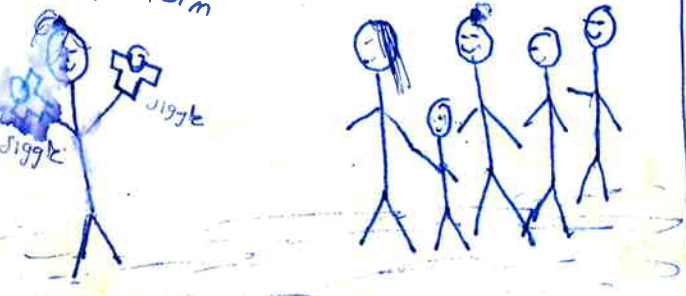


PUPPET RONIN at WINTER COURT

Puppet Ronin performs at a village

Perform Act Perform jiggle jiggle



... when SUDDENLY!



PUFFO PUFFO



An Imperial messenger!



In our village? Why?



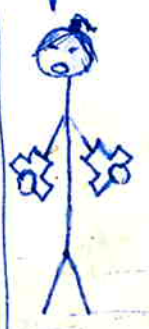
Shut up kid!



I wanna be a ronin too!



Uh... yeah. (what gave it away?)



Are you the ronin known as Puppet Ronin? Master of the Kage Bunraku school of puppet theater?



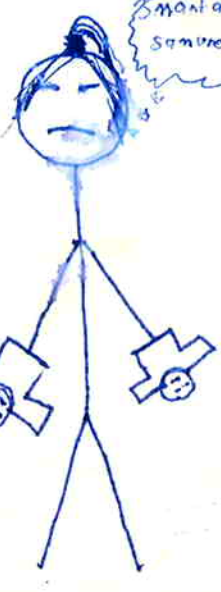
Bow! Scrape! Grovel!

self-abase!



Smartass ronin!

Smartass samurai!



THIS IS FOR YOU!

Take off the puppet before you take it...

GROVEL! GROVEL!

Gasp! This is a summons... to Winter Court at Shiro Saikakita!



It sucks being a peasant...



AWAY!



Run! Dash! Jog!

The lair of my enemies! The site of my greatest defeat and my shame! To go there is to court disaster. But it could be an opportunity to seek out my hidden enemies...



Puppet Ronin was cast out of the Kakita Acting School as part of a plot involving a mysterious one-armed art critic with ties to the kolat. See issue #4.

AND SO - AFTER MUCH TRAVEL.....

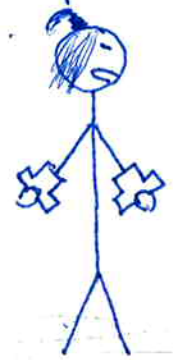
YOU! Grubby and unimportant ronin! What brings you to Shiro San Kakita?

Geez! They'll let anyone in these days!

I am Puppet Ronin as I have an invitation to winter court!

I got an invitation Chikusho*!

You - ronin pig! You have dishonored the Kakita's school - how dare you return?



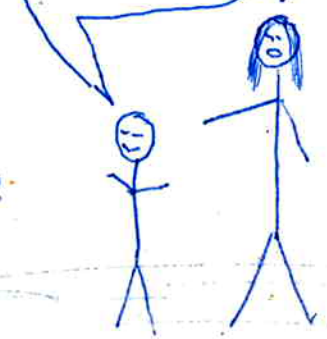
*Chikusho - "uncultured beast." A bad insult

I MUST GO!



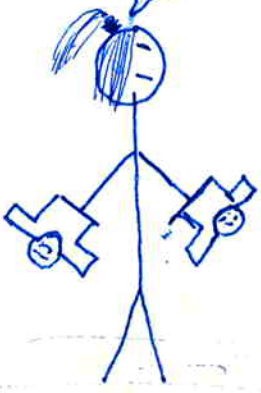
Shut UP kid!

Can I go too?



