



Wind Chaser Under the Blue Sky

青空下的追風少年

Author: Chien Chia-Cheng **Illustrator:** Chien Chia-Cheng **Publisher:** Gaea Books

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Awards: 2023 The 17th Japan International Manga Awards, Gold Award

BFT2.0 Translator: Michael Kearney

In the latter part of World War II, the skies over Taiwan were dominated by military aircraft, explosions echoing one after another, and the air thick with the smell of gunpowder. Amid this chaos, two passionate teenagers meet through their shared love of running.

Miyahara Ryo, an avid train enthusiast, passes on his passion to Yin Li-Sen. United by their awe of speeding trains, they are filled with a fighting spirit, dreaming of leaving their mark in Japan's track and field history. In this period of youthful rivalry, they agree to compete on the track.

But as war looms, the future grows increasingly uncertain. Will they be able to fulfill each other's wishes? As dreams and promises are shattered by the bombs, how will those left behind cope with the aftermath?



Chien Chia-Cheng

Chien Chia-Cheng's *Windchaser* won the Grand Prize at the 17th Japan International Manga Award in 2023. Chien has worked as a lead artist on comics about railways, finance, and World War II, as well as storyboards for advertisements and animation, and novel illustrations. His comic works include *Time Train*, *Alishan Railway Mysteries*, *Ms. Jiang*, *Have You Ever Been in Love?*, *Battlefield Communications*, and *Seven Dreams of the Louvre*. His illustrations for novels include *Howl of the Wolf*, *Other Dreams*, *Fight Chess King: Winning Moves*, and *Fight Chess King: Ghost Moves*. *Time Train* and *Back Street Dusk* sold rights in Arabic, while *The Movie Painter* sold rights in Russian. In 2016, works from *Seven Dreams of the Louvre* were exhibited at the Beijing Normal University Art Museum. In 2013, *Time Train* won the Best General Comic Award at the 4th Golden Comic Awards from the Ministry of Culture.

A Tale Rich in Emotion and History: Two Athletes During World War II

by Sado no Kami
(Originally published on OpenBook)

In the 1940s, towards the end of World War II in Taiwan, the sky was filled with military planes, and the constant echo of explosions resounded through the air. The atmosphere was thick with smoke and gunpowder. Amidst this turmoil, two passionate young boys bonded over their love of running. Miyahara Ryo, a train enthusiast, shared his excitement with Yin Lisen. Driven by their shared love for speed, they became determined to make their mark in Japan's track and field history.

From racing against each other to pushing their limits, Miyahara and Yin grew to become not only each other's fiercest rivals but also closest confidants. Their youthful competition was brimming with dreams and pure ambition, but the war soon disrupted their lives. Would they be able to fulfill their aspirations despite the overwhelming challenges?

Windchaser beautifully captures the emotions of youth striving to find their place in history while grappling with the pain of separation and loss. It tells the deeply moving story of the long journey toward post-war recovery in Taipei, where people worked tirelessly to rebuild the railways and recover their memories.

Golden Comic Award-winning artist Jason Chien collaborated with the National Archives Administration, which provided crucial Taiwan Railway archives that served as the creative foundation for this project. Reflecting on this partnership, Chien commented, "I realized that these events actually happened in Taiwan." This history includes a pandemic that required mass vaccinations and severely damaged railways that led to the use of freight cars in place of passenger trains.

Chien also considered the emotional turmoil of the time, as Japanese residents

were repatriated and Taiwanese people faced the installation of a new government. While studying historical materials, he imagined the unique experiences of Taiwan in the early post-war period, which led to the creation of *Windchasers*. Amid a pile of administrative files, a tale rich in emotion and history emerged.

Only recently has the air raid on Taipei gained significant public attention. *Windchaser* delves into details that few might recognize, from the specific U.S. planes involved in the air raid to historical locomotives. Chien's meticulous research ensures these elements are depicted with accuracy, adding depth to the story.

The National Archives hopes that adapting its historical records into comic books will make Taiwan's preserved history more accessible to a wider audience. At the end of the book, readers can explore additional stories from the archives, including a diagram of the Taipei Railway

Station employee dormitory and the anthem of the Provincial Games, inviting them to reflect on the rich history of the railway.

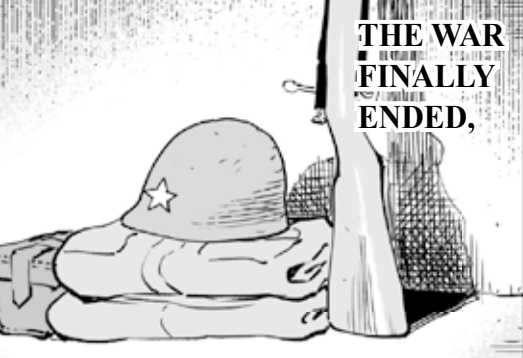
"When I create a story, I want readers to connect with the characters' emotions,"

Chien explained. "For instance, in *Windchasers*, there's a railway worker who lived in the same place for over 40 years before being forced to leave. Anyone who has spent a long time in one place can relate to that feeling. I hope readers will connect with this emotion."

Windchaser beautifully captures the emotions of youth striving to find their place in history while grappling with the pain of separation and loss. It tells the deeply moving story of the long journey toward post-war recovery in Taipei, where people worked tirelessly to rebuild the railways and recover their memories.

Sado no Kami has previously worked in the media, advertising, and publishing industries, and is now dedicated to social work involving children, migrant workers, and animal protection.

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



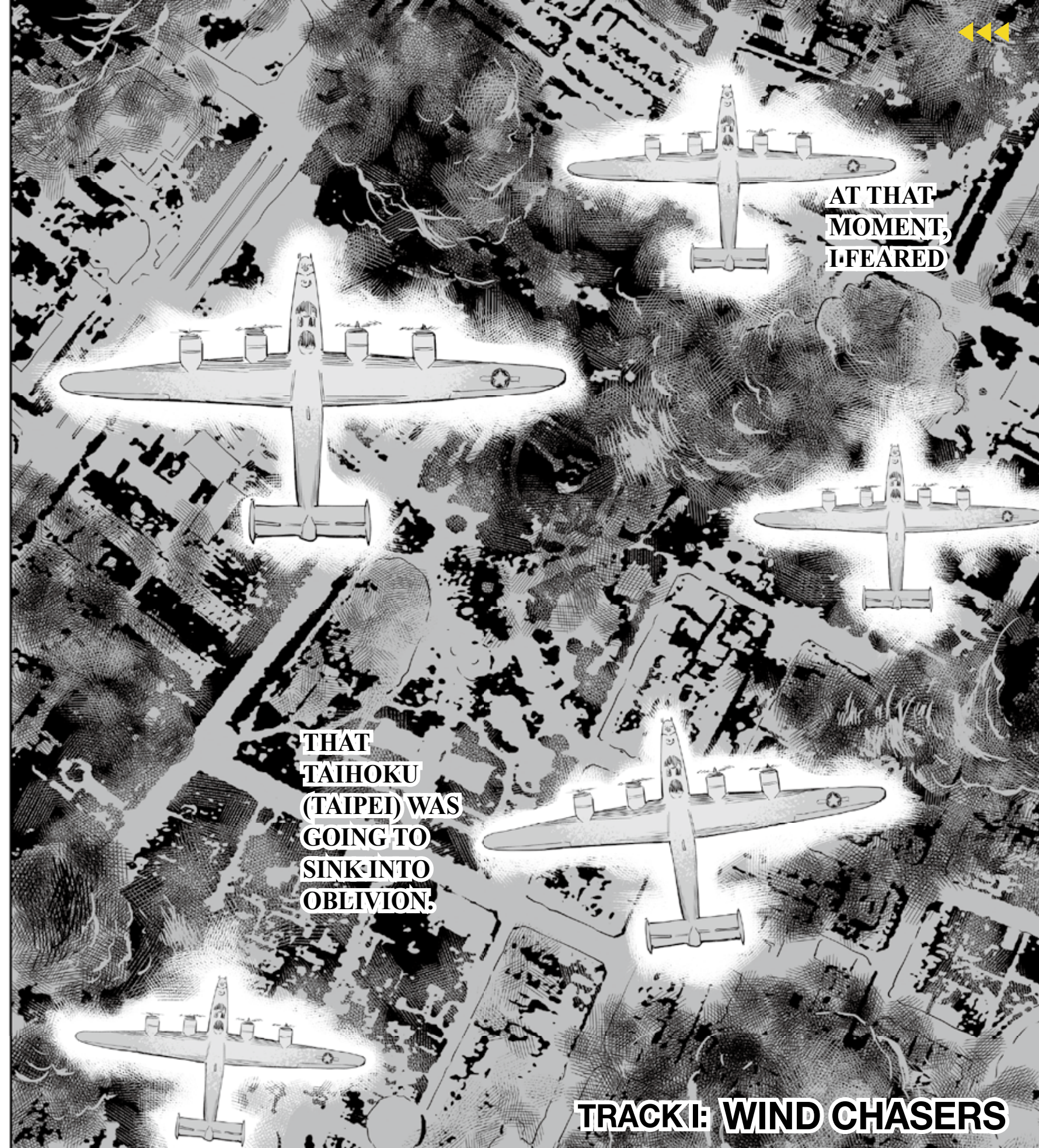
THE WAR
FINALLY
ENDED,



A FEW MONTHS
LATER, JAPAN
ANNOUNCED ITS
SURRENDER.



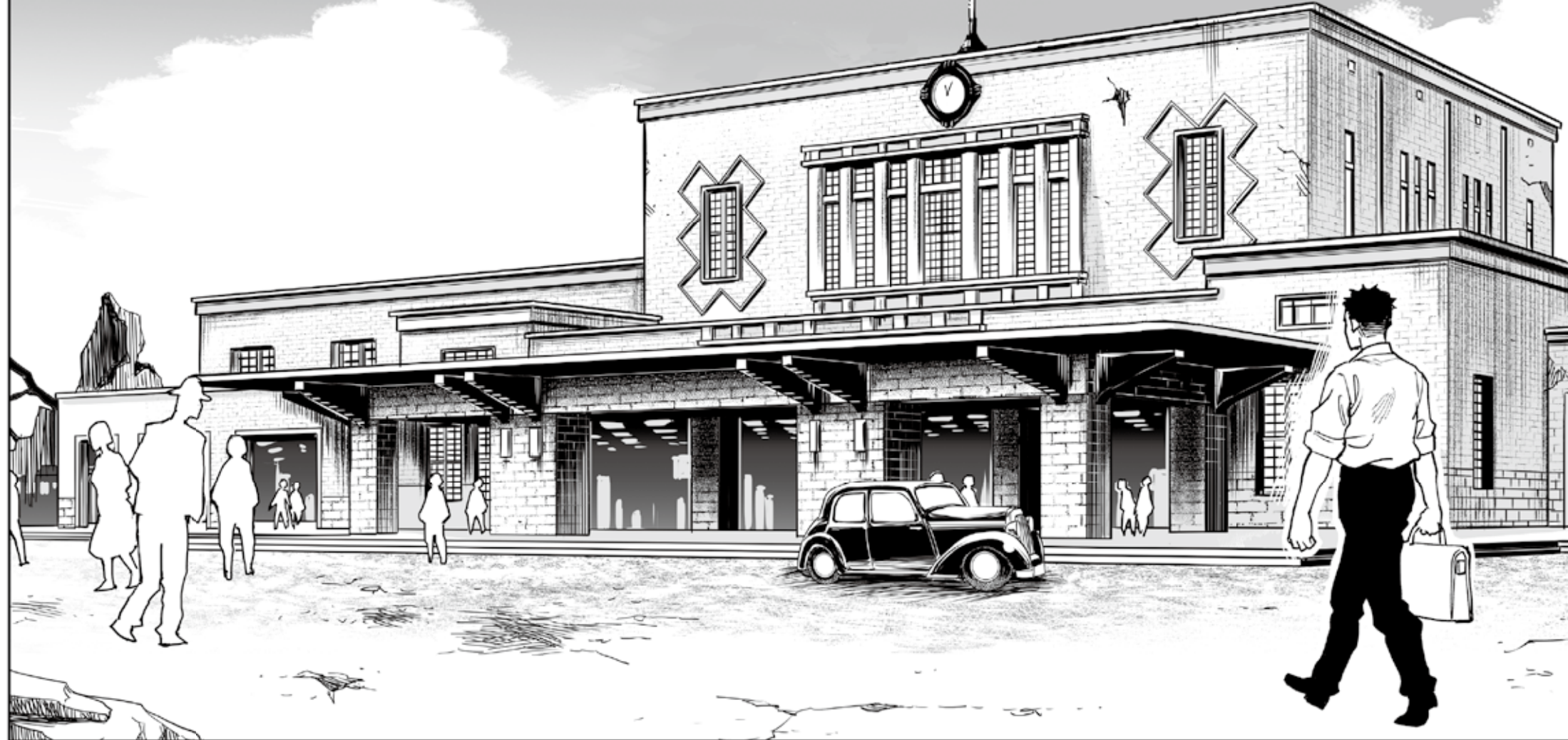
BUT
TAIPEI'S
PATH TO
RECOVERY
REMAINED
LONG.



AT THAT
MOMENT,
I FEARED

THAT
TAIHOKU
(TAIPEI) WAS
GOING TO
SINK INTO
OBLIVION.

TRACK 1: WIND CHASERS





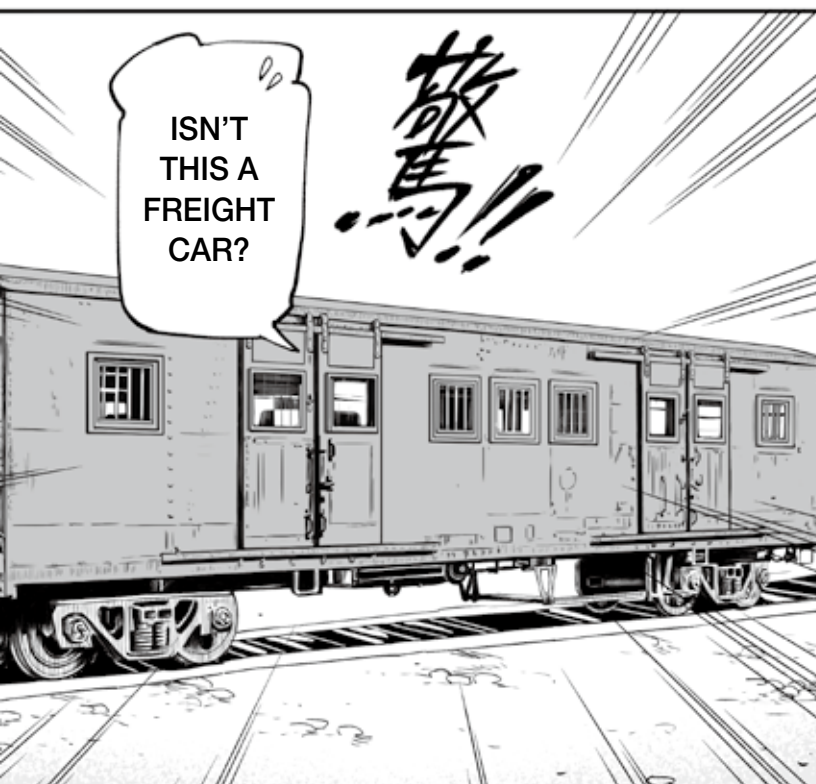
FINALLY...



YOU STOMPED ON MY FOOT!

I WAS HERE FIRST!

DON'T PUSH! DON'T PUSH!



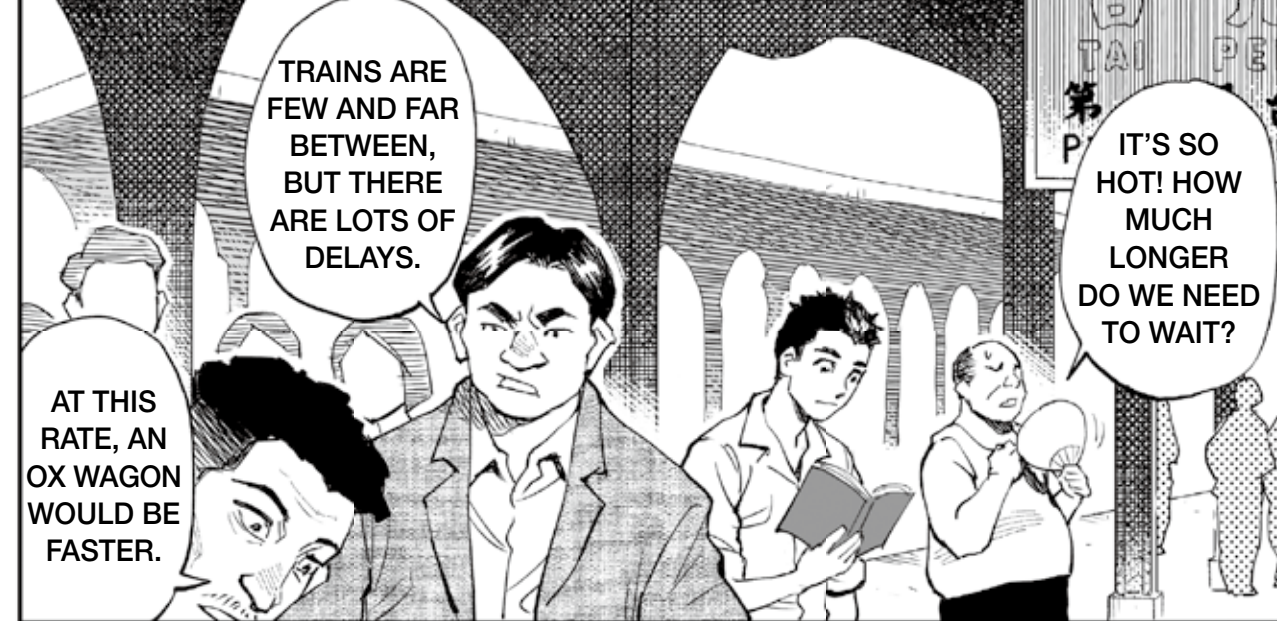
ISN'T THIS A FREIGHT CAR?

