

URUSEI YATSURA
DISC 24, EPISODES 91 - 94

Episode 91, Story 114: Document! Who'll be Miss Tomobiki?

“Just as the flower's color will easily fade...” -Shinobu.

This line comes from a poem by Ono no Komachi, a 9th century imperial attendant and poet. A majority of her poems are about love and romance.

The poem that Shinobu recites is from one of Ono's most famous pieces:

Hananoirowa
utsurinikerina itazurani
wagamiyonifuru
nagameseshima ni

Dozens of translations and interpretations exist for this poem. Here is but one example:

While watching
the long rains falling on this world
my heart, too, fades
with the unseen color
of the spring flowers.

[The Ink Dark Moon: Love Poems by Ono no Komachi & Izumi Shikibu; translated by Jane Hirshfield and Mariko Aratani (Vintage Classics). New York: Vintage Books, 1990.]

Because of the inherent complexity in translating poetry, especially fragments of it, we've left just enough in the subtitles to be used as a guide. Interested readers are invited to read further!

“...and so, we'll be supporting you 100%, every step of the way! The heyday of the sailor-suit is over!” - a student.

The sailor-suit, or the traditional school uniform for girls, was often the wardrobe of choice for many teenage idol stars in the seventies and early eighties.

There are many jokes in Cherry's narration:

“Here's a pair of tickets for an overnight trip to Hakone. One of which is in the name of the No.3 babe at Butsumetsu High. Don't you want the other one?”

Hakone is at the center of Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park near Odawara, which is perhaps the most popular spot in Japan, known for many of its hot springs.

“Restaurant Jipangu used the motto, ‘Okonomiya gives power for tomorrow!’ and Shinobu became their poster girl.”

Okonomiyaki is a thick pancake-like food with fillings that consist of shredded cabbage and meat.

“With their motto, ‘Eat Me,’ Akadama Bakery used Ran as their endorser.”

Japanese bakeries usually are integrated into coffeeshops, where pastries and other small baked goods do most business.

“Ebiya hired Lum as an endorser and used the slogan ‘The Legacy of the People of the 20th Century.’”

Ebiya's product is a traditional, baked snackfood called taiyaki, which is made of a fish-shaped dough and sweet-bean paste filling.

“Ryuunosuke became the model for Kotobuki Oden, with the slogan, ‘The Taste of Hamachaya, the One and Only.’”

Oden is a diverse mix of broiled and boiled vegetables and fishmeat paté all cooked in broth soup. Oden kiosks are set up on street corners, and are especially popular in winter.

Episode 92, Story 115: Bizarre! The Medicine of Selflessness!

“This medicine can purge the body of all its earthly desires. 'Tis a revolutionary potion!” - Cherry.

“You're using THAT to solidify it?!” - Sakura.

In certain Buddhist teachings, ‘bonnou’ refers to harmful, earthly desires that pollute the mind. Priests go through arduous training to rid themselves of such desires.

Cherry's mysterious concoction was being mixed, poured and then baked and solidified in an iron mold that's used to make taiyaki (see above).

“You spend your life building your happiness, one bit at a time, suppressing most of your desires. You call that a beautiful life?! Being human is so lame! But I'm different! I'll become a true human, and use this freed existence to go on a journey! I'll live like a human, of humanity, by humanity, for humanity! And that is what being human is all about!” - Ataru

Yet another overdramatic attempt by Ataru to deliver a serious-sounding monologue!

“Oh, such a handsome man! I'm Akina. Nice to meet you!” “Call me Seiko, handsome!” - Aliens.

The names come from the most popular idol stars from that time period.

Episode 93, Story 116: Shutaro's Jinxed Morning

“Here's some okayu for you, sir!” -Mendou.

“Why in the world do I have to eat okayu in a harem? Bring me something richer! How about Beefbowl with Miso soup? Tanuki-Donburