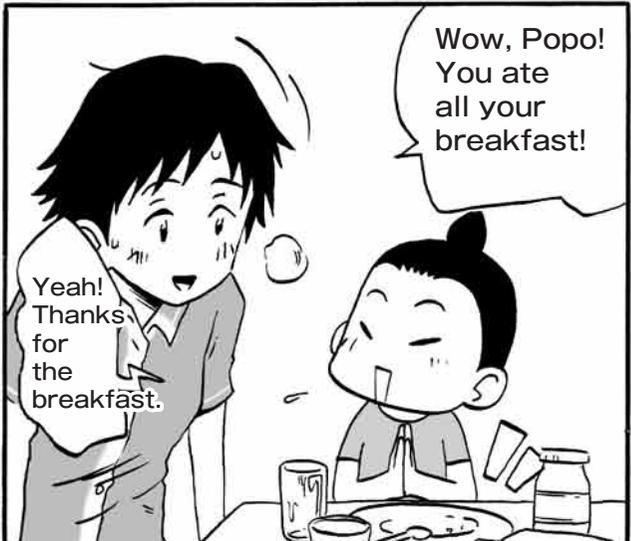
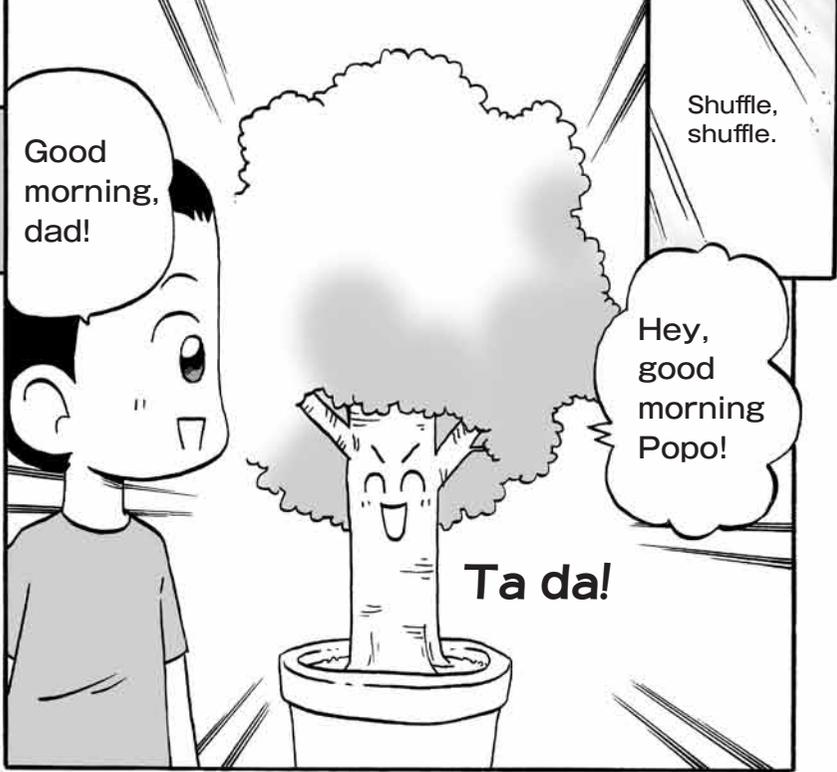
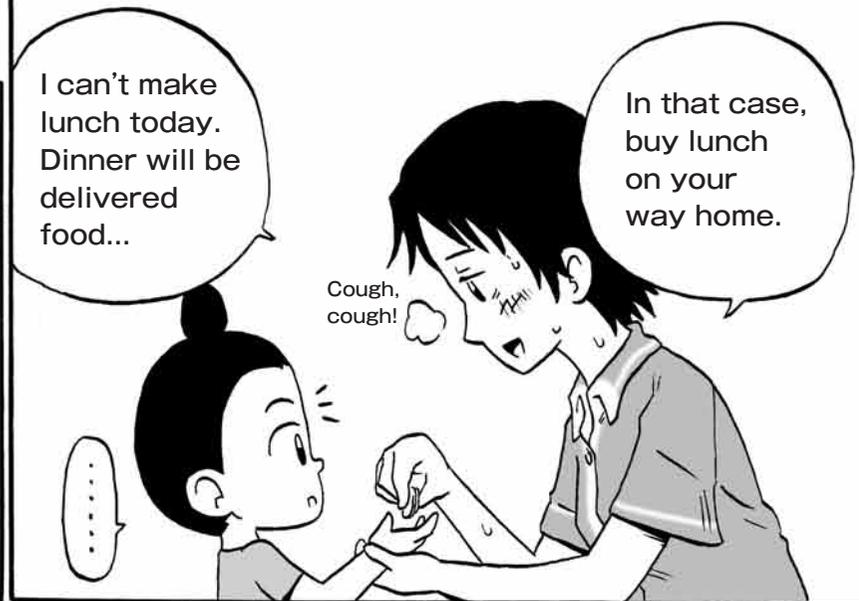




Makino family's food issue!







Umm... well... I had no idea a super dragon was living in a little dragon's lair...

I'll finish you off by turning you into a pot plant!

You were cursed by a dragon a year ago and turned into a pot plant.

And whose fault is that?

Are you gonna be OK? You're working too much. Take days off.

Oh, no!

Bang!

Oh... dear!

Even if I consulted a doctor, he would only tell me that the dragon that cursed you is the only thing that can reverse it. And all the other dragon hunters are gone, wiped away by the dragon.

What?!

Umm ...

Cough!
Cough!

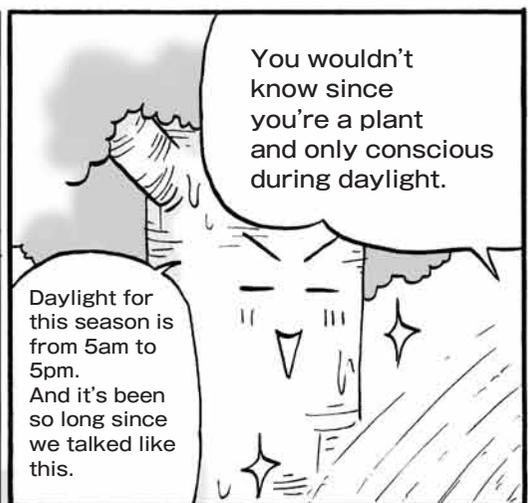
Flap!

Ugh!

The dragon hunting business was dangerous and unstable and I had told you to quit.

So don't tell me I should take days off!

That's why I was against it!



you turned into a plant...

Come to think of it... he hasn't been eating since...

I wonder why?

