him yet! Oh, and remember when Shigure teases Kyo with a song? The original words were "kyo-o-kun no su-ke-be." (Kyo-kun is a pervert). Can you guess the tune? Don't worry about it. I don't think anyone would really know it anyway. It'll just be my secret!













MOM
REALLY
LOVED
ME...

BUT THAT'S
NOT RIGHT.

IF I
LIVE
HERE...

...I'LL BE
MISERABLE.

...I HAVE TWO
WONDERFUL
FRIENDS...

THE SOHMAS
TREATED ME
KINDLY...



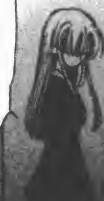
EVEN
SO...

BUT...

...AND GRANDPA IS SO
GENEROUS TO LET ME
LIVE WITH HIM...

I ONLY HAVE
THINGS TO BE
GRATEFUL FOR.

I'M VERY...
BLESSED.



DAD...

YOU NEED
TO LIVE
SOMEWHERE
WHERE YOU CAN
SPREAD YOUR
WINGS AND
REALLY BE
ALIVE.

KATSUYA
NEEDED
THAT TOO.

YOU
DON'T HAVE
TO STAY
HERE, KYOKO-
SAN.

IF
THERE'S
SOMEPLACE
YOU'D
RATHER
BE, YOU
CAN GO.

I'M AN OLD
MAN. IF THEY
SAY MEAN
THINGS TO ME,
I CAN DEAL
WITH IT.

STILL,
THIS IS
WHERE
I NEED
TO BE.



BUT YOU
DON'T HAVE TO
STAY HERE.



THAT
IS...

I'M
NOT TRYING
TO CHASE
YOU OUT.

I JUST
FEAR YOU
WON'T
BE HAPPY
HERE, KYOKO-
SAN.

IS THAT
WRONG?

I WANTED
TO STAY...

...I HATED
TO LEAVE.

I
WANT-
ED TO
STAY...

IS IT
PROOF...

...THAT I'M
SPOILED?

...WITH
SOHMA-
KUN...

...AND
KYO-
KUN...

...AND
SHIGURE-
SAN.

I THINK
IT'S
TIME
YOU...

I WANT
TO LEARN
MORE...

...ABOUT
SOHMA-KUN AND
KYO-KUN.

...SOHMA-
KUN'S
HOUSE...

...SO MUCH,

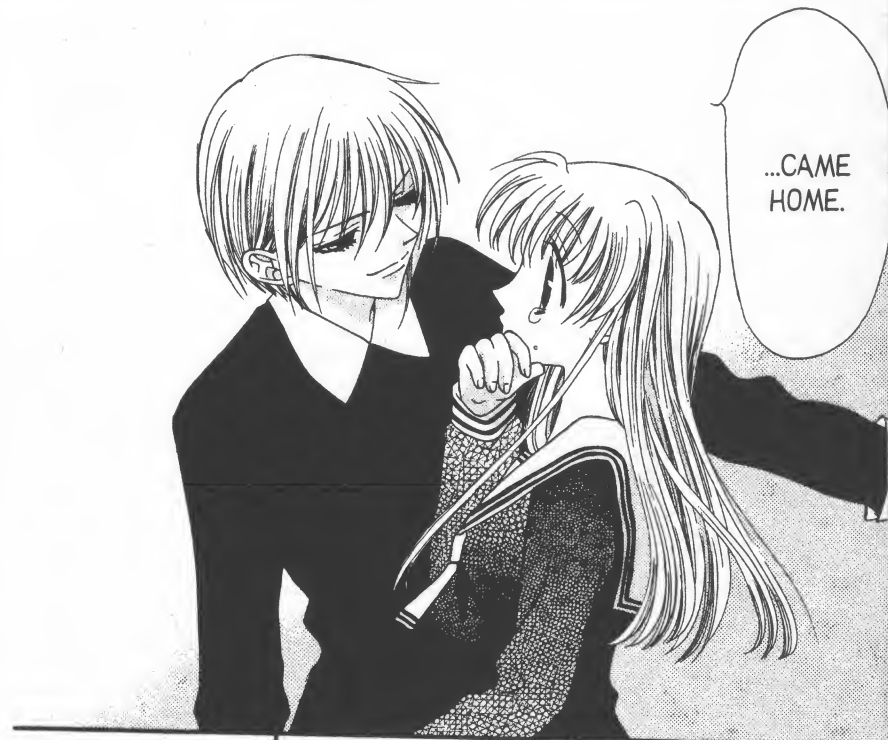
I WANT TO
HAVE DINNER
WITH THEM AND
TALK ABOUT SO
MANY THINGS.

