

Fostered

Written by Bach Nguyen

Just a note, in the actual comic drawings, some of the panels are split into more panels to make more space for dialogue in each panel.

Panel 1: Juro wakes up early in the morning, ready to start the day. Panel is a close shot of an alarm clock on a nightstand, at around 7:20AM.

Panel 2: Juro runs down the stairs to try to catch his train and misses the closing doors by a few seconds.

Speaker: Please stand clear of the doors-

Panel 3: Train starts moving as Juro slows down at his pace.

Juro: *Sigh*

Panels 4-5: Time skip - Juro is working on a video project at a computer when it crashes, before he was able to save the project file he was working on.

Juro: Seriously...? Why is the universe out to get me?

Panels 6-7: Juro clocks out of work, close shot of him checking his phone to see that it has died. (Another panel zooming in to show the phone screen)

Juro: ...Why don't they start improving the battery life instead of changing the camera?

Panels 8-9: Juro begins to head to sleep, and we see a transition into the dream. In Juro's state of hypnagogia (the transition between awake and asleep), he travels through a "dream" of some sorts and finds himself in a new world.

Panel 10: This world appears as an ethereal, snowy landscape. This "dream" world is a mixed landscape of snowy hills, a frozen river, lifeless trees, wooden buildings, and other nature or structures on it as well. The Fosterer and Juro are seen standing looking at each other. This panel should be a wide shot.

Panels 11-13: Mid-range shot of The Fosterer speaking.

The Fosterer: Greetings, fostered.

The Fosterer: Would you like to speak about anything?

Juro: I think I have been incredibly unfortunate recently.
The Fosterer: Given your visible weariness, that is rather believable.
The Fosterer: I will ask you a question. What does this world mean to you?

Panels 14-18: Juro answers the question, intrigued by the calm and collected nature of The Fosterer.

Juro: This world is a unique creation to me, and my own life is no exception to that.
Juro: ... and who are you?
The Fosterer: I am The Fosterer.
Juro: Why am I here? What is this place? Why does this place feel vivid?
The Fosterer: This is a dimension in your mind. It feels vivid because you are used to hearing, seeing, and feeling otherwise. You're in an imaginary world.
The Fosterer: I, however, am permanent in this residence, and I am but a real part of your imagination. My own home is not mine to control.
The Fosterer: How could that *ever* be possible? I have always existed before this world has existed.

Panels 19-22: Juro continues questioning.

Juro: If you've existed before *this* world, did you create it?
The Fosterer: No. I created your world, however.
The Fosterer: I am permanent here. Moving from this spot implies that at some point in time I was never here. That implies I never existed there in reality. That would imply that I am temporary.
The Fosterer: To my own dismay, I am unable to move.
Juro: Is it comfortable to be stuck there?
The Fosterer: I don't feel any discomfort or pain, so I would say that it's acceptable.

Juro silently grieves, although it is none of his concern. He makes for a caring heart.

Panels 23-25: Juro continues questioning, but to clear his guilt, he tries to switch the topic. He wants to explore the concept of luck.

Juro: So, is our world based on luck or predetermination?
The Fosterer: If you are asking me about a choice, I prefer a world of luck rather than a world of predetermination.
The Fosterer: Ultimately, luck collapses into equality with a long term perspective. This leaves everyone who ever existed with the same amount of blessings and misfortune, which you can group together as they are all eventually the same thing.
The Fosterer: Luck itself is mundane. You may believe luck is thrilling because there's mystery and spontaneity, however everything including all luck is

temporary. The same luck will eventually come to brighten or tarnish everyone's lives.

Panels 26-28: The Fosterer authoritatively states the truth about Juro's universe.

The Fosterer: Predetermination naturally implies you know what to expect. You will live your life to the fullest.

Juro: At least I could see into my future.

The Fosterer: Why not see your whole timeline, yet only experience an infinitesimal portion of your life in the present?

The Fosterer: I was not convinced of such a universe, and demanded a universe of luck to control your reality.

The Fosterer: It might be surprising to you how I created your universe, but I'm completely powerless. Luck runs your world.

The Fosterer: Either way, no amount of power you could give me could ever manipulate the outcome of your experiences.

Panels 29-30: The Fosterer looks through a portal into someone's predetermined future, and destroys the portal in rejection of control over the timeline.

The Fosterer: It's very selfish of me to choose a timeline for someone else's life... I would rather let luck drive those worlds.

The Fosterer: There's no point in suppressing my beliefs.

Panel 31: The panel goes back to a wide shot/full bleed of the scenery, where Juro is standing.

Panel should be similar to Panel 10.

Juro: So... Can I leave this world?

The Fosterer: You're asking me that question out of urgency rather than curiosity. You are the one who controls your decisions.

The Fosterer: You can temporarily leave whenever you desire, but you cannot break free from history permanently.

The Fosterer: Enjoy the scenery while you still can.

Panel 32: The world starts to crumble, as if the dream itself is dematerializing from reality. Juro is scared as the dream feels real, so he's afraid that he will die in his dream.

The Fosterer: Don't worry, Juro. You will wake up soon.

Juro: But... What about you!?

Panel 33: The Fosterer's outer slate rock shell starts to crumble, and underneath the shell is another renewed version of The Fosterer. It should look as if he is shedding a layer of stone, but remains unharmed.

The Fosterer: My old slate shell is retiring.

Panel 34: Close up shot of The Fosterer's face as he speaks.

The Fosterer: Juro...

The Fosterer: One day, you and I will ascend.

Panel 35: Juro wakes up from his supposed dream that turned into a nightmare. He disappears from the dream world and leaves safely.

Panel 36: A panel with a fully black background, with The Fosterer floating in the middle of a void. He closes his eyes, but not in a sleeping way, rather that he is content after having a conversation with Juro.

Panel 37: The Fosterer opens his eyes to a timeline with Juro in it, and after briefly looking into Juro's timeline, The Fosterer closes the window without manipulating anything in Juro's world.

End