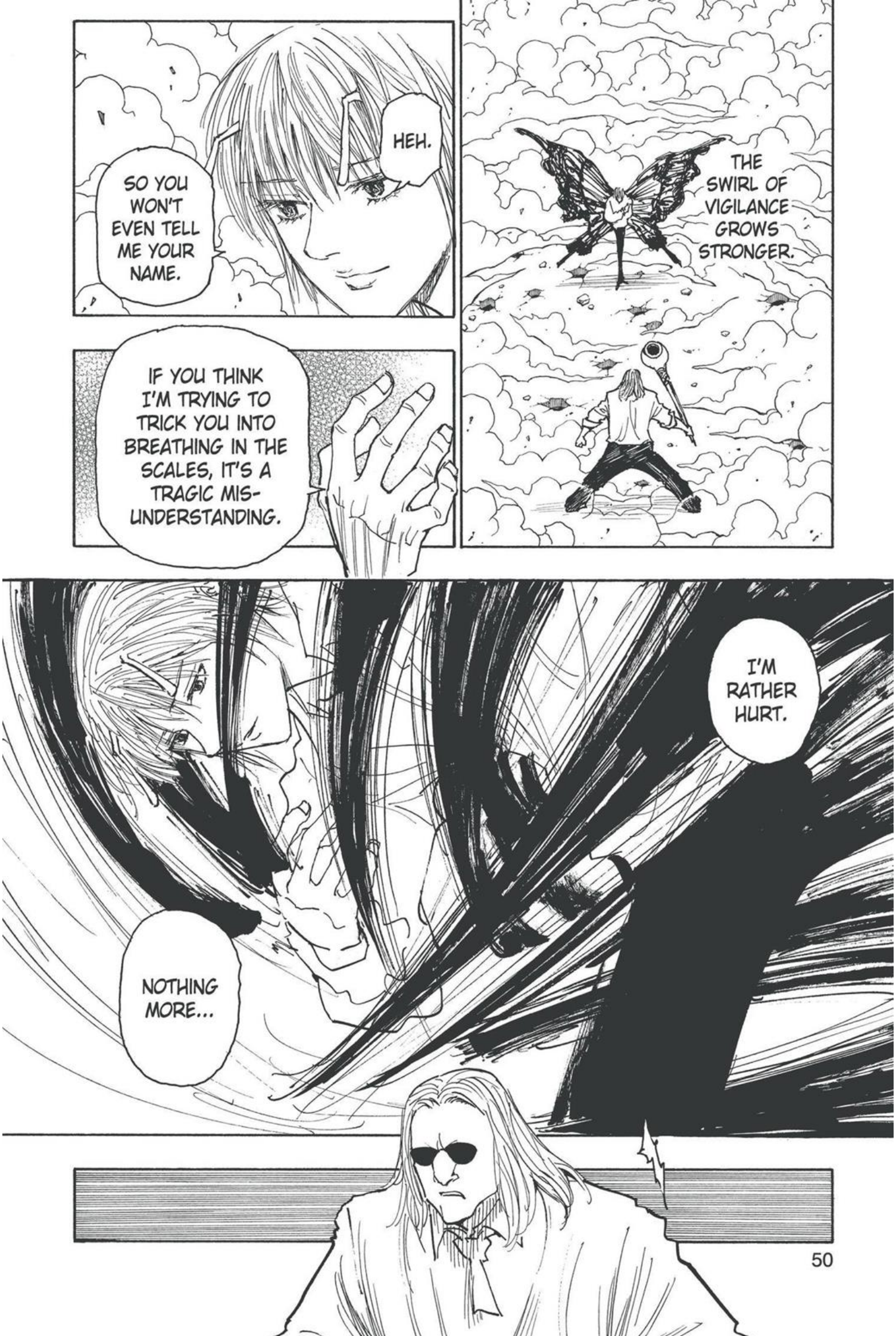
Chapter 273: We Meet Again



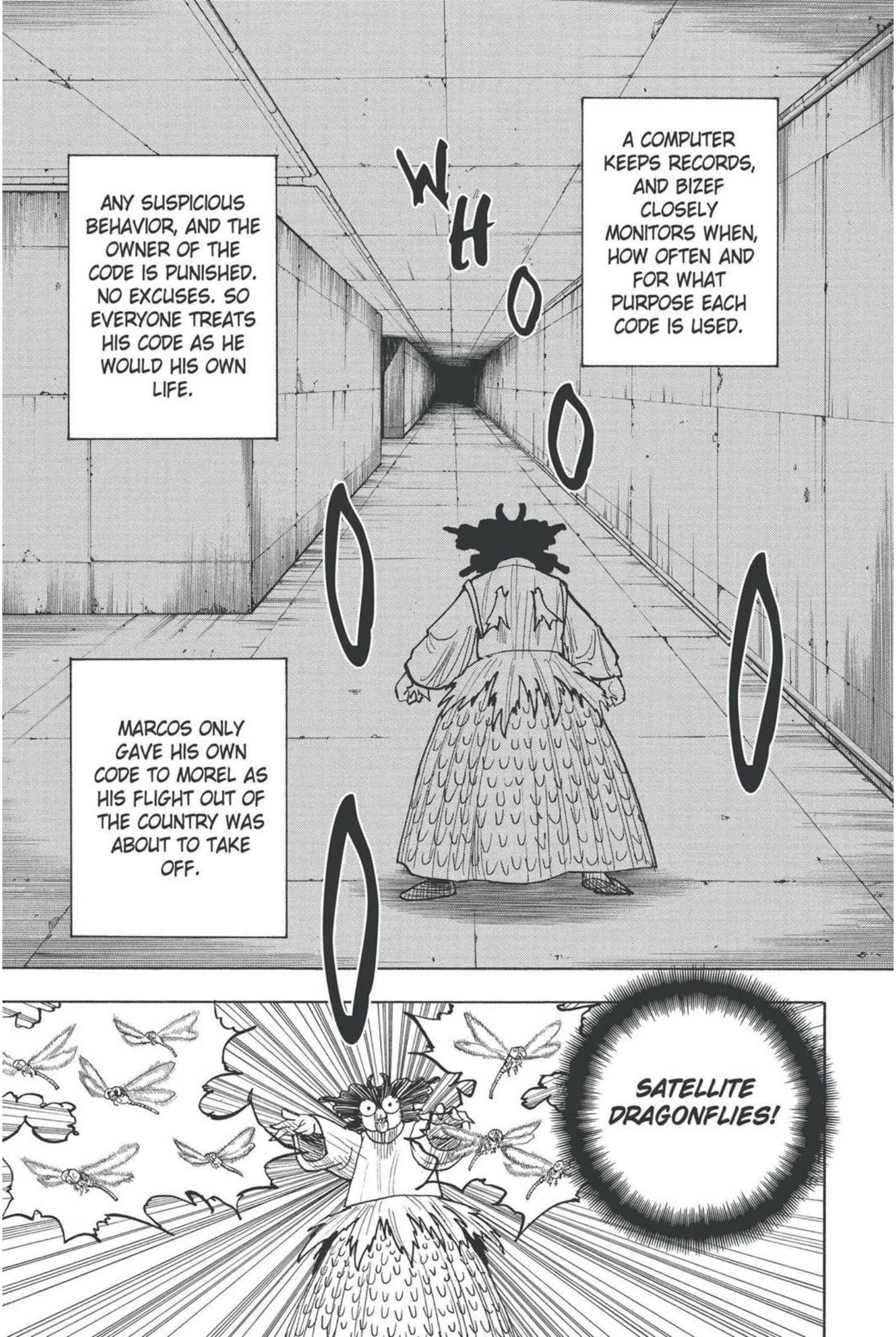

I CAN'T BREATHE IT IN...!
BUTTERFLY DUST... KNOV SAID IT HAS A HYPNOTIC EFFECT.
THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR A DECENT WARRIOR...
YOU STOPPED TALKING.
RESOLVE...
VIGILANCE...
IN A RATIO OF 2:3:5.
AND CONFI-DENCE ...


ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF.
MY NAME IS SHAIAPOUF, A ROYAL GUARD TO THE KING.
HE MAY BE BEHIND ENEMY LINES, BUT THE SENSE OF RELIEF FROM LURING ME INTO HIS TRAP OUTWEIGHS THE REST... THAT'S HIS EMOTIONAL MATRIX.
NOT MUCH VIGILANCE IS AN INDICATION OF HIS CONFIDENCE... HE HAS A STRONG CHARACTER.
"SPIRITUAL MESSAGE" ALLOWS POUF TO READ HIS OPPONENT'S PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE BY DIFFUSING BUTTERFLY SCALES INTO THE SURROUNDING AIR AND MAKING THE AURA FLOW DISTINCT.
HE ANALYZES THE BLEND OF 30 EMOTIONAL PATTERNS APPARENT IN THE AURA FLOW, AND FROM THAT HE CAN INFER HIS OPPONENT'S THOUGHTS.