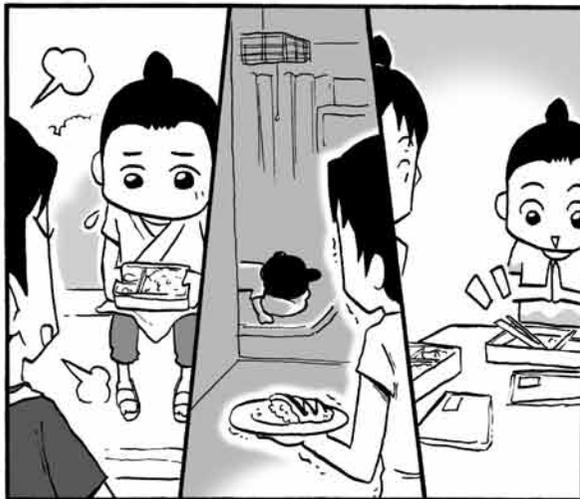
Oh!
Tomorrow?!

Yeah! No
problem! But just
don't overwork
yourself.

Can you
work from
tomorrow?

Yeah, it was when
I asked for more
part-time hours at
the fashion design
company to pay off
the bills.

So from
that time,
I started
to work
evenings
at the super-
market.



For a while,
it wasn't a
problem.

The fried
noodles
I made are
in the
fridge.

I got so
busy and
Popo
started
eating
often on
his own.

Just
heat it
up in
the
evening.

Ring!
Ring!
Ring!

Anyway,
when we
are not
around,
Popo
doesn't eat.

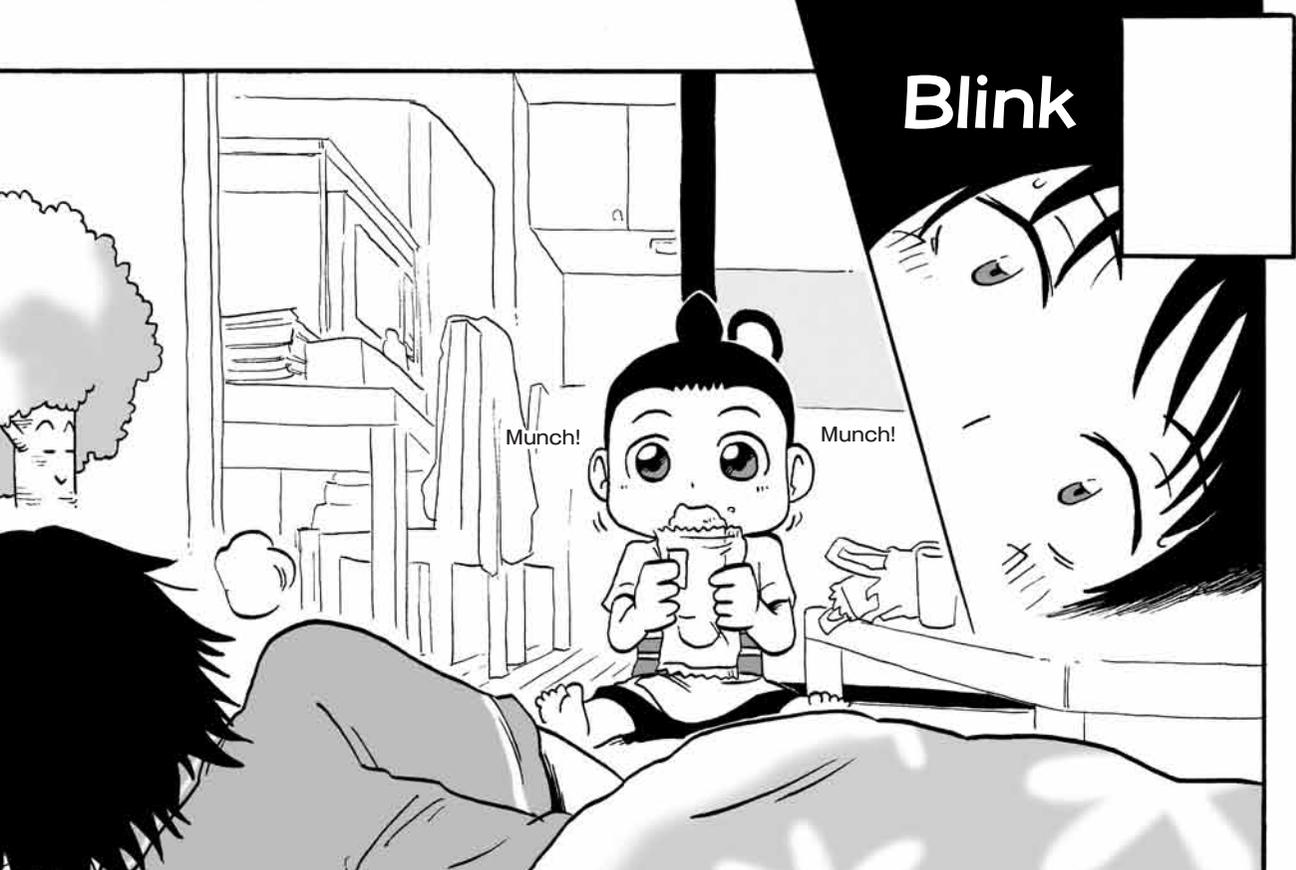
I thought I was giving Popo too
much readymade food. But even
when I make something, he
doesn't eat it. And Popo would
always say "I don't know"
whenever I ask why he didn't eat.

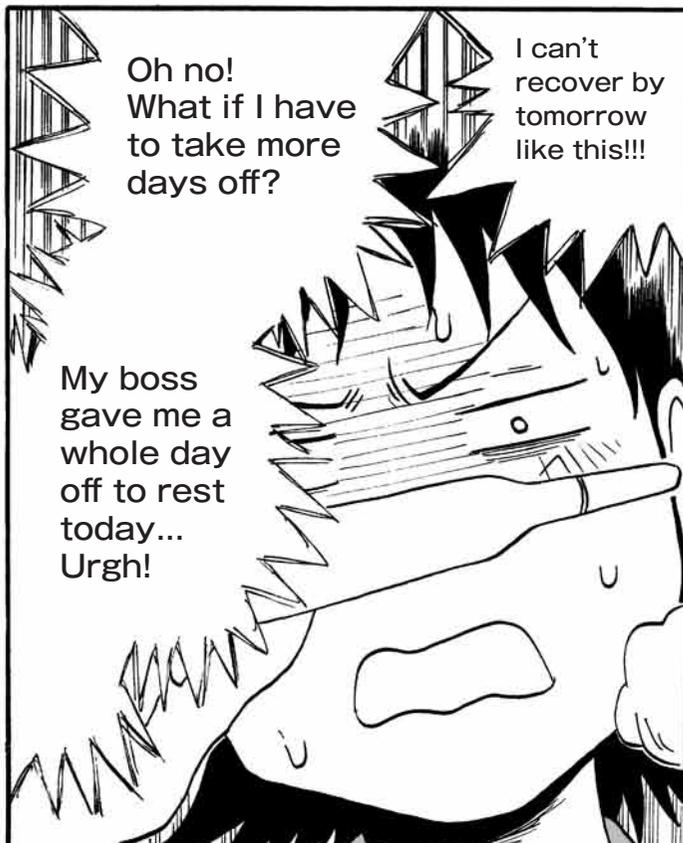


I don't
know.

