

### **Ep. 21, Story 41: "The Duel! Ataru vs. Ataru"**

There's an old wives' tale in Japan that certain foods, eaten together, are bad for digestion. This phenomenon is known as "tabeawase," and some examples are given in the episode itself; i.e., the mixture of eel and sour plum, or tempura and ice water. It's not entirely clear whether these notions have any basis in medical fact, though research is said to be in progress on the subject.

In the final fight scene, a horse can be seen in the background. This is a pun on the word "yajuma," roughly equivalent to "rubbernecker" in English.

### **Ep. 21, Story 42: "Wake Up to a Nightmare"**

This story, which originally aired in 1982, was the inspiration for the 1984 Urusei Yatsura movie, "Beautiful Dreamer," featuring as it does the first appearances of Mujaki and Baku, as well as a harem dream sequence on which Oshii Mamoru would elaborate to a truly impressive degree.

The name "Mujaki" itself is a pun with a couple of layers. The conventional reading of this word means "innocent" or "guileless." But "Mujaki" as it refers to the name of this character is written with an entirely different set of kanji, which have a similar reading, but a different meaning: in this case, the kanji that make up the name "Mujaki" mean "Dream-interference Demon," or, more colloquially, "The Demon that Interferes with Dreams." And Mujaki is, literally, "mujaki" (innocent) by his own lights. He's just doing his job.

As for Baku, there is a Japanese myth that says that Baku is the name of a monster that feeds on nightmares.

Hanafuda, the card game Lum and Ataru stayed up all night playing the night before, is similar to Bridge. The cards feature pictures of flowers, scenery (i.e., Mt. Fuji), and birds, among others, rather than numbers.

Mah Jongg is a game that originated in China, using engraved tiles as playing pieces. It is designed for four players to play, each representing one of the four directions, or "winds." Starting with the East Wind, each player takes a turn as dealer, arranging the tiles and giving out thirteen to each player. The dealer changes counterclockwise whenever a dealer loses a hand. The dealer in a given hand also gets certain advantages with certain tiles that the other players do not. The basic object is to get a better arrangement of the tiles in one's own hand than one's opponents. When the robot says, "Now we'll have enough players!" the term he uses in Japanese, "mentsu ga sorou," means a complete group (of four), which is necessary for a proper game. Then, when he says, "You should at least join in a half-game!" the term he uses, "han-chan," means the first two Winds, or half of a normal four-Wind game.

When the tiger in this scene takes off his coat, revealing the ornate tattoos on his shoulder and back, it indicates that he is a yakuza, a member of one of Japan's organized-crime syndicates. His speech patterns are also very coarse for Japanese, another trait that marks his gangster background.

Okayu is rice boiled with enough extra water to make it very sticky, often eaten in a variety of ways, such as sha-ke (salted grilled tuna), pickled plums, and pickled vegetables. In China, it's a breakfast food, in addition to being good for people with stomach problems because of its easy digestibility (this last the author can attest to personally--the last time he had stomach flu, okayu was about the only thing his stomach could tolerate).

Fugu is blowfish. Fugu liver is considered a delicacy in certain Japanese culinary circles. There are restaurants dedicated to its preparation and serving. The reason is that this particular organ is normally lethally poisonous, but if prepared properly (and one needs special certification in order to work professionally as a fugu chef, in addition to specially-manufactured utensils), there is just the merest hint of the poison in the liver, enough to tingle the taste buds. Improper preparation, however--and even the best chefs are not 100% perfect--results in a quick death. A fugu victim's last words are usually "My, that was tasty... Urk!"

Tanuki-domburi is a bowl of rice with "tanuki" (in this case, tempura batter, not a raccoon) and a soy-based sauce. Combined with things like Beefbowl and Miso soup, all of which Ataru calls "richer" than okayu, the joke that results is that these foods are not gourmet cuisine, but rather, plain, cheap food for ordinary people, along the lines of a hamburger.

In the dream sequence, when Ataru and Mendou charge one another, the statues they draw are themselves

noteworthy. The one Ataru draws is called "maneki-neko," or "The Beckoning Cat," and is traditionally placed outside of stores to invite customers and ensure that the business will flourish. The one that Mendou pulls out is a Shigaraki-yaki tanuki (a raccoon made of Shigaraki-yaki pottery, about which see below), which serves much the same purpose as a maneki-neko. It was invented during the Edo period. The straw hat, or amagasa, which it wears symbolizes protection against bad luck or hazardous events. The Tokkuri, or Sakeboro (sake jug), in its right hand means sufficient food and drink to live on. The moneybag he carries represents treasures. Its big round eyes are for kikubari, or being aware of people around oneself. Its big smiling face means aisoooyoku, or having good relations with others. The big belly represents a bold, decisive nature. The overall point is that having these statues in one's home or business invites good luck and virtue and all that good stuff.

When, at story's end, Mendou chases Baku for eating the great sword of his ancestors, he says, according to the subtitles, "You stupid Baku!" But in the original Japanese, he actually says, "Kono Bu-waku-mono!" This turns out to be a multilayered pun. The word is both a combination and a corruption of "Baku," "bakemono" (monster), and "bakamono" (stupid).

### **Spring Special, Part 1: "Urusei Yatsura All-Star All-Out Attack!"**

This segment is the first part of a one-hour special that was broadcast out of the regular series continuity, and is not counted among the regular episode listing by Kitty Films, the series' producers. It is composed of out-takes from the preceding episodes, with dialogue recorded (and sometimes re-recorded) ad-lib, in the studio, and recaps the preceding first 21 weeks of the TV series.

### **Spring Special, Part 2: "The School Excursion! Run, Kunoichi!"**

General Note: the places listed in this story are well-known tourist attractions in Nara, ancient capital of Japan. School excursions to these places, such as the one in this episode, are very common.

At the beginning of this story, when the tour-guide says, "Please enjoy your trip over the roads of the ancient capital of Nara, about which many praises have been sung," the word she uses in the original Japanese to refer to these roads, "Yamatoji," means, more literally, "the road to Yamato," which in this case is the ancient name of what is now Nara Prefecture.

Horyuji Temple in Nara is the oldest intact wooden structure in the world, having been built in AD. 607. It is reputed to have been built by a man named Shotoku Taishi, who is one of the most famous political figures in Japanese history. He established the first Constitution in Japan, as well as establishing missions to China, and building many temples to promote Buddhism. One story about his wisdom is that he supposedly once carried on seven different conversations, with seven different people, all at the same time. His face also used to be on the 10,000 bill, before being replaced by Fukuzawa Yukichi, founder of Keio University, and author of Gakumon no Susume (A Promotion of Study) in the Meiji Era, among other things. The joke is that, even though important people are officially credited with building structures such as Horyuji, the fact is that it was the carpenters of the day who actually did the work, and this is a fairly common one-liner in Japan.

Yumedono (Dream Palace) is the central building of Too-in (East Temple), built in AD. 739 in appeasement of Shootoku Taishi's spirit on the remains of his original home. It is octagonal in shape, and is representative of the architecture of the era.

Kaede, Yatsude, Mukade, Kumade: aside from all of these names ending in "-de," all of them are actual words, with the following meanings:

Kaede: maple tree, which explains the pattern on her kimono.

Yatsude: a type of evergreen shrub.

Mukade: a centipede.

Kumade: a rake.

When Ataru shouts, "Men! Dou!" he is heaping a new layer of pun on Mendou's name. These two words, as used in this scene, are terms from kendo--Japanese fencing--referring to body locations. Men is hitting the face mask. Dou is hitting the abdominal armor.

Kaede's phone number, "007-009," is an homage to two classic fictional characters. 007 is James Bond, of course, and 009 is Cyborg 009, one of the many excellent works of Ishimori (now "Ishinomori") Shotaroo.

"Shigaraki-yaki" is a type of Japanese chinaware named for Shigaraki, the place where it originated. See Ep. 21, Story 42, "Wake Up to a Nightmare," for details.

When Lum says, "Playing with fire is the cause of bedwetting!" she is messing around with a serious statement, "Hiasobi wa kaji no moto," or "Playing with fire causes conflagration." But in this case, Lum is just trying to insult Kaede's fire trickery.

Kaede's "secret trick of hog-raising," or "yooton no jutsu," is a play on the way ninja attach the word "jutsu" (trick or technique) to almost everything that they do. It's deliberate nonsense, done for the sake of being ridiculous. (So what else is new?)

Normally, "smart" is synonymous with "intelligent" in English. Sometimes, depending on to what one is referring, it can take on a slang meaning of "sharp" or "stylish." It was this latter meaning that was assigned to this word when it was adopted into Japanese, and is what Mukade and Kumade mean when they use it just prior to their initial "attack" on Kaede.

The reason Kumade chews out the little ninja for using all their smoke, and making Ataru "disappear," is that ninja usually use smoke to make themselves disappear, not someone else. However, these little ninja have long been in the habit of using their smoke under any circumstances, and simply acted out of reflex.