I DIDN'T
REALLY
WANT...

...I WANT
TO GO
BACK.

C

I MISS...



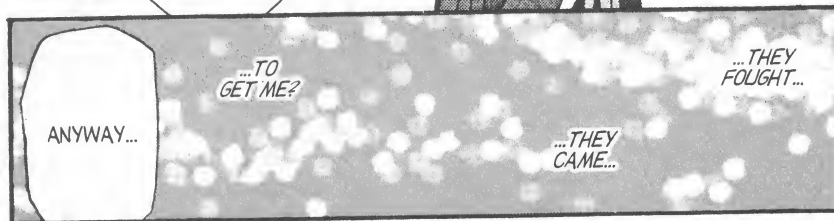


I DON'T KNOW WHY THE HELL I'M DOING THIS.

WHY DID I GET ALL IRRITATED THE MOMENT YOU LEFT?

IT DIDN'T MAKE ANY SENSE, SO I GOT EVEN MORE ANNOYED!

EVEN THOUGH...



...TO GET ME?

...THEY FOUGHT...

ANYWAY...

...THEY CAME...



I HEARD YOU.



IF YOU REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE...

...YOU SHOULD HAVE SAID SO IN THE FIRST PLACE!

BUT-- HOW DID YOU--?

E.H.?!?



UH, UH...

KYO-KUN, HOW DID YOU FIND ME?

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO LEFT THE ADDRESS!



EVEN IF IT WAS FRICKIN' HARD TO MAKE OUT!



THANKS TO YOUR LOUSY HANDWRITING, I HAD TO SPEND ALL DAY WALKING WITH THAT DAMN YUKI!

This can't be right! Gimme the map!

No. Give it!



DAH!

DON'T...

...CALL HER TOHRU-CHAN LIKE YOU'RE HER FRIEND.

LOWLIFE.



"IT'S
OKAY..."

...TO LET
YOURSELF
"BE SAD."



HEY!

WHY
ARE YOU
CRYING?!

WHAT
?!

WHAT'S
WRONG?!



...TO
...GO BACK.

I DO
WANT

HIC.



IT'S
OKAY...



...TO LET
YOURSELF
BE SAD.



...TO
COMPLAIN...

...IT
WOULD
BE OKAY...



I
THOUGHT
THAT
YOU...



...WERE
ALL ABOUT
SAYING
WHAT YOU
FEEL.



...BUT
IN YOUR
CASE...

NORMALLY
I HATE
PEOPLE
WHO WHINE
ALL THE
TIME...



BE SELFISH...
SAY WHAT YOU
WANT... ONCE
IN A WHILE.



!



ONIGIRI!

THERE'S...



...HOME!

"IT'S
OKAY."

I WANT
TO GO
BACK...

THEN
WE'RE
GOING
HOME
NOW!

All
right
already!

!

.....

IT'S SO NICE TO SEE THAT THEIR EFFORTS WERE REWARDED.

YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN THESE TWO. THEY PRACTICALLY KILLED ME TO GET YOUR ADDRESS.

As opposed to Kyo-kun, who's always flustered.

!!

Well, I'm not actually going to do anything, but...

IT'S ALL RIGHT. LEAVE ALL YOUR WORRIES TO ME.

