Story and Art by
KOYOHARU GOTOUGE
Hi! I’m Gotouge. Volume 18 is out. Thank you very much to everyone who supports the series. Thanks to the wonderful anime they made, it seems more people have been picking up the graphic novels, for which I’m incredibly grateful. I had no idea this would happen, so I’m trembling for many reasons. I took my comforter to the cleaner’s at a poor time, so I’m cold every day. But until the day I get it back, I’ll wear multiple layers and work hard.
ASSAULTED BY MEMORIES

KOYOHARU GOTOUGE
The demon who killed Kyojuro Rengoku, the Flame Hashira of the Demon Slayer Corps. He burns with desire for revenge against Tanjiro.

The Hashira who invited Tanjiro to join the Demon Slayer Corps. He has always cared about Tanjiro.

He also went through Final Selection at the same time as Tanjiro. He wears the pelt of a wild boar and is very belligerent.

He went through Final Selection at the same time as Tanjiro. He’s usually cowardly, but when he fails and anger’s true power comes out...

Kibutsuji turned Nezuko into a demon. He is Tanjiro’s enemy and hides his nature in order to live among human beings.

Successor to Shinobu. She doesn’t talk much and has difficulty making any kind of decision by herself.

Another Hashira in the Demon Slayer Corps. Familiar with pharmacology, she is a swordsman who has created a poison that kills demons...

Shinobu Kocho’s older sister Kanae. and founded the Eternal Paradise.

In Taisho-era Japan, young Tanjiro makes a living selling charcoal. One day, demons kill his family and turn his younger sister Nezuko into a demon. Tanjiro and Nezuko set out to find a way to return Nezuko to human form and defeat Kibutsuji, the demon who killed their family!

After joining the Demon Slayer Corps, Tanjiro meets Tamayo and Yushiro—demons who oppose Kibutsuji—who provide a clue to how Nezuko may be turned back into a human.

During a fierce fight against an upper-rank demon, Nezuko manifests the ability to withstand sunlight, so Kibutsuji comes after her and attacks Ubayashi Mansion. The Demon Slayers pursue Kibutsuji into Infinity Castle! Tanjiro and Giyu, the Water Hashira, engage in a difficult struggle against the Upper Rank 3 demon Akaza...

Tanjiro’s younger sister. A demon attacked her and turned her into a demon. But unlike other demons, she fights her urges and tries to protect Tanjiro.

A kind boy who saved his sister and now aims to avenge his family. He can smell the scent of demons and an opponent’s weakness.
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...I dramatically increased the speed with which I could predict his moves...

...and evade his attacks.

When I entered the transparent world that my father taught me about...

AKAZA MAY BE SENSING MY FIGHTING SPIRIT, BUT IF I CLOSE IT OFF I MAY BE ABLE TO AIM FOR HIS HEAD.

I've also got a faster and clearer awareness of the contractions of my own muscles.

His breathing and the flow of his blood became transparent to me.

CHAPTER 152: THE TRANSPARENT WORLD
CHAPTER 152:
THE TRANSPARENT WORLD
Inosuke before the previous two-page spread.

No, Inosuke! Everyone is facing the other way!
Even if I make a strong, accurate attack, he responds with an equally sharp technique.

Damn! I barely cut him! It was too shallow!

What a demon!

It's like he's predicting my attack forms!

This is upper rank 3!

He's a killing machine!
IT APPEARS YOU'VE ALREADY USED ALL YOUR WATER FORMS!

THAT'S ENOUGH, GIYU.

LET'S END THIS.

I'M SURPRISED YOU LASTED THIS LONG!!
PAY ATTENTION ...

WATCH CLOSELY...

GW

00
GOODBYE!

HE HIT THE INCOMING BLADE FROM THE SIDE AND BROKE IT!

IMPOSSIBLE!
The sound of his breathing is different. His hair and eyes look different too.

Tanjiro cut Akaza's arm off and stopped the attack.

Tanjiro saved me.
SOMETHING CHANGED IN HIM.

EVERY FIBER OF MY BEING, DOWN TO EACH STRAND OF HAIR, IS TELLING ME TO KILL THIS KID RIGHT NOW.

HE'S DANGEROUS!!
THE SPEED OF HIS ATTACKS IS INCREASING AGAIN!!

HIS POWER IS INCREASING!!

CAN I WITHSTAND IT? WITH DEAD CALM!!

FINAL FORM:

BLUE SILVER CHAOTIC AFTER-GLOW!
THIS IS... STRANGE. TIME IS PASSING SLOWLY. OR DOES MOVEMENT JUST LOOK SLOW?

THIS IS WHAT FATHER WAS TALKING ABOUT.

...THE TRANSPARENT WORLD.
I couldn't block all of them even with dead calm!!

Well done. I'm impressed you're still alive.

How you dodged a fatal blow, eh?

It was inescapable.

He hit me with a hundred blows almost all at once.
Don't die like Kyoujurou and Tanjiro.

You should become a demon too, Giyu.

Can't he sense him?!

Tanjiro is behind him!

Now...

He hasn't noticed!!

Go for his neck!!

Before he notices you!

Since you can still move, do it...

Take him, Tanjiro!!
MY DESTRUCTIVE DEATH: COMPASS NEEDLE CAN DETECT ANY ATTACK.

HE'S ALIVE!! EVEN AFTER MY LAST STRIKE?!

WELL, NO BOTHER.

WHAT IS THIS ODD AURA ABOUT HIM?

THE STRONGER MY OPPONENT'S FIGHTING SPIRIT, THE STRONGER THE RESPONSE OF MY COMPASS NEEDLE.

IT'S LIKE HE'S BECOME A DIFFERENT CREATURE.

WELL... WHAT?

HIS...

HIS... HIS FIGHTING SPIRIT IS GONE!

GET A GRIP!!

HE HAS NO FIGHTING SPIRIT!!

HERE HE COMES!!
SETTING SUN TRANSFORMATION!
What're you doing?! Hey!!

Yushiro scattering eyes
I’ve never once seen a human being without fighting spirit.

But in that moment, his fighting spirit disappeared.

In the last few hundred years...

Even a baby has a faint fighting spirit.
NOW I'M FACING THIS UNUSUAL CREATURE THAT SHOULDN'T EXIST...