Cherry's joke about "jumping from the stage of Kiyomizu" (Kiyomizu no butai kara tobioriru) is based on an idiom of the same wording, which means that one is doing something that is, in all probability, risky or dangerous in some sense to the person doing it. Such risk or danger does not have to be physical; any such personally challenging and hazardous act comes under this heading. Emotional or financial hazards are additional examples. The joke here is that, when Cherry says this line, he is standing on the real stage of Kiyomizu Temple (a very high place indeed), making the idiom a literal statement. As for Kiyomizu itself: one of Kyoto's most famous temples, Kiyomizu is the main temple of the Kyoto branch of the Hossoo sect of Buddhism, which, together with the Kegon, Sanron, Kusha, Joojitsu, and Ritsu sects, make up the six original sects of Nara-period Buddhism.

## **Ep. 22, Stories 43-44: "The Great Space Matchmaking Operation"**

Ataru sneezes while Jariten and Lum's Father are talking about him behind his back. In Japan, the superstition goes that, if you sneeze, it means someone is doing just that.

To find out about the "Ventura" that Ataru suggests to the Gang of Four as a means to bring Lum back, see Ep. 1, Story 2, "It's Raining Oil in Our Town."

Ataru's first reaction, upon seeing Jariten's spaceship for the first time, is, in the subtitles, "Your potty?" This is because Jariten's spaceship resembles a Japanese toddler's porta-potty, or "Omaru," which is what Ataru actually says in the original Japanese.

## **Ep. 23, Stories 45-46: "The Big Springtime Picnic Uproar!"**

"Surume" is a Japanese snack food, a sort of squid jerky.

When Shinobu refers to the "dried and impaled prey of a shrike," she is referring to the Mozu, or butcher-bird, which stores food by impaling it on thorns.

Kappa are mythical creatures, similar to vampires, which look like frog-men with sharp beaks and a set of 'head fins' that hold water. Kappa are amphibious, but can only survive on land as long as there's enough water on its head. A few shrines in Japan are said to have fragments of Kappa mummies and Kappa legends recorded on old scrolls, so perhaps the Kappa actually did exist. Kappa love cucumbers, and it is said that feeding them their favorite food will keep them from sucking blood. Ataru, apparently, doesn't like cucumbers much, which is why he isn't impressed by the delicacies given to him, which are all made of cucumbers.

Dragon Palace ("Ryuujugoo") which the Master Kappa takes Ataru to is a reference to the legend of Urashima Taroo; this legend is also the basis for the second Urusei Yatsura movie, "Beautiful Dreamer." In the story,

Taroo found a sea turtle that had washed up on a beach, and was being tormented by some cruel children. He rescued the turtle, and in return, the turtle took him to Dragon Palace, where he was wined and dined by the Princess of the Palace. This is why Ataru asks where the Princess is, and why he is disappointed by the answer he gets. When Taroo decided to leave, the Princess gave him a box as a going-away present, with a warning that he must never open it. After returning to the land, Taroo discovered that over 100 years had passed, even though he had only been away a few days. He finds that all his friends have aged and died, and that his village has changed so much as to be unrecognizable. Finally, Taroo opens the box, and the gas that was contained within released him from the magic that had retarded his aging, swiftly turning him into an extremely old man.

When Ataru torments Mendou by saying "Look! Over there!" to Lum and Shinobu, he is making a reference to a children's game ("Atchi muite hoi!") of the same name; the object of the game is to avoid looking in the direction the caller is indicating.

Mendou's speech that culminates in his saying he must "bear the unbearable, and eat" is yet another in a series of takeoffs on the famous speech the Showa Emperor made when Japan surrendered at the end of the Second World War. The original line is "Taegataki o tae, shinobigataki o shinobi" (bear the unbearable, conceal the unconcealable); Mendou mangles this into "shino-bigataki o tae" (conceal the unbearable).

#### **Ep. 24, Story 47: "Beware of Earmuffs!"**

The Sukiyaki which Ataru's parents are secretly feasting on when Sakurambo (Cherry) surprises them in Ataru's body is a Japanese delicacy, all the more prized because it has a lot of meat in it, which is very expensive in Japan. Sukiyaki actually means "cooked meat that I love," so it's no wonder that Ataru's parents were trying to trick everyone into eating cheap instant noodles so they could hog the good food for themselves. For more Sukiyaki tidbits, see Ep. 15, Story 29, "The Great Spring War."

#### **Ep. 25, Story 48: "Fly, Imo!"**

"Imo," the name Ataru gives to the caterpillar, is actually a cute short form of "imomushi," which is Japanese for caterpillar.

The small wooden or plastic lunch-boxes (and the lunch within them) that everyone uses are called "Bentoo," or "Obentoo." Inside the box is rice, pickles, and all sorts of other tidbits, all neatly packed together, as well as a few treats to eat and trade. Just as American kids lust after lunch-boxes with their favorite characters on them, Japanese kids bug their parents to get similarly adorned Bentoo.

The scene with Megane and Ataru making weird noises like "Acho!" is an homage to the king of martial-arts films, the late, great, Bruce Lee. See Ep. 20, Story 39, "Sleepy Springtime Classroom," for more details.

#### **Ep. 26, Story 49: "Ten's Love"**

The Carp Streamers, or "Koinobori," which are fluttering in the Spring breeze at the start of this episode, are traditionally flown on May 5th, Children's Day (formerly Boy's Day). They are also a pun on the episode title; depending on the Kanji character used, "Koi" can mean "carp" or "love." The name of the coffee shop where Ten and Sakura meet, "Pigmon," is most likely a reference to a spiny red monster of the same name who appeared in Tsuburaya Productions classic series, "Ultraman."

"Ocharaka," the game Kintaro and his bear play while they are waiting for Lum to talk to Sakura, is a Japanese kids' game; it is sort of a cross between Patty-cake and Rock-Scissors-Paper.

After Ten's phone conversation with Sakura, Kintaro says, "All right, Ten! Tomorrow, a homerun!" This is a play on a famous commercial for a Gyuudon (Beefbowl) fast-food restaurant chain named Yoshinoya. In the commercial, a father comes home bearing a gift for his little-league son, a baseball promotional item he got when he ate at Yoshinoya. Upon seeing the gimmick, the son is so inspired that he exclaims, "All right, Dad! Tomorrow, a homerun!"

When Kintaro sees Ten off on his date, the subtitle reads "You look great." The original Japanese is "Otokomae," a compliment to men that means he looks neat, handsome, and generally good-looking. However,

it is an old term not currently used by the current generation, but rather by their parents or grandparents.

At Pigmon, Ataru orders "Two extra-large American coffees." American coffee is just that: coffee that Americans drink. It is weaker than normal, Japanese coffee, which is itself weaker than European coffee. Also, the word Ataru uses to mean "extra-large," "oomori," is usually used to refer to extra-large portions of food, not drink.

Finally, in the next episode preview, mention is made of Dracula's assistant, Koomori. This is the Japanese word for "bat." However, since the word is used twice in the sentence, as a name and a description, we subtitled it as "Koomori the Bat."

The episode title itself has a great pun in it that we couldn't translate. The original Japanese line was "Tonda Dracula." "Tonda" can either mean "flying" or it can mean "ridiculous" or "stupid." Both of these meanings are quite accurate, as we shall see next time.

### **Ep. 27, Story 50: "What a Dracula"**

The title of this episode is a joke. "Tonda," the past tense of the verb "Tobu" (to fly), normally means "flew." But when used as it is here, it is an adjective, with the added meaning of "What a..."--usually meaning "What an idiot." Therefore, it has both a literal and figurative meaning in this case: Dracula both flies, and is also a "flying" (flipping) lunatic.

"Koomori" is Japanese for "bat," but it is also the name of Dracula's bat servant.

This episode brings up the Japanese writing system, in the form of Dracula's love letter to Lum. A serious dissertation on the subject is beyond the scope of these notes, but in brief, there are three different writing systems used in modern Japanese: hiragana, katakana, and kanji. The first two are syllabaries (i.e., one symbol for each sound used in Japanese), and the third is pictograms, originally taken from the Chinese writing system. The main difference between hiragana and katakana is in usage: the former is used mainly for Japanese words, and the latter for words borrowed from other languages, such as English, German, and French. Not using kanji in one's writing makes it seem childish and unsophisticated; this is why Koomori chides Dracula for not using kanji in his letter. Another problem with not using kanji is that Japanese has a lot of homonyms, and very often one can tell which of several words with similar pronunciation is meant only by seeing the kanji itself. Dracula's retort that "you can't write the word 'date' in kanji" refers to the word "date" being a foreign word, and thus cannot be written in kanji: that's what katakana is for.

Koomori and Lum talking about Dracula's "misspelling" was an attempt to deal with a concept that doesn't exist in English: that of "Ateji," or substitution, whether arbitrarily or incorrectly, of kanji, usually ones that have readings similar to those which one wants to write, but that one either doesn't know or can't remember. Ateji is also used when a writer wants specifically to have a reading for a given set of kanji that is not its normal reading. The title of this series is an example of that.

Dracula saying that "Tonight is awfully bad" is a reference to a type of fortune telling which was popular around the time this story was made, based on calendar calculations about an individual--birthdate, age, etc. The word he uses in the original, "Tenchuusatsu," means, in this fortune telling style, that one is having, or is going to have, a bad time--day or year, usually. It soon passed into common use, being used whenever one was having a bad time: "Today is my Tenchusatsu," "This year is my Tenchusatsu," etc., and Dracula uses it in this latter manner.