Oh,
boy!









Don't talk to me!
Can't rest
if you give
me stressful
phone
calls!

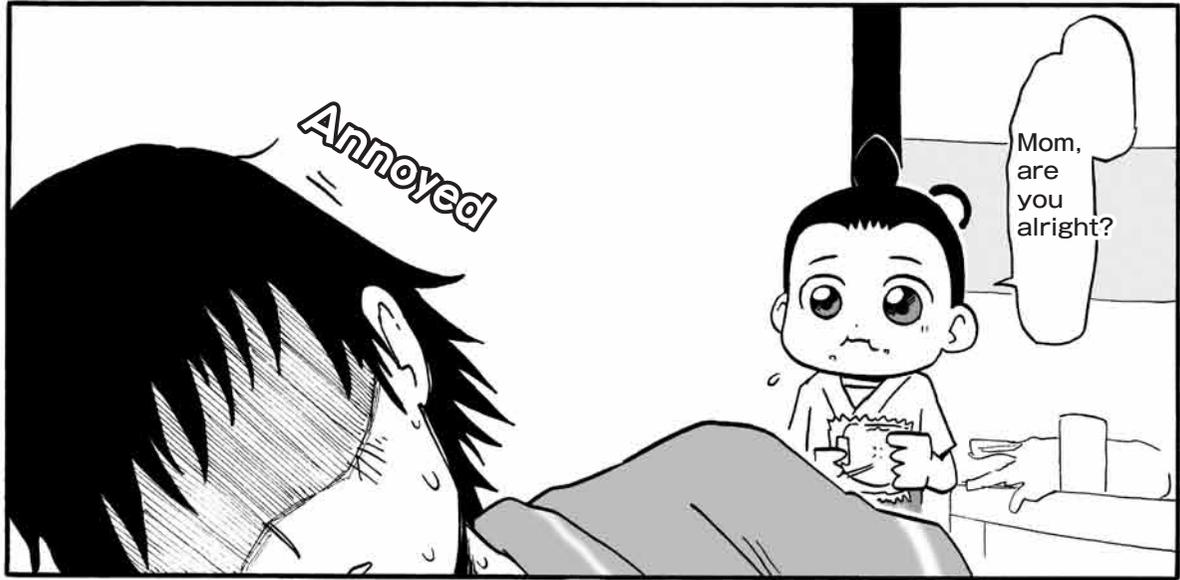
See you
tomorrow
at work!

Mom?



Stop
saying
that!
It's not
that
easy.

Just take
another
day off.



Annoyed

Mom,
are
you
alright?



I have to get well and start
working again for you and
dad. THAT'S WHY, I have to
get some SLEEP!

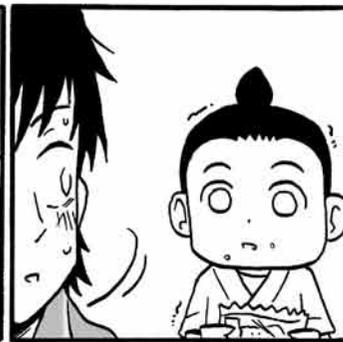
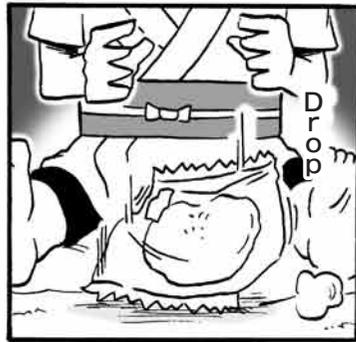
Flinch

Moko
?!



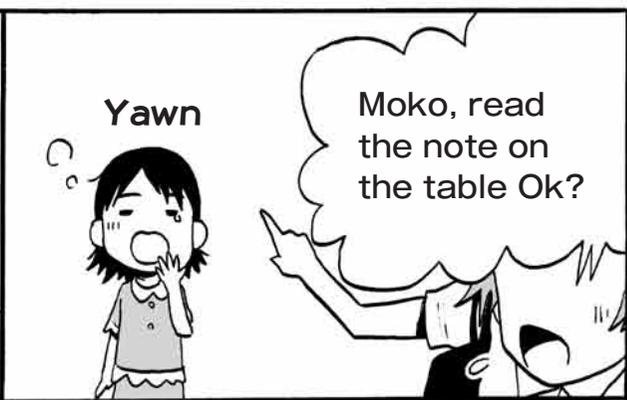
Popo, I told
you to eat
over there!

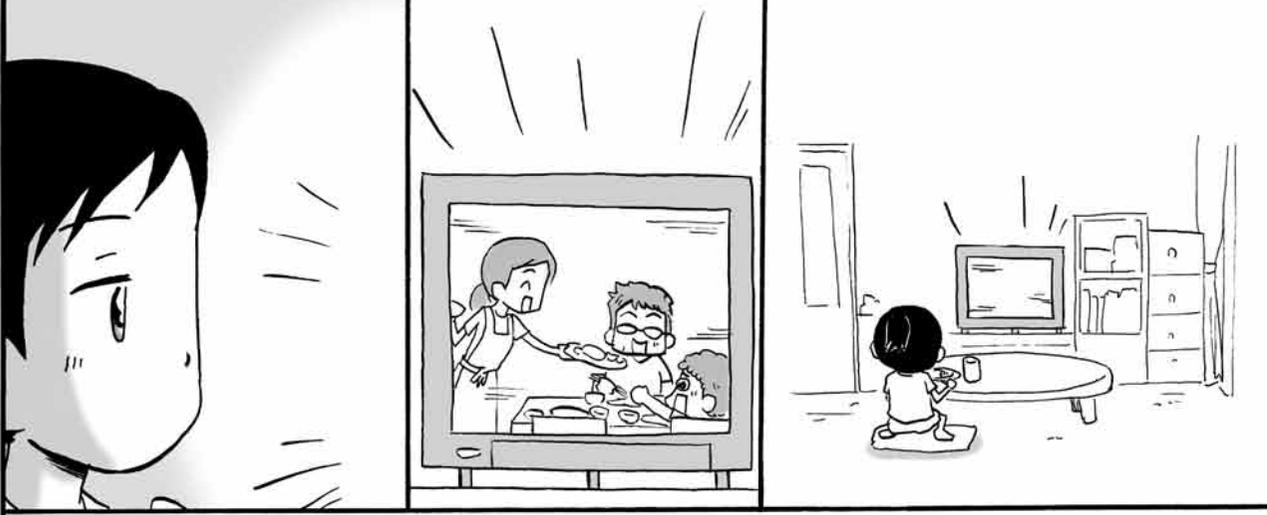
CEE...
Mo...
Mo...





