



36

The top performing athletes at this event will qualify to travel to Japan for the Olympic Games.

gab



Then, my opportunity had arrived.

Well, as you all already know... the African competition will be held in Morocco soon.

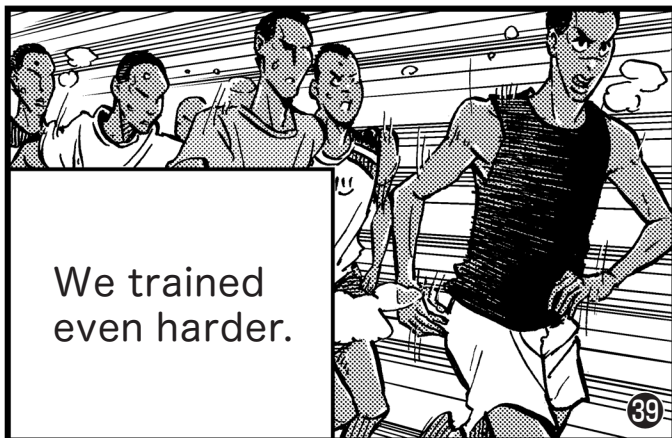
35



From then on, we trained day after day.

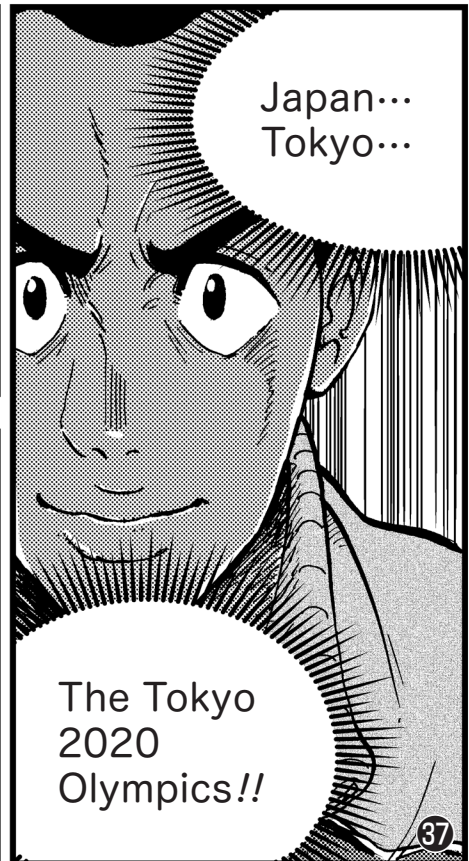
Abraham. He is really training hard...

38



We trained even harder.

39



Japan... Tokyo...

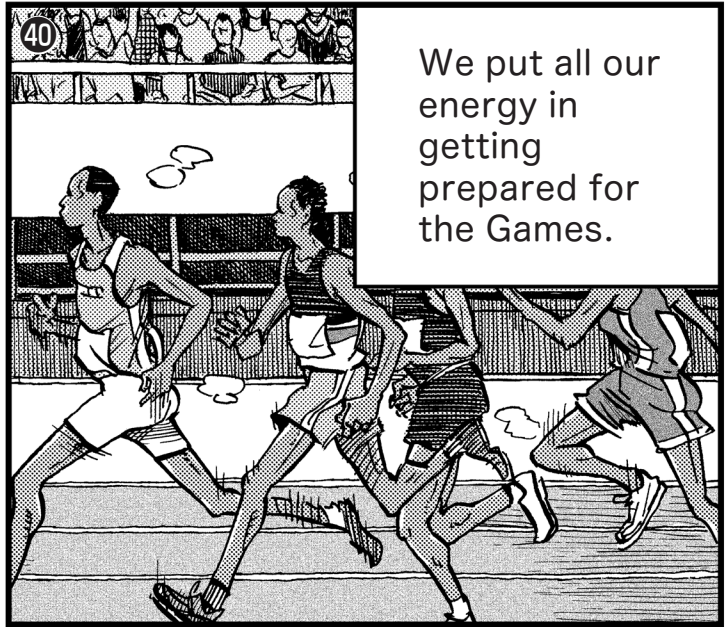
The Tokyo 2020 Olympics!!

37



WAAAAA

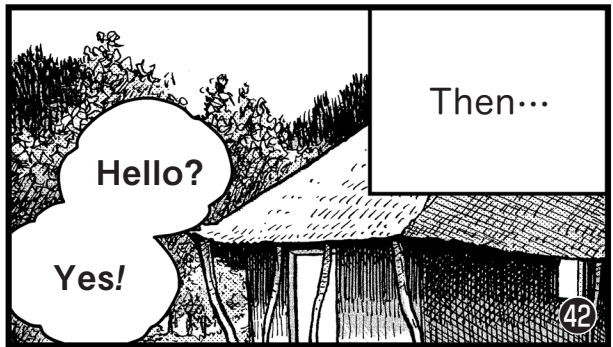
A new meet record!!



We put all our energy in getting prepared for the Games.



Yes! Thank you so much !!



Hello?

Then...

Yes!



I did it!!

I did it...

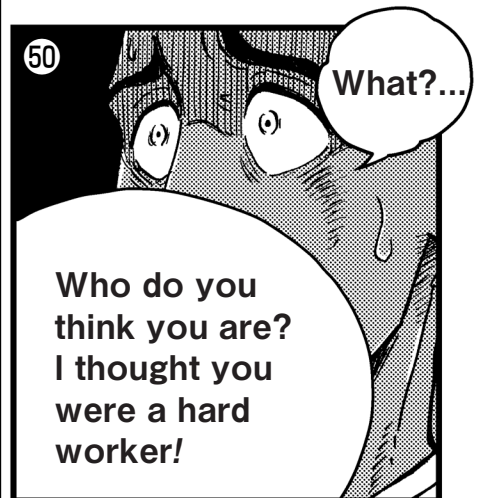
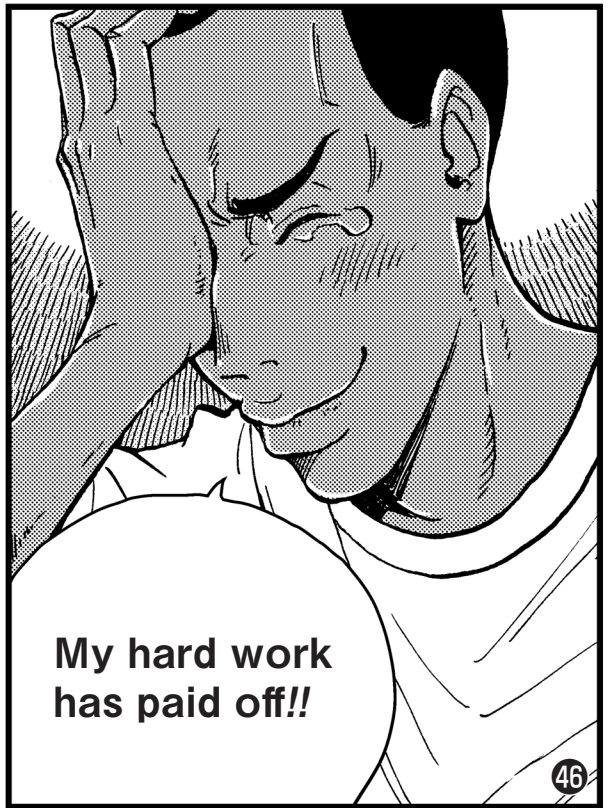
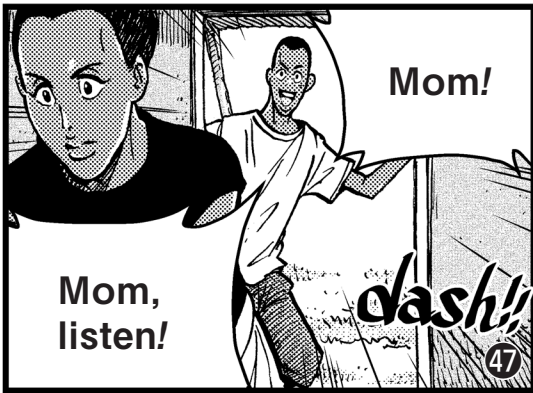