### **Ep. 28, Story 51: "Lum's Boy's Education Lecture Course"**

The caption on one of Ataru's childhood photographs reads, according to Lum, as "The embarrassment of 7-5-3 Day." The original, "Shichigosan," is a festival for girls of 7 and 3 years of age, and boys of 5 years of age, intended to celebrate the attainment of these ages, which takes place on Nov. 15. Their parents take them to Shinto shrines to receive blessings from the gods for their children's health. The children themselves are dressed in their very best, and parents often spend large amounts of money buying or renting traditional costumes. In modern times, it has become standard practice to mark the occasion with a formal photograph.

The sound effect Lum makes when she dives into the teacup, "Shuwachi!" is the sound which Ultraman made when taking off into the sky.

The songs that Ataru was trying to sing and couldn't remember are songs about pigeons and rain, songs which preschoolers learn and normally can memorize before entering grade school. That Ataru, as a first-grader, not only cannot remember them but also gets them mixed up only serves to emphasize that, even as a little kid, he was a moron.

Ataru's Father saying (in the subtitles) that "It's that new house state of mind" was another attempt to deal with a difficult pun in Japanese: the word "shinkyoo," used by Ataru's parents, is a homonym, in that it can be written in two different ways, each with a different meaning. When Ataru's Mother says "shinkyoo," she means "new house," as in "Let's take a commemorative photo in front of our new house." When Ataru's Father says "shinkyoo," he is using its other meaning, "state of mind." But because of the way he says it, "Soo iu shinkyoo da na" (It's that sort of shinkyoo), the word ends up having both of the above meanings, creating a pun which would come out more literally in English as something like "It's that kind of new house state of mind." Not nearly as eloquent or as funny in English as in the original Japanese.

### **Ep. 29, Story 52: "From the Gardenia, With Love"**

The central pun of this story is the name of the flower itself. Kuchinashi (Japanese for "Gardenia") can also be written with kanji that mean "without mouth," or "without speech." This joke crops up several times in the course of this episode, in various forms. First is when Ataru tries to ask the flower-shop girl for her name and phone number. Her reply is that "Gardenias don't make phone calls!" In the original, she says "Kuchinashi," giving it the double meaning of both the flower, and those (people and things alike) that cannot speak. Naturally, neither is capable of using the phone. Later, when the giant gardenia appears, it clearly has a mouth, even though it is "Kuchinashi." It also proves to be quite garrulous, again in contradiction of its "name." Finally, there is Ten's line, "Die! Die! Dead men tell no tales." This line in the original, "Shinin ni wa kuchinashi da," is normally the Japanese equivalent of the idiom, "Dead men tell no tales." But in this case, because of the double meaning of the word "kuchinashi," it ends up meaning much more... and less.

Ataru's Father saying "Well, it might work..." is a reference to a phrase, "Ataru mo hakke, ataranu mo hakke," which means that things like fortune telling, weather forecasting, etc. have a 50/50 chance of being right. However, used in reference to Moroboshi Ataru, it becomes a pun on his name as well.

Ataru telling Ten that he's "not Mito Komon" is a reference to the hero of a popular, long-running "jidaigeki" (Samurai Drama), which are roughly the Japanese equivalent of American Westerns. For more information, see Ep. 13, Story 25, "Mendou Brings Trouble!" (Mendou wa Trouble to Tomo ni!)

At traditional omiai (matchmaking meetings between prospective marriage partners), where both interviewees kneel on tatami, in front of a low table, it is common for the woman to seem very shy and unsure of herself, and typically she will trace the hiragana character "no" on the tatami, as a sign of her shyness and embarrassment. It is this action to which Ten is referring when he points out that the Gardenia is doing the same thing. It indicates the Gardenia's bashfulness.

There is a joke in the flower-shop girl's choice of flower to which she chooses to dedicate her life. Japanese quince, in Japanese, is called "boke," which can also mean "a senile person," or "a person who is stupid in a senile fashion."

### **Ep. 30, Story 53: "A Beautiful Girl Brings Rain"**

Amamori Tsuyuko's name is a couple of jokes in itself. Literally translated, it means "Rain-forest Dew-girl."

Tsuyuko calling herself "a rain woman" has a larger meaning in the original Japanese. The word "ameonna" (or the male equivalent, "ameotoko") refers to a person who seemingly attracts rain wherever he or she goes. If one is having some sort of outdoor activity and invites this person, one can expect that outing to be rained out, or so the story goes.

Some of the ways in which Tsuyuko's Father mangles Ataru's name are actual words themselves. "Morokoshi" means "corn," "Monohoshi" means "clothesline," and "Morodashi" means "totally exposed," particularly of something embarrassing.

"Daruma-san koronda" is a Japanese children's game. One person, the Oni, stands at one end of the playing area, facing away from the other players, who are at the other end. The Oni chants "Daruma-san koronda," during which time the other players advance on the Oni, and when the Oni finishes, he turns around, and catches anyone he finds still moving. Those people have to link hands with the Oni, while those who are still free try to reach the Oni and touch the hands that are holding the other players, to set them free. The specific rules for a given game are often negotiated by the players at that time, and thus can differ from one game to the next.

### **Ep. 31, Story 54: "Gimme Back My Horn!"**

In the opening fight scene, some of the thrown objects include Shoonen Sunday magazines (the Shoogakkan manga magazine in which Urusei Yatsura was serialized) and early collected volumes of Maison Ikkoku, another excellent Takahashi creation, which began serialization at about this time in Big Comic Spirits, another Shoogakkan weekly manga magazine. Ms. Takahashi was, for several years, doing two weekly manga serials at the same time!

After Ten belittles Ataru for being so dumb as to throw burnable things at him, Ataru responds by throwing a bag of unburnable trash. The reference behind this joke is that for a number of years, some parts of Japan (most notably Tokyo) have required that garbage be separated into burnable (things which can safely be burned) and unburnable (those which cannot).

"Deer Brand Rice Crackers," or Shika Sembei, are a type of rice cracker sold to tourists in Nara Park, so that they can feed the resident deer population. Of course, Ataru is just cracking wise about the horn of Ten's dilemma.

In the scene where Ran calls up Lum to come outside, a fleet of hearses (Japanese style, of course) goes by. One suggested explanation for this scene comes from a superstition which says that it's a bad omen to stick out one's fingers when one comes across something having to do with the dead. Ran is sticking out her finger to dial the phone while the hearses go by.

An additional point about "crane, turtle:" images of these supposedly lucky creatures are often displayed at weddings and other events where one wishes to bring good luck. But one doesn't normally say the words themselves for that purpose.

### **Ep. 32, Story 55: "Shocking Library--Quiet, Please!"**

Organized sex education in Japanese schools is practically nonexistent. Most young people, boys and girls alike, get their initial information from videos and photo collections such as the one Ataru and the Gang of Four are reading at the beginning of this story.

The "Chirico Collection" on the librarian's desk refers to Giorgio di Chirico (1888-1978), a pioneer of the surrealist movement in art.

Lum shouting "Week after week!" as she chases Ataru and "the assistant" refers to the series originally being a weekly one on Japanese TV.

The character who asks Ataru how to get to Takadanobaba (a real area in what is now central Tokyo) is an actual figure from Japanese history, Horibe Yasubei (1673-1703). He was one of the Akoorooshi, the people featured in the Edo-Period revenge epic, "Chuushingura" (The tale of the 47 Ronin). Supposedly a master of archery, he and his fellows waited many years to avenge their master (who had been trapped into committing seppuku) and then killed themselves. Known to be good-looking and aggressive, Horibe Yasubei was a central figure in this story, with side stories of his own. The story has become a classic piece of Japanese literature, with numerous Kabuki plays and puppet shows written concerning it. A TV drama about the incident airs annually in Japan at year's end, and movies about it have been made and remade. Takadanobaba was where Horibe supposedly killed a number of samurai at one time in the course of the Akoorooshi, but historically, he is supposed to have killed only one or two people in Nara. That may not have been thought interesting enough to write an epic about, thus causing the Takadanobaba story to come about.

There are lots of visual jokes at the end of the episode, featuring popular characters from Japanese and

American TV and comic books. The dancing peasants, however, are a reference to the peasants' revolt at the end of the Edo Period, c. 1867. It was based on the rural custom of visiting Ise Shrine, in Kinki (Western Japan). Over a wide area, including Kinki, Shikoku, Tookaido and Kooshu, mass frenzy overtook the peasants, who chanted "Ee ja nai ka" (What's wrong with it), and danced like crazy. But so long as they danced on their way to Ise Shrine, saying this phrase, the samurai couldn't do anything to them. Since the event took place during the overthrow of the Tokugawa Military Government, the phrase has taken on a sense of reform, especially political.

### **Ep. 33, Story 56: "Mr. Hanawa Arrives! It's the Springtime of Youth"**

Like some American schools, Japanese schools, in general, assign homeroom numbers. These numbers are usually of the form "Year-X Group-Y," where X is the year that the students are in, in their school, and Y is an arbitrary number. Unlike the American system, Japanese schools do not number their grades 1-12 straight through. Instead, it goes 1-6, 1-3, 1-3. The years 1-6 are spent in Shoogakkoo ("little school"). The next 3 years are spent in Chuugakko ("middle school"). The last 3 years before college are in Kookoo ("high school"). In each grade, the student body is randomly divided into several groups, depending on the number of students enrolled. Each "group" is then assigned a number or letter code, just to differentiate them from one another. Ataru's homeroom is thus 2-nen 4-kumi (2nd year in high school, 11th US-grade, group 4).