I'm gonna be late.







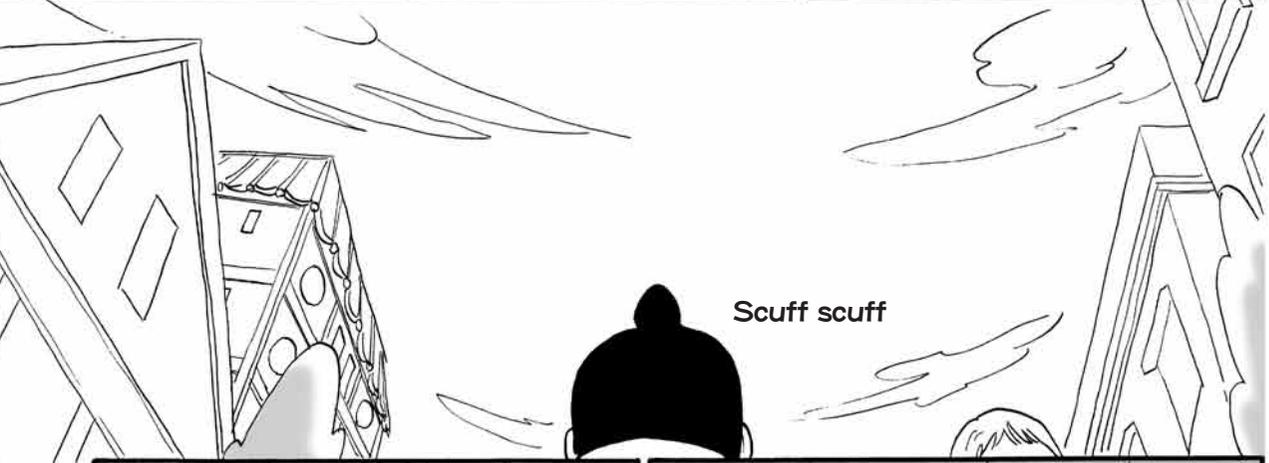
Why don't you call your mother?



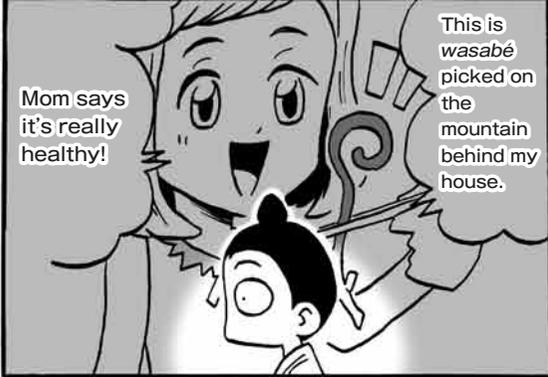
Hey Moko!

My fever!

Darn it!



Scuff scuff



Mom says it's really healthy!

This is wasabé picked on the mountain behind my house.



I can't rest when YOU ARE AROUND!

Popo, you didn't eat your lunch... again!

aboy?

Am!



Over there!



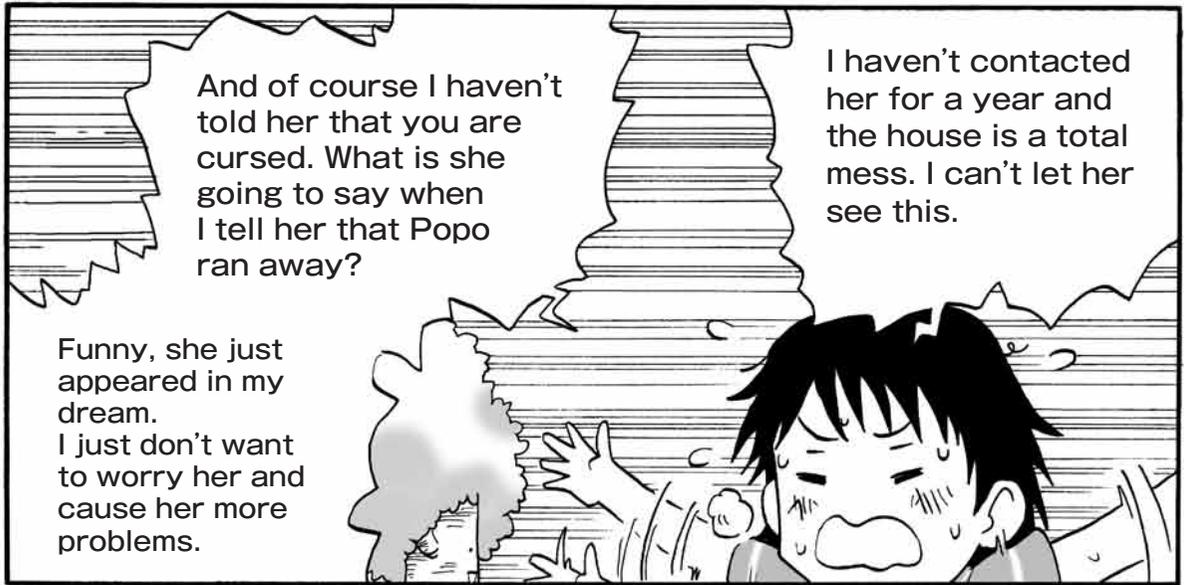


Your mom's place is close by. Just 30 minutes away.

She can go and look for Popo for us.



Why are you hesitating?



And of course I haven't told her that you are cursed. What is she going to say when I tell her that Popo ran away?

I haven't contacted her for a year and the house is a total mess. I can't let her see this.

Funny, she just appeared in my dream. I just don't want to worry her and cause her more problems.



Whaaaaaat?!