MY COMPASS DIDN'T RESPOND.

...AND MY SENSES ARE CONFUSED.

...EVERY UNEXPECTED SITUATION YOU ENCOUNTER. ...

...YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY UNDERSTAND AND HANDLE...

I CAN DO THAT.

IN BATTLE...

BUT THAT'S NOT A PROBLEM.
In this brief fight, he grasped something and surpassed my speed.

But...

Hundreds of years of martial arts.

He came at me head-on and completely demolished...

Perhaps what his eyes perceived was...

In his eyes, there is no hatred or anger.

No malevolence or fighting spirit.
I've been seeking... the domain of supremacy, but even now I have not reached it.
I WILL GROW STRONGER YET!

NO!! I CAN STILL FIGHT!!

HIS HEAD!!

IS HE TRYING TO PUT IT BACK ON?!
I must become stronger than anyone else!

I will become stronger.

It can't end like this.
PHew
HE'S DOWN!! IT'S OVER.
I WON!!

TRMBL
TRMBL
TRMBL

MY BODY'S REACHED ITS LIMIT.
MY MUSCLES ARE SHAKING ... UNGH!!
I'M DIZZY!!
HIS BODY HASN'T FALLEN.

HOW CAN THIS BE?

HOW...
HE'S STILL MOVING!! HIS BODY ISN'T GOING DOWN!

HIS NECK WOUND CLOSED!!

UGH... MY HEAD IS SPINNING!!
HEAD FELL OFF AND DISAPPEARED.

IS THERE A SPECIAL CONDITION LIKE WITH GYUTARO AND DAKI?

I CUT OFF HIS HEAD, BUT HE DIDN'T DIE!!

NO WAY!!

NO, HIS HEAD FELL OFF AND DISAPPEARED.

IS THERE A SPECIAL CONDITION LIKE WITH GYUTARO AND DAKI?

I CUT OFF HIS HEAD, BUT HE DIDN'T DIE!!

NO WAY!!

...INTO SOMETHING DIFFERENT!!

AKAZA...

...IS TRYING TO CHANGE...
JUST LIKE MUZAN...

...HE'S TRYING TO MAKE HIS WEAKNESS BE SOMETHING OTHER THAN HIS HEAD!!

THE FIGHT IS STILL...

THIS ISN'T OVER.

HE PASSED OUT!! OF COURSE!!

TANJIRO!!

WHMP

HE'S WAY PAST HIS LIMIT!!
WATER BREATHING
FOURTH FORM!

STRIKING TIDE!
HE'S SO FAST DESPITE LOSING HIS HEAD!!

HE REGENERATED!!

BAM!! WTH!!
HN
N
WAIT.

...ALIVE!!

I AM...STILL...
...FIRST DEFEAT ME!!

IF YOU WANT TO KILL TANJIRO...

IN WHATEVER HARDSHIP WE FACE, IT NEVER BREAKS.

OUR INDOMITABLE SPIRIT...

BUT WE CARRY SWORDS IN OUR HEARTS.

WE ARE NOT SAMURAI. WE DO NOT CARRY A KATANA.
WE ONLY USE OUR FISTS.

WHAT A...

HAKUJI, THAT'S ENOUGH!
While waiting for Yushiro, they neglected to pay attention to their footing and fell.
If a normal person runs at full speed for just ten seconds, they'll be totally out of breath.

Sprinting isn't something you can do for a long time.

I can't hear anything at all with my left ear.

My right hand has no feeling. I have strength, but for how long?

Your muscles strain and your hands and feet get heavy like lead.

...and then the precision of your technique falls.

When you keep going past that, your speed drops...
In a fight against an upper-rank demon, maintaining full strength for a long time...

...is a miracle that only someone who can use breathing techniques can do.

Demons don't feel exhaustion or pain.

...what was entrusted to me.

I must pass on...

...will I let family and friends die before my eyes.

Never again...
I will save Tanjiro...

...the same way I was saved.

Let go.

Who are you?

Let go of my hand.
I have to kill them.

Why?

Why do you want to be strong?

But why?

I must become stronger.

I kill anyone who gets in my way.

If I'm not strong, I can't bring it back.

Because...
AND IF I DON'T GET STRONGER, THE MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE WILL CATCH ME AND PUNISH ME.

IF I DON'T GET STRONGER, I CAN'T WIN WHEN MY VICTIM RETALIATE.

IF I DON'T GET STRONGER, I CAN'T STEAL SOMEONE'S WALLET AND GET AWAY.

NEXT TIME, WE'LL CUT OFF A HAND.

YOU ALREADY HAVE THREE LINES TATTOOED ON BOTH ARMS FOR BEING A PICKPOCKET.
HA HA HAI!

HA HA!

I’LL PICK POCKETS WITH MY FEET! ANYWAY, NEXT TIME I WON’T GET CAUGHT!

AND YET YOU REMAIN DEFIANT DESPITE RECEIVING A HUNDRED LASHES—WHICH WOULD MAKE EVEN A GROWN MAN FAINT.

YOU ARE A DEMON CHILD.

IF THAT’S WHAT YOU’RE GONNA DO, THEN DO IT!

IF YOU CUT OFF BOTH MY HANDS, I’VE GOT FEET!

AT JUST 11 YEARS OF AGE, YOU’RE A REPEAT OFFENDER...
AFTER ALL, THEY SAY I WAS BORN WITH TEETH.
HE’S RIGHT, I AM A DEMON CHILD.
SAY WHAT-EVER YOU WANT.

HAKUJI!

...YOUR FATHER HANGED HIMSELF!

WHEN HE HEARD YOU GOT ARRESTED AGAIN...

HE’S DEAD!!
"DEAR HAKUJI...

SORRY FOR TROUBLING YOU."

"TO HELL WITH THIS WORLD!"

"I AM SORRY FOR TROUBLING YOU."

"LIVE A RIGHTEOUS LIFE. YOU CAN STILL CHANGE."

"I DIDN'T WANT TO LIVE ON IF IT MEANT STEALING FROM PEOPLE."

"ARE THE POOR NOT EVEN ALLOWED TO LIVE?"

"TO HELL WITH THIS WORLD!

FATHER..."
TO HELL WITH EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM!

...BUT MY FATHER HAD TO DIE?

