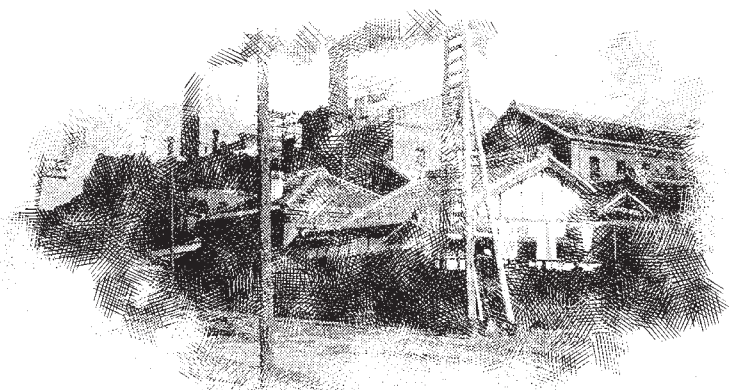


Chapter 2

Suzuki & Co.

Business at the Kanmon Straits



Since Suzuki & Co.'s founding, the company had handled imported sugar procured domestically from Nihon Seito Corporation, which was first established by Eiichi Shibusawa and others.

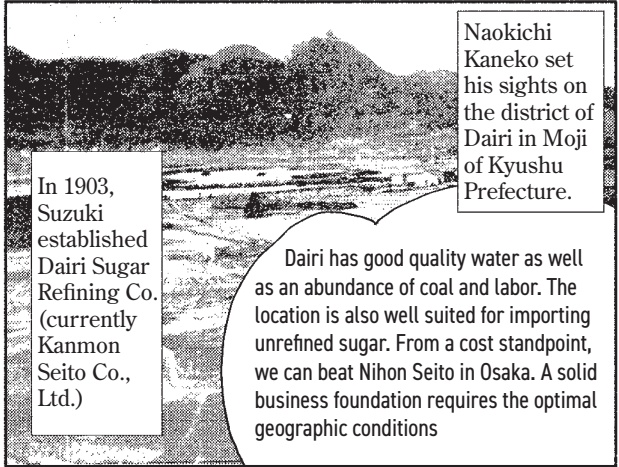
Ugh...Nihon Seito's senior executives won't let us buy sugar if we don't entertain them with geisha first. On top of that, they're asking price is high and the quality of their sugar inferior to the foreign trading houses. At this point, it would be better to do it ourselves.



Suzuki & Co. did what?! Hmph. They'll never pull it off. Spread a rumor that there's ammonia in Dairi's water.



In 1903, Suzuki established Dairi Sugar Refining Co. (currently Kanmon Seito Co., Ltd.)



Naokichi Kaneko set his sights on the district of Dairi in Moji of Kyushu Prefecture.

Dairi has good quality water as well as an abundance of coal and labor. The location is also well suited for importing unrefined sugar. From a cost standpoint, we can beat Nihon Seito in Osaka. A solid business foundation requires the optimal geographic conditions

We just need to focus on moving forward with our business. What we're building with these bricks will eventually be worth gold ingots!



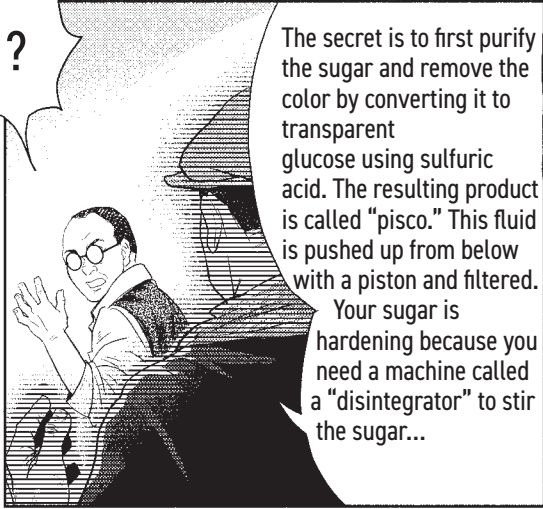
They're trying to sabotage us with false rumors.

The rumor spread to Suzuki & Co. as they worked on construction for the sugar refinery in Dairi.

Just ignore them.

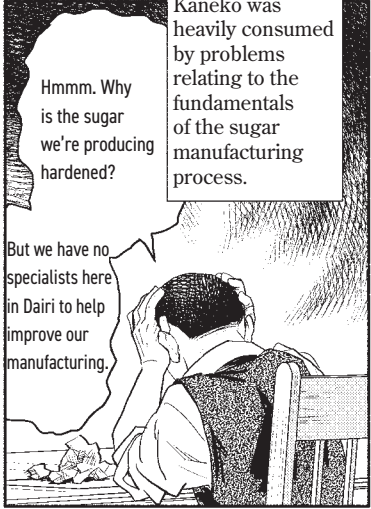


!?



The secret is to first purify the sugar and remove the color by converting it to transparent glucose using sulfuric acid. The resulting product is called "pisco." This fluid is pushed up from below with a piston and filtered. Your sugar is hardening because you need a machine called a "disintegrator" to stir the sugar...