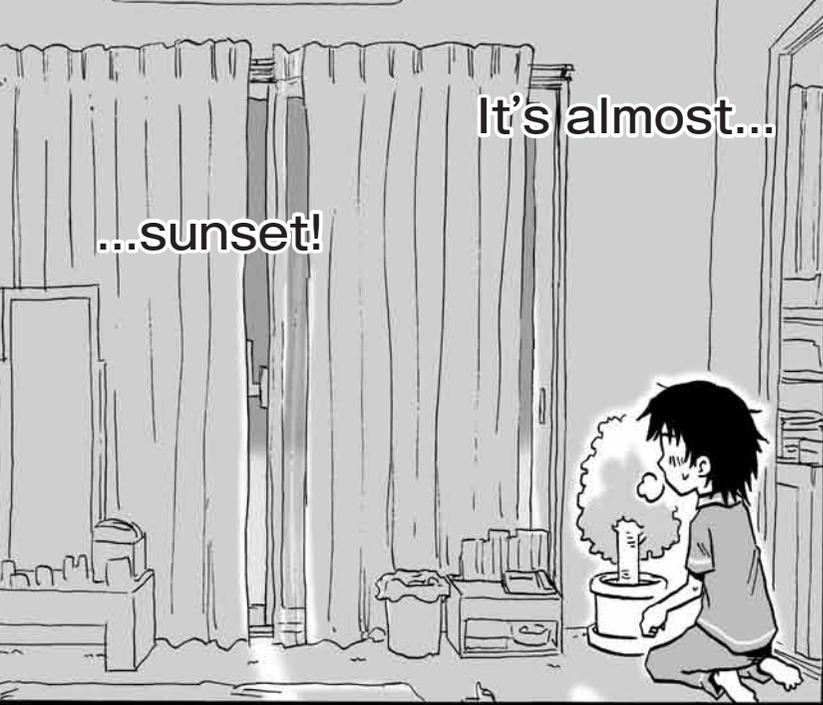


...by nighttime?



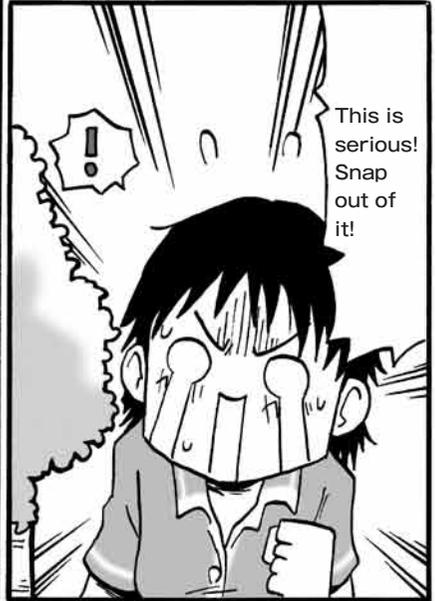
What if Popo doesn't come back...

This is no time to be thinking about what your mom will think.

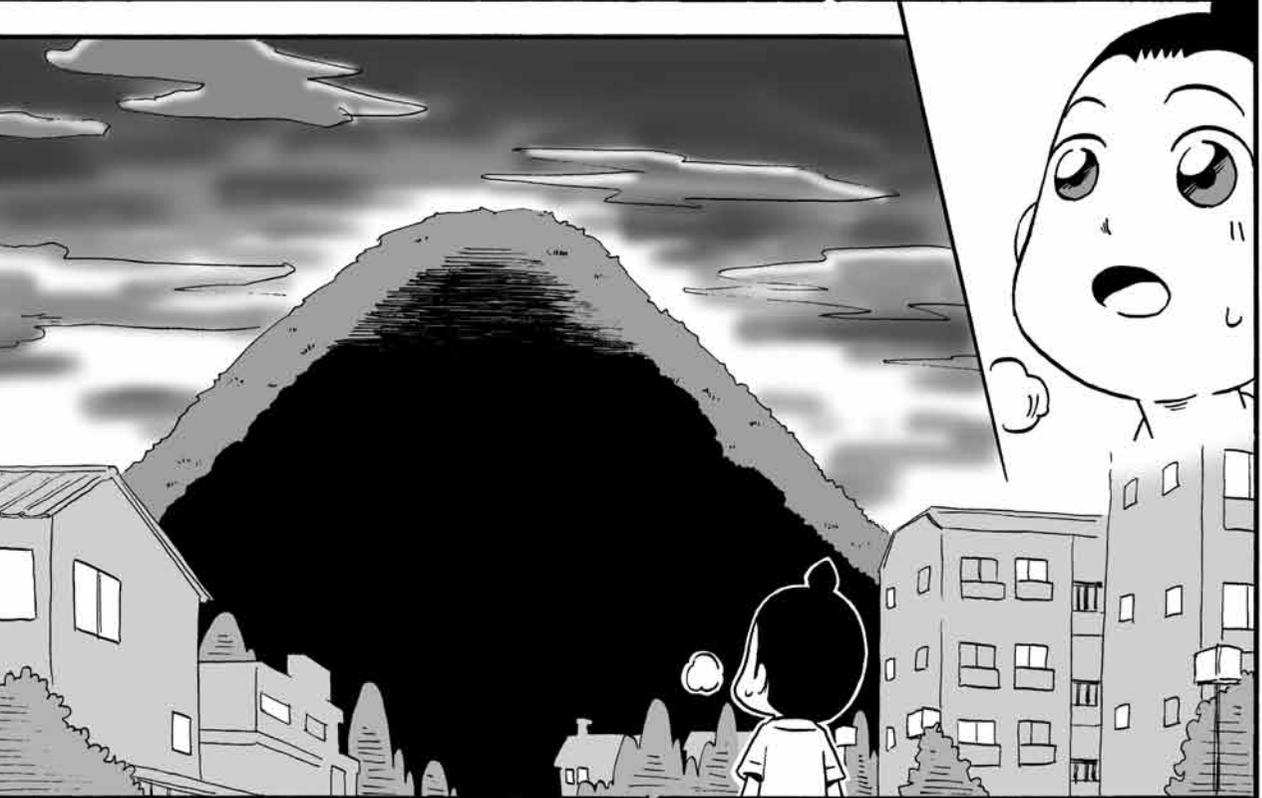


It's almost...

...sunset!



This is serious!
Snap out of it!

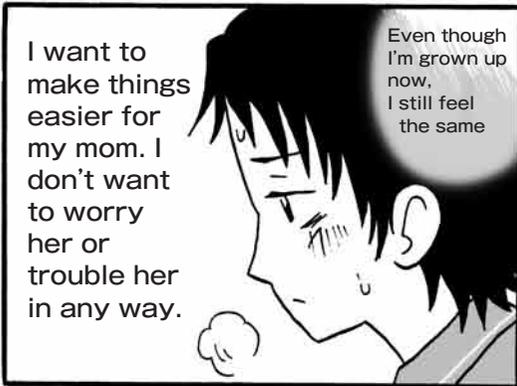


Here I go!



Well, I suppose, it would make things easier if my mom came...

You know, my mom had to raise me up on her own.



I want to make things easier for my mom. I don't want to worry her or trouble her in any way.