Okamoto Taroo, a leading modern artist who achieved his greatest fame in the 1970's, made the phrase "Geijutsu wa bakuhatsu da!" (Art is explosive!) famous. In the scene where Mr. Hanawa runs the students' gauntlet, the class puns on that line, saying, "Geijutsu da! Bakuhatsu da!" (Artistic! Explosive!).

When Mr. Hanawa tries to ask Ataru about Lum's horns, he tries to come up with a proverb that will get his point across, scanning through a couple of bad examples:

"Tonbi ga taka..." -&gt; "Tobi ga taka o umu" (A black-eared kite gives birth to a hawk). The tobi (tonbi) is considered a very average bird in Japan, and the taka, conversely, a very rare and special one. So when average parents give birth to exceptionally talented children, this expression is used to describe it.

"Shusse no himitsu..." (The Secret of One's Birth) is something similar, referring to something hidden concerning one's birth or upbringing.

The net result is nonsense, as Mr. Hanawa tries to approach with delicacy what he thinks is a delicate issue.

Japanese girls would probably name Buruma (Bloomers) the number one most hated apparel, as they are short pumpkin-shaped trainer-pants that were (in general) required to be worn during gym classes. They're considered just plain ugly. There are many nicknames that exist for these generally regarded as hideous pieces of clothing. One which Ataru mentions is "Chouchin buruma." Chouchin is a round lantern made of paper, which is typically displayed during festivals. They were much more common 30-50 years ago than they are now (they began disappearing some twenty years ago, and are now practically nonexistent). That Mr. Hanawa would spring them on Lum just goes to show how old-fashioned he is.

When Perm refers to Ataru as "...the boys' volleyball team's sixth man..." he is making a pun on the title of Graham Greene's "The Third Man."

### **Ep. 34, Story 57: "Goblin in Distress, Yearning for People"**

Green tea over steamed rice is called "Ochazuke," and is popular when one doesn't feel like cooking anything elaborate, as it is easy to make, or when one doesn't have much of an appetite, as it is easy to swallow (though it isn't very good for digestion, as one doesn't chew it very much). The time most popular for eating such food is summer, which gets very hot, and even more humid, taking away most people's appetites and energy. This phenomenon is so standard in Japan that it has its own name: "natsubate." All of this added together with the Goblin's statement that he does have an appetite is an outright contradiction in terms.

Mendou saying, "Good thing I didn't take that trip to Florida," is another seemingly offhand sign of his being a really rich kid. Going to Florida is considered more like a rich man's trip than the usual Guam or Hawaii, for Japanese, if only because of the greater distance.

Tsubame saying "Come on over" is another line that's funnier in the original. "Oidemasse" is from a famous advertising slogan of the time, "Oidemasse Yamaguchi e!" (Come on out to Yamaguchi, y'all!) The slogan was invented to drum up interest in visiting Yamaguchi Prefecture, and is done in the dialect of the area, which is roughly to Tokyo-style Japanese as a Southern accent in the US. would be to the accent of a big Northern or West-Coast city. For more information, see, Ep. 12, Story 23, "Battle Royal of Love."

The Dappya Monster crying, "Help me, please!" when the kids beat it up is a reference to the story of Urashima Taroo, who saved a turtle when some kids were torturing it on a beach. For more information, see Ep. 23, Stories 45-46, "The Big Picnic Uproar."

### **Ep. 35, Story 58, "Darling's had it this time!"**

Mama's Boy: When the waiter says, "To my dearest mother, she is pretty," there are some additional nuances in the original. Normally, when writing a letter to one's mother (as he is mentally doing here), someone of his age would say "hahauesama," (most honorable mother) as a salutation. But instead, he says "mamauesama," which, being the sort of thing that only someone much younger would say, and even then, not in a letter, makes him out to be something of a mama's boy. Also, words such as "hahaue" are not modern colloquial Japanese. They date back to the Edo Period, and were primarily used by samurai and other nobility, not the common people. Such words largely went out of fashion during the Meiji Period. On top of which, "mamaue" isn't even a real word. All the speaker did was substitute "mama" for "haha," making a word which sounds strange to native Japanese speakers.

The Terrible Fields: "Hidoiwagahara" is a strange, made-up name based on the occasional practice of naming fields in Japan using the words "ga hara," meaning, roughly, "field" or "fields." Normally, such names would be one or at most two kanji, followed by "gahara," as in "Sekigahara." So "Hidoiwagahara" is an extreme example. On top of which, it seems likely that the name itself derives from the monster running around saying, "Hidoi wa!" which is a feminine way of saying "How Terrible!"

The Price is Right: In the scene afterward, where Lum and Ran buy ice creams, the robot says the price is "20 Torajima." "Torajima" literally means "tigerstripes," which would seem to be a perfectly logical name for the Oni monetary unit.

Being Sat Upon: Later, Ran says, "Lum, you've been living your life at the expense of mine!" The original, "Agura o kaku," literally means "to sit cross-legged," but also has an additional idiomatic meaning of taking advantage of someone, as if by sitting on them.

Fish paste: "Chikuwa" are straw-shaped pieces of fish, about an inch in diameter, with a hole through the center about a centimeter wide. The edge portions are white, and the middle part is baked. It's typically cut into segments and used in oden (explained below).

Put a lid on it: "Seeing as how I'm sick, your treating me like a pervert is just too much!" The original has an idiomatic expression, "Mi mo futa mo nai." Literally, it means "there is neither jar nor lid," idiomatically meaning that what one says lacks subtlety or sympathy, in other words, that one's words are too direct.

### **Ep. 36, Story 59: "Rei Returns! The Great Study Hall Panic!!"**

Historical note: this episode marks the first appearance of Onsen-mark.

Winter Soup: "I'll bet a bowl of Kotobuki-oden on Mendou." Kotobuki is the name of an oden shop (possibly fictional). Oden is a sort of shoyu (soy sauce) "soup," with seaweed, egg, potatoes, various types of processed fish, konyaku (a kind of processed potato), radish, and various other things mixed in. Sometimes it's served in special sets in shops, or from traveling carts, together with sake, where you pay by the item. It's especially popular in winter.

Tune In, Turn On, Eat Out: "Channel 8, 9, Ten." "Channel 3, 2, 1, Rei." These are bilingual puns on the names of these characters. "Ten" is used here as both Ten's name and as the English number 10. When written with a certain kanji, "Rei" is the Japanese word for "zero," which sets up the pun on Rei's name in this instance.

Translator's Excedrin Headache #3276541: Chibi's response to Ataru saying that Rei's coming, is, in the

subtitles, "Ah! Rei!" But in the original, he puns on the expression "Are?" which roughly means "Huh?" or "What?" by saying, "A-Rei?!"

Sneaky Snacking: "Boys who haven't eaten their lunches yet, fork them over." In Japanese high schools, there are typically four morning classes, and then lunch. Normally, one isn't supposed to eat lunch before lunch time, but some students eat the lunches (bentoo) that they've brought from home during the five-to-ten-minute breaks between classes. Others, like Ataru, prop up their books on their desks and actually eat during class. These two activities are known as "hayaben," which is what Ataru is referring to when he talks to those students who haven't yet eaten their lunches. It isn't lunch time yet.

We're not here, and you never saw us: "Young Master. Young Master! Can't you hear me? Young Master!" "Waka," or "Young Master," and "Wakaran," "don't understand," are juxtaposed here, for another pun. The black-garbed servants are "kuroko." In certain types of Japanese theater, such as Bunraku puppet theater, they are "officially" invisible helpers. Since Mendou made a point that the Beefbowl delivery should be discreet, it isn't surprising that the family kuroko squad would deliver the food. This episode marks their first appearance, and they will soon become known as the willing servants and co-conspirators of Mendou Shutaro's dangerous little sister, Ryoko, who will soon appear to make her big-brother's life hell.

### **Ep. 37, Story 60: "The Coming of the Mysterious Red Mantle!"**

The Hell of Study: Mendou mentioning preparation for college entrance exams refers to "Exam Hell," perhaps the most trying period in a typical Japanese student's life. Exam Hell is the period of preparation for the college entrance exams, the outcome of which largely determines one's future. Mendou saying that he doesn't have to worry about it understandably infuriates Ataru.

Quoth the Teacher: "No, not that! Like a mystery man with 20 faces, and also a mystery man with 40 faces, and a mystery man with 100 faces and a mystery man with a 1000 faces, and 10,000 faces..." This line is a reference to "Kaijin nijuumenso" (The Mystery Man With 20 Faces), a popular mystery-suspense novel by an author who wrote under the penname of Edogawa Rampo, which is a made-up Japanese reading of "Edgar Allan Poe." Since 1954, Edogawa's contributions to the Japanese mystery-novel genre have been remembered in an award for new mystery writers bearing his name. As a side note, the award is currently worth a whopping 10,000,000 (about US\$100,000 as of this writing (1994)), in addition to the winning work(s) being published by Kodansha, one of Japan's biggest publishing houses, and royalties from said publication.

"Bon" appetit: "Yes, we also held cool of the evening "bon" dances sponsored by the student council." Bon dancing is a type of traditional outdoor dancing, in which the participants wear yukata (cotton kimono), and make large circles. This type of dancing happens during the festival of Obon, the time when people return to their homelands to visit the graves of their ancestors, which takes place in either mid-July or mid-August depending on the region.