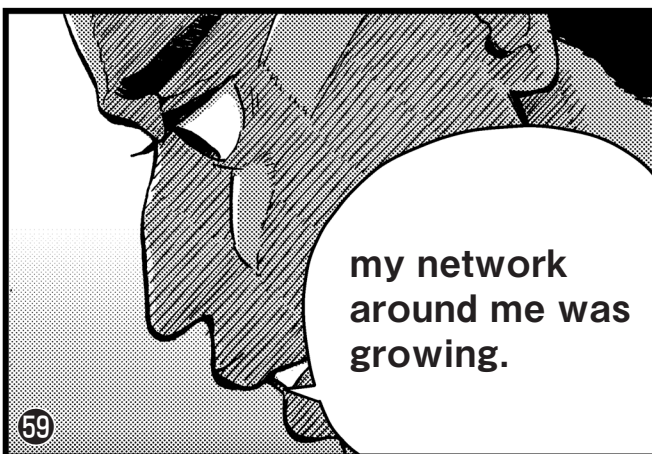
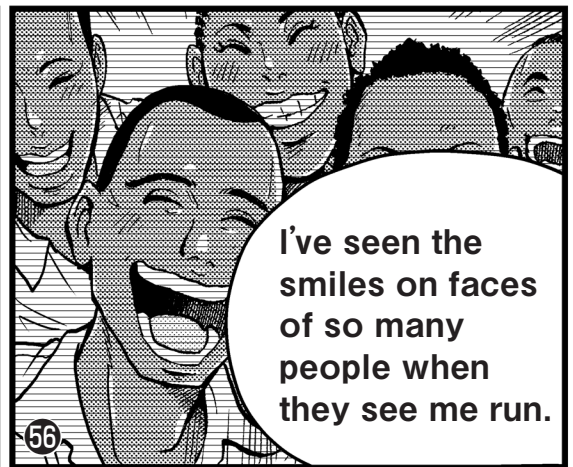
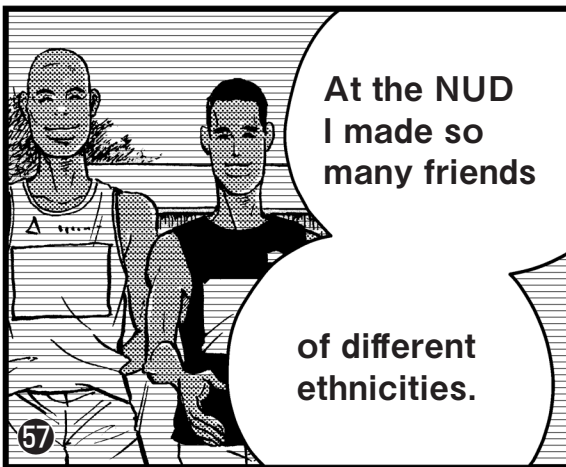
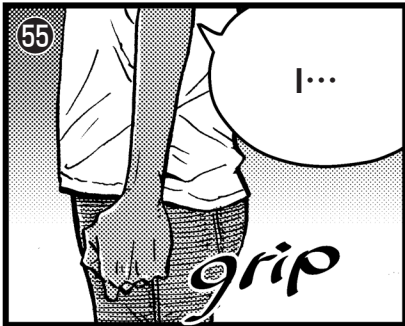
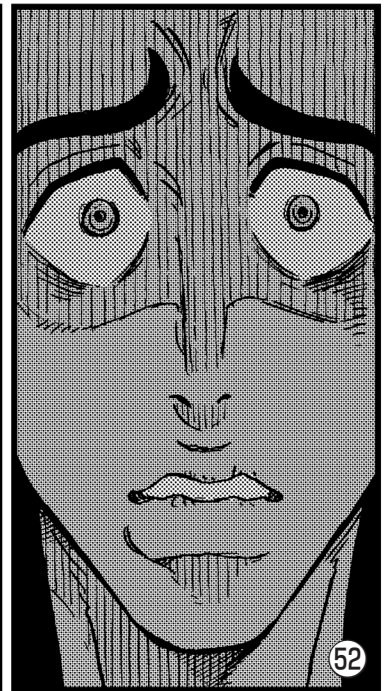
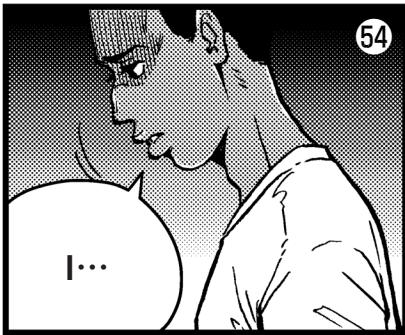
Yes...

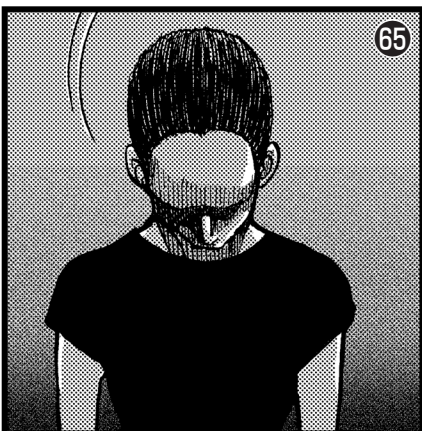
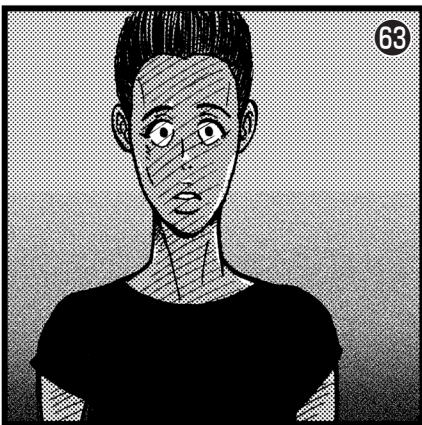
YES!!