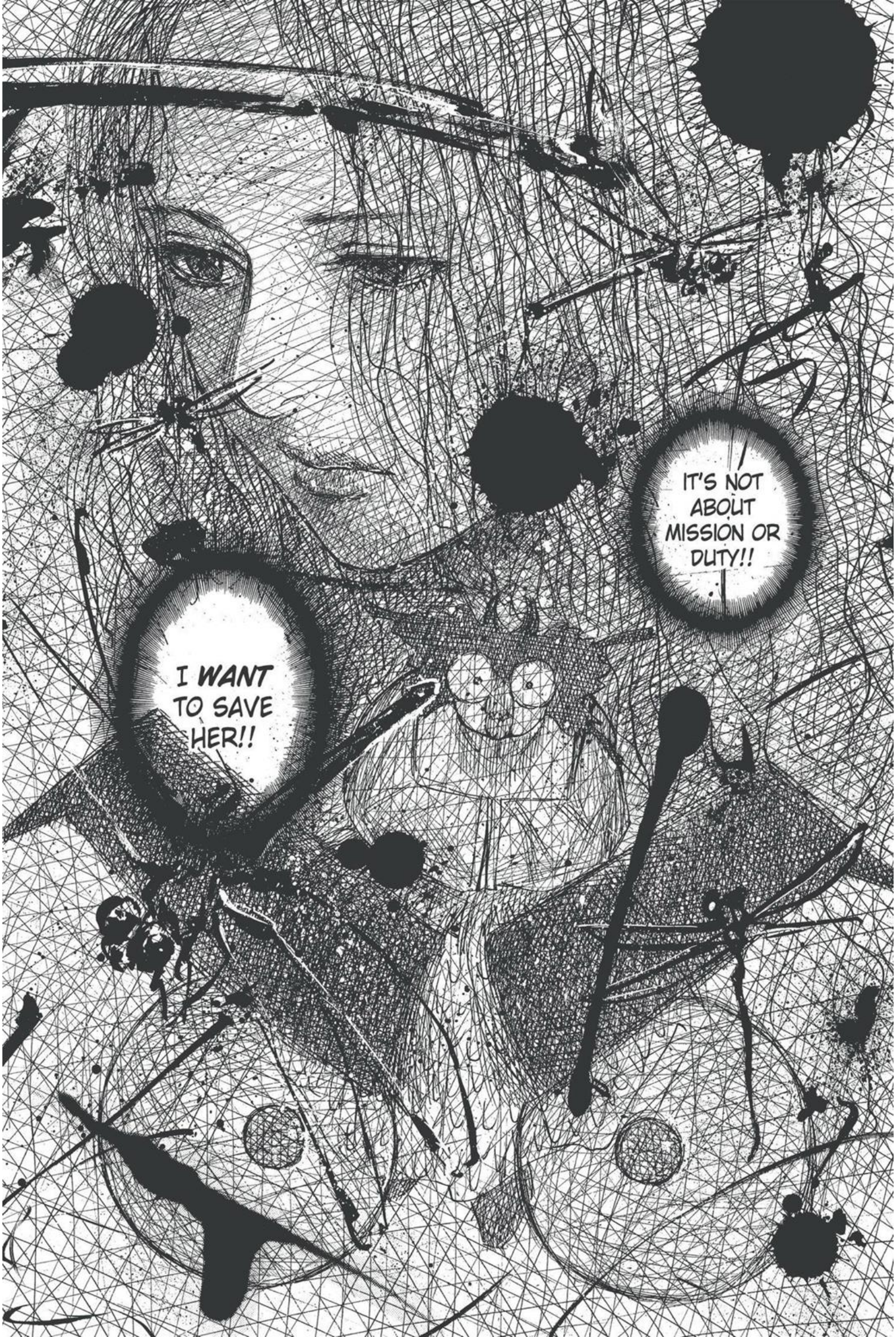

HEH.
SO YOU WON'T EVEN TELL ME YOUR NAME.
THE SWIRL OF VIGILANCE GROWS STRONGER.
IF YOU THINK I'M TRYING TO TRICK YOU INTO BREATHING IN THE SCALES, IT'S A TRAGIC MIS-UNDERSTANDING.
I'M RATHER HURT.
NOTHING MORE...