Not a pushover: "Last ditch! Crashing wave push! Heave!" "Dosukoi" is an expression used in Sumo when one is making a serious push, which is why it fits this scene.

That woman again: Megane saying, "Am I that pretty?" is a reference to an urban legend which circulated among Japanese children in the mid-to-late 1970's, about a woman known as "kuchisake onna," which roughly translates as "the woman with a slashed mouth." Supposedly, this woman, who wore a veil over her face, would walk up to schoolchildren (up to and including high-schoolers) and say, "Atashi kirei?" (Am I pretty?) No matter what answer she got, she would keep asking it over and over again. Eventually she would take off her veil, revealing a mouth the corners of which were slashed back to her ears. She also supposedly carried a kama, or grain sickle, which might have been used as a weapon. No confirmation has ever surfaced as to this woman's existence.

Cameos: In the final dance scene, several interesting figures show up, most notably the two original Kamen Rider (Masked Rider) super heroes, Tiger Mask, and a batter for the Hanshin Tigers baseball team.

### **Ep. 38, Story 61: "Steal Darling! The Copy Operation!!"**

A Fishy Compliment: "Ran, you're so cute, pretty, fantastic, oh, you tease." "Hamachikko" is a pun. "Burikko," the word normally associated with Ran (see Spring Special Part 1 for Ataru's Mother's explanation), refers to

being too cute for words. But Buri and Hamachi are both types of fish, so what Ran has done here is, in an act of especial cuteness, switch one fish for another, thus making "Burikko" into "Hamachikko."

Perhaps a Summit meeting would help: "What will you do with that mountain of Darlings?" "Kuroyama no hitodakari" refers to having a crowd of people so large that they look like a black mountain, or "kuroyama." In that expression, Lum substitutes Darling for "hito" (person or people), resulting in the phrase "kuroyama no Darlingdakari."

"I've got a good idea. If we cut them off at the source, like an odor, it'll be OK." "The source?" "Let's snuff the real one." "Are you saying Darling's a stink?!"

The above lines are based on a Japanese commercial for a chemical used to treat odors in septic tanks and traditional Japanese toilets, which are basically just holes in the ground. The original line translates as follows:

"Kusai! Kusai! Kusai nioi wa moto kara tatanakya dame." (It stinks! It stinks! You have to stop stinky odors at the source.)

### **Episode 39, Story 62: "Thrilling Summer Date"**

"And the batter for Pierrot Academy..." This school name is a pun on PL Gakuen (PL Academy), a school renowned for its baseball. "PL" comes out as "Pieru" in Japanese pronunciation, and it's not far from that to "Pierrot." And, of course, Studio Pierrot did the animation for this episode of Urusei Yatsura.

"The whole Ookanei High School team is crying." In Japan, it's common knowledge that players in the summer national high school baseball festival all cry like babies. Supposedly, teenagers crying their hearts out takes on an almost religious significance.

"I guess I'll have to make do with Tamiko." Kojima Tamiko, one of the series's main directors, is also a disciple of chief director Oshii Mamoru.

"Come on, Darling, let's go on a date! Come on, let's go on a date! Hey!" The LP Ataru is cleaning here says "YMC." In all probability, this is a pun on YMO--Yellow Magic Orchestra, Sakamoto Ryuichi's legendary technopop band.

"Yes, this is Moroboshi. Is this Iyo? Huh? Your tastes have changed?" Iyo is most likely meant to be Matsumoto Iyo, a well-known TV talent.

"Let's go have a bite. I know a great Beefbowl place!" It goes without saying that Beefbowl joints are not the sort of place one normally takes a girl on a date!

The Restaurant Sign: "Ikakuchoo Restaurant": The characters used in the sign are ateji (Chinese characters substituted, arbitrarily in this case, for proper ones) for a word which in Japanese means "gastric dilation." The joke is that Lum and Miki are eating enough to cause themselves just such a condition.

### **"Episode 40, Story 63, "So Long, Goodbye, Summer Days"**

Mr. Tebasaki Yoshinori, the character actor who was hospitalized for an enlarged appendix which is said to have been 7.5 times normal size, left the hospital yesterday in good health." "Tebasaki" is Japanese for "chicken wing," so a guy with that name having an abnormal appendix is a pun.

"...that boy was plagued by a terrible stomachache for ten days!" "Oh! A stomachache!" "And he only had ten watermelons of about this size!" "Ten!" "I usually have twenty!" "I can handle eighteen." "Ah, indeed, so can I." This sequence is simply a reference to what monstrous appetites Sakura and Cherry have. For the definitive reference, see TV set 4, episode 13, story 26, "Full Course From Hell."

"So "goblin," what do you want to be "gobbling?"" This was an attempt (made by one of us whose name is being withheld to protect the guilty) to deal with one of the most outrageously untranslatable puns yet seen in the series. The original line reads: "Yookai, nani ga yookai?" The pun is that the first "Yookai" means "goblin," and the second, together with the "nani ga," means, "What do you want?"

### **Episode 41, Story 64, "Panic in a Typhoon!"**

"...potato chips, Nichibei Caramel, and Umauma Chocolate!" These are brandnames--made up for the story, in all likelihood.

"Oh! Hold it! You thieving cat!" The word Ataru uses in the original, "dorobooneko," is equivalent to the English "cat-burglar"--when applied to humans, that is.

"The splashing of the oars is like flowers..." This line is from a song called Hana, by Taki Rentaroo, one of Japan's great composers.

### **Episode 42, Story 65, "Drunkard's Boogie"**

This episode marks the earliest Urusei Yatsura screenplay penned by Komparu Tomoko, who went on to script three of the movies (Only You, Remember My Love, and The Final Chapter) and co-script a fourth (Always My Darling).

Umeboshi (pickled plums) have a preservative effect on rice, due to being soaked in vinegar. Also, the single red circle in the field of white rice gave rise to the term "Hinomaru Bentoo" (Hinomaru Box Lunch), because of its similarity in appearance to Hinomaru, the Japanese flag. For more about Hinomaru Bentoo, see TV Set 4, Episode 13, Story 26, "Full Course From Hell."

"They really hit the spot! Want to have them with hot water?" This is a nod to a relatively recent trend in alcoholic drinks. "Mizuwari" means adding water to a drink, as in whiskey and water. "Oyuwari" means adding hot water instead.

"Here, spray some of this alcohol on them, and they should be OK!" The spirits which Cherry is carrying around are "shochu," or fermented potato liquor.

"Alcohol! Alcohol!" The word "sake" is often used to mean alcohol in general, as well as the specific fermented-rice liquor.

### **Episode 43, Story 66, "The Terror of Meow"**

This episode is a signature piece, in that Chief Director Oshii Mamoru performed the three main functions of screenplay, storyboarding, and direction by himself.

"I gotta go to the bathroom first!" When hearing scary stories, people don't want to go to the bathroom alone.

"If this follows the usual pattern then I'd call the Creature Police..." The original line, "Yookai 110-ban," refers to "110," the emergency telephone number set aside for the police in Japan.

"Oh, very well!" "Huh? What is it?" Cherry is receiving a bribe in a very traditional Japanese fashion, known as "sodenoshita," or "under the sleeve." It comes from the receiver of the bribe inserting it within the sleeve of his kimono.

"Looks like the ones who ought to have survived have indeed survived." From here on, Ataru takes on the appearance and style of Joe, the star of "Ashita no Joe" (Tomorrow's Joe), a classic manga series about a budding boxer (later made into an equally classic anime series). Note also Cherry's impression of Joe's manager.

### **Episode 44, Story 67, "After You've Gone"**

At the end of the series's original broadcast run (March, 1986), the viewers voted this episode as their favorite.

"Menko, I've always loved you..." "Shiruo!" Shiruo, when written out in kanji is the same as "Soup Man," while Menko is "Noodle Girl." Soup and noodles, of course, are the key ingredients in Ramen. In fact, it's sometimes said that the relationship between soup and noodles in Ramen is like marriage!

"MENDOU!" This line is a pun. Although he's saying "Mendou's here," Mendou is also a homonym for "bother," "trouble," or "nuisance." For more details, see TV Set 4, Episode 14, Story 25, "Mendou Brings Trouble!"

"Allow me to say it straight... Your husband is a buffoon!" Mendou is speaking in Osaka dialect in Ataru's imagination, because it supposedly makes him look and sound stupid.

"But it'd be a crying shame if she really is gone." "Moto mo ko mo nai" is an idiom. At times it can be taken to mean "one's efforts going down the drain," but generally equates to "it'd be too bad."

"...I don't care if you have to go down to the grass roots, but find Lum!" "Kusa no ne wo waketemo..." literally, "even if you have to part grass roots..." It actually means, "no matter what you have to go through, find whatever you're looking for."

"Sir, there was no sign of her on Dream Island!" Dream Island is actually a landfill in Tokyo Bay, in other words, a garbage dump, with a name meant to make it sound nicer than it is.

"I hope she's not at another matchmaking session!" For details on this reference, see TV Set 6, Episode 22, Story 43, "The Great Space Matchmaking Operation."