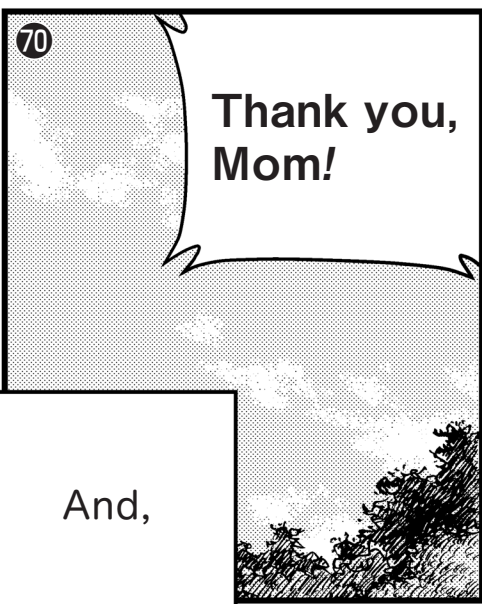
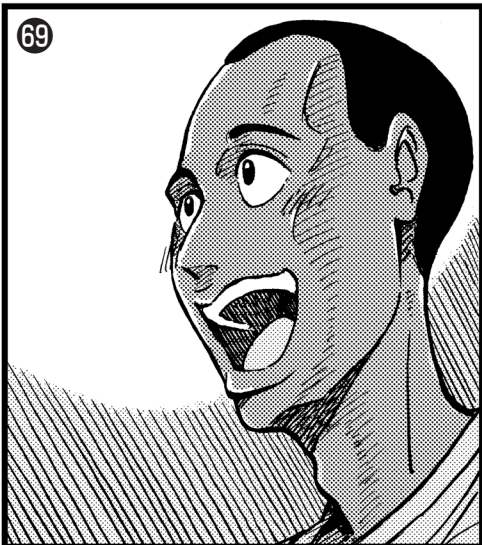
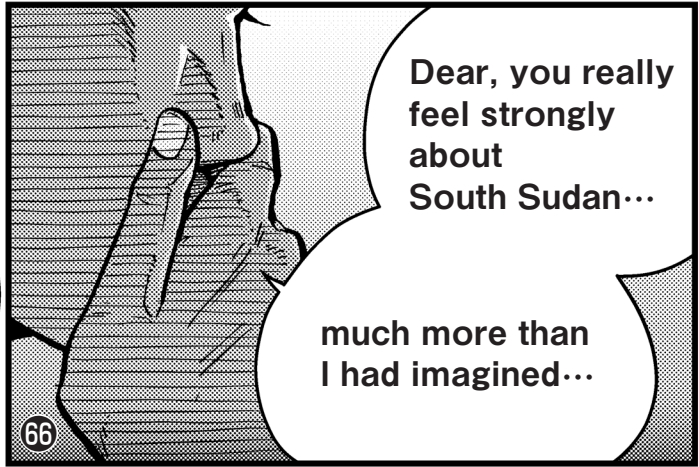
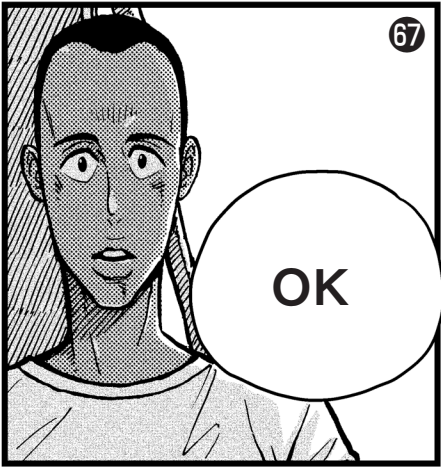
The day had come!

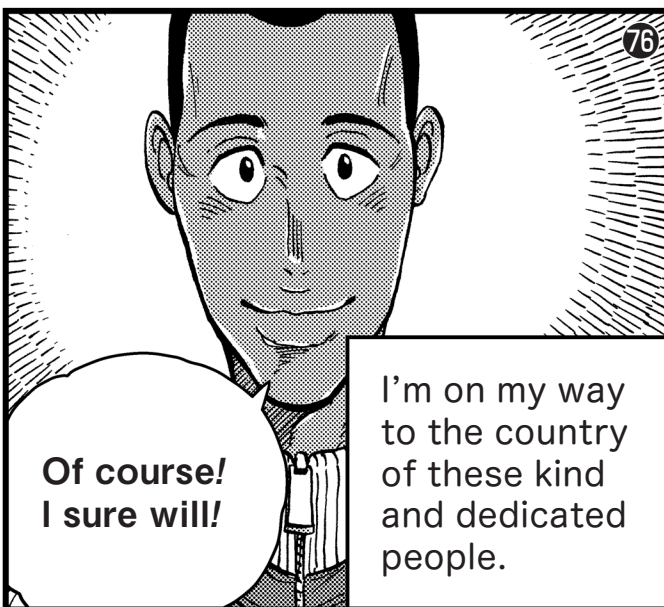
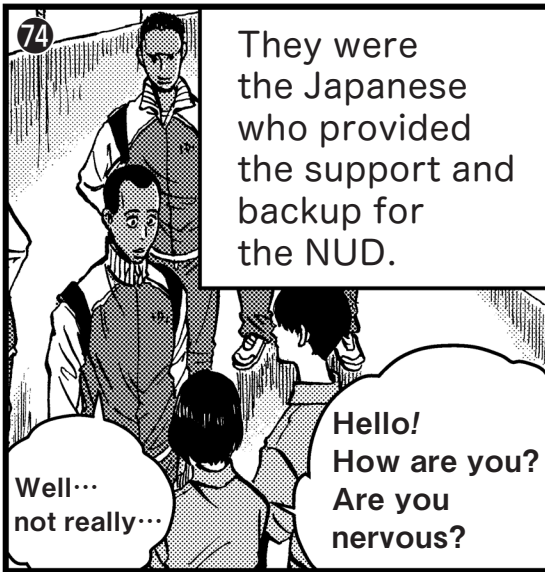
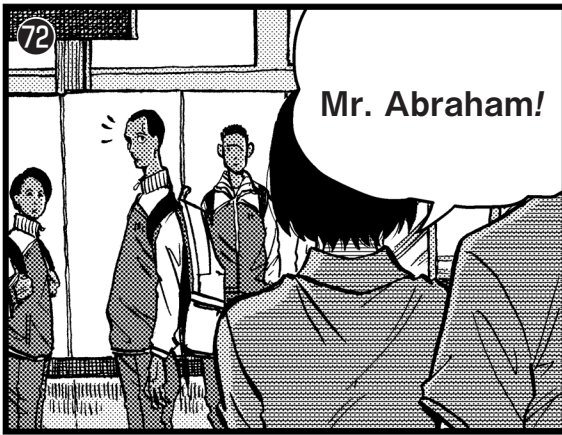
I was finally able to receive authorization to travel to Japan.

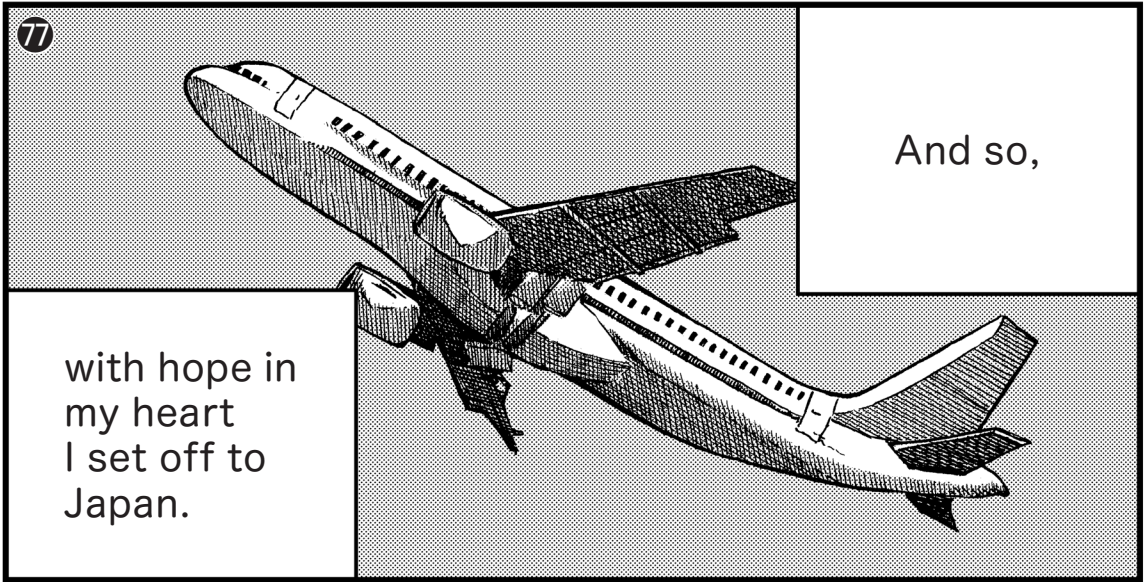










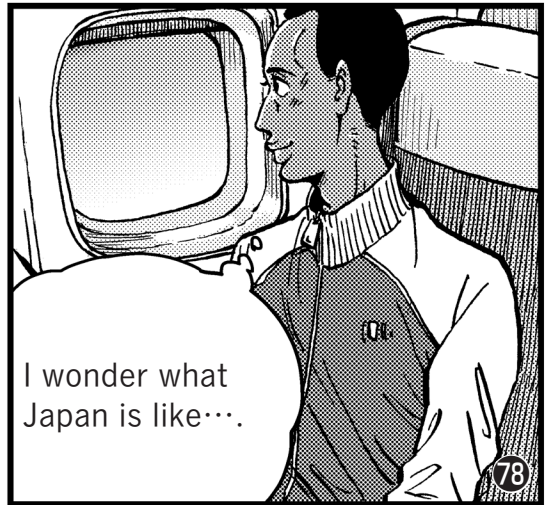


with hope in
my heart
I set off to
Japan.