WHY DO THESE ROTTEN PEOPLE GET TO LIVE...

I COULD TAKE THE PUNISHMENT.

MY FATHER DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG!

HE WASN'T A BOTHER.

WHAT DID HE HAVE TO APOLOGIZE FOR?
WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY! MEDICINE IS EXPENSIVE!

I WANTED TO FEED HIM SOMETHING MORE NUTRITIOUS. I WAS SURE I COULD HEAL HIM.

DO HONEST WORK!

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT, YOU BASTARD!

WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY! MEDICINE IS EXPENSIVE!

THEY COULD WHIP ME SAVAGELY OR BREAK ALL MY BONES...

...BUT I COULD TAKE IT FOR EVEN A HUNDRED YEARS FOR MY FATHER'S SAKE!

I WOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY TO DIE INSTEAD, IF IT WERE FOR MY FATHER'S SAKE.

MY FATHER WAS RAPIDLY LOSING WEIGHT.

HIS RIBS WERE BEGINNING TO SHOW THROUGH HIS BACK.

WHY DID HE HANG HIMSELF?
...BUT YOU KNOCKED OUT SEVEN ADULTS WITH YOUR BARE HANDS.

YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD!

OH, WOW!

...BUT YOU KNOCKED OUT SEVEN ADULTS WITH YOUR BARE HANDS.

THEY CALLED ME BECAUSE SOMEONE WAS ABOUT TO KILL A CHILD, SO I CAME TO SEE WHAT I COULD DO...

FOR MY FATHER!!
YOU BEAT ADULTS WITHOUT A WEAPON.

IMPRESSIVE!

YOU'VE GOT PROMISE.

MY MEMORIES?

DON'T HAVE ANY STUDENTS!

VEL KILL you!!

YOU'VE GOT PROMISE.

WHAT AM I SEEING?

WHO IS THIS GUY?

SHUT UP, OLD MAN!!

I DON'T HAVE ANY STUDENTS!

I'LL KILL YOU!!

GRIN

WANNA COME TO MY DOJO?
THOSE TATTOOS MEAN YOU'RE A CRIMINAL FROM EDO.

SO WERE YOU BANISHED FROM EDO...

...AND ENDED UP HERE?

UH-HUH! WELL...

TIME FOR YOU TO BE REBORN, BOY. SO COME ON!!

IT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU!!

SO WHAT IF I DID?!

DROP DEAD, OLD MAN!!
I GAVE YOU A BEATING, BUT YOU WOKE UP IN LESS THAN AN HOUR!

WHEN, YOU'RE TOUGH.
I don't have a single student. So I make my living doing odd jobs.

I'm Keizo. I run a martial arts dojo that teaches the Soryu style of fighting.

My wife was exhausted from nursing her, and she drowned herself the other day.

I have some work to do, so I leave her to you.

This is hard.

What I want to have you do first, though, is nurse my sick daughter.

You sure you want to bring a criminal like me into your home with your daughter?

The truth is, I'm weak willed. It was a burden on her—and my daughter.
YES, BUT
I BEAT
UP AND
DEFEATED
THAT
CRIMINAL
EARLIER,
SO IT'S ALL
RIGHT NOW!

WE'RE
ALIKE.

...THIS
TIRESOME
OLD STORY.

...IS BECAUSE
YOU REMIND
ME OF...

I GET IT. THE
REASON I
FIND YOU SO
UNPLEASANT...
This is Koyuki, my daughter.

A worthless memory...

Worthless...
THIS BOY WON'T TELL ME HIS NAME. SO GET IT OUT OF HIM BEFORE I RETURN.

YOU'RE INJURED. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

...YOUR FACE...

...Y...

YOU'RE INJURED. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

ALL I EVER DID WAS SPEW LIES...

MY WHOLE WORTHLESS LIFE...

PROTECT...

I'LL GET BETTER...

SAVE...
Your comrades have fallen, so at least pray for the dead. You're so cold.

Right now?! Anyway, they're not dead!! And whose fault was it?!

I'm really gonna slap you!!
CHAPTER 155: USELESS KOMAINU

WHY DO PEOPLE SUFFERING FROM ILLNESS ALWAYS APOLOGIZE?

THEY'RE SORRY FOR INCONVENIENCING EVERYONE. THEY'RE SORRY BECAUSE THEIR COUGH IS NOISY.

THEY'RE SORRY BECAUSE THEY CAN'T WORK.

THEY'RE THE ONES SUFFERING THE MOST, BUT...

THEY CAN'T STOP COUGHING AND MUST WANT TO BREATHE NORMALLY.

THEY MUST WANT TO DO THINGS BY THEMSELVES.
Because of me, you can't train or go have fun.

Forgive me.

I had her drink water, and, of course, I had to support her when she went to the privy.

Koyuki was very delicate, and her health was getting worse.

I spent all night changing her bedding and the towels on her forehead.

In my free time, I train around here, so pay no mind.

I never think about having fun.

...so it wasn't terribly hard.

...and I could endure more than the average person...

I had nursed my father...
THAT'S RIGHT. I CAN CARRY YOU TO THE FOOT OF THE BRIDGE, SO SHALL WE GO?
I HEAR THERE WILL BE FIREWORKS TONIGHT, SO YOU SHOULD GO.
BUT... SOMETIMES YOU NEED TO GET AWAY FROM THIS.

EVEN IF YOU CAN'T GO TODAY, THERE'LL BE FIREWORKS NEXT YEAR AND THE YEAR AFTER THAT. YOU CAN GO THEN.

I SUPPOSE BEING SICK IN BED WAS DEPRESSING, BUT WHEN SHE CRIED, I FELT REALLY BAD.

...WAS WHEN KOYUKI WOULD WEEP PITIFULLY WHILE WE WERE TALKING.

THE ONLY THING I DIDN'T LIKE ABOUT NURSING HER...
IT'S THE SAME KANJI CHARACTER AS "KOMA" IN KOMAINU? AH, I SEE.

OH, I SEE!

THE "HAKU" IN HAKUJI IS THIS?

LIKE A KOMAINU* PROTECTING A SHRINE.

I KNEW IT. YOU'RE THE SAME AS ME.

YOU NEED TO HAVE SOMETHING TO PROTECT.