This episode marks the earliest animation work on Urusei Yatsura by Yamazaki Kazuo, who would take over as Chief Director on the latter part of the TV series, as well as direct two Urusei Yatsura movies ("Remember My Love" and "Lum the Forever," the latter of which he also co-scripted). Yamazaki made the storyboards, as well as working as Animation Director and on the key animation.

#### **Episode 45, Story 68: "Lum's Class Reunion"**

English classes are a required part of education in Japan, usually starting in intermediate school (equivalent to 7th grade in the US).

"We mustn't interfere with class... Here! It's heavy." That big white thing Ten's holding is a Japanese radish, or "Daikon." He's grating it. One of the most popular ways of consuming grated Daikon is to put some on grilled fish, which Cherry is apparently preparing on his Hibachi.

"She hasn't been here since Setsubun, right?" Setsubun is the last day of Winter in the traditional Japanese calendar, which falls on Feb. 3. To understand what Ataru is referring to in this scene, see TV Set 4, Episode 15, Story 29, "The Great Spring War," and Story 30, "The Benten Gang's Return Match."

"In that moment, a dark memory crossed the minds of the Gang of Four. It was a painful memory of their trip to Neptune via a Dimensional Tunnel." For details of this experience, see TV Set 2, Episode 8, Story 15, "Neptune is Beyond My Closet."

"It was a painful memory of the time he first met Rei, when he lost a contest over their looks." For details, see TV Set 10, Episode 36, "Rei Returns! The Big Study Hall Panic!!" For details of his reaction to Shinobu in this scene, refer to TV Set 7, Episode 23, "The Big Springtime Picnic Uproar!"

"Hold on a second!" The little green man Lum sees Ran talking with right before the commercial break is the Space Taxi driver from TV Set 1, Episode 1, Story 2, "It's Raining Oil in Our Town." Later, he is being carried around by Prim, from TV Set 6, Episode 22, "The Great Space Matchmaking Operation."

"My name is the Prince of the Underground!" For more about the Prince, and many of the guest stars in this episode (most notably Diana and Uni), see TV Set 6, Episode 22, "The Great Space Matchmaking Operation."

#### **Episode 46, Story 69, "Lunchtime Eat-Out'ers, Gather Around!"**

Eating out of school during lunch breaks, or at any time in school uniform, is known as "kaigui," and is against school rules in Japan.

"Baked goods and ice cream at 'Akamaru..." "Pan" normally translates as bread, but in this case, it's more

likely that Onsen is referring to baked goods or pastries in addition.

"...Okonomiyaki at 'Zipangu...'" Okonomiyaki are basically Japanese-style pancakes. Zipangu is an ancient term for Japan.

"...the Taiyaki joint, 'Ebiya...'" Taiyaki is a fish-shaped "pastry," with Anko (sweet bean paste) inside and a little dough on the outside. It contains no fish whatsoever, despite its name. It's served very hot (see Mr. Hanawa's expression later on).

"...Ramen and Takoyaki at 'Neko Restaurant...'" Takoyaki is a dough puff, the size of a golf ball. Its ingredients are mainly eggs and flour, plus some vegetables. There's also a tiny piece of octopus (tako) in the center, hence the name. Takoyaki is perhaps the most popular snack during festivals, eaten using a little plate and toothpicks.

"...the Oden joint, 'Kotobuki...'" Oden is hotchpotch, consisting of all kinds of boiled stuff. Aside from potatoes and daikon, there is baked tofu and other goodies, including Konnyaku, a jello-like substance made of a certain kind of potato.

"Lum, what's going on? Is this the School Olympics?" Every fall, grade schools hold a major sports event called Undoukai. Essentially, it's a combination of miniaturized Olympics and athletics exhibition.

"I'll have Tanuki Ramen and a half-serving of rice!" Tanuki-Udon is literally, "Raccoon Wheat Noodles." Despite its name, it has no raccoons in it. It's Wheat noodles immersed in a thick soup, topped with Tenkasu (Deep-fried egg-flour droplets, left over from cooking Tempura). Related to this is something called Kitsune-Udon (lit., "Fox Wheat Noodles"), which doesn't have fox in it either. Instead of Tenkasu, it's got what's called Age, which is something like a thin deep-fried tofu.

"At Taian Store's Yakisoba Corner, two male students were reprimanded." Yakisoba is cooked buckwheat noodles.

The spiderweb weapon which Onsen-Mark wields has its origins in kabuki theater, and is the secret weapon which the villain typically uses to trap and manipulate his enemies.

"Let's hang in there, Megane!" Posters in this scene are for three Rumic World manga features published around this time (1980-1982): The ChooJo (SuperGal), Seito Kaichoo (Student Body President), and DustSpart.

Knighthed Pawn, read you loud and clear." "Honarinotokin" (Knighthed Pawn) is a term from Shoogi, which will be considered a Japanese form of Chess for simplicity's sake. It refers to a pawn reaching the opposite side of the board from where it started. When this happens, it can be turned over, revealing a more powerful piece on the other side, typically a knight. Sakura being the traditional Japanese that she is (mostly), she would use a Shoogi term as her codename rather than one from Chess.

"One enemy motorcycle and two private cars are heading toward Mrs. Donut's." No surprise that this is a takeoff on Mr. Donut, which, like McDonalds, is very successful in Japan.

"Excuse us." "Excuse us." In the background are characters from another Takahashi Rumiko classic, Maison Ikkoku (which was starting up at this time in the manga weekly Big Comic Spirits). They are the grandfather-in-law and niece-in-law of the heroine, Otonashi Kyooko, by her late husband, Note also the Wonder Woman and Supergirl knockoffs who run past.

The girl jumping out of the dumpster and Megane running out of Zipangu both say "Shuwacchi!" This is the sound effect made by Ultraman when he flew. Also, the poster next to the dumpster is from the legendary opening animation to Daicon IV. In another scene, note also the Mach-Go, (the car from Maha GoGoGo, aka "Speed Racer") with a red paint job.

"Cherry, let's make a deal for some Modanyaki!" Modanyaki is a sort of combination of yakisoba and okonomiyaki.

"Uncle, this is for the sake of my job. I won't go easy on you!" Cherry is striking a pose from sumo, namely the stance taken for warming up, or just before starting the match.

"Youth can't be explained away as simply as that!" This speech by Megane is reminiscent of a uniquely Japanese narrative form: "Seishun (youth) Drama." The stories typically revolve around a high-school student and the teacher who does everything he can to show him the glory that is youth. Megane's lines deliberately point up just how maudlin these shows can (and usually do) get.

"Everyone rush immediately to Tomobiki-Ginza..." Attaching "Ginza" to a placename is a common device used for naming shopping districts in Japan.

### **Episode 47, Story 70: "Terror! The Deserted Fossil Grounds Mystery"**

"Gori, set the light on it and make a good shadow, would you?" "Gori," in this case, may be short for "Gorilla," a possible nickname for the lighting man on this crew.

"We got any straw festoon ropes?" Shimenawa is a type of rope (festoon) which is sacred to Shinto.

"Terror! A do-or-die invasion of the mysterious mountain which is protected by weird Jizo statues." This is an example of a practice used in some Japanese TV documentary shows called "yarase" or "detarame," which means fabrication or elaboration on the truth. It's used typically when a director or producer decides that reality won't be interesting enough to get ratings. The staff simply makes up something that they think will sell. "Jizo" are stone statues of Buddha, which makes stringing them together with shimenawa, a sacred Shinto rope, all the more amusing.

"You've got a sports newspaper that you bought this morning, right?" Sports newspapers are one of the major classes of tabloid dailies in Japan. In addition to sports coverage, they also contain large doses of salacious gossip and numerous pinups.

"How long have you been an Assistant Director?" In the Japanese entertainment businesses, esp. TV and movies, Assistant Directors (ADs) are legendary for the abuse they have to take, from higher-up staffers and performers alike. One anecdote tells of a TV show being filmed at the beach. The director thought the waves were too small, so he told the AD, "Make the waves bigger."

"Testing, 1, 2, 3..." "Amemboakainaaieuo" is a phrase commonly used in Japanese broadcasting to check that the audio is working properly.

"Here, on 'Low-Ratings Special...'" "Urban," short for "urabangumi," which refers to the lowest-rated show in a given timeslot.

"If it doesn't go as I want, I'll make it the way I want." "Nakanai hototogisu o nakaseteyaru" (If the nightingale won't sing, I'll make it sing) is part of a classic anecdote from Japan's Sengoku Jidai (Warring States Period), in which numerous warlords battled for control of Japan in the 16th Century. The entire story is a depiction of the personality types of the three greatest warlords of the time: Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu (who would eventually defeat his two rivals and unite Japan into one nation as the first Tokugawa Shogun). These examples represent the attitudes and personalities of the three warlords. Oda's attitude would be, "If it won't sing, I'll kill it." Toyotomi's would be, "If it won't sing, I'll make it sing," which is the portion borrowed here. Tokugawa, on the other hand, would be of the opinion, "If it doesn't sing, I'll wait until it does." The fictional character Yoshi Toranaga, from James Clavell's "Shogun," is based on Tokugawa Ieyasu.

"A mysterious monk who isn't seaweed, not even Kombu or Wakame seaweed!" The word "kaisoo," written with one set of kanji, can mean "mysterious monk." Written another way, it can mean "seaweed." An awful pun, but not as bad as...