And so,



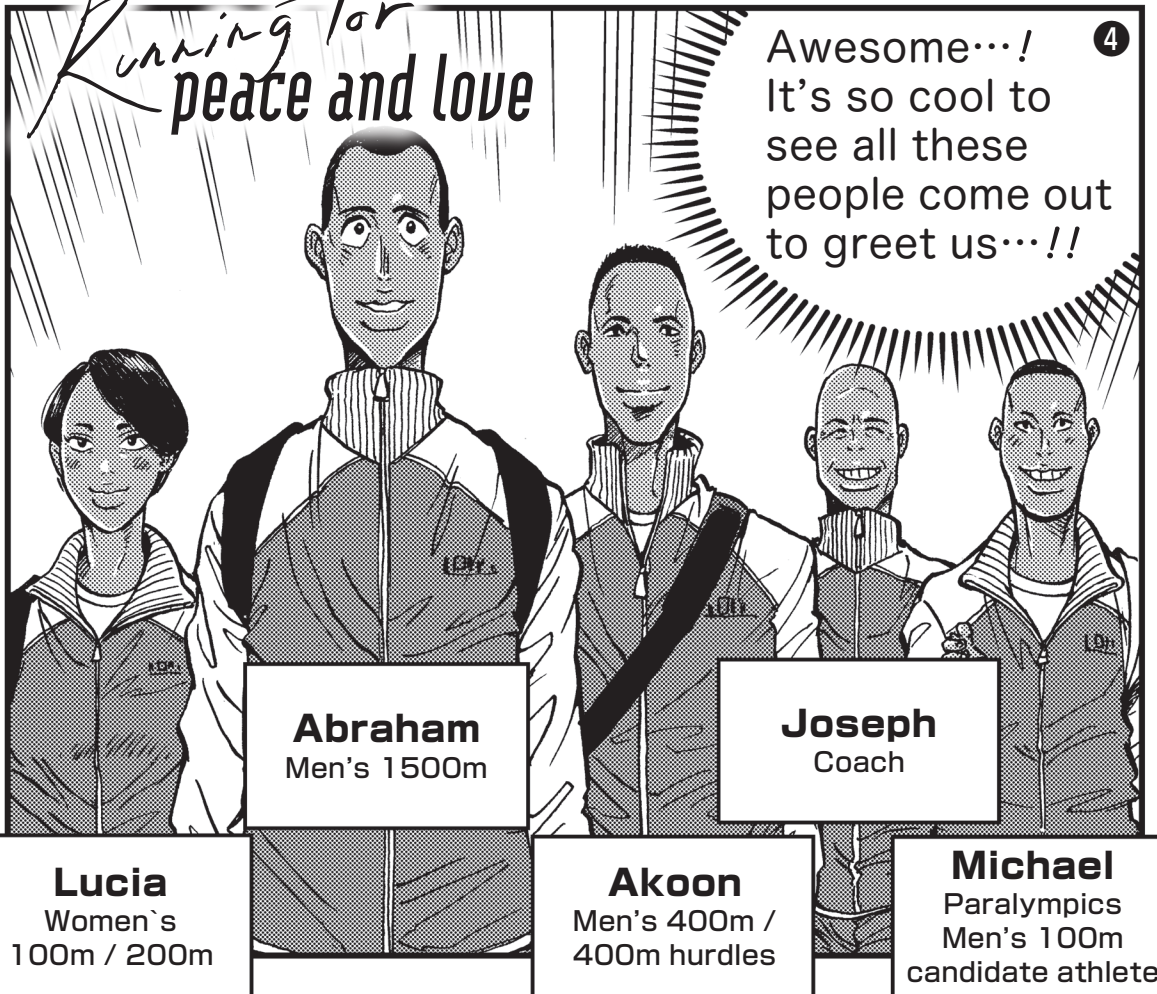
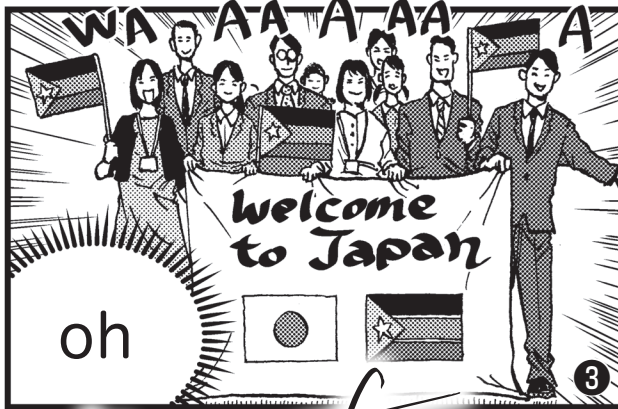
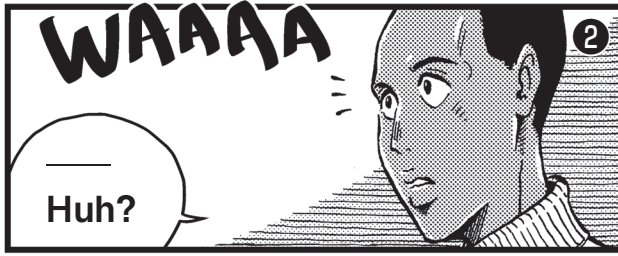
something
unexpected was
waiting for me...
or for all of us.

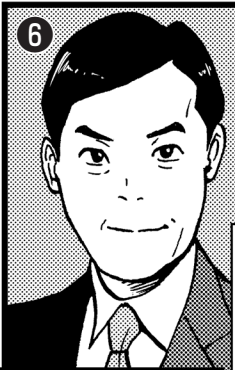


I wonder what
Japan is like...



I had no idea
at that time.
However...



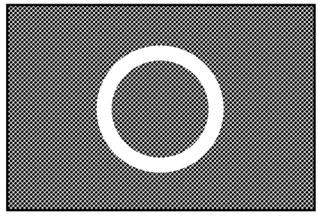


6

**YAMAMOTO
Ryu**
Mayor of
Maebashi City

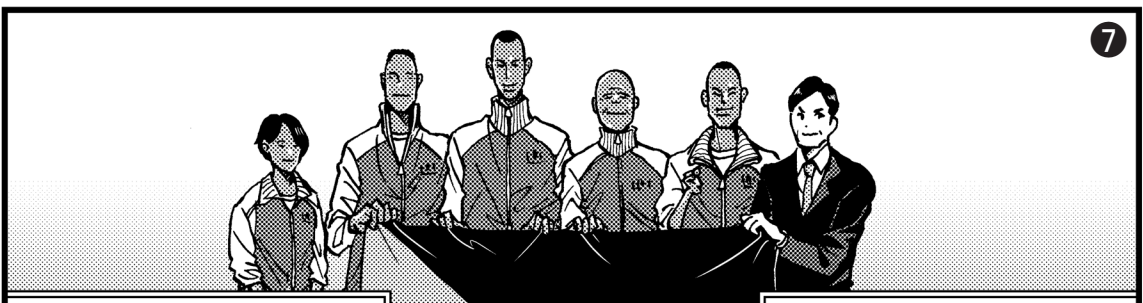
sympathized with
JICA's efforts to
promote peace
through sports

and provided them
with the opportunity
of an unusually long
pre-Olympic training
camp.