MY MASTER WASN'T A SAMURAI OR ANYTHING, BUT HE OWNED LAND AND THE DOJO BECAUSE...

*GUARDIAN STATUES AT JAPANESE SHRINES.
He didn't have an heir, so he left his land and the old dojo to my master.

...he had once saved an old man being attacked by bandits.

The old man was impressed by his soryu style.

There were others who wanted the land for themselves. They weren't pleased.

A neighboring dojo began harassing the soryu dojo.

But lessons and nursing Koyuki here...

...saved me.

Because of that, my master had trouble finding students.
SHE WAS ABLE TO LIVE NORMALLY.

Koyuki says she likes you.

Three years passed and I turned 18.

Koyuki was 16 and was always up and around.

All right.

After all, Koyuki says she likes you.

Will you be my successor for the dojo, Hakuji?

Huh?
MUCH LESS ONE IN WHICH SOMEONE LIKED ME.

...SO I COULDN'T IMAGINE A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR MYSELF.

I'D BEEN BRANDED AS A CRIMINAL...
THE FAINT HOPE THAT I MIGHT BE ABLE TO START ANEW GREW BEYOND MY CONTROL.

WOULD I BE ABLE TO LIVE A RIGHTEOUS LIFE...

LIKE MY FATHER SAID?

I WOULD HAVE GIVEN MY LIFE TO PROTECT THOSE TWO...

I NEVER IMAGINED THEY WOULD BE POISONED TO DEATH.
I WENT TO VISIT MY FATHER'S GRAVE...

...TO TELL HIM THERE WOULD BE A WEDDING.

...EVEN BEFORE THEY TOLD ME...

I RETURNED TO THE DOJO BEFORE NIGHTFALL, BUT...

...AND MY SKIN WAS CRAWLING WITH A BAD PREMONITION.

...I FELT NAUSEOUS. MY STOMACH WAS CHURNING...
They did it because they couldn't beat Keizo or you face-to-face!

They did something horrible!

They even killed Koyuki!!

...and I wasn't by their side.

Once again, a crisis had visited the people most important to me...

Someone put poison in the well!!

It's awful!!
AM I REALLY GOOD ENOUGH?

REALLY GOOD ENOUGH?

DO YOU REMEMBER?

WE TALKED ABOUT GOING TO SEE FIREWORKS.

WHEN I WAS A CHILD...

EVEN IF I COULDN'T SEE THE FIREWORKS THAT YEAR...

...YOU SAID I COULD GO THE NEXT YEAR OR THE YEAR AFTER THAT.

...MADE ME HAPPY.

THOSE SILLY TALKS WITH YOU, HAKUJI...
...OR ANOTHER AFTER THAT.

I WAS SO TERRIBLY WEAK.

AND I KNEW THAT MY FATHER HAD GIVEN UP.

I BELIEVE THAT'S WHY SHE KILLED HERSELF.

MY MOTHER WAS THAT WAY TOO. SHE DIDN'T WANT TO SEE ME DIE...

YOU TALKED TO ME ABOUT THE NEXT YEAR AND THE YEAR AFTER THAT. I WAS VERY HAPPY.

...AS IF IT WERE JUST A MATTER OF FACT.

BUT YOU COULD SEE MY FUTURE...
WILL YOU MARRY ME?

YES, YOU ARE GOOD ENOUGH.

...AND PROTECT YOU FOR LIFE.

I WILL BECOME STRONGER THAN ANYONE...

...I WAS ALL TALK. I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING.

IN THE END...
RECORDS AT THE MAGISTRATE’S OFFICE DETAILED THAT ATROCIous MURDER.

...KILLING 67 OF ITS MEMBERS...

AFTER THE MASTER OF THE SORUYU DOJO AND HIS DAUGHTER WERE POISONED...

...THE SINGLE SURVIVING STUDENT ATTACKED THE NEIGHBORING DOJO...

...WITH HIS BARE HANDS.
IT WAS A HELLISH
SCENE, WITH JAWS,
BRAINS, EYEBALLS,
HANDS AND FEET
AND INNARDS
SCATTERED
AROUND, STUCK
to THE CEILING
AND WALLS.

THE ACCOUNT
WAS SO
UNBELIEVABLE

...THAT AFTER
30 YEARS THE
RECORDS WERE
DISPOSED OF AS
A FABRICATION.

MOST OF THE
BODIES WERE
MANGLED
BETYOND
RECOGNITION...

AND WERE
MISSING
ENTIRE
BODY
PARTS.

THE
SURVIVING
MAID LOST
HER MIND.
...BUT I DON'T REMEMBER PLACING ONE AROUND HERE, SO I WENT TO ALL THE TROUBLE OF COMING TO SEE.

I HEARD THERE WAS A FUSS ABOUT A DEMON...

HOW BORING.

BUT YOU'RE JUST A HUMAN.
OR I'LL...

MOVE.

...KILL YOU.
CAN YOU WITHSTAND THE AMOUNT OF BLOOD I'M GIVING YOU?

I'M THINKING ABOUT MAKING 12 POWERFUL DEMONS.

...ABOUT...

...ANYTHING.

...ANYMORE.

I DON'T CARE...

DON'T...

CARE...
I didn't even want to continue living in a world without my family.

There was nothing left that I wanted to protect.

I became a demon, lost my memories and again began seeking strength.

For over a hundred years I committed pointless acts of carnage.

It's a horribly sad...

...and ridiculous story.
Memories are the foundation for all of Akaza's techniques.

Technique names → Come from fireworks

Technique Development pattern → Koyuki's hairpins stance

Martial arts school → Soryu

His father told him to live a righteous life, but he became a demon and committed many sins. Perhaps that's why criminal tattoos have mixed in with demon patterns and appear to be spreading all over his body.
CHAPTER 156: THANK YOU
EVEN IF I DIE, I CAN'T GO TO THE SAME PLACE AS THEM.

HUMANS...

YOU MADE ME REMEMBER...

ARE SOFT...

FRAGILE...

WEAK-LINGS.

MY PAST...

THEY BREAK...

AND DISAPPEAR.

THEY DIE EASILY.
DURING A BATTLE!

FINISH FINISH FINISH

GAAAH! EVEN THOUGH HE'S CUT IT OFF!!