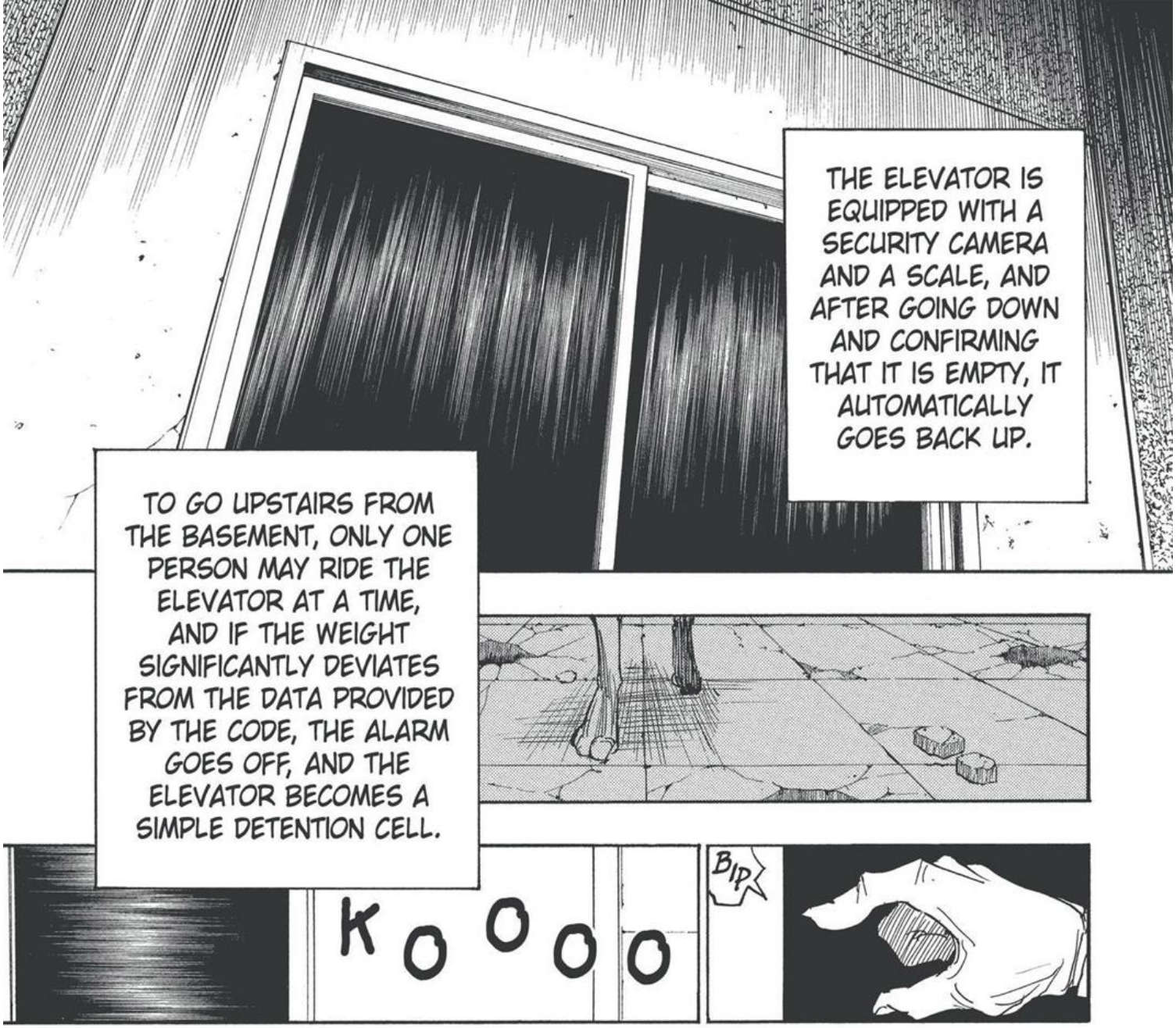

READ THIS WAY
HEE HEE, PLEASE WAIT A MOMENT... HEE HEE.
QCH
SCH
HEE HEE.
HEE HEE.
SPLK
PCH
I WON'T EVEN REMEMBER WHEN I'M REBORN.
HEE.
NO MATTER *WHAT* HE TURNS INTO!!
IF HE WANTS TO TAKE TIME, SOUNDS GOOD TO ME!