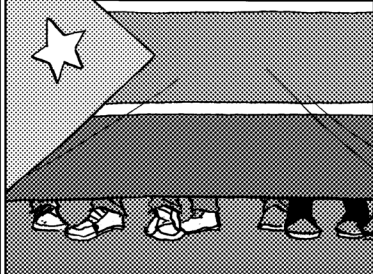
5

Maebashi City,
Gunma Prefecture,
which has become
a host town for
the athletes,

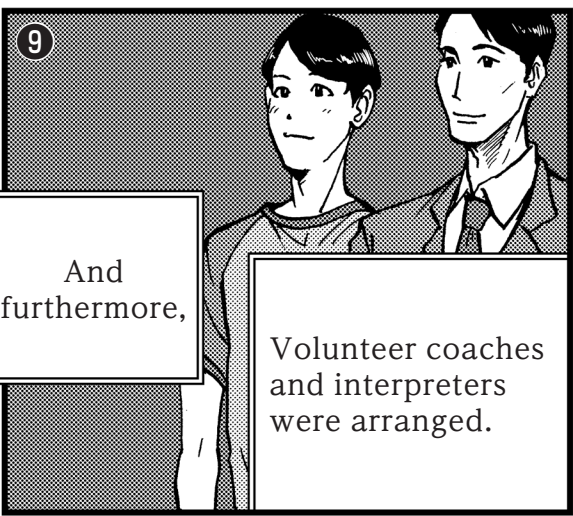


7

the initiative involved
not only the
government but also
citizens and the
community.



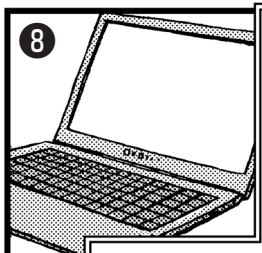
Also, as they wanted
to "provide
an opportunity for
citizens to think
about peace,"



9

And
furthermore,

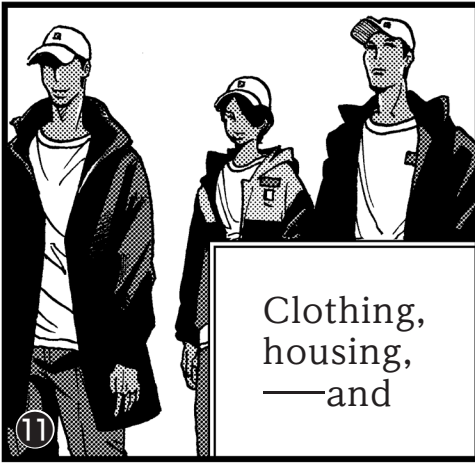
Volunteer coaches
and interpreters
were arranged.



8

One example of
this was the use of
"Furusato Nozei
(hometown tax)."

Activities were funded
through crowdfunding.



Clothing, housing, —and



sponsorship by private companies was sought.

Language schools conducted Japanese lessons for us.



training facilities were provided.



Oh my gosh, wow!!



We will be able to fully prepare for the Olympics!

Yes!

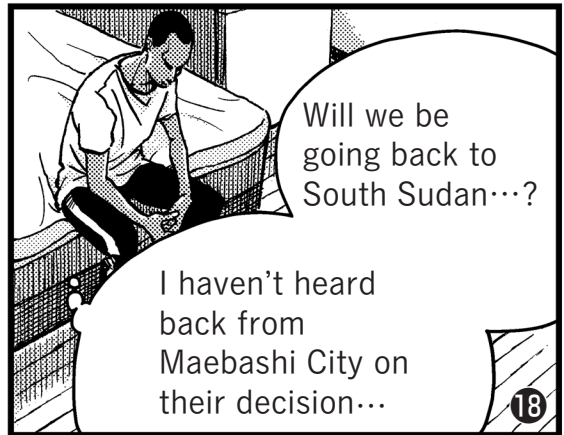
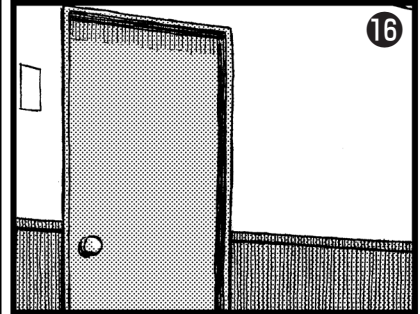
But the celebration did not last for long. We were hit with an unprecedented anxiety.

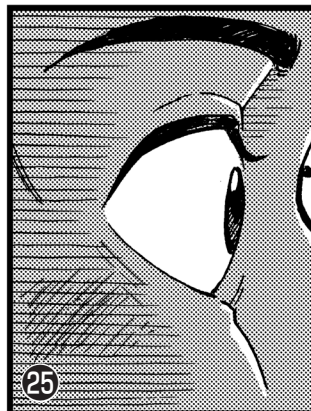
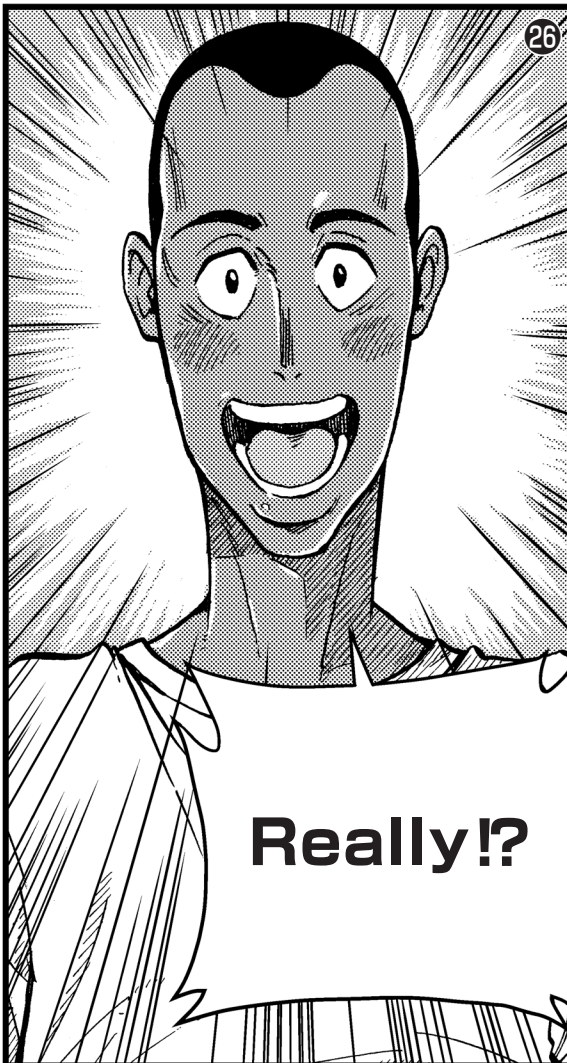
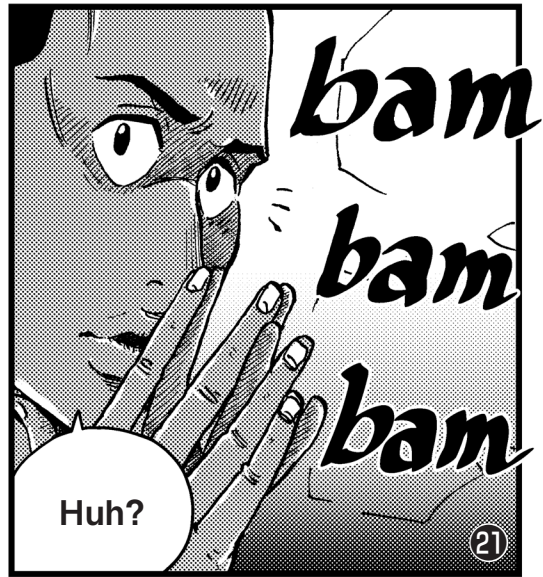
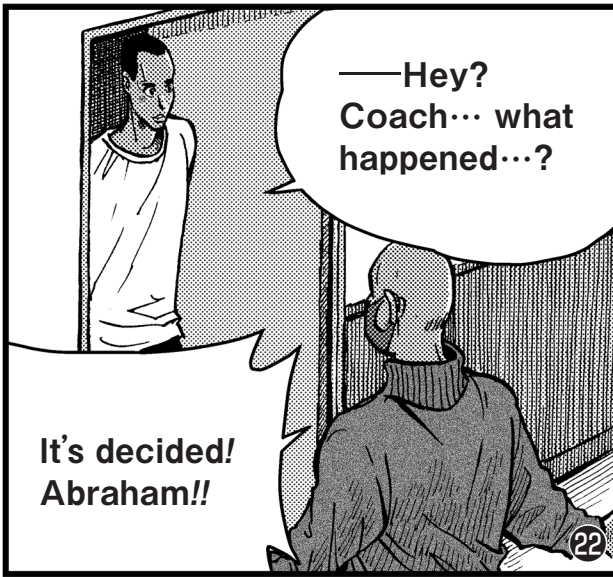


Japan is so amazing!!