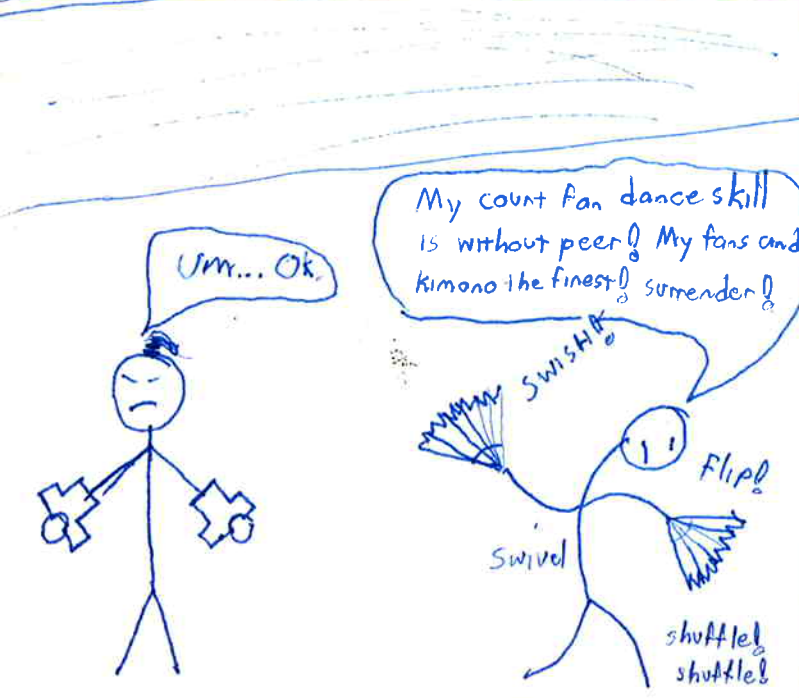
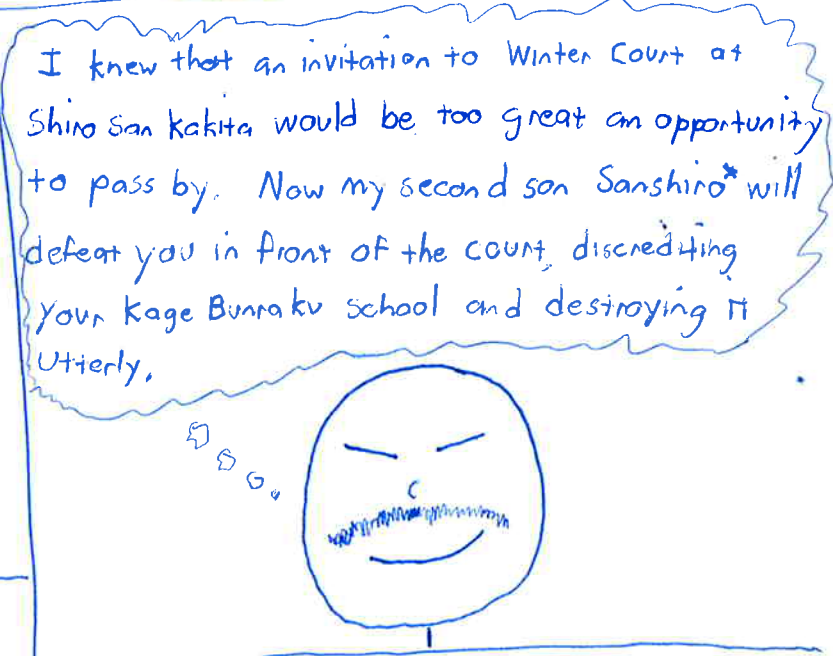
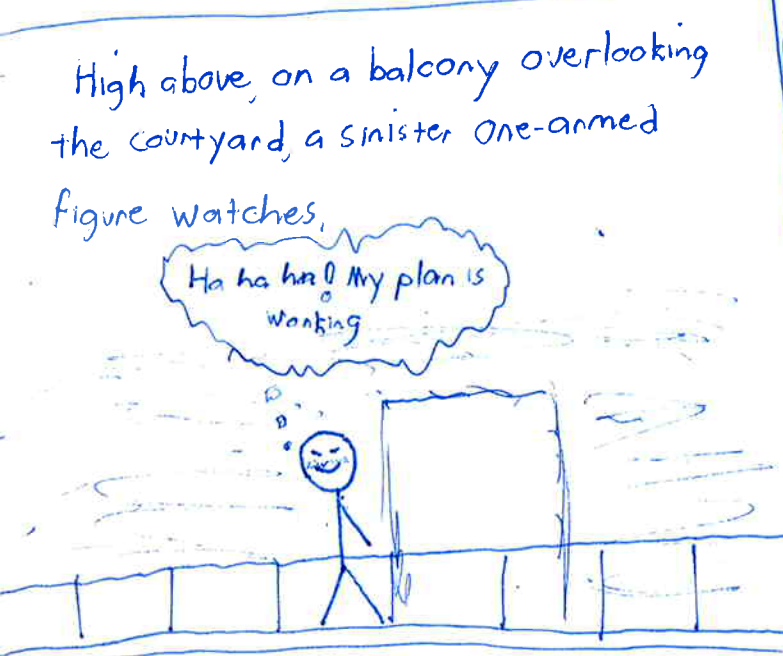
I face the greatest artists in all of Rokugon! What savage pitfalls await?

5 syllables!
7 syllables!
5 syllables!