Even though I'm grown up now, I still feel the same



I didn't want to make things harder for my mom, so I tried to do things by myself.

That's why she was always so busy with work.



Sorry mom!



Mom!

But...

Oh!



That's why I don't want her to see me like this.



You haven't called at all.

How long has it been?

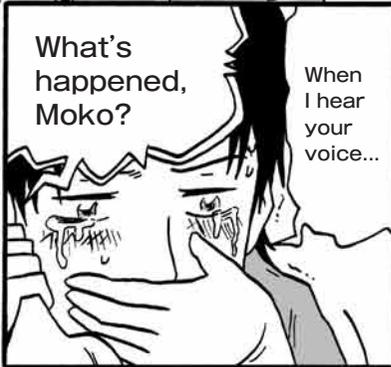
Oh my!
Is that you,
Moko?

How's everything?
Are you fine?
How's Popo?

We...
actually...

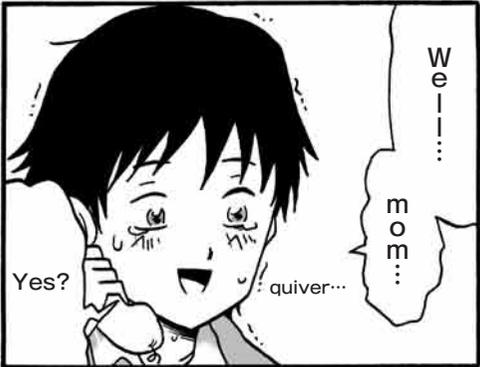


Sobbing



What's happened, Moko?

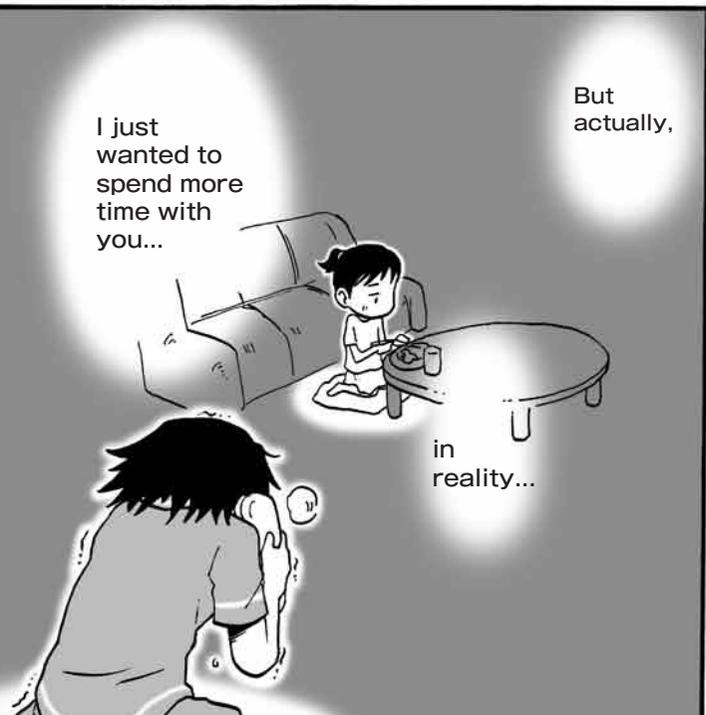
When I hear your voice...



We...
mom...

Yes?

quiver...



I just wanted to spend more time with you...

But actually,

in reality...



I can do everything by myself.

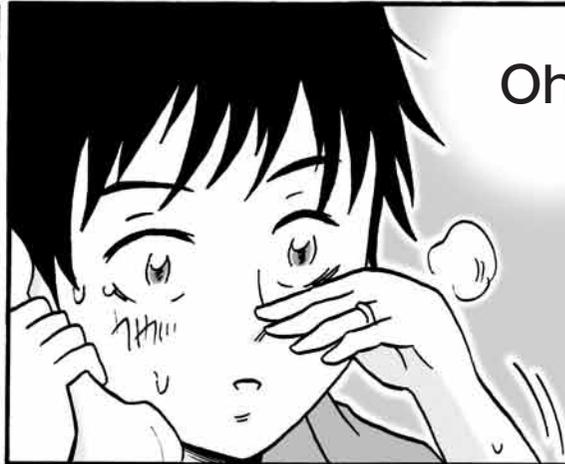
Everything is fine, mom.



Is something wrong with Popo?

Well, actually...

Oh!

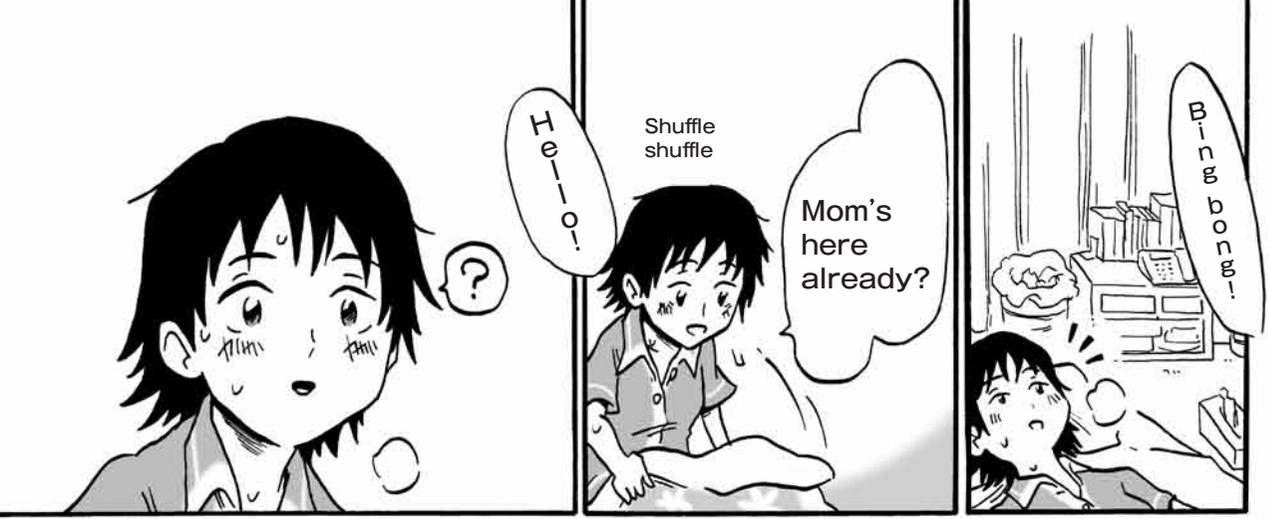


Popo!

Dazing out

I'm coming now. Just wait.







Sorry, for coming in like this.

I was so worried about you. Where were you?