Can we really train on this track!?

**“Due to the spread of COVID-19,
the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games will be
postponed”**





28

If I can train at a high-level in Japan for this one year,

I will surely become even faster!!

huff

huff

I was worried about the holding of the Olympics but quickly switched my thinking.

前橋総合公園

huff

huff

27

30

How was that!?

huff

huff

Click!

29

31

Hmm... Well...

it was quite difficult to improve my times

Clench

while running alone.

34

33

Hmm...

Actually

32

Your time is not improving...

What?



Ha ha, relax, relax

Oh... hajimemashite (nice to meet you)



I look forward to running with you today.

Oh...yes! I look forward to it too!



While we were occupied with these issues, through an introduction from JICA

we met "Him."

Nice to meet you, Abraham!

YOKOTA Masato
Leader and coach of the track club "TWOLAPS" and former Olympian

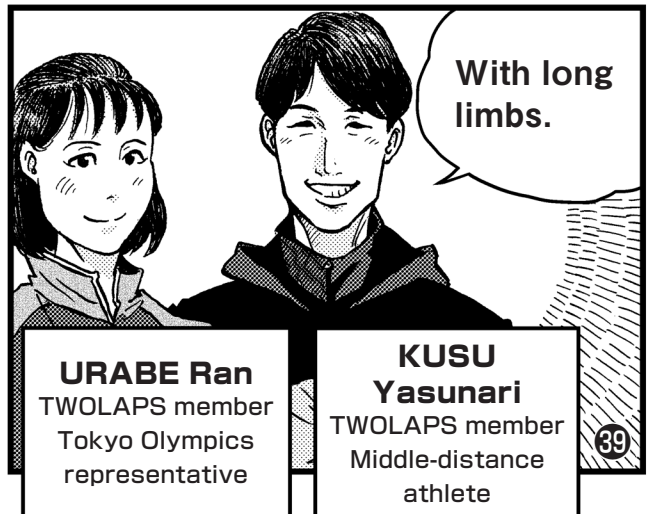


Ah... sukoshi dake (just a bit)...

Do you speak Japanese? Japanese!



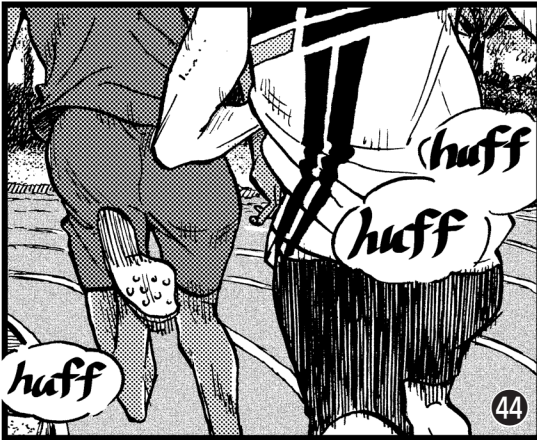
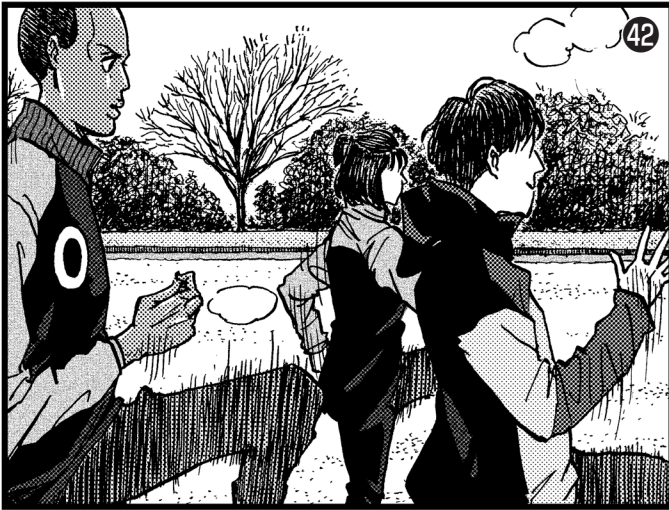
Wow, Abraham. You're such a tall guy!

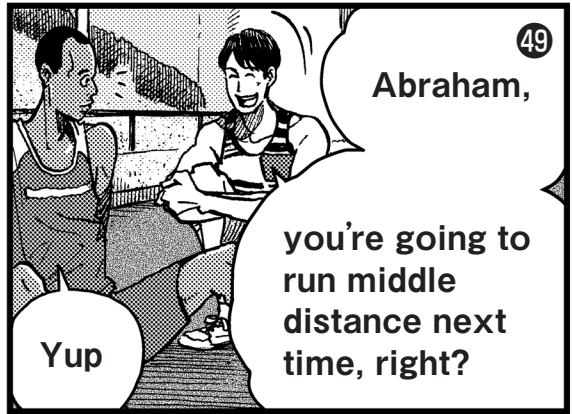
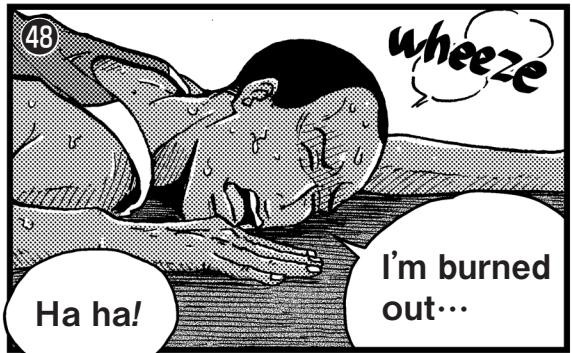


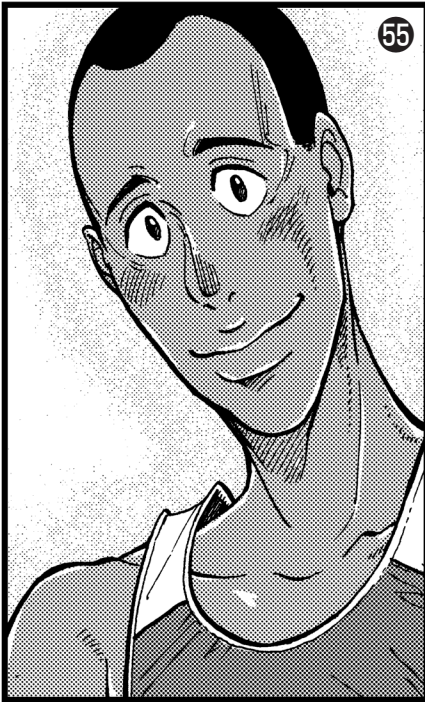
URABE Ran
TWOLAPS member
Tokyo Olympics representative