HIS HEAD!! HIS HEAD HAS STARTED TO REGENERATE!! I PASSED OUT DURING A BATTLE!!
DESTRUCTIVE DEATH

ANNIHILATION TYPE!

HE'S STILL MOVING?!

STOP!!
...AGAINST AKAZA!!

NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I HAVE TO CUT OFF HIS HEAD...

...GIYU AND I ARE GOING TO WIN...

SLIP

MY GRIP... I LOST THE STRENGTH IN MY HAND!!

DROPPED MY SWORD!!
TIME FOR YOU TO BE REBORN!

WEAK PEOPLE...

I HATE WEAK PEOPLE.

THE WEAK...

THEM'RE UGLY.

THEY ARE POISON IN THE WELL.

DON'T CONFRONT YOU HEAD-ON.
I KILLED PEOPLE WITH FISTS MEANT TO PROTECT.

...LACK FORBEARANCE.

THEY SOON GIVE IN TO DESPERATION.

...AND I COULDN'T FULFILL MY FATHER'S LAST WISHES.

I GOT BLOOD ALL OVER MY MASTER'S BELOVED SORYU STYLE...

YES... THE ONE I WANTED TO KILL WAS...
PUNCHES WON'T STOP HIM!!

OH NO, NO, NO!

MY SWORD WENT FLYING!

I'LL TAKE GIYU OUTSIDE THE ATTACK RANGE!!

AKAZA IS TRYING TO USE THE ANNIHILATION TECHNIQUE HE USED AGAINST RENGO!!

FORGET ABOUT ME!
HE DID IT TO HIMSELF...
WHY DID HE SMILE?

FOR A MOMENT...

...THE SCENT OF GRATITUDE CAME FROM AKAZA.

WHY?

WHY DID HE ATTACK HIMSELF?

STOP. NO MORE REGENERATION.

THAT'S ENOUGH.
IN THAT MOMENT, I SUFFERED TOTAL DEFEAT.

HE PERFECTLYread my moves and spun in right on the edge of control...

...AND SLASHED BEFORE I COULD FULLY LAUNCH MY ATTACK.

IT WAS A BOLD...

AND SPLENDID TECHNIQUE.

...HE STOPPED.

...I WANT TO GO TO HELL GRACEFULLY.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT NOW? YOU Aren't suffering?

I'M SORRY, FATHER.

THANK YOU.

I'M FINE, HAKUJI.

THAT DOESN'T MATTER.

I COULDN'T DO MY LIFE OVER. IT WAS NO USE.

I'M SORRY, FATHER. I'M SORRY.
EVEN IN DEATH, WE WOULD NOT FORSAKE YOU.

WHATEVER YOU BECOME...

...A SON IS A SON. A STUDENT IS A STUDENT.

...TAKE YOU TO HEAVEN.

BUT WE CANNOT...

GRIP...
DIDN'T YOU WANT TO BE STRONG?

IS THIS THE END FOR YOU?

THAT'S RIGHT. I'M GOING TO BE STRONG.

I WANT TO BE STRONG.

AKAZA...

I CAN STILL GET STRONGER.

I MUST FULFILL MY PROMISE.

SO WHAT IF HE CUT OFF MY HEAD?

LOOSING DOESN'T MATTER. I'LL KILL THEM ALL.
ENOUGH.

THANK YOU, HAKUJII.

YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH.

AKAZAI!

ENOUGH.

ENOUGH.
I'm sorry I couldn't protect you!

I'm sorry I wasn't with you when you needed me!

Forgive me! Please forgive me!

Forgive me!!

I'm glad you remembered us.

I'm glad you returned to your original self.

...A single promise!!

Welcome home...

...my love.
KRUMBL
BLUP BLUP

OH...

FW SH
The neighboring dojo had a son and heir who was about Koyuki's age. He liked Koyuki, but he had an extremely violent and arrogant personality, so he was unable to show proper consideration for her weak constitution. When she wasn't feeling well, he forced her to go outside with him and she had an asthma attack. Seeing that, he was frightened and ran away, leaving her to suffer. If Hakuji hadn't found her, she would have died.

Hakuji was furious about that, leading to a feud between the Soryu Dojo and the neighboring dojo. Keizo was on standby, but Hakuji defeated nine people all by himself at just 16 years of age and forbid any involvement whatsoever with Koyuki and Soryu Dojo. Incensed, the neighboring dojo's heir drew a real sword instead of a wooden one and attacked Hakuji. Hakuji defended himself by striking the oncoming blade from the side with his fist, breaking it in two. That was the technique at which Hakuji was most proficient. He called it Bell-Splitter.
CHAPTER 157: RETURNING SPIRIT

I'M BACK.

I'M HOME, FATHER.

KOYUKI

MASTER...

I'M HOME.
FW OOSH

HE DISAPPEARED...

IT'S...

OVER.
HUFF

...TO TAMAYO.

HUFF

...TO HURRY...

SHNK

STAGGER...
...from exhaustion!!

Kaw

They have collapsed...

TANJIRO AND GIYU...

...have defeated AKAZA!
...Is gone.

...Presence...

A path had opened for him to attain further heights...

...but he renounced it himself.

How exceedingly weak.

He has fallen.

Didn't you go to defeat me?
As if Lord Akaza had become some different kind of creature...

I felt a strange sensation for a moment, but I guess it was my imagination.

Oh!

Right, right! I asked you your name.

Um, what were we talking about?

Ah ha ha ha

But he's gone, so I'll never know!
I AM KANAO TSUYURI.

...AND SHINOBU KOCHO'S YOUNGER SISTER.

SPEAKING OF GIRLS... RIGHT, RIGHT...

MOST YOUNG GIRLS ARE TASTY, SO ANYTHING IS FINE!

HUFF

JUDGING FROM THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEAT, THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A BLOOD RELATION.
...because he would never eat girls.

...so eating lots of them makes you stronger faster.

I told him women are so nutritious because they can raise babies in their stomachs...

Akaza was allowed to live and got special treatment.

In the end, his lordship tolerated it, but I wouldn't call that fair.

But not only would he not eat them, Lord Akaza wouldn't even kill them!
HE WAS MY BEST FRIEND, BUT...

...NOW HE'S DEAD.

BUT...

HOW SAD...