驚馬!!



HUH?

WHY AREN'T THERE ANY SEATS?



TRAINS ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN, BUT THERE ARE LOTS OF DELAYS.

AT THIS RATE, AN OX WAGON WOULD BE FASTER.

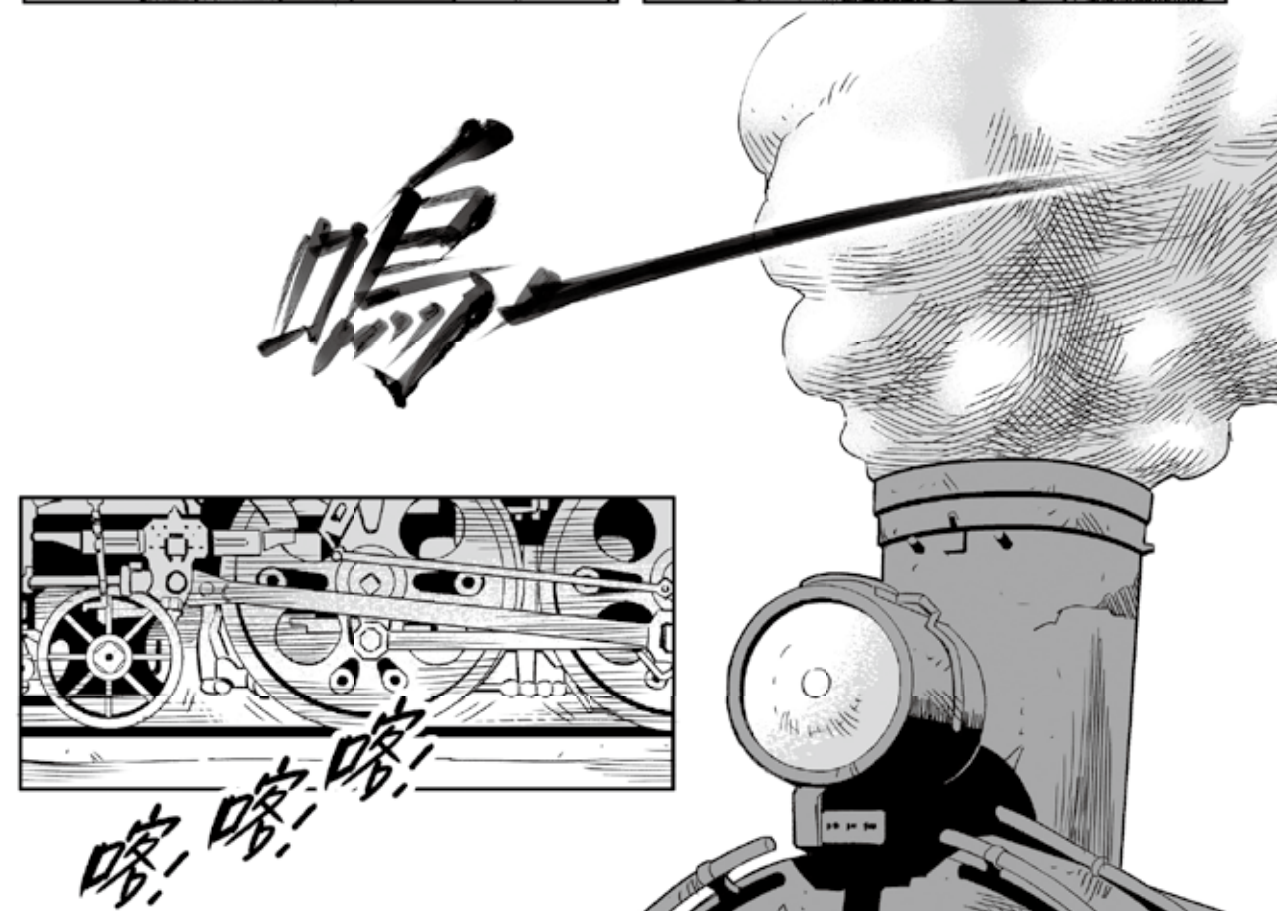
IT'S SO HOT! HOW MUCH LONGER DO WE NEED TO WAIT?



AH, I SEE IT COMING!



THE TRAIN TIMETABLE IS JUST WISHFUL THINKING.



鳴



喀! 喀! 喀!