YES, YES.

BUT!

IT'S FINE, IT'S FINE. JUST MAKE SURE YOU DON'T RUN AWAY AGAIN.

I CAN'T CAUSE YOU ANY MORE PROBLEMS!

MOPING AROUND LIKE A SAD RAT WHO LOST HIS CHEESE.

FLUSTERED!

I WASN'T THAT...

110 7 110 7 110 7 110 7

CONGRATULATIONS ON OPERATION: KIDNAP THE PRINCESS!

YOU MAKE IT SOUND AS IF WE DID SOMETHING WRONG.

AT LEAST CALL IT A RESCUE.

UM...

...I'M BACK. I HOPE THAT'S NOT A PROBLEM.

THERE'S NO ONE...

...AS LUCKY AS ME.

Your nose is running.

Heh.

MOM.

Omake Theater 4: This question isn't on the S.A.T....



Correct answer: Sometimes it's easier to understand a situation if you look at it from a distance.



To be continued in Volume 2...

Next time in...



Old Friends and New Family

The Sohma family is just starting to get used to life with Tohru, but can they survive a sleepover visit by her two best friends without their secret being exposed? Things aren't any easier at school where crowd-shy Kyo must deal with sudden popularity—and a surprise visit by two other members of the Sohma clan!

Fruits Basket Volume 2
Available April 2004



Thanks to Harada-sama,
Araki-sama, Mother, my
editor, and everyone who
reads and supports "Fruits
Basket."

Next time it'll be Yuki--

This is Natsuki Takaya,
signing off!

Fruits Basket's

The Chinese Zodiac – Part 1: History Lesson

Fables, myths, and legends abound in every culture of the world. Some of the most ancient of them stem from a basic need to place some type of meaning on those events that are out of our control. The exact origins of the Chinese Zodiac remain a mystery, but their influence is still being felt even today.

The Chinese once viewed time as a cyclical journey consisting of highs and lows that would eventually come full circle. This concept of time would become the basis for the Chinese Lunar Calendar, a 12-year calendar built around 60-year cycles that were delegated by the longitude of the sun and the phases of the moon.

The calendar itself dates back to around 2637 B.C. and consists of 10 Heavenly Stems (elements with yin and yang characteristics) and 12 Earthly Branches (animals of the zodiac) that are clumped together to become the name of the year. When the stems and branches, also known as "Jikkan Junishi," are combined in sequential order, they do not repeat until 60 years have passed. So in essence no one person will ever see any given year more than twice in their own lifetime.

Unfortunately, much of the population was illiterate and unable to fully grasp the complexity of the calendar so the 12 Earthly Branches came to be represented by animals so that everyone could remember them better. The version of the calendar that has been passed down also incorporates the five Chinese elements (Metal, Water, Wood, Fire, and Earth) into its design. The elements themselves each have a yin and yang variation, but the zodiac animals are always either yin or yang. For example, an odd year is yin and an even year is yang.

Japan was introduced to the Chinese calendar in approximately 604 A.D. during the reign of the Empress Suiko-Tenno, when she made an active attempt to spread the many wonders of Buddhism throughout the island nation. By this time though, the calendar was all ready being used for a number of things including telling the time of day through two-hour intervals and even pointing out cardinal directions.

As time went on, the animals became the core basis of Asian astrology, which dictates that one's personality can be divined from the year in which they were born. When combined with the elemental aspects of the calendar, Chinese astrology can even point out which partner will be more dominant in a relationship. Needless to say, the vast majority of the population does not take this seriously anymore.

Still, the Chinese Zodiac does have its uses in modern society. Instead of being rude and asking someone how old they are, one would instead ask what their animal where they born under. With a little math—just add or subtract 12—you'll have your answer. And let us not forget the Chinese New Year, which is celebrated every year in either late January or early February.