HE WAS MY BEST FRIEND, BUT...

THAT'S ENOUGH.

SOB!

SOB!
YOU'RE NOT SAD. NOT EVEN A LITTLE.

I KNOW EVERY WORD COMING FROM YOUR MOUTH...

...IS A THOUGHT-LESS LIE.
YOU HAVEN'T PALED, AND YOUR FACE ISN'T FLUSHED WITH ANGER.

THE COLOR OF YOUR FACE HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL...

...EVEN THOUGH YOUR "BEST FRIEND" DIED.

THOUGH YOUR "BEST FRIEND" DIED.

...BUT THEIR BLOOD CIRCULATES THE SAME AS HUMANS, SO THEIR COMPLEXION CHANGES.

DEMONS' EYES ARE ALWAYS MOIST, SO THEY DON'T BLINK...

THAT'S BECAUSE I'M A DEMON.

AS SHE DIED, KANAE SAW...

...SHE WAS SORRY FOR YOU.
YOU DON'T FEEL ANYTHING, DO YOU?

...SADNESS, ANGER AND OTHER EMOTIONS SO STRONGLY THEY TREMBLE.

PEOPLE BORN INTO THIS WORLD...

BUT THAT'S ALL A MYSTERY TO YOU, ISN'T IT?
YOU CAN ONLY PRETEND TO BE HAPPY OR HAVE FUN OR BE SAD SO YOU WON'T REVEAL YOUR EMPTY HEART.

BUT YOU'RE SMART ENOUGH...

TO MAKE UP FOR IT BY LYING.

A RIDICULOUS JOKE.

FACING DIFFICULT THINGS AND PAINFUL THINGS...

YOU'RE ACTUALLY AN EMPTY SHELL.

ENJOYING HAPPY THINGS, FUN THINGS...

...WERE YOU EVEN BORN?

WHY...
WHY DO YOU SAY SUCH SPITEFUL THINGS?

TO MANY GIRLS, BUT...

...I HAVE KNOWN...

YOU KNOW...

...THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE TALKED TO SUCH AN UNKIND GIRL AS YOU.

WHY DO YOU SAY SUCH SPITEFUL THINGS?
I WANT TO CUT OFF YOUR HEAD AND SEND YOU TO HELL AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

DON'T YOU KNOW?

IT'S BECAUSE I HATE YOU.

BECAUSE THERE'S NO POINT TO YOU LIVING.

YOU DISGUST ME, AND THE SOONER YOU DIE THE BETTER.

LET ME REPHRASE THAT.

YOU DON'T SEEM SO SMART.
SHE'S ADAPTING TO MY MOVES AND FIGHTING STYLE.

SHE'S REACTING FASTER.
A LITTLE MORE SKILLFUL THAN THE HASHIRA GIRL I JUST ATE.

SHE ISN'T INHALING THE POWDER FREEZE SCATTERED BY MY FAN.

...IT WOULD BE HARD NOT TO WHILE ENGAGED IN CLOSE COMBAT.

...A LITTLE MORE SKILLFUL THAN THE HASHIRA GIRL I JUST ATE.

...MIGHT JUST BE...
The beauty of that technique moved the master of the neighboring dojo so much that he admitted defeat, apologized for his son’s inappropriate behavior and stopped bothering the Soryu Dojo.

A few quiet years passed, but then the master of the neighboring dojo died. When the heir heard about Hakuji and Koyuki’s marriage, he knew he would lose a fight, so he poisoned the Soryu Dojo’s well, partially at the prompting of the dojo adherents. An old woman living nearby witnessed the heir and his followers leaving the Soryu Dojo.

After they drank poison, Keizo carried Koyuki to a physician’s house, coughing up blood as he ran. Koyuki had already died, but Keizo took a few hours to die and suffered a long time.

The above story was too long to include in the manga.

He was one of the 67 slain.

Neighboring dojo’s heir
CHAPTER 158: CHAOS
IF I DON'T SEND STRENGTH ALL THE WAY TO MY FINGERTIPS...

...MY BODY IMMEDIATELY STARTS TREMBLING.

I CAN STAND UP TO HIM THANKS TO THIS FIERCE ANGER.

IT'S LIKE MY BODY IS BURNING.

...WERE INFANTS COMPARED TO HIM.

THE DEMONS I HAVE DEFEATED SO FAR...
IT'S DRIVING ME SO CRAZY I WANT TO SCREAM.

I'VE NEVER FELT THIS WAY IN MY WHOLE LIFE.

I FEEL LIKE MY BODY WILL FALL APART IF I DON'T CUT LOOSE.

THIS IS HATRED BEYOND ANGER.

HOW DARE YOU KILL MY FAMILY!

I HATE YOU!
NICE.
PRETTY. SO
I'LL DO IT
TOO!

...SEVEN...
EIGHT...NINE
SUCCESSIVE
ATTACKS!
BARREN HANGING GARDEN!

SECOND FORM:

HONORABLE SHADOW PLUM!
SHE NARROWLY PARRIED AND SURVIVED MY ATTACKS JUST NOW.

NOT ONLY IS SHE ASTUTE, BUT SHE DOES THINGS THAT THE AVERAGE SWORDSWOMAN CAN'T DO.

MY SHOULDERS, LINE OF SIGHT, TOES, ELBOWS AND KNEES...

FOR NOW, I'LL CRUSH HER EYES.
SIXTH FORM:

WHIRLING PEACH!!!
IT'S LIKE A SPRING!

WHAT A WELL-TRAINED BODY YOU HAVE!

BLOOD DEMON ART

FREEZING CLOUDS!
UH-OH! IF I hadn't closed my eyes, my eyeballs would have frozen!

WAIT. WAIT!

LOTUS VINES!

BLOOD DEMON ART

SASH! SASH!
HERE COMES MY NEXT ATTACK...
PLOOOSH

COLD WHITE PRINCESSES!
WHAT A BROAD-AREA TECHNIQUE! I CAN'T GET CLOSE...
WINTRY ICICLES!
YOU CAN'T CUT OFF MY HEAD IF YOU DON'T GET CLOSE, RIGHT?

HEY, YOU KEEP BACKING OFF.

HE DISAPPEARED...
OKAY; YOU WEREN'T
"LL JUST
HOLDING IT
VERY TIGHTLY,
SO I TOOK IT.