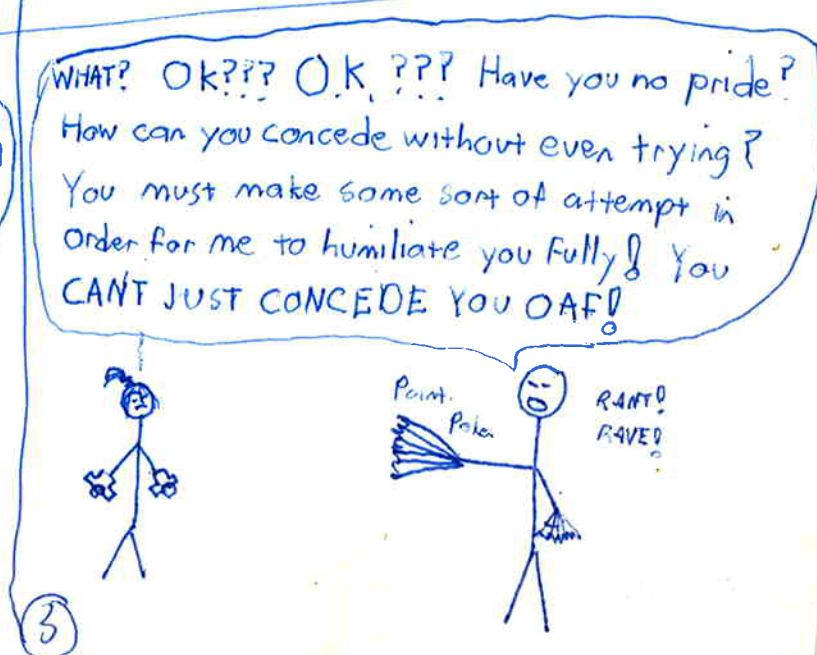


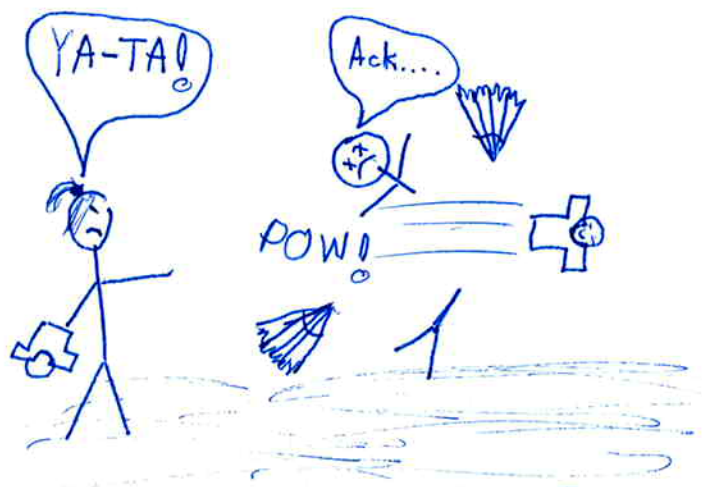
You were a fool to come, Puppet Ronin!
Your Kage bunraku school of puppet theater may impress peasants, but it cannot stand against...





*Puppet Ronin defeated the one-armed ant critics first son Sukeune - a master of epic poetry recital in issue #6.

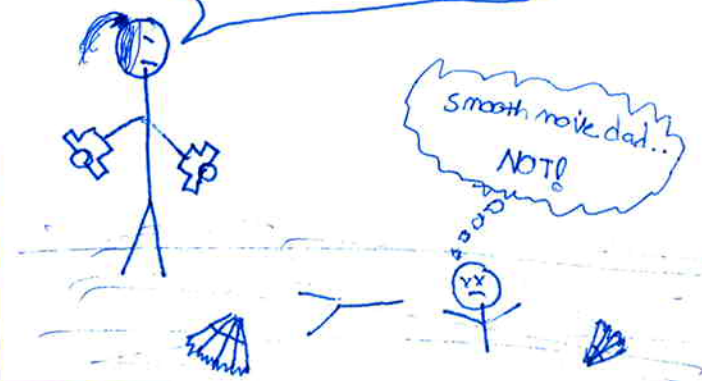
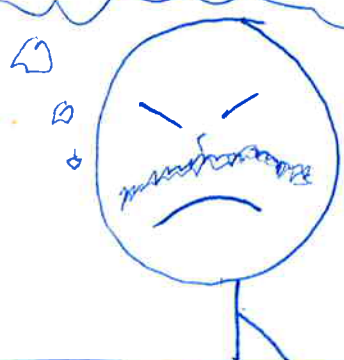




I had not reckoned on the devastating power of the Blood Puppets of Iuchiban which Puppet Ronin carries. I had always considered them merely a lame joke! Damn it!

Curse you Puppet Ronin, I shall not underestimate you again!

When artistry fails... all must fall before the power of puppets!



END

NEXT TIME....

Puppet Ronin
vs
Shinsei!

Don't miss it!