Squeeeeeeze

I'm so sorry about before!

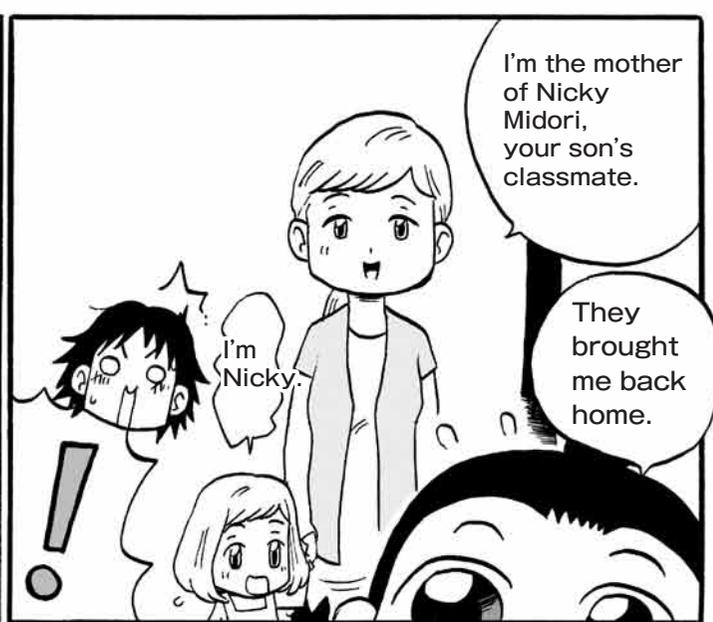


Sorry, I look like this and the place is such a mess. Would you like tea?

Thank you so much!

No, we're fine. You need to rest.

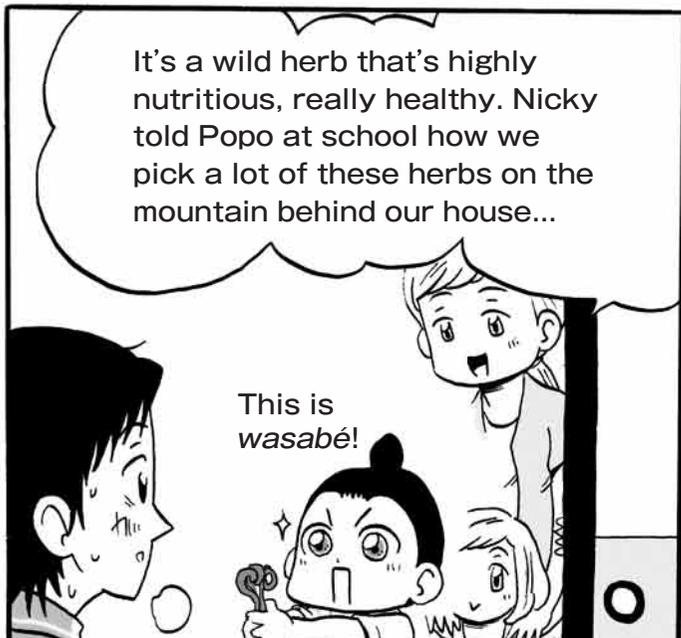
Cough! Cough!



I'm the mother of Nicky Midori, your son's classmate.

I'm Nicky.

They brought me back home.



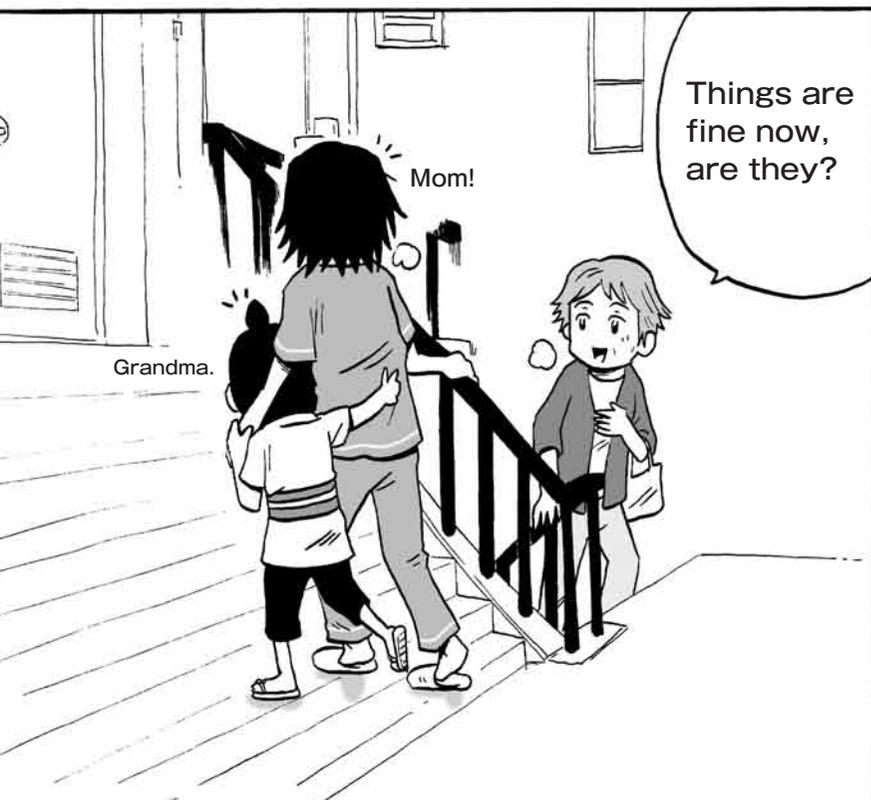
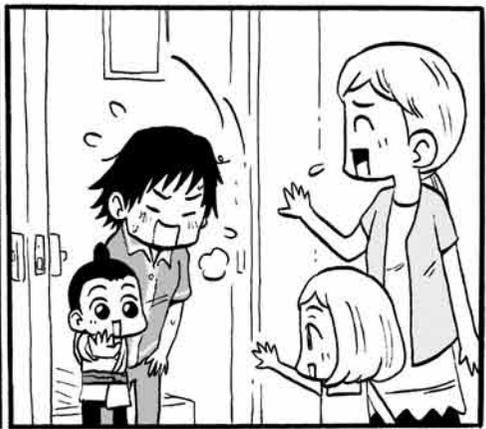
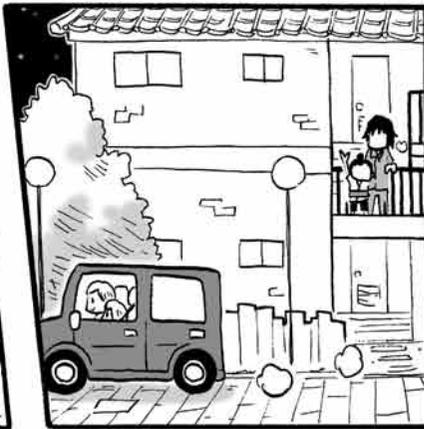
It's a wild herb that's highly nutritious, really healthy. Nicky told Popo at school how we pick a lot of these herbs on the mountain behind our house...