Cow

Years: 1961, 1973,
1985, 1997
Positive: inspiring,
conservative, natural
born leaders
Negative: stubborn,
unyielding personality



Tiger

Years: 1962, 1974,
1986, 1998
Positive: courageous,
unpredictable, loving
Negative: overly
aggressive, highly
emotional



Rabbit

Years: 1963, 1975,
1987, 1999
Positive:
affectionate,
pleasant, talented
Negative: too sen-
timental, avoids
conflict



Rat

Years: 1960, 1972,
1984, 1996
Positive:
imaginative,
ambitious,
generous to
loved ones
Negative:
hot-tempered,



Boar

Years: 1971, 1983,
1995, 2007
Positive: reliable,
sincere, tolerant
Negative: shy, short
tempered



Dog

Years: 1970, 1982,
1994, 2006
Positive: honest,
generous, faithful
Negative: quiet,
cynical



Rooster

Years: 1969, 1981,
1993, 2005
Positive: courageous,
hardworking, skilled
Negative: arrogant,
selfish



Monkey

Years: 1968, 1980,
1992, 2004
Positive: inventive,
entertaining, magnetic
personality
Negative: distrusting,
untrusting

Dragon

Years: 1964, 1976,
1988, 2000
Positive: intelligent,
enthusiastic,
soothehearted
Negative: bossy, loud



Snake

Years: 1965, 1977,
1989, 2001
Positive: romantic,
clever, beautiful
Negative: vain,
procrastinators



Horse

Years: 1966, 1978,
1990, 2002
Positive: cunning,
adventurous,
cheerful
Negative:
impatient, selfish



Sheep

Years: 1967, 1979,
1991, 2003
Positive: creative,
honest, passionate
Negative:
disorganized,
timid

TP: How is acting for anime different from other acting jobs you do?

LB: Well I can look like sin for one thing. I love that. And anime is the only thing I do in which I act after the fact. Dubbing is a craft unto itself; it takes a completely different approach. You don't always get to decide how you want to say a line, because your way doesn't work with the timing. Anime means taking something very specific, and making it work for you.

TP: Do you have a favorite anime or manga series?

LB: I feel like a cheese for saying so, but Fruits Basket is my favorite. When I found out you guys were releasing the manga in english, I was ecstatic.

TP: What's your zodiac animal? Are you happy being that animal or would you rather be something else?

LB: I'm a cock. I wouldn't change that either; just 'cause it's fun to say, "I'm a cock."

TP: Okay, I have to ask... If you were in Tohru's shoes and you had to pick one guy, who would you choose Kyo or Yuki?

LB: I don't know ... I've tried to make that choice about a thousand times. At first I thought Kyo because, c'mon, he's awesome. He's got the whole bad boy thing working for him; but then I think about Yuki, and how much he truly cares about Tohru and how wonderful a person he is ... and I'm back at square one. It's an endless circle.

TP: Tohru is a very emotional character who is often moved to tears of joy or sadness. Was it difficult to bring out her emotions out in your performance?

LB: It wasn't so much difficult as it was draining. In the last few episodes especially, Tohru goes through a lot of extreme emotions. Those days of recording were the hardest. The emotion you feel as the character, attaches itself to you, so I left the booth very depressed and frustrated.

TP: What was it like working with the other members of the Fruits Basket cast? What was your involvement with the other actors?

LB: Justin did a great job of casting the show. When listening to the final product, I kept wishing that I had been able to be involved with their recording sessions as well. Luckily, I'm friends with a lot of the cast, so I could still tell them how much I enjoyed what they did.

TP: How did you feel when the series was over?

LB: I was so upset. I loved working on Fruits Basket; there's no doubt that I would jump at the chance to continue it.

TP: What was your first voice acting role for anime?

LB: The first thing I did was kid Dende on Dragonball Z. I was filling in for the woman who originally did that voice, as she wasn't available. It turns out, though, she came back to the studio after me, and rerecorded everything I'd done. Which really sucked, let me tell you. Soon after, though, I was cast as kid Trunks. So I guess it was all for the best in the end.