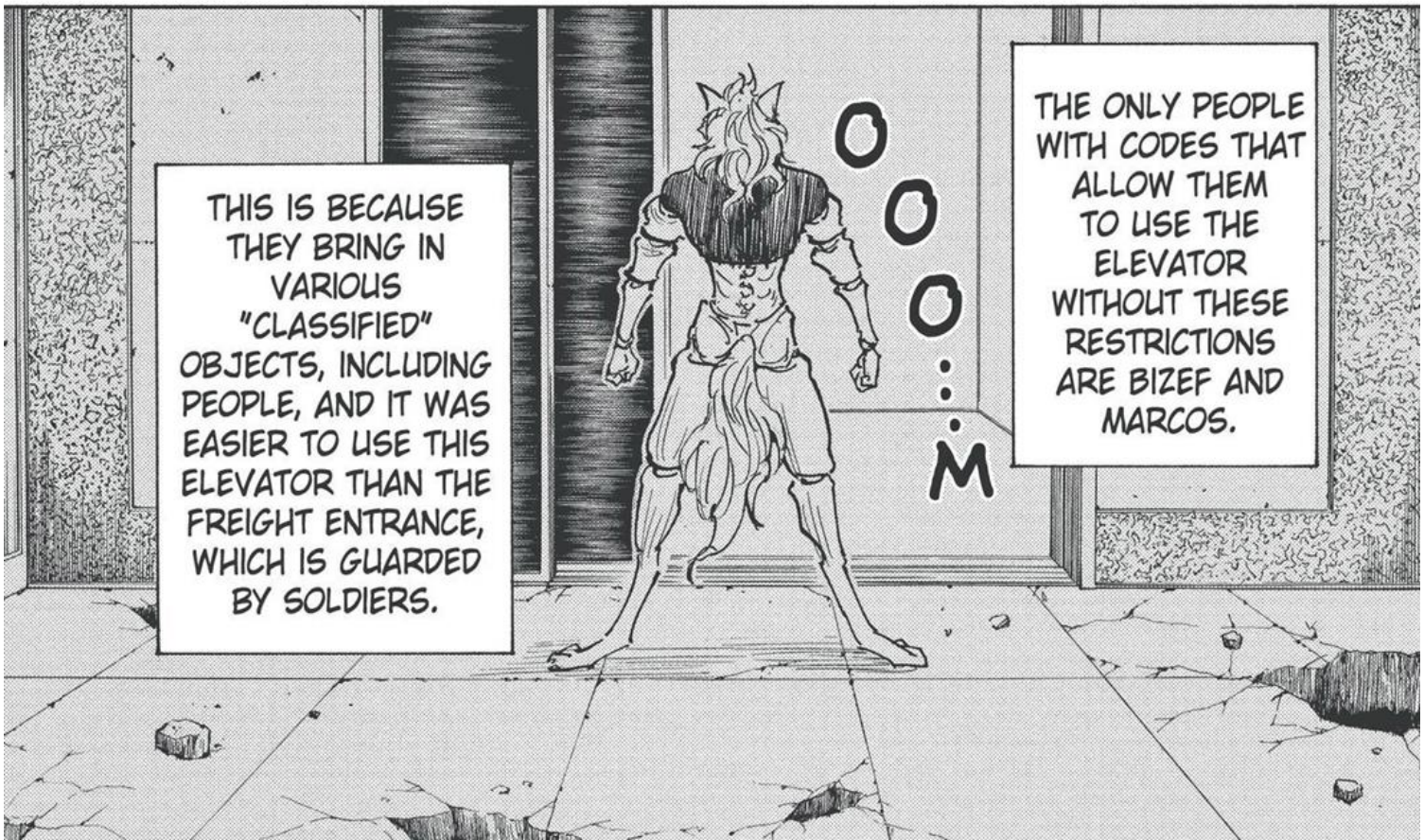

THE ELEVATOR TO THE BASEMENT CAN BE DESCENDED BY ANYONE...
...BUT A CODE MUST BE ENTERED TO GO BACK UP.
EACH PERSON HAS A DIFFERENT EIGHT-DIGIT CODE SO THAT USAGE CAN BE TRACKED.
WHIRR
KOOM
IF A MISTAKE IS MADE, A SIREN GOES OFF, AND THE DOOR IS LOCKED.
A REPEATED ERROR ALERTS THE SECURITY GUARDS, AND THE ELEVATOR IS FILLED WITH SLEEPING GAS. THE PERSON IS ARRESTED AND TORTURED... TO DEATH.


ANY SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR, AND THE OWNER OF THE CODE IS PUNISHED. NO EXCUSES. SO EVERYONE TREATS HIS CODE AS HE WOULD HIS OWN LIFE.
A COMPUTER KEEPS RECORDS, AND BIZEF CLOSELY MONITORS WHEN, HOW OFTEN AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE EACH CODE IS USED.
WHOOO
MARCOS ONLY GAVE HIS OWN CODE TO MOREL AS HIS FLIGHT OUT OF THE COUNTRY WAS ABOUT TO TAKE OFF.
SATELLITE DRAGONFLIES!


SHOOM
IKALGO ONLY KNEW PALM THROUGH DATA GIVEN TO HIM, BUT...
...HE RESOLVED EARLY ON THAT HE WOULD NOT LEAVE THE PALACE WITHOUT FINDING HER.
...SHE'S MY FRIEND!!
PALM EARNED IKALGO'S RESPECT JUST THROUGH THE FACT THAT SHE WAS RISKING HER LIFE.
PALM IS A FRIEND OF MY FRIENDS.
I'LL FIND HER AND BRING HER BACK!!!
THAT MEANS...
SSH


IT'S NOT ABOUT MISSION OR DUTY!!
I WANT TO SAVE HER!!


THE ELEVATOR IS EQUIPPED WITH A SECURITY CAMERA AND A SCALE, AND AFTER GOING DOWN AND CONFIRMING THAT IT IS EMPTY, IT AUTOMATICALLY GOES BACK UP.
TO GO UPSTAIRS FROM THE BASEMENT, ONLY ONE PERSON MAY RIDE THE ELEVATOR AT A TIME, AND IF THE WEIGHT SIGNIFICANTLY DEVIATES FROM THE DATA PROVIDED BY THE CODE, THE ALARM GOES OFF, AND THE ELEVATOR BECOMES A SIMPLE DETENTION CELL.
KOOOO
BIP