RIGHT
HERE.

COME
AND
GET IT!
BLOOD DEMON ART

SCATTERING LOTUSES!

LOOK CLOSETLY AND ASSESS.

OBSERVE OR A FREEZING BLOOD DEMON ART?

MANY BLADES?
SEE CLEARLY...
OUT OF THE SKY, LORD INOSUKE’S COMIN’ IN!!
CRAZY CUTTING!!

BEAST BREATHING
FIFTH FANG:

SO LET'S FIGHT!

THE CROW'S GUIDANCE...

...WAS SPOT-ON!!
Inosuke tormenting a Crow.

Hurry or I’ll poke you!!

Got it?!?

Take me to the strongest demon!
*EYES: UPPER 2

HA HA HA HA!!! IF I DEFEAT YOU, I'LL BE A HASHIRA!!

YOU!!
YOU'RE UPPER RANK 2! YOUR SECRET'S OUT!!

I KNOW YOU'RE SECOND FROM THE TOP!
WHEN I BECOME A HASHIRA, THEY’LL CALL ME THE BEAST HASHIRA... NO, THE BOAR HASHIRA!

YOU LOOK INTERESTING.

I DON’T EXACTLY HIDE THAT I’M UPPER RANK 2.

WHICH DO YOU THINK IS BETTER?! HEY...

YOU'RE ALL BEATEN UP! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!

AND SHE GETS REALLY ANGRY!!

SHINOBU'LL GET REALLY MAD AT YOU!!

IF YOU GET INJURED, YOU'LL... YOU KNOW!

YOU... YOU'RE ALL BEATEN UP! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!!
OF COURSE NOT! SHE'S NOT DEAD!

SHE LIVES FOREVER INSIDE ME!

OF COURSE NOT! SHE'S NOT DEAD!
ALL THE PEOPLE I EAT ARE THAT WAY. I SAVE THEM.

THEY BECOME PART OF ME AND FIND HAPPINESS.

THEY'RE NO LONGER IN PAIN. THEY NO LONGER SUFFER.

AND DON'T PULL OUT THE THREAD ON YOUR OWN.

I STITCHED UP THE WOUND...

SO DON'T TOUCH IT.
PINKY PROMISE!
I'm gonna chew you up, you scum!

Don't breathe in the cold air he spreads!!
WITH THAT CHIPPED KATANA AND YOUR STRANGE SWORDSMANSHIP!

WHAT SLOPPY TECHNIQUE!

AH HA HA!!
VERY INTERESTING!
THAT HEAD IS A MASK, RIGHT?

YOU'RE FLEXIBLE! IMPRESSIVE!

THA DO

YOU...
DON'T LET HIM TAKE IT AGAIN.

YOU'RE QUICK. I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE.
HE'S SWINGING HIS SWORD? BUT HE'S OUT OF RANGE. TOO FAR AWAY.
SEE? YOU CAN'T REACH ME AT ALL...
HE GOT ME WITH A SLASH!

GWMD

EXTENDING BENDY SLASH!!

BEAST BREATHING

NINTH FANG:
WHAT'S HE GONNA DO NEXT?

HUH? DID HE DISLOCATE ALL THE JOINTS IN HIS ARM?

SNAP

TCH!

ARGH!! THE PRECISION OF MY NEW TECHNIQUE STILL ISN'T SO GOOD!

NO WAY... HUH? NO WAY, NO WAY, NO WAY...

I WAS AIMING FOR YOUR NECK BUT MISSED!
EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU IS REALLY...

...SLOPPY.

SO YOU CAN IMMEDIATELY RESET YOUR JOINTS. DOESN'T THAT HURT?

HURNF!

...BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN A KID LIKE YOU.

I'VE BEEN ALIVE FOR A REALLY LONG TIME...

...I, LORD INOSUKE...

YEAH, OF COURSE YOU HAVEN'T. COMPARED TO THE RABBLE...
AM COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!

INOSUKE!!

AH, I KNEW IT. IT WAS A MASK.
HMM...

THIS BOAR HIDE HAS BEEN THROUGH QUITE A LOT.

YOU...

GIVE THAT BACK!

HOW DID YOU DO THE EYES?

...YOUR FACE.

HMP? I FEEL LIKE I REMEMBER...
Genya Shinazugawa (16 yrs) First-year, Class Kabosu. The ace of the marksmanship club. He’s no good at math, so his older brother always gets angry at him.

He won the marksmanship competition, but when he received his award at school, his brother stepped in and broke it, saying it was useless and Genya should study math more. Genya trembled as he stood on stage. Everyone had been afraid of him because of his large size and face, but this incident made his classmates sympathize with him, so he got more friends.

His hairstyle is against school rules, but when he shaved his head, his shots stopped hitting the target, so he received special permission.

Sanemi Shinazugawa. Math teacher.

Feeling constricted around his neck stresses him out, so he always leaves his shirt unbuttoned. Once when his students said they wouldn’t need math in the future, he threw them out the window like in Smash Bros. He talks to Ms. Kanae a lot, so for a while there was a plan to bump him off, but the Smash Bros. incident put an end to that. He’s incredibly kind to the women, children and the elderly, but whenever he approaches children, they burst into tears. He doesn’t even button his shirt for ceremonial occasions.
CHAPTER 160: SIMILAR FEATURES, RETURNING MEMORIES
WE'VE MET SOMEWHERE BEFORE, RIGHT?

KEEP YOUR FILTHY HANDS OFF OF MY FUR!

I DON'T REMEMBER EVER MEETING A MAGGOT LIKE YOU!

I KNOW YOU.

NO...

...WE HAVE MET.
TO ASK HER ABOUT IT. WE EVER MET AGAIN, BUT...

I WAS GOING TO ASK HER ABOUT IT IF WE EVER MET AGAIN, BUT...

I FEEL LIKE...

...I MET SHINOBU SOMEWHERE LONG AGO.

AND I HAVE A GOOD MEMORY.

MY ONLY MERIT IS THAT I’M SERIOUS.

NONSENSE? THAT HURTS.

STAY CALM, INOSUKE.

I EVEN REMEMBER THE TIME WHEN I WAS STILL HUMAN REALLY WELL.

