



# Op.9 The Swan

九號天鵝

**Author:** Greamo **Illustrator:** Greamo **Publisher:** Kadokawa Taiwan Corporation

**Date:** 02/2024

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334 pages | 14.7 x 21cm

**Volume:** 1 (END)

**BFT2.0 Translator:** Chris MacDonald

Chiyo, a baby boy cloned from the genes of a once-renowned astronaut, was born on a cold winter night, carrying high hopes for one day flying into the cosmos. By his side since childhood has been his caretaker robot, Anders, a constant presence and source of guidance. However, as Chiyo grows older, Anders begins to age, facing the inevitable need for an upgrade.

Aware of his unique origins, Chiyo often gazes at the sky, his favorite sight, grappling with the realization that he isn't truly "special." Yet, he remains steadfast, unwilling to compromise on the dreams he holds close to his heart. In this vast universe, is there a place where he and Anders can truly belong?

Set against a steampunk backdrop featuring clones and robots as protagonists, the story delves into the essence of "self-affirmation" and explores the many forms of "love." It provokes deep reflection while engaging readers with the emotional decisions faced by the characters. With its accessible sci-fi setting and universal themes, the book appeals to readers of all ages worldwide.



**Author Greamo**

Greamo is a Taiwanese manga artist. *Op. 9 The Swan* was initially serialized on the Creative Comic Collection platform and later published as a standalone volume by Taiwan Kadokawa. Greamo has garnered a devoted following for this work. Selected for the 2024 Bangkok Book Fair, *Op. 9 The Swan* remains Greamo's most recognized work.

# Home Is Far Away: Science Fiction Manga *Op.9 The Swan* and Its Creator Greamo

by Li Hua  
(originally published on Okapi)

During her research, artist Greamo realized that while “sci-fi” might seem far removed from reality, it must be firmly grounded in real-world theories—perfectly aligning with the theme she had chosen. The unique traits and irresistible charm of sci-fi captivated her, becoming an effective tool in her quest for answers.

The name “Chiyo” originates from the Italian word Ciao, meaning both “hello” and “goodbye.” Similarly, the robot caretaker “Anders” derives from the Icelandic word *endurfæðingu*, meaning “rebirth.” These names reflect the story’s theme of achieving “eternal companionship.”

Why does Anders, a robot designed to facilitate the “ideal ending,” resemble

a household appliance rather than a humanoid? Greamo explained, “Because its primary function is surveillance and baby care, this design is practical. If it were humanoid, it would be significantly more expensive and might even incur entertainment taxes. Considering the social structure, a simple-shaped robot is something most middle-class families could afford.”

In keeping with this logical design, Anders lacks facial expressions to convey emotions. Greamo explained that this absence forced her to explore more subtle, indirect ways for the robot to express feelings. This approach deepened the chemistry between Anders and Chiyo, allowing their bond to grow in unexpected

ways.

Fans often ask, “Are Chiyo and Anders lovers?” particularly since the term mechanical love is prominently featured on the book’s cover.

In reply, Greamo says that such a term is “beautiful.” “It elevates inanimate objects to the same level as humans, making them ‘encounterable.’ This gives us the choice to meet or not meet a robot. It reduces anthropocentric bias. To me, respect, empathy, and love are the most beautiful things.”

From a short story to a full-length novel, Greamo explained that along the way, she consulted many friends for their opinions, and those around her gave various concrete and insightful feedback. She carefully considered their ideas, which became key in making the work more balanced and complete. “My editor and I both had a lot of empathy for the characters. We did a lot of research to understand the motivations behind their behaviors,” Greamo shared. They aimed to maintain control over the rhythm and structure of each page while ensuring the visuals didn’t become overly complex or emotional. As she explained, “It’s like a conductor being careful not to focus on the trumpet when the string section should be quiet.”

At the same time, she allowed the characters to move naturally within the story, observing and analyzing their

psychological dynamics. This approach let the characters develop their own chemistry.