KUSU Yasunari
TWOLAPS member
Middle-distance athlete

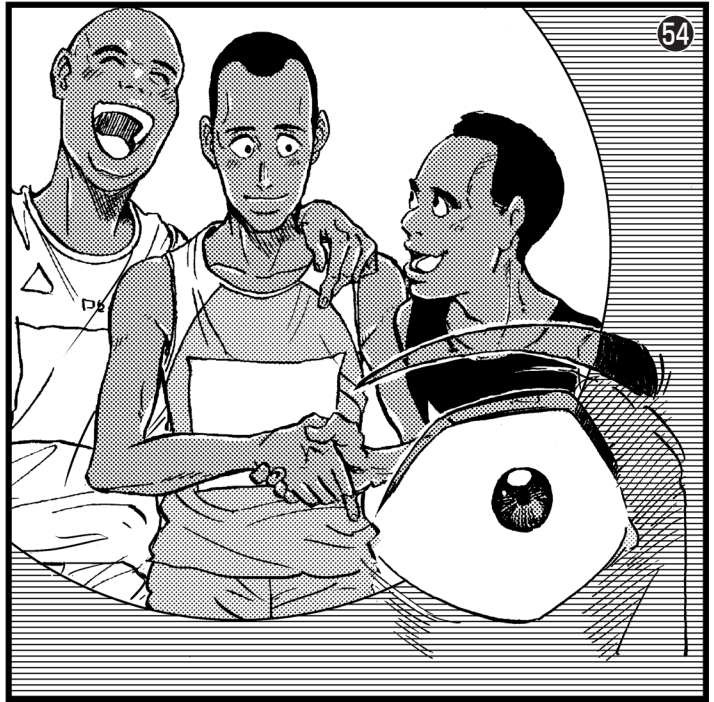
With long limbs.



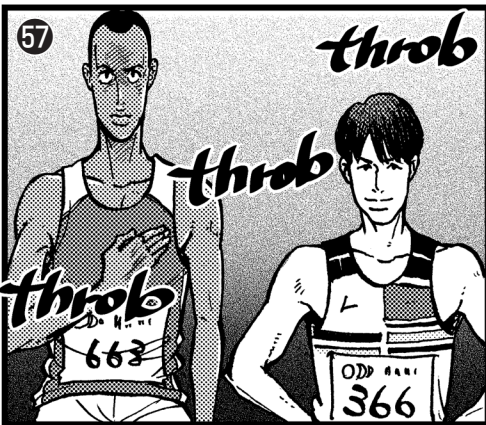




55



54

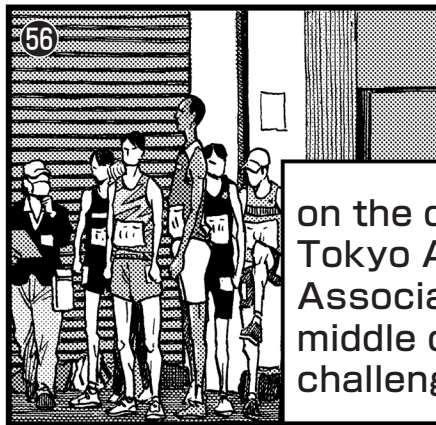


57

throb

throb

throb



56

Then

on the day of the Tokyo Athletics Association middle distance challenge...

I've got something I'd like to tell the people of my country and the whole world.

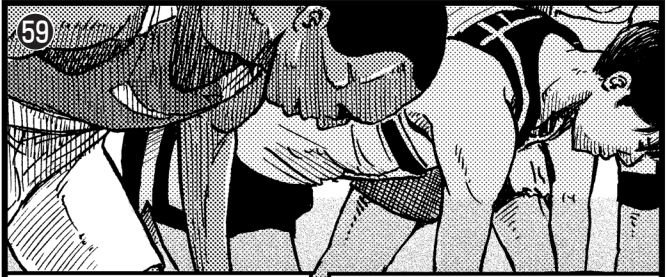


58

On your mark

BANG!

But I can tell you one thing.



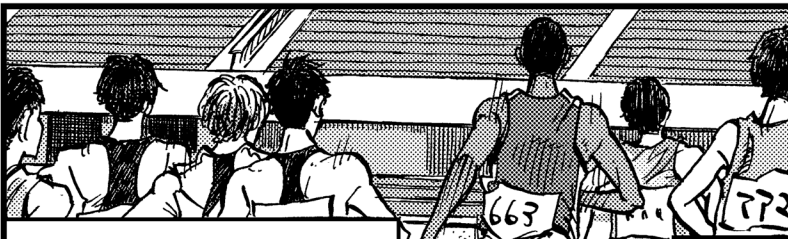
59

It is very important to love one's country.

60

I lost a brother-in-law in the civil war.

I didn't grow up in a wealthy family.

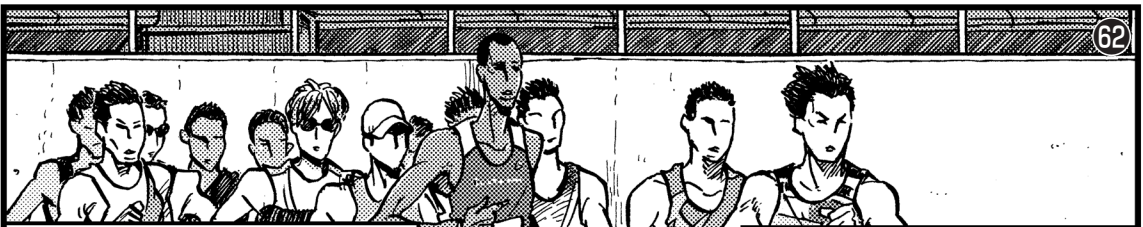


When I first participated in the National Unity Day

I wanted to use that power for the development of my country.

and experienced the power of my running

61



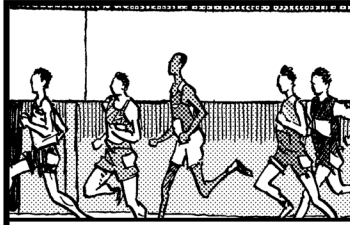
62

Now that I am interacting with the Japanese athletes, I am convinced that I was right.

That was my way of showing "I love my country."

killing each other with guns.

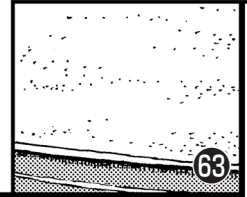
Of course, that does not mean



I believe that loving one's country

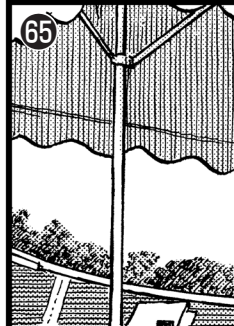


means to think positively about what's good for the country.

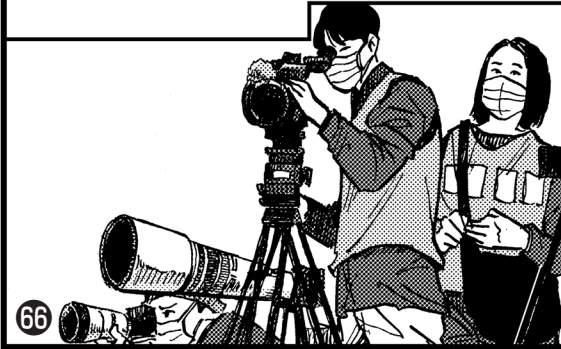


may be saving someone's life somewhere in the world.

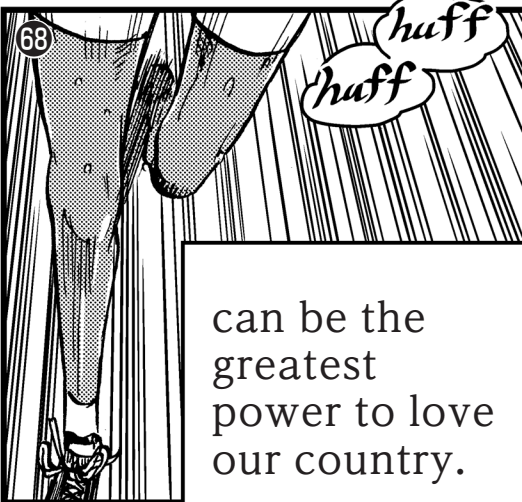
If you are a farmer, the crops you are growing



If you find happiness in teaching others,



you have the power to become a teacher and contribute to your country's education.