TP: Is there a favorite anime role that you've performed?

LB: Tohru. I just loved everything about her.

TP: What was the most challenging role you've ever played?

LB: That's a tough question. Either Tohru or Marlene in Blue Gender. Both had some intense moments throughout their series.

A conversation with Laura Bailey, the English voice of Tohru Honda

You genuinely care about every storyline.

TP: How did you prepare for the role of Tohru Honda? How was this character different from other anime characters that you've played?

LB: In preparing for the part, I researched the series on the Internet and watched the Japanese version. Tohru was the first innocent character I'd played. The more I researched, the more I fell in love with that innocence.

TP: How does the original Japanese performance influence your own interpretation of a character?

LB: Well, it helped me form a basis for Tohru's mannerisms and inflections. I think when the original is so wonderful, you don't want to stray from that. Why mess with a good thing, y'know?

TP: Many of Tohru's humble behaviors and speech patterns must have been very difficult to translate to English. What did you find most challenging about capturing her character in your performance?

LB: Actually, I was asked a similar question by Mr. Daichi (Japanese director) himself, during a panel discussion. He wanted to make sure that her sweetness and formal nature didn't get lost in the translation. I think that, while we in America don't have that same speech formality, the humble nature can still be communicated through inflections and tone. I guess the challenging part was just making sure to always use those softer inflections.

TP: What about Tohru's character do you most relate to? What do you find difficult to relate to?

LB: Her desire to turn any situation into a positive one—that's what I most connected with. Not to say that I always succeed ... but I certainly try to remain optimistic. I think it was her formal nature that I found most difficult. Luckily, John Burgmeier did a wonderful job with the dialogue, which made things easier.

TOKYOPOP: Could you briefly explain the process of voice acting for Fruits Basket?

Laura Bailey: I, as an actress, become involved after the translated script has been completed and the director has an idea of what he wants from the episode. Justin Cook, my voice director on Fruits Basket, usually has pretty specific ideas and is great about filling me in on what's happening throughout the show. He'll give me the background of other characters and help me decide where Tohru is coming from during her interaction with others. That's especially helpful when I'm the first actor to record on an episode. All actors record separately due to the difficulty of ADR; but I always prefer to be the last to record so that I can have Justin play the other actors in my headphones when I go in. It's easier to be believable when you know what you're reacting to. One of the great things about Tohru was, though she had a lot of dialogue, most of it was spoken off screen. That helped to speed up recording because I didn't have to match mouth flaps and could use the timing that I wanted to. Often, on the narration, I could get through it in one take.

TP: When you first became involved with Fruits Basket, were you aware of the huge international following that the series has? What is it about Fruits Basket, do you think, that makes it such a fan favorite series with many viewers and readers outside of the usual shojo market?

LB: I had no idea Fruits Basket had the following it did, but I could tell from the first episode I watched that it wasn't an average series. I think what makes Fruits Basket so special is the depth of all the characters.



Laura Bailey



players based on their rank. So if you use "King" as your model, you might have King, Duke, Knight, Merchant, and Peon as your ranks. More importantly, the players of higher status are entitled to enjoy and generally abuse their power over the lower ranking players. You can also add to the fun by having players wear hats based on rank, with the leader wearing a crown and the loser wearing a dunce cap.

Between hands, players move seats based on ranks. The Dai Fugo selects the most comfortable chair; second place sits to the left, and so on around to the Dai Hin Min who sits to the Dai Fugo's right, probably on a crate or packing case.

The Dai Hin Min is responsible for shuffling, dealing and clearing away the cards when necessary. As the players are now seated clockwise in order of rank, the first card is dealt to the Dai Fugo, and so on down.

When the deal is complete, the Dai Hin Min must give his highest card to the Dai Fugo, and the Dai Fugo gives back in exchange any card that he does not want. Second place trades with second from last, etc. If there are an odd number of players, the middle player doesn't swap. (Variation: swap 2 cards per round)

The Dai Hin Min then leads any card or set of cards and the game continues as before.