Setting aside the rumors, Naokichi Kaneko was heavily consumed by problems relating to the fundamentals of the sugar manufacturing process.



Hmmm. Why is the sugar we're producing hardened?

But we have no specialists here in Dairi to help improve our manufacturing.



As you know, our director is busy with geisha parties. I'm tired of working for him, so I took time off to come here.

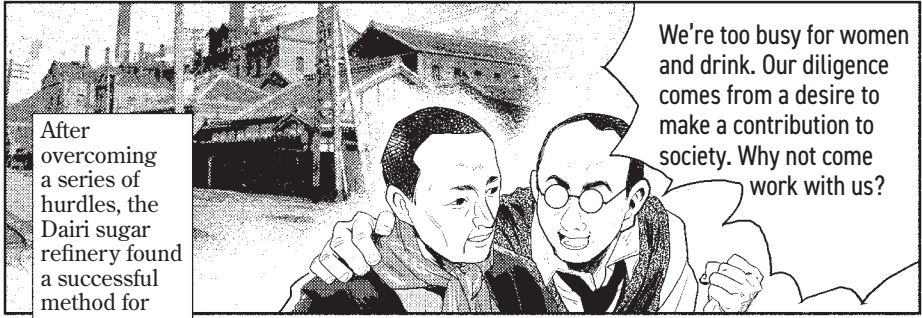
You have a good reputation, and I hear that you're working day and night to grow your business...



The truth is, I'm a worker at Nihon Seito.

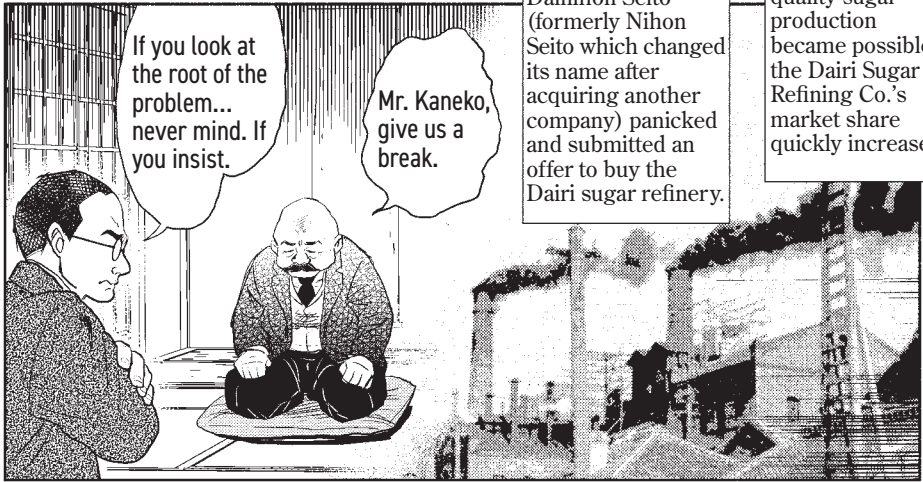
Amazing. Who on earth are you?

Really?!



We're too busy for women and drink. Our diligence comes from a desire to make a contribution to society. Why not come work with us?

After overcoming a series of hurdles, the Dairi sugar refinery found a successful method for manufacturing sugar.



If you look at the root of the problem... never mind. If you insist.

Mr. Kaneko, give us a break.

Dainihon Seito (formerly Nihon Seito which changed its name after acquiring another company) panicked and submitted an offer to buy the Dairi sugar refinery.

As soon as high-quality sugar production became possible, the Dairi Sugar Refining Co.'s market share quickly increased.

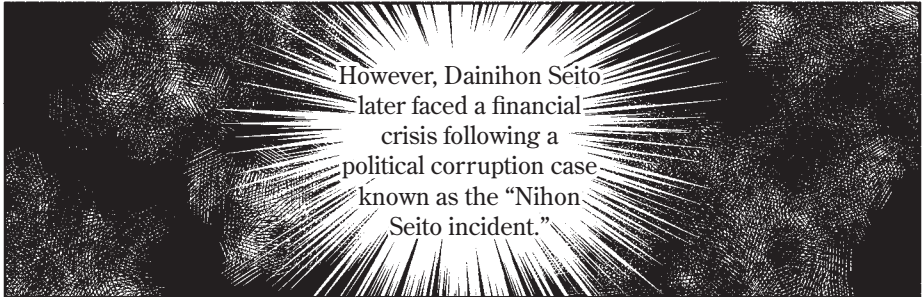
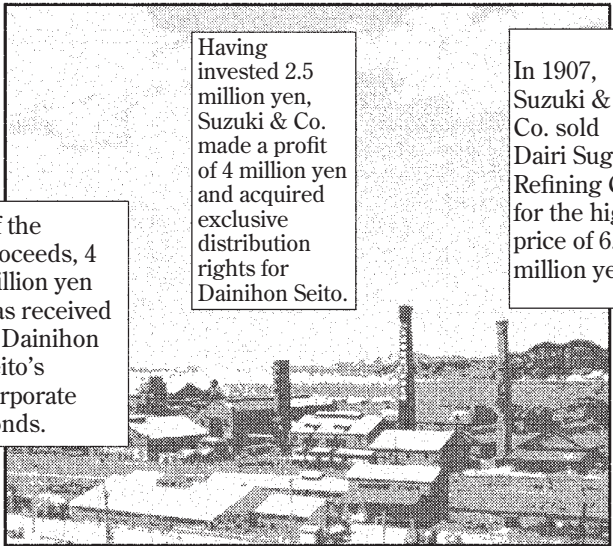


Hopefully we can receive the rest soon in cash to start our next business...