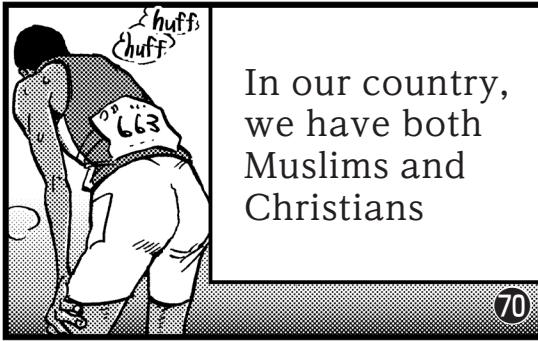


can be the greatest power to love our country.



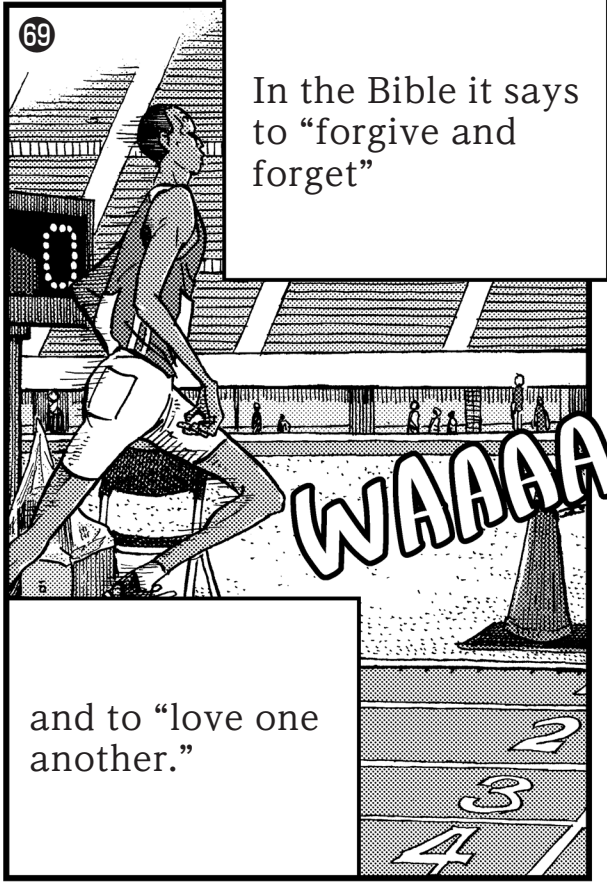
The everyday power that all of us have and our daily mission,

if we look at it in a positive way,



In our country, we have both Muslims and Christians

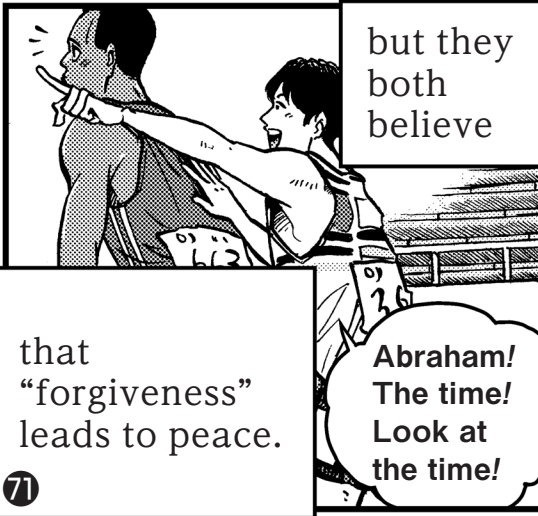
70



In the Bible it says to "forgive and forget"

WAAAA

and to "love one another."



but they both believe

Abraham!
The time!
Look at the time!

that "forgiveness" leads to peace.

71

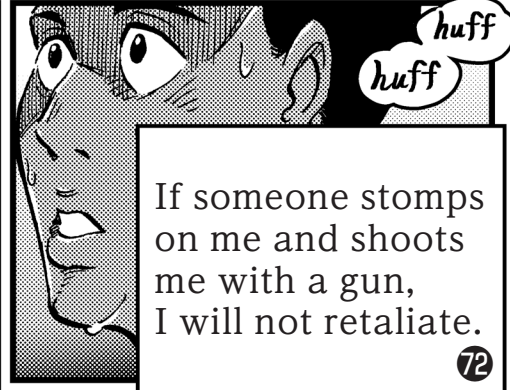


—Yes, We can surely love our country and our people—

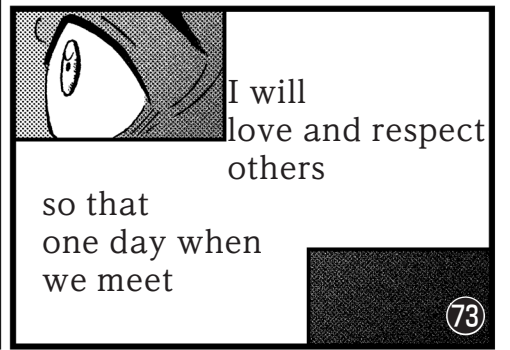
I hope they will treat me the same way.

What?!
A South Sudan new national record!?
Really!?

National Record...



If someone stomps on me and shoots me with a gun, I will not retaliate.



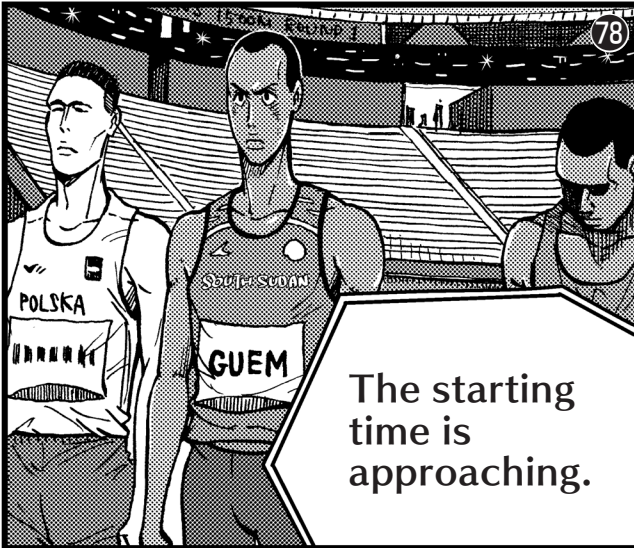
I will love and respect others

so that one day when we meet

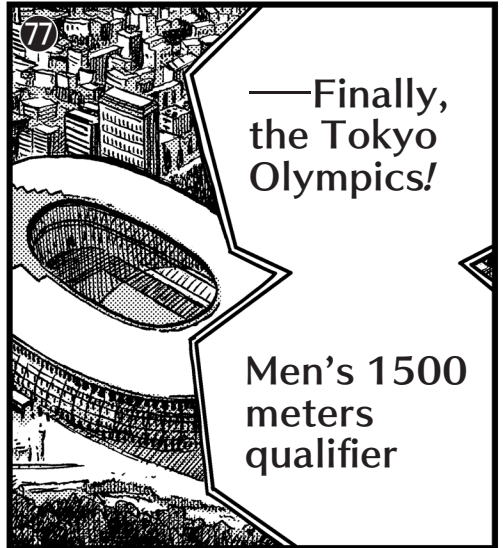


**That's
because
we are
"one."**

August 2021 —



The starting time is approaching.



—Finally, the Tokyo Olympics!

Men's 1500 meters qualifier



Thank you... to everyone I ever met.



breath in...

81

On your mark...

For Peace
and for
Love.



82

● END...