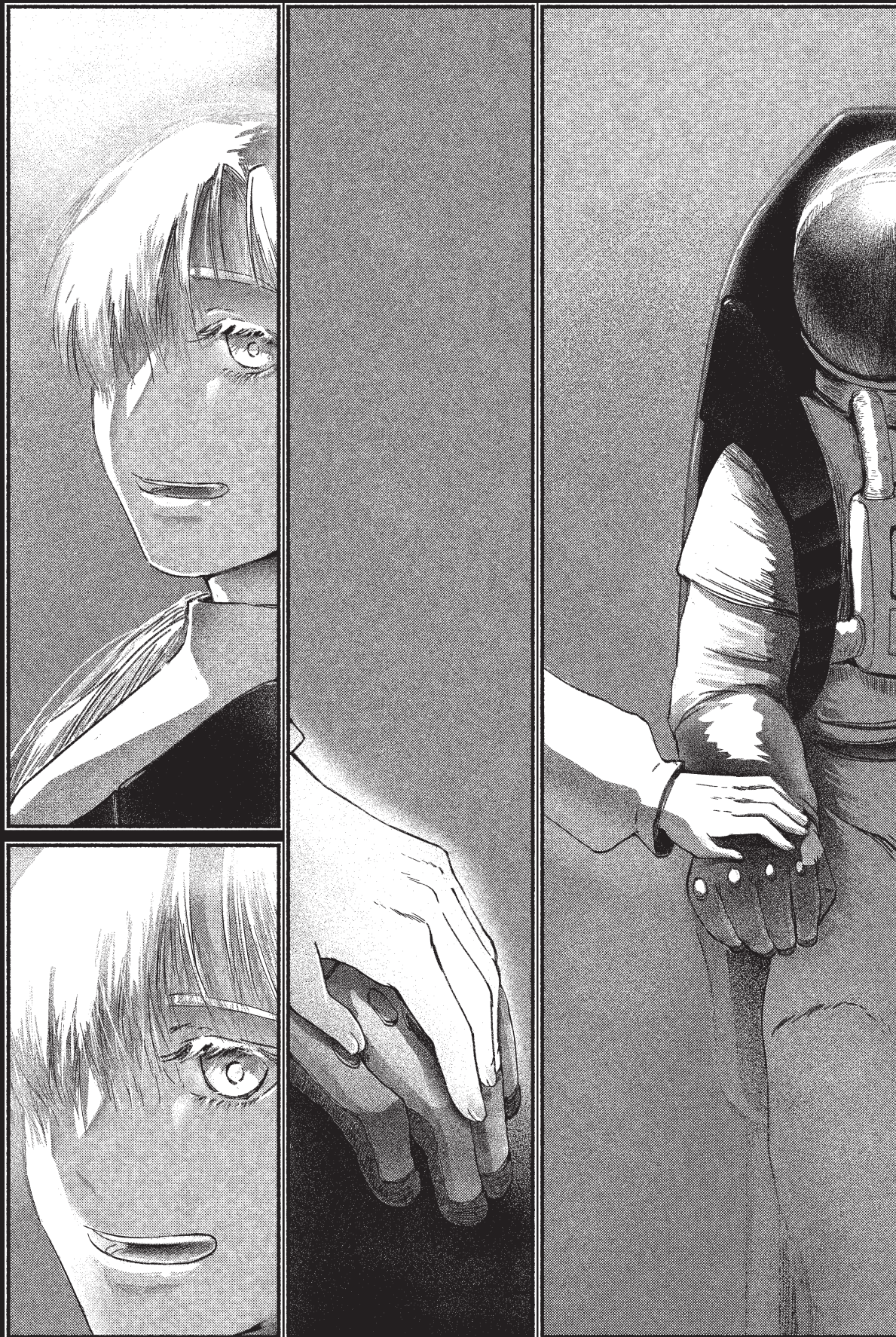
In her effort to “respond to the reader’s emotions,” Greamo welcomed multifaceted feedback, allowing the characters to evolve organically. The result was *Op. 9 The Swan*, a story she intended to share as a work for the public.

This seemingly delicate comic artist, who approaches everything with great care, may have learned to “let go” of fixed ideas. By moving forward along the river of opportunity, she inevitably “leaves something behind”—like *Op. 9 The Swan*.

*This essay has been edited for the purposes of this booklet.*

*Li Hua has worked as a web and animation designer at an advertising company and as an associate editor for a newspaper supplement. She has contributed columns and illustrations to newspapers and magazines and has taught creative courses and delivered lectures on reading and writing. With many years of experience as editor-in-chief at a publishing house, Li Hua specializes in designing and editing art books, picture books, and comics. She has overseen the publication of more than 100 books.*





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