"By 'mysterious bird,' I don't mean 'the head of a community association...'" Again, with one writing, "kaichoo" can mean "mysterious bird." Written another way, it can mean "president of a community association."

"Momoe!" This is probably a reference to Yamaguchi Momoe, who was Japan's most popular singer when she retired around this time period to get married, at the ripe old age of 21.

### **Episode 48, Story 71: "Princess Kurama--A New Challenge!"**

"Why are they so interested in an old woman in a box?" "Hakoiri-toshima" (Old Woman in a Box) is a pun. The original phrase, "Hakoiri-musume" (Young Girl in a Box) means a girl sheltered by her family, believing that protectiveness is the best way to raise her. Thus, she doesn't know much about the outside world.

"It's a nightmare. Today is evidently a bad day." Butsumetsu, the day Buddha died, is the unluckiest day in "Rokki," the six-day Buddhist nomenclature. For details, see TV Set 3, Episode 10, Stories 19-20, "Pitter Patter Christmas Eve."

"Princess Kurama and I are destined to be united in marriage!" "Unmei no akai ito" (the red string of fate) is an invisible thread which supposedly ties destined lovers together. For details, see Urusei Yatsura Movie 3, "Remember My Love."

"It's your favorite deep-fried saurel dinner!" "Teishoku" is a combination meal set, comprised of fixed meal items for ease of both the customer (when ordering) and the restaurant (when preparing).

"With the very best rice." "Sasanishiki" is a particular brand of rice, originally from Miyagi Prefecture. Together with Kooshihikari brand, from Niigata Prefecture, it is considered one of the top brands of Japanese rice.

"The guy with the swept-back hair is so-and-so, and the idiot is such-and-such!" "Kakugaku" and "shikajika" more or less mean the equivalent of "so-and-so" and "such-and-such."

"One day, when I was taking a walk in the forest..." "Ippo, niho, sampo to sampo shiteita" is a pun. With one writing, the word "sampo" by itself means "to take a walk." With the variant writing used in the phrase "Ippo, niho, sampo" (one step, two steps, three steps), it means "three steps," and the entire phrase means "to stroll."

### **Episode 49, Story 72: "The Terrifying Cavity Wars!"**

"I knew it was wrong, but I couldn't stop eating sweets before bed. Ow..." "Yookan" are sticks of anko, or bean jam.

"Wanna go for it?" In this scene, Ataru's poses and noises are reminiscent of Bruce Lee.

"So-and-so, such-and-such, thus-and-such!" The Dappya Kaijuu is using the same words as the Karasutengu in the previous episode.

### **Episode 50, Story 73: "The Mendou Siblings!"**

This episode marks Mendou Ryooko's first appearance in the Urusei Yatsura TV series.

"I will interfere any way I can!" "But I'm going!" This exchange is a pun on "jama suru," which normally means "to interfere." But it is also a polite way of saying that one is entering someone else's home.

"Intruder in World's Dumbest Son District!" "Sangokuichi no Hanayome" means "Number One Bride in the Three Kingdoms," referring to Japan, China and India. It was a common saying in the Muromachi Period (1392-1572).

### **Episode 51, Story 74: "There's a Cat on the Stairs"**

The original Japanese title of this episode, "Kaidan ni Neko ga Onnen," is a pun. "Onnen" is a dialectical way of saying "oru," which is one way of saying "to be." But written with a different set of kanji, "onnen" can also mean "to curse" or "haunt." So the full meaning would be something like, "There's a Cat Cursing on the Stairs."

"Legsweep!" The Dappya Kaijuu is dressed as a Sumo referee in this scene because he is describing Kotatsu Neko's maneuver against Ataru as a Sumo technique, namely, "komata sukui," of which legsweep is a convenient if somewhat unsatisfactory translation.

"We came to chase evil spirits from this house." "Are you sure? The only thing I want to have chased away is our mortgage!" This exchange is a pun on the word "harau," which can be used to mean either "to pay," as in a bill, or in this case, a loan or mortgage, or "to chase away," as in to exorcise evil spirits.

"A scary stair ghost!" Written one way, "kaidan" can mean "horror story, but with different kanji, it can mean "stairs," hence the pun. The original also makes reference to the horror story being out of season. This is because summer, particularly June/July, is the traditional horror season in Japan, and this episode takes place in December.

"Two eels, please." Unajuu is, essentially, sliced eel in a box over rice. Other such meals include katsujuu, which is breaded pork slices, also in a box over rice.

"We'd like the most expensive kind. Can we pay in installments?" Foods such as eel typically come in three grades: Nami (Ordinary), Joo (Good), and Tokujoo (Special, or the Highest Grade). Grade also determines price.

"My head isn't for pounding on!" A Mokugyo is a type of drum used by Buddhist priests during their meditations.

### **Episode 52, Story 75: "Can a Raccoon Repay a Favor?!"**

"Going is fine, returning is cold." The original version of this line, "Going is fine, returning is hazardous," is a famous Japanese proverb, originating in a children's song, the specifics of which can be found in the next episode, "The Do-or-Die Subspace Part-time Job."

"I'm O-shima!" A raccoon of the same name appears in Urusei Yatsura Movie #3, "Remember My Love," which was made in 1985, some three years after this episode. Both of the O-shima's are played by the same voice actress, Sugaya Masako, and both O-shima raccoons are absolutely good for nothing, but the similarities between the two end there. For all intents and purposes, they are not the same character.

### **Episode 53, Story 76: "The Do-or-Die Subspace Part-time Job"**

"Miss, I'll have a Sunday Part-time Jobs Weekly." Shuukan Arbaito Sunday is a pun on Shuukan Shoonen Sunday, the magazine in which Urusei Yatsura was originally serialized.

"Yochinoya Beef-bowls is hiring a few. 500 per hour..." Yochinoya is a take-off on Yoshinoya, a major Japanese gyuudon (beef-bowl) chain.

"Bath? Bath... Hazels!" "Hazels? Sacred!" "Uh... I'm not here to play games. Do you know where it is?" Shiritori is a word game wherein the object is to make a word beginning with the last character used in the previous word given. Ataru makes an inadvertent pun on "shiritori" when he asks, "Shirimasen ka?" (Do you know where it is?) The pun is that the "shiri" is "shiritori" means "rear," and the "shiri" in "shirimasen" is the -masu form of the verb "shiru," which means "to know."

"Asura, according to Buddhism, was one of Tenryu's eight clans..." Tenryuu hachibushu are eight different beings who protect Buddhism. They consist of Ten, Ryuu, Yasha, Kendasuba, Asura, Karura, Kinnara, and Magoraga.

"Wait! Do you want menko? How about Rooseki? Or Biidama?" Menko is round thick cardboard card, used in a traditional kids' game, the like of which hardly exists today, in the age of Nintendo. One card is placed on the ground, and players take turns trying to flip it over by throwing their own cards at it. Flipping it over earns points. Rooseki are stones cut into long sticks, used for drawing lines and circles on the ground for children to play in. Biidama are marbles, and used in much the same way in Japan as in the US.

"Hey, you, over there... YOU! What's your name?" This character is in the style of manga artist Tsujino Taroo, creator of "Kyoofu Shimibun" (Terror Times) and other horror stories. For more information, see Urusei Yatsura OVA set 3, "Goat and Cheese."

"What's this, Jariten? You're old enough to be in the men's bath?!" Young children often go to the women's baths, with their mothers.

## **Episode 54, Story 77: "The Big Year-End Party That Lum Organized!"**

Everything in this episode points fairly obviously to the tale of Urashima Taroo, with the joke being that nobody figures it out, no matter how obvious it gets.

"I'm the protector of justice, Zenigata Heiji!" Zenigata Heiji was a legendary Edo-period detective, whose special technique for capturing criminals was (as shown in this episode) to throw a handful of zeni (a type of old Japanese coin, of fairly low value) at them.

"Come, Kojiroo!" "Here I come, Sashi!" This scene is a parody of the duel between Miyamoto Musashi and Ganryuu Sasaki Kojiroo. Unlike the actual event, Kojiroo wins. For more information, see TV Set 15.

"A traveling takoyaki seller!" Takoyaki are pieces of baked octopus, rolled into balls and wrapped in seaweed.

"Where's Garapachi?" Garapachi was Zenigata Heiji's actual assistant.

"OK, then, how about this?" Yoiko no Ehon (A Good Child's Picture Book) is a typical title or slogan for a book for children. "Yoiko no..." is often attached to the names of merchandise intended for children, as if to say, reading or using such products will make your children into good children.

"Hey! Y...You look familiar!" "Don't be shocked, but I'm the thief Lupin!" This exchange between the original Zenigata Heiji and Arsene Lupin is an in-joke directed towards the popular manga/anime series "Lupin III," which had finished its smash-hit second series run in 1980, only about a year before Urusei Yatsura began what would become an even more successful TV run. To be precise, the descendants of both Zenigata and Lupin are two of the five regular stars of "Lupin III."

"Good place to meet! Does this mean anything to you?" "Not really. Why?" "Me ni hairu" can mean to recognize something, or to literally get something in one's eye. "Me ni ireru," on the other hand, means to put something into one's eye, which Lupin says is impossible.

Visual jokes: Chase scene one: Leaning Tower of Pisa and Pyramids of Egypt in background, the Invaders' saucer, Kazama Shin's F-20 Tigershark, from "Area 88." Chase scene two: Ultraman, Tetsujin 28-goo.