Of the proceeds, 4 million yen was received in Dainihon Seito's corporate bonds.

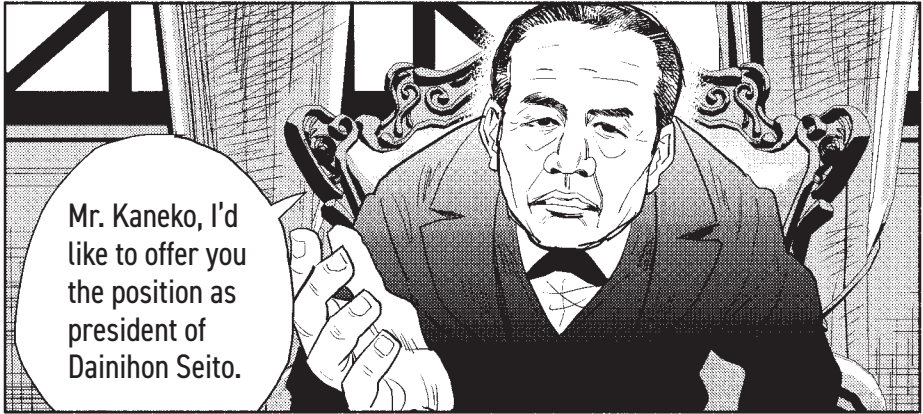
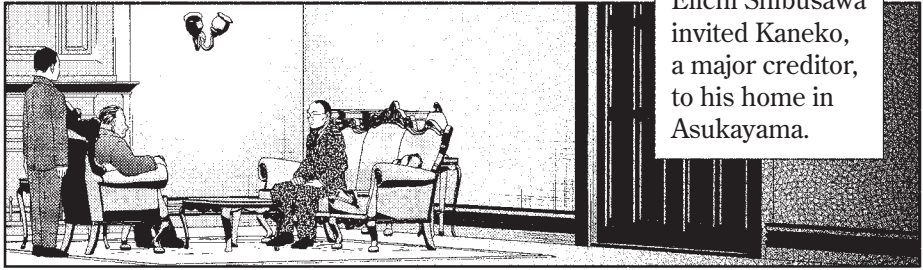
Having invested 2.5 million yen, Suzuki & Co. made a profit of 4 million yen and acquired exclusive distribution rights for Dainihon Seito.

In 1907, Suzuki & Co. sold Dairi Sugar Refining Co. for the high price of 6.5 million yen.

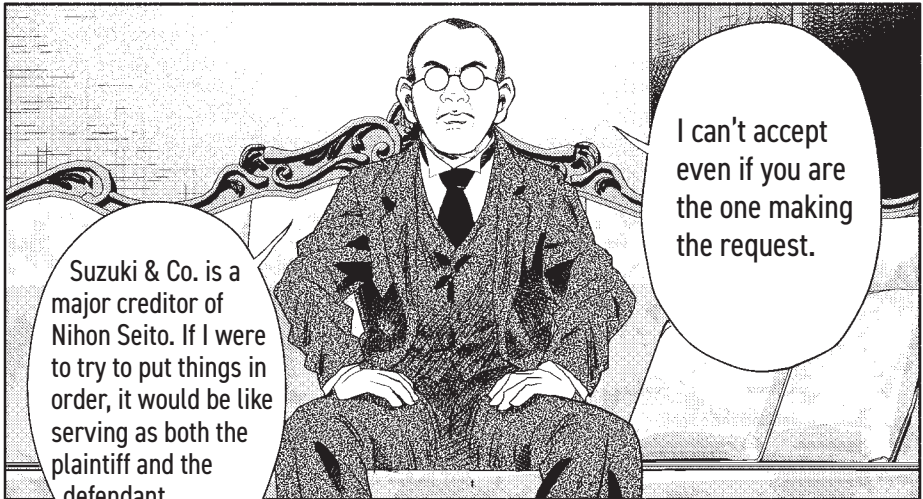


However, Dainihon Seito later faced a financial crisis following a political corruption case known as the "Nihon Seito incident."

The prominent Eiichi Shibusawa invited Kaneko, a major creditor, to his home in Asukayama.



Mr. Kaneko, I'd like to offer you the position as president of Dainihon Seito.



Suzuki & Co. is a major creditor of Nihon Seito. If I were to try to put things in order, it would be like serving as both the plaintiff and the defendant.

I can't accept even if you are the one making the request.