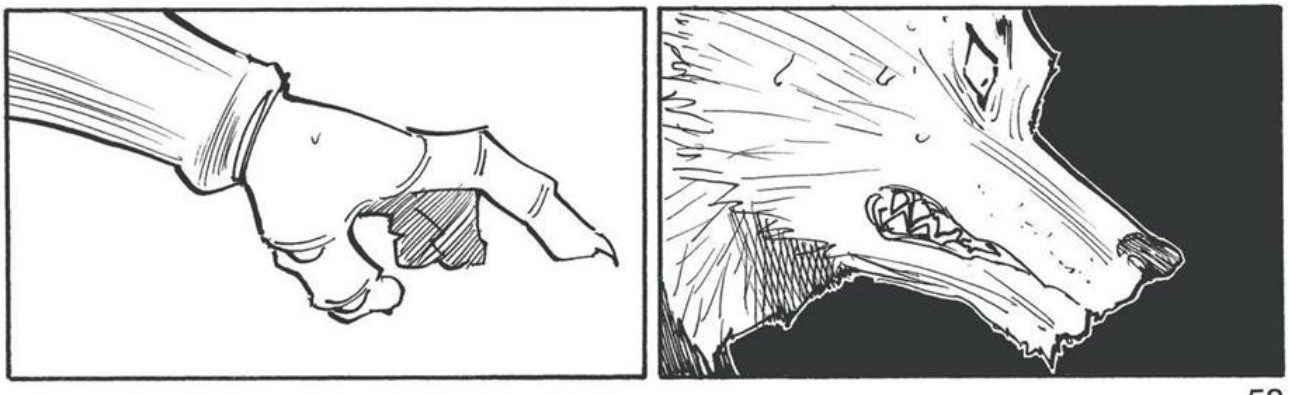

THIS IS BECAUSE THEY BRING IN VARIOUS "CLASSIFIED" OBJECTS, INCLUDING PEOPLE, AND IT WAS EASIER TO USE THIS ELEVATOR THAN THE FREIGHT ENTRANCE, WHICH IS GUARDED BY SOLDIERS.
OOO...M
THE ONLY PEOPLE WITH CODES THAT ALLOW THEM TO USE THE ELEVATOR WITHOUT THESE RESTRICTIONS ARE BIZEF AND MARCOS.

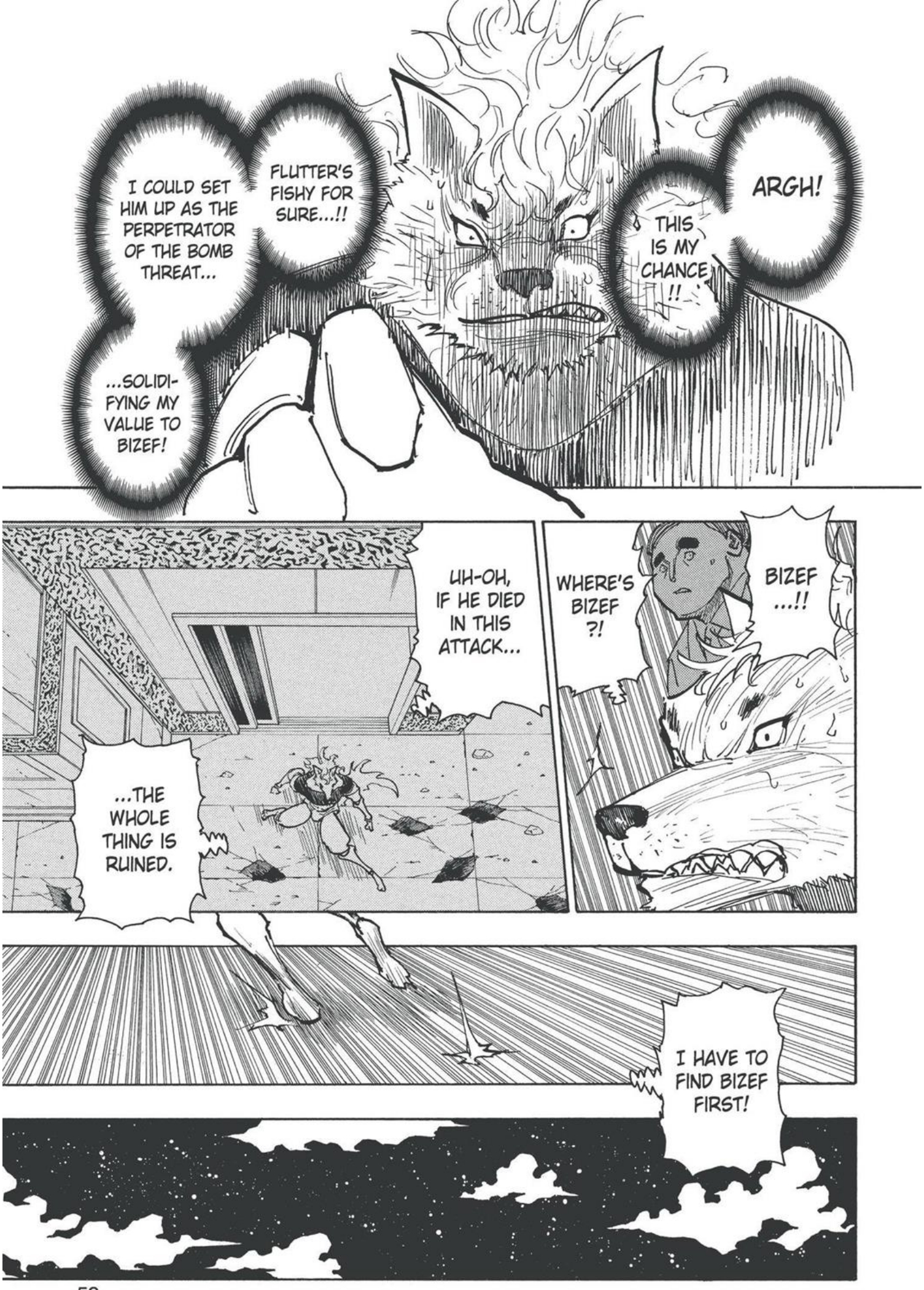

WAS FLUTTER LIVING IN A MORGUE?!
WHAT'S THIS STENCH ...?!
URK!
THE SMELL OF FLUTTER'S ROTTING CORPSE, A FEW DAYS AFTER DEATH, DULLED WELFIN'S SENSE OF SMELL.
ARGH... THERE'S ANOTHER FAINT SCENT, BUT...
ANYTHING ELSE...? I SMELL BLOSTER WHO WENT DOWN BEFORE ME...
IS BLOSTER IN ON IT TOO?!
OR...
...DID HE NOTICE FLUTTER SAID "HAGYA," TOO?
IF BLOSTER WENT DOWNSTAIRS AFTER HIM...


...WHILE I WAS WATCHING THEM?!
WAS BLOSTER WATCHING ME...


IN THAT CASE...
...

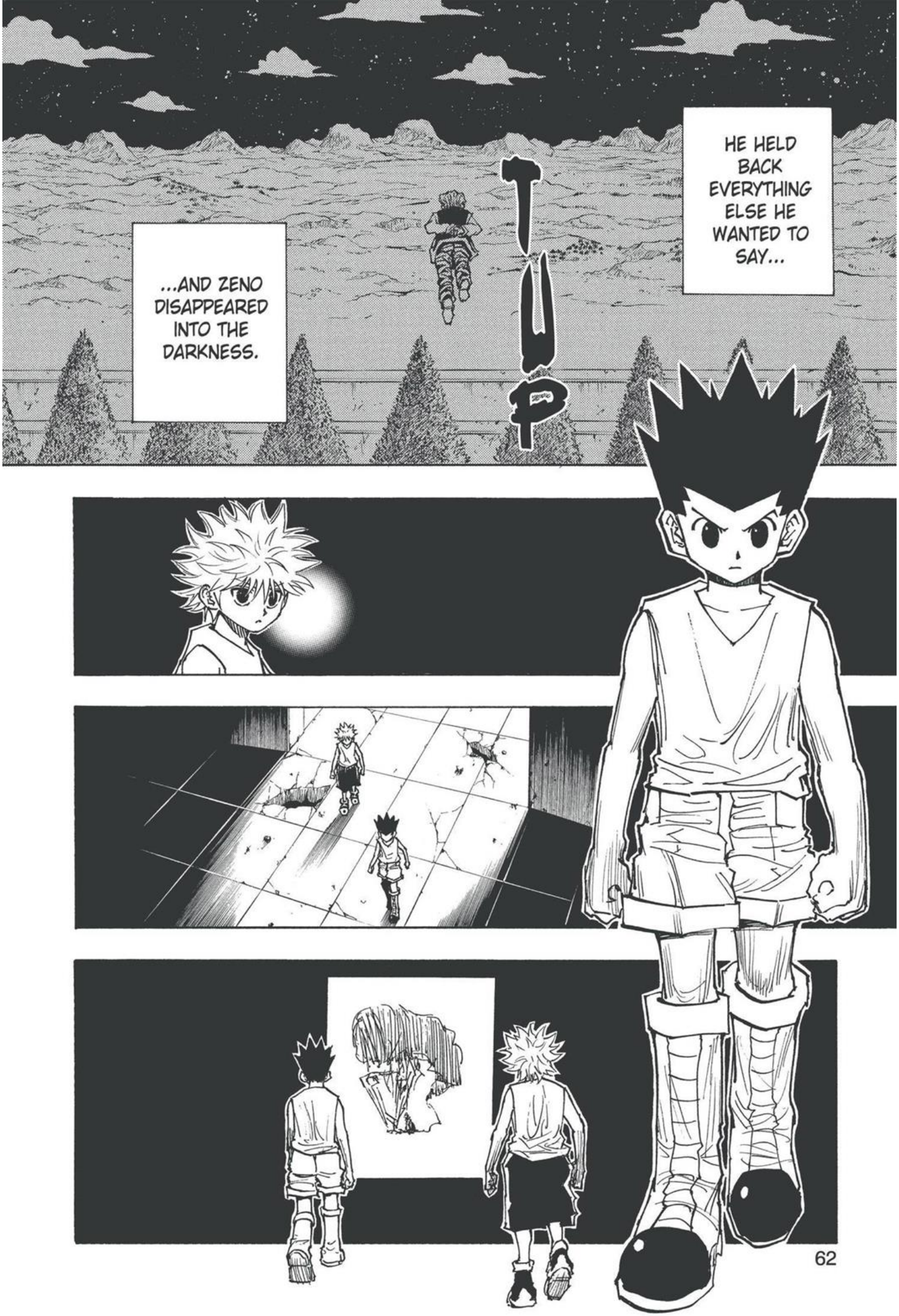

THEN THE REASON WHY HE WENT DOWN FIRST IS...
SHP
BLOSTER MUST'VE NOTICED THAT I NOTICED HOW AWKWARD FLUTTER WAS.
...TO AM-BUSH ME ?!
HE'S WAITING ...