"Come in!" The pun here is that turtle, in Japanese, is "kame," and this turtle says "kam-in," playing on the sound similarity of "kame," and "come in."

"Was it a dream? Or was it real?" The music in this sequence is from a song about Urashima Taroo. Also, note the various women seated around Onsen-mark when he sits at the banquet table. The Macross (a.k.a. Star Blazers) bridge crew are directly behind him.

"I want to have a good poke with all the girls in the world!" Written one way, "tsuki au" means to go out with, or date, someone. Written another way, it means to poke, or stab, one another.

"What? Treasure? As a hero I can't let this go by!" This is the legendary "Gekkoo Kamen" (Moonlight Mask), perhaps the original mysterious masked motorcycle-driving superhero in Japan. An awful lot of similar Japanese heroes over the last twenty or thirty years more or less owe their existence to Gekkoo Kamen.

Note also the various cameos by famous heroes and monsters in the last part of this episode, including Frankenstein's Monster, Wolfman, Batman and Robin (albeit with slightly different color schemes), Wonder Woman (same), Spock (ditto), and Tinkerbell.

## **Episode 55, Story 78: "Bad Boy Musashi: A Success Story"**

Miyamoto Musashi, inventor of the "Nito" (two-sword) fighting style, was made famous in Japan by an author named Yoshioka Eiji, in a newspaper serial called "Miyamoto Musashi," which began serialization in 1935. The novel, while based on historical fact, contains considerable amounts of fiction as well.

Miyamoto Musashi (1584?-1645?) was born in what is now present-day Ooaza Miyamoto, Sanumomura, Aida-

gun, Okayama Prefecture. It was called Yoshino-gun, Mimasaka-no-kuni (Country of Mimasaka) in his time. His given name at birth was Bennosuke, a name which he himself later changed to Musashi. He also had the title of "Niten." His father, Munisai, died when he was seven. When he was seventeen, he took part in the famous Battle of Sekigahara, on the losing side.

At the age of twenty-one, he fought a duel in Kyoto with the Yoshiokas: Seijuuroo, Denshichiroo (brothers), and Matashichiroo (son of Seijuuroo). Yoshioka Kempoo, father of Seijuuroo and Denshichiroo, founded the Yoshioka-ryuu (Yoshioka School of Kenjutsu [fencing]) toward the end of the Muromachi Period (1333-1572). Some people feel that Miyamoto was being excessively cruel, because he not only killed the two elder Yoshiokas, but also the young Matashichiroo, who wanted to avenge his father and uncle. But the Yoshioka clan themselves did not see any particular unfairness, and not only supported Matashichiroo's attempt at revenge, but also provided him with a musket for the purpose.

During that same year, he also took part in a competition with the famous Nara Hoozoo school of spear-fighting.

Between his twenty-second and twenty-eighth years, Miyamoto had a battle with Shishidoo Baiken(?), wielder of the kusari-gama (chain-and-sickle) at Iga, took part in a competition at Edo against Musoo Gonnosuke, who invented the Musoo style of staff fighting, and visited many Zen temples, including Daitokuji (whose master was Takuan Soohoo), to improve himself mentally.

In April, 1612, when Miyamoto was 29, he fought another duel, this time at Funajima, against Ganryuu Sasaki Kojiroo, killing him (see below). The name of the island was later changed to Ganryuujima to honor the name of the fallen swordsman.

In the later years of his life, he became more interested in cultural matters, developing his skills as an artist and writer. In the latter field, he wrote a book on his "Niten-ichi-ryuu" (two-swords fighting style, also known as "Enmei-ryuu" and "Nitoo-ryuu"), as well as the legendary "Gorin no Sho" (The Book of Five Rings), which he finished in 1645, at the age of 62, not long before he died. His most famous work of art is the black-and-white brush painting, "Kosui Kigezu."

Character references:

Takuan: full name: Takuan Soohoo (1573-1645). Like Miyamoto, he was born in Mimasaka. Historically, he crossed paths with Musashi many times. Apparently, he assisted Musashi's mental training while Musashi stayed in his temple, Daitokuji. He had an important role in Yoshikawa's book, but it is unclear whether he was really all that close to Miyamoto. It is possible that a radish of the same name took its name from this monk, but it cannot be said for certain that this is so.

Sasaki Kojiroo (?-1612). He developed the Kempoo Tsubame-gaeshi (Swallow Swoop Style) of Kenjutsu. In 1612, for historically unclear reasons, he would fight Miyamoto Musashi, at what would become known as the Duel of Ganryuujima. According to Yoshikawa, Musashi used a number of strategies, the first of which was to arrive three hours late for the duel. It was set for eight o'clock, and he didn't arrive until eleven. He used this strategy routinely, because it would offend and upset his opponents. Next, instead of regular swords, he fashioned a long, flat heavy sword out of one of the oars of his boat. Then he fought in shallow water, with the sun deliberately behind him. He chose this time of day because the sun would be high, and would also reflect well off the water, thus adding to the strain on Kojiroo's eyes. Finally, waiting for the moment when Kojiroo dropped his scabbard, Musashi said, "Kojiroo, you lose!" Kojiroo, startled, was caught completely unprepared when Musashi brought the boat oar squarely down on his head, killing him.

Supposedly, Musashi was a sneaky fighter, always choosing opponents that he knew he could defeat, and then applying strategies that would make his victory even more inevitable. But according to Yoshikawa, he had numerous ups and downs in his life as well, and in Yoshikawa's novel various (fictional) acquaintances appear in order to dramatize this. Chief among these was Matahachi, a childhood friend of Musashi's, his grandmother, Osugibabaa, and Matahachi's fiancée, Otsuu, who was later abandoned by Matahachi. Osugi held a grudge against Musashi, because she believed Matahachi left Otsuu and never came back home after the Battle of Sekigahara because of Musashi. But the truth was that Matahachi simply found himself another woman, and didn't want to go back. But that didn't stop Osugi from laying all sorts of traps for Musashi throughout the course of the novel. Yoshikawa went to great lengths to make all the events in his novel, both real and fictional,

as dramatic as possible.

Musashi was also considered something of a wild man, traveling alone from place to place, with little regard for what was considered good grooming and dress among the bushi (the warrior caste), and also engaged in conflict with various authority figures, including the Yoshiokas and the Hosokawas, all of which combined to make him a popular figure.

Another noteworthy point in this episode is the multitude of anachronisms. See how many you can spot.

#### **Episode 56, Story 79: "We'll Risk Our Lives During Classtime!"**

"If you do something like that, your folks will be saddened!" This line is reminiscent of a typical episode of "Taiyoo ni Hoero (Howl at the Sun)," a Japanese detective series. This sort of comment is typical of old-fashioned persuasion techniques on the part of police, trying to convince criminals to give up their evil ways. In

"Do you make your customers eat soba so old that it's swelled up like udon?" Soba are thin buckwheat ramen, and udon are thick egg-flour ramen. When soba is left to sit too long in the broth, it absorbs the liquid content, swelling up. This indicates that it's fairly old.

"It was as if Friday the 13th, Butsumetsu, Sanrinbo, Tenchuusatsu, the Grand Cross, and the Seventh Month of 1999 had all come together at once, and congealed!" Butsumetsu is bad luck because it is the day Buddha died, according to the Rokki, or Buddhist diary, which foretells days of good and bad luck based on certain events in the life of Buddha. See TV Set 3, Episode 10, Stories 19-20, "Pitter Patter Christmas Eve" for more details. If something is built on the day of Sanrinbo, it will catch fire, and not only burn down itself, but also three other houses in the neighborhood. Tenchuusatsu is from a method of fortune-telling introduced a decade or so ago, based on determining what days or years will be bad luck for one. We weren't able to determine what the Grand Cross means, but the Seventh Month of 1999 is from the prophecies of Nostradamus, who supposedly foretold some great disaster for Earth at that time.

"Come on, Tentaman!" This sort of gattai (combination) robot is one of the most abundant themes in anime.

#### **Episode 57, Story 80: "Domestic Quarrel--To Eat or to Be Eaten?!"**

"Ran...?" "...Away...?" "...From home?" This is an attempt to deal with the exaggerated repetition of "I." "E." "DE." (Run Away From Home) that the Moroboshis use in reply to Lum's statement of same.

"The way of men!" "The way of men!" "The way of men!" The visual following this scene is a parody of the Toei Movie Logo. It is also a parody of *Otoko Wa Tsurai Yo* (It's Tough to Be a Man), the longest-running film series in the world, about the life and times of Tora-san, a ne'er-do-well travelling salesman.

#### **Episode 58, Story 81: "Steal the Kiss of Miss Snow Queen!"**

"What induced you to treat me to okonomiyaki all of a sudden?" Okonomiyaki is a pancake-like snack food, with many combinations of ingredients.

"And now, here she is, Miss Snow Queen!" As the Queen struts down the stage, look for Minky Momo in the crowd.

"I don't know, but I do know this: 'V for VICTORY!'" "Sign wa V" (The Sign is V) was a TV drama popular around 20 years ago, about a girl's volleyball team. Very soap-opera-like.

"I love your manliness, Shiruo!" "Menko..." Shiruo means soup-guy, and Menko means noodle-girl. The reason these characters are here is for no reason at all. Really.