

**URUSEI YATSURA**  
**DISC 16, EPISODES 59 – 62**

**Episode 59, Story 82 - "Valentine's Day from Hell"**

"It's a day when girls confess their love to guys by giving them chocolate."

Modern Japanese Valentine's Day celebrations involve women of all ages giving men chocolate. Legend has it that this all started about 40 years ago, when the head of a Japanese chocolate company went abroad and learned of St. Valentine's Day. Seeing the commercial possibilities inherent in the event, he imported it as a means to boost business, and invented the concept of "Girl Choco," or chocolate given as an obligation by women to men in certain situations, i.e., the workplace. In the recent economic hard times, however, this "custom" has largely fallen by the wayside, and a larger percentage of Valentine's Day confectionary is romantically oriented. To give men an opportunity to repay the debt incurred from receiving Girl Choco, the chocolate manufacturers most thoughtfully invented "White Day" (March 14th), wherein the men give chocolate and other gifts back to the women.

"It means that he's accepted the girl's love for him."

"A...A...Accepted her love?!"

On the other hand, the above explanation does not necessarily make Lum's statement here true. Most of this story centers around Lum and Mako's determination to misunderstand the workings of Japanese Valentine's Day, so as to justify their actions.

"I'd prefer Okonomiyaki now."

Okonomiyaki is a sort of pancake, with small pieces of various vegetables baked into it.

"Swastika figure lock!"

The Manji, or Buddhist cross, is the original symbol that was reversed to become the swastika. The bizarre wrestling hold that Lum is putting on Ataru resembles the shape of the manji.

**Episode 60, Story 83 - "Love-Love Catchballs!"**

"Two o'clock at Cafe Tokeizaka? Sure! I'm not busy."

Tokeizaka is the name of the fictional neighborhood setting of "Maison Ikkoku," which Takahashi Rumiko was writing -- simultaneously with Urusei Yatsura -- during this period (c.1983). Note also all the clocks and clock sounds in the cafe -- "tokei," as in "Tokeizaka," is Japanese for clock.

"Ah, Waiter. One extra-large American coffee, strong, please!"

In Japan, "American coffee" is a weak blend, as opposed to stronger Japanese and European blends. By trying to order "strong" American coffee, Ataru shows how little he knows about the subject. Also, "oomori" sounds as strange to Japanese ears as "extra-large" would sound to American ears when applied to ordering coffee, tea or similar drinks.

"Shinobu, you have to end up marrying the man you've seen in there!"

"N...N...No way!"

The in-joke here is in the video. The scene is a parody of the climactic scenes from each installment of Fujio F. Fujiko A's classic series, "Warau Salesman" (Laughing Salesman). In this series, the title character, Moguro Fukuzoo (whose name is itself a pun, roughly translating as "Mourning Clothes Happiness Maker") gives various people what they think will make them happy. Naturally, there is always a catch, and when the victim falls for it, Moguro appears, with a grin that seems fixed on his face, and pronounces their doom. In addition to some five volumes of manga originally published in the 1960's, an animated version was aired on late-night TV in Japan (c. 1990).

### **Episode 61, Story 84 - "The Mendou Family Masked Ball"**

The key pun of this story is in its title. "Butookai" is normally written with a pair of kanji that mean "ball." "Kamen butookai" would then mean "fancy dress ball" or "masquerade ball." But by using a different pair of kanji for the "butoo" in "butookai," a pair which means "martial arts," the meaning of "kamen butookai" instead becomes "masked martial arts party." The confusion surrounding this notion is central to this episode.

When Ten shouts "CHARGE!" Torajima follows up with "Miaowdachi!" This is a cat-speak mangling of "Ninoodachi," which refers to the classic stance of a Ninoo, or Deva, which is typically very strong and solid --i.e., immovable once it places itself somewhere.

"Heroes are supposed to come and go like the wind."

The original line is a riff on "Hayate no yoo ni arawarete, hayate no yoo ni satte yuku" (He appears like the wind, and leaves like the wind), a lyric from the theme song to "Gekkoo Kamen" (Moonlight Mask), possibly the earliest Japanese masked, motorcycle riding mystery hero (c. 1962-63). Most Japanese heroes since can be said to owe a debt to Gekkoo Kamen for their existence.

"Want some Meow-cotine?"

This is a takeoff on the slogan from a well-known Japanese cigarette commercial of the period, "Nicotine-suru?" (Want some nicotine?)

"Little kids don't go smoking Meowld Sevens, you jerk!"

Mild Seven is a popular brand of Japanese cigarette, of which "Meowld Seven" is the version that cats smoke (supposedly).

"This is all there is for kids who won't buy candy."

This line is a reference to kamishibai (paper plays), an entertainment form popular in the decades immediately following the war. Entertainers would travel from place to place, and the shows they put on consisted of a series of illustrations on paper that together told a story. The kamishibai artist would elaborate with words and sound effects to entertain the kids who came to see. The line in question refers to one way the performers would make money at this: show a little bit, then get kids to buy candy before showing any more.

Among the characters appearing in the fight scene: Majinger Z (note Kabuto Koji getting kicked out of helicopter when "Majinger Z" gets kicked), Elle, Masked Bride, the Zaku from the original Kidoo Senshi Gundam, ET, Alien, Char Azanable, Mr. Spock, Gekkoo Kamen, and Darth Vader.

"Ataru...here I go!"

This line is a play on "Amuro, ikimasu!" from the original Kidoo Senshi Gundam (in which Furukawa Toshio had a supporting role as Kai Shiden).

"Is this where the grape harvest is being held?"

"Budoogari" is essentially a do-it-yourself grape harvest. It's a pun on the similarity in pronunciation to "Butookai."

"Two people are death!"

The original, "Ninin ga shi!" comes from Kuku (Nine-nine), the Japanese multiplication tables. It's normally the expression for "Two times two is four," but "shi," which is one reading of the kanji for four, is also the reading of the kanji for "death." It should hardly come as a surprise, then, that four is considered an unlucky number in Japan.

### **Episode 62, Story 85 - "Space Cold Panic!"**

The opening narration is a parody of the classic opening narration of "Uchuu Senkan Yamato" (Space Battleship Yamato).

"Yeah, there's a Torajima SSX flu epidemic this year..."

The "SSX" here is probably a reference to "Waga Seishun no Arcadia Mugen Kidoo SSX", a popular if brief Captain Harlock TV series that aired at this time.

"They say that cute big-breasted girls don't catch colds!" is a play on the saying, "Baka wa kaze o hikanai" (Idiots don't catch colds). Ataru uses an absurd rendering of the readings of the "Ba" and "Ka" in Baka in an attempt to keep Lum from killing him: "Ba" from "Basuto" (Bust) and "Ka" from "Kawaii" (Cute). As Megane points out, it's a shaky dodge at best.

"Space has multitudes of mysteries beyond the ability of mankind to comprehend, after all!"

The visual that follows this line -- the finger-touch scene -- is another jab at ET, which was highly popular in Japan.

The ending narration is another parody, this time of the Japanese translation of the opening narration to the original Star Trek TV Series.