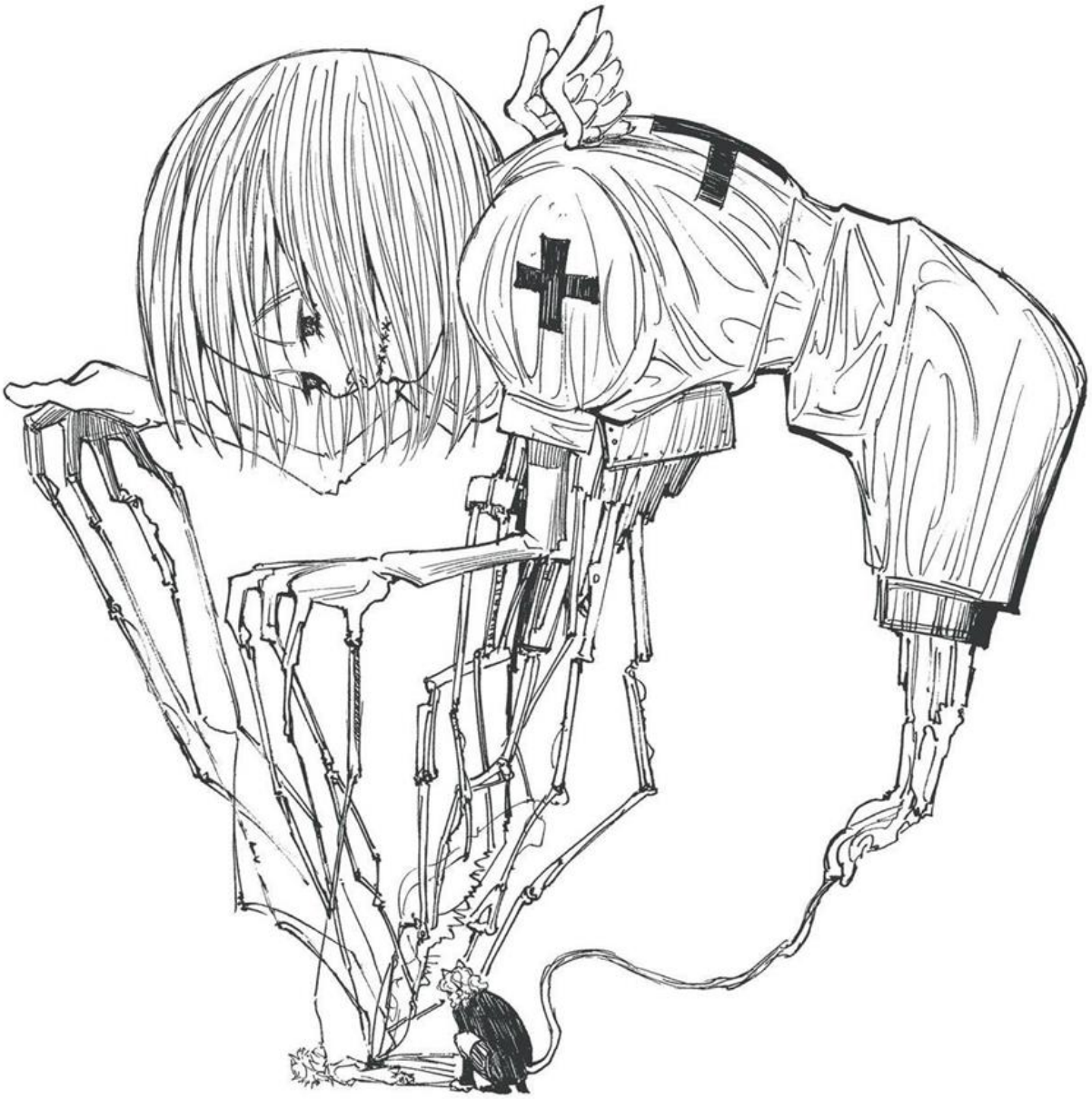



I COULD SET HIM UP AS THE PERPETRATOR OF THE BOMB THREAT...
FLUTTER'S FISHY FOR SURE...!!
ARGH!
THIS IS MY CHANCE!!
...SOLIDI-FYING MY VALUE TO BIZEF!
UH-OH, IF HE DIED IN THIS ATTACK...
...THE WHOLE THING IS RUINED.
WHERE'S BIZEF ?!
BIZEF ...!!
I HAVE TO FIND BIZEF FIRST!


ТМР


HEY.
GRAND-PA...
MY JOB HERE IS DONE.
I KNOW NOTHING BESIDES THE MISSION.
HE'S CHANGED ...
YOU MAKE THE CALL INSIDE.
...
"THE CALL"...?


HE HELD BACK EVERYTHING ELSE HE WANTED TO SAY...
TIP
...AND ZENO DISAPPEARED INTO THE DARKNESS.






I CAME TO SEE YOU...
MY NAME IS GON FREECSS !!
...TO RESTORE KITE !!!
...RE-MEMBER ME?
DO YOU...