HE’S JUST SPOUTING NONSENSE.
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
ARRRGH!!

WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
ARRRGH!!

WAS IT ONLY 15 YEARS AGO?
THAT'S FAIRLY RECENT.

OH! THIS IS IT!

HRMMM ...

POKE
SHE SAID HER HUSBAND BEAT HER EVERY DAY...

A GIRL ABOUT 17 OR 18 CAME TO ME HOLDING A BABY.

...AND THAT HER MOTHER-IN-LAW BULLIED HER DAILY TOO.

I CREATED THE PARADISE FAITH IN ORDER TO PROTECT PITIFUL PEOPLE LIKE HER.

THE FIRST TIME I SAW HER, HER FACE WAS SO SWOLLEN HER FEATURES WERE WARPED.

AND I DIDN'T HAVE ANYONE TO RELY ON OR ANYWHERE TO GO.

I DIDN'T HAVE PARENTS OR SIBLINGS.

WHAT A HORRIBLE THING TO DO.

...RETURNED TO NORMAL AFTER TREATMENT. SHE WAS PRETTY, SO SHE MADE A LASTING IMPRESSION ON ME.

SHE HAD GONE BLIND IN ONE EYE BECAUSE OF HER HUSBAND BEATING HER...

A GIRL ABOUT 17 OR 18 CAME TO ME HOLDING A BABY.

Fwip Fwip

I CREATED THE PARADISE FAITH IN ORDER TO PROTECT PITIFUL PEOPLE LIKE HER.

THE FIRST TIME I SAW HER, HER FACE WAS SO SWOLLEN HER FEATURES WERE WARPED.

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WHAT A HORRIBLE THING TO DO.

...RETURNED TO NORMAL AFTER TREATMENT. SHE WAS PRETTY, SO SHE MADE A LASTING IMPRESSION ON ME.

SHE HAD GONE BLIND IN ONE EYE BECAUSE OF HER HUSBAND BEATING HER...
...I bet she was your mother.

Yes, yes! There's no doubt about it!

It was more delicate and had softer features, but...

She had the same face as you.

You're human, so a human must have given birth to you.

I don't have a mother!!

DID A boar give birth to you?

I was raised by boars!!

She has nothing to do with me!!
FATE
BRINGING US
TOGETHER IS
A MIRACLE.

SHUT UP,
SCUM!!
GIVE THAT
BACK!!

INO--

SIXTH
FANG!

BEAST
BREATHING

LISTEN TO
MY STORY TO
THE END.

FATE
BRINGING US
TOGETHER IS
A MIRACLE.
INOSUKE, ARE YOU OKAY?

PLEASE, CALM DOWN!

IT FEELS GOOD TO HAVE SOMEONE SO PURE BY YOUR SIDE, RIGHT?

I DIDN'T INTEND...

...TO EAT YOUR MOTHER.

I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT INSTEAD OF LULLABIES, SHE SANG ABOUT PINKY PROMISES.

SHE OFTEN HELD YOU AND SANG TO YOU.

UNFORTUNATELY, YOUR MOTHER WAS A FOOL.

SHE ALWAYS SANG THAT TO YOU.

"PINKY... PROMISE..."

BUT SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL AND GOOD AT SINGING.
"...YOUR MOTHER WILL PROTECT YOU ALL ALONE."

"YOUR PROMISE.

"I WILL PROTECT YOU. I Promise."

"UNTIL YOU GET BIG..."

"I'm SORRY, INOSUKE."

"...I WILL WORK HARD TO PROTECT YOU IN YOUR FATHER'S STEAD."

"INOSUKE...

"YOU MAY FEEL LONELY BUT..."
"...even if it costs me my life."

Partway through, it would become a song about tanuki or something. It was cute.

The words of the pinky promise song were different each time.

I thought it was her, but it wasn't.
...BUT YOUR MOTHER... OH, RIGHT. KOTOHA WAS APPARENTLY AS PERCEPTIVE AS SHE WAS FOOLISH.

I DIDN'T INTEND TO EAT HER. I PLANNED TO KEEP HER ALIVE UNTIL HER SPAN RAN OUT.

EVEN IF I EXPLAINED MYSELF, SHE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND MY GLORIOUS WORK.

SHE REALIZED I WAS EATING MY FOLLOWERS.

THEN SHE FLED MY TEMPLE.

SO SHE CURSED ME...

...AND ACCUSED ME OF BEING A CRUEL LIAR.
I'M SORRY, INOSUKE.

I'M SORRY. YOUR MOTHER IS SO FOOLISH.

I'M YOUR MOTHER, BUT...

I MUST TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU, BUT...

I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY...

I ALWAYS GO TO SOMEONE BAD.

I ALWAYS FAIL.

WHAT SHOULD I DO? I'M SORRY... I'M SORRY...

WHICH WAY IS IT TO A VILLAGE?

OH NO... I DON'T KNOW THE WAY. I'M LOST...
BUT AT LEAST YOU ALONE COULD LIVE.

AT THIS RATE, HE'LL KILL US BOTH.

THERE'S NOWHERE LEFT TO RUN.

I'M SORRY, INOSUKE.

I'M SORRY...

THUD

BAM
YOU WERE FOOLISH TO THE END.

THERE'S NO WAY HE COULD SURVIVE ALONE OUT HERE.

HOW PITIFUL...

DYING BECAUSE HIS MOTHER DROPPED HIM FROM A CLIFF.
HE KILLED...

MOTHER...

...MY...
"YOUR SMALL HANDS..."

"...ARE SO CUTE, INOSUKE."

"SHUT UP!!

"YOU JERK!!"
"YOU'RE EVERYTHING TO ME."

"YOU'RE SO WARM, INOSUKE."

"I'M SO HAPPY I CAN BE WITH YOU."

...REALLY IS A MIRACLE.

FATE BRINGING US TOGETHER...
...IS RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES!!

AFTER ALL, THE DEMON WHO KILLED...

...MY MOTHER AND MY FRIEND...

I'M GONNA SEND YOU TO HELL!!

YOU HAVE MY GRATITUDE FOR MAKING ME REMEMBER.

JUST CUTTING OFF YOUR HEAD WON'T BE ENOUGH!!

VOLUME 18—
ASSAULTED BY MEMORIES (END)