END OF GAME

If scoring, set a target score (say 11 points). The game ends when someone reaches it.

VARIATIONS

Shibari

If a player follows a play with a card of the same suit, that player may declare "shibari," or "binding," which means that all other players must follow suit in order to play. For example, if Hanajima plays a seven of clubs and Tohru trumps it with a nine of clubs, she can declare shibari on clubs, and only clubs can be played. This variation can work with doubles and triples, too. Example—Kyo plays a six of clubs and a six of hearts. Uo trumps that with a eight of diamonds and an eight of hearts. She can declare shibari on hearts so that each subsequent play must have a heart plus any other. Double shibari or triple shibari can be declared if two or three suits match. Shibari's are only effective for the hand in which they are played.

Revolution!

If four of a kind are played, it is called a revolution. When this happens, the rank of cards is reversed. From that point on, lower values now trump higher values until there is another revolution. For more turmoil, you can also switch the ranks of players!

Dai Fugo makes the rules!

Another fun variation is to let the Dai Fugo add an extra rule each round (or cancel an existing rule). The rules will likely make it easier for the Dai Fugo to keep winning or be humiliating for the loser, but in Dai Hin Min, as in life, it's not always fair. But remember Karma—what comes around goes around, and you won't stay on top forever...

There are many other variations to Dai Hin Min and its Western equivalents, and the rules are slightly different depending on whoever you ask. For other variations, and rules on similar games, visit www.pagat.com, the web's leading resource for card games.

How to Play Rich Man, Poor Man (Dai Hin Min/ Dai Fugo)

OBJECTIVE

The aim is to get rid of all your cards as soon as possible.

PLAYERS AND CARDS

About 4 to 7 people using a standard 54 card pack with jokers. The suits are irrelevant and the cards rank, from high to low with deuces high: 2 A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3. Jokers are wild.

DEAL

The game is played clockwise. All the cards are dealt out. Some players may have one more than others.

PLAY

The player to dealer's left starts by leading (face up) any single card or any set of cards of equal rank (for example, three fives). Each player in turn must then either pass (i.e. not play any cards), or play face up a card or set of cards which beats the previous play.

A single card is beaten by any higher single card. A set of cards can only be beaten by a higher set containing the same number of cards. So for example, if the previous player played two sixes, you can beat this with two kings, or two sevens, but not with a single king, and not with three sevens (though you could play two of them and hang onto the third).

It is not necessary to beat the previous play just because you can -- passing is always allowed. Also passing does not prevent you from playing the next time your turn comes round.

The play continues as many times around the table as necessary until someone makes a play which everyone else passes. All the cards played are then turned face down and put to one side, and the player who played last (and highest) in the previous "trick" starts again by leading any card or set of equal cards.

For example the play might go:

Tohru leads with a pair of fours. Kyo follows with a pair of sevens. Uo passes. Hanajima follows with a pair of Tens. Tohru passes. Kyo plays a pair of Jacks. Uo passes. Hanajima passes. Tohru passes. Kyo then starts again by leading any card or set.

When a player whose turn it is to play has no more cards left, the turn passes to the next player in rotation. Therefore in the example, if the two Jacks were Kyo's last two cards, he would sit out the rest of the round and it would then be Uo's turn to play anything.

Jokers are wild and are equal in rank to whatever card they are played with.

For scoring purposes, whoever goes out first gets 2 points, second out gets one point and the rest of the players get no points.

SOCIAL STATUS

The first player who is out of cards is dubbed the "Dai Fugo," or very rich man. Other variations on the rules call this person the President, King, or the Great Dalmuti. The last player to be left with any cards is known as the "Dai Hin Min," or very poor man. You can also use other derisive terms such as peon, beggar, scum, or a--hole.

While it's not part of the basic Dai Hin Min rules, many variations also give titles to the