This is wasabé!



Wasabé?

Popo came over to get some wasabé.





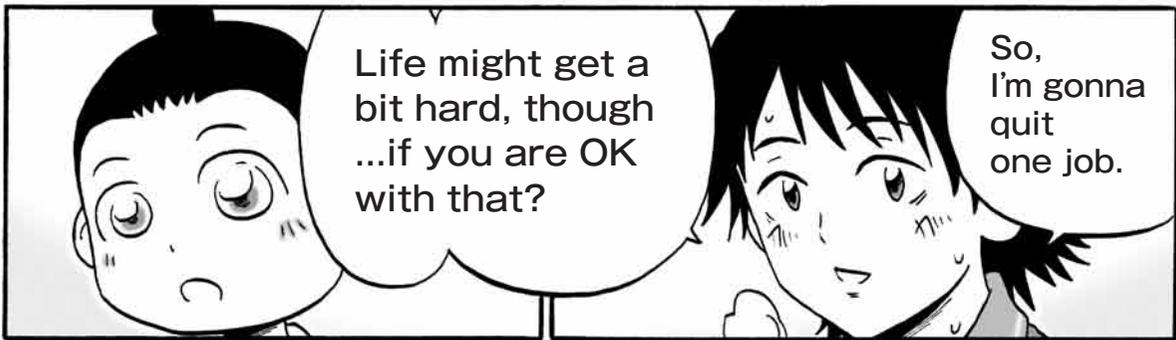


I wanna spend more time with you.



I'm now thinking that...

Hey, Popo!



Life might get a bit hard, though ...if you are OK with that?

So, I'm gonna quit one job.

I was also thinking of being with you more, mom.





Good morning!

Surprisingly, I could fully recover the next day thanks to those *wasabé* herbs.

Good morning!

Hey, Moko!



OK, let's go together then.

Mom came to help out and I could rest well.

I finally called the supermarket the next day and asked for a day off.

Keep quiet!

I'm really sorry for the short notice.

About tomorrow, could someone cover for me?

I wanna go shopping too.



Thanks for everything.

You're gonna quit?! You really do as you please, don't you? You get people to cover for you and then you just quit. What's gonna happen when you can't make a living? Now is your last chance...

Hey, you still have me, right?

I decided to quit my super-market job.



Hey, no problem! We gotta help each other out, right?

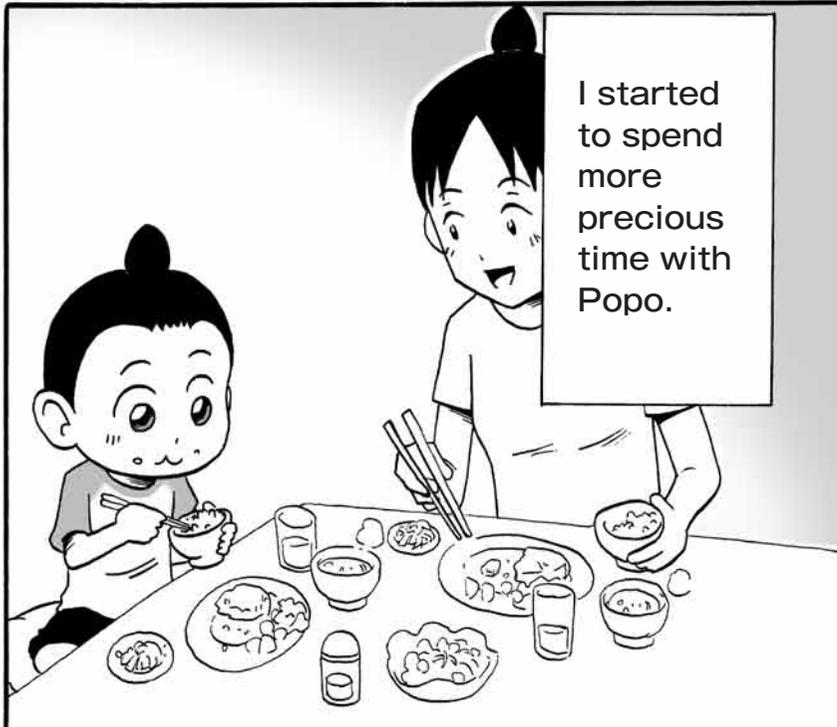
Thanks for giving me those days off.

And then,



I was wondering about this thing here...

And then...



I started to spend more precious time with Popo.



Oh!
I still
haven't
told her
about it.



Isn't
this thing
in the way?

Uh-oh!



Tingle!
Sparkle!



Popo,
I don't
know
why but
I just
felt
something.

What
secret?

Grandma,
you
know
our
secret?

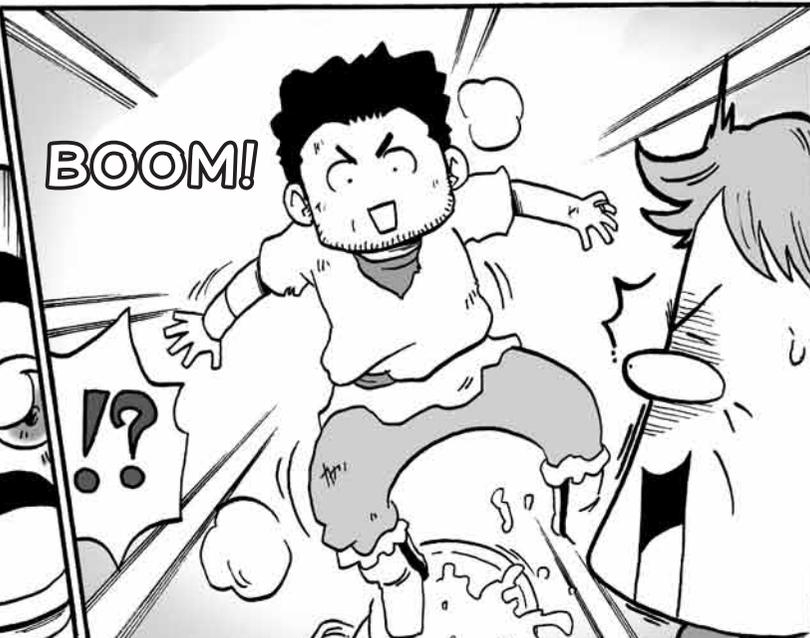


Hey,
Yoshio?



Dad
just...!

Dad!



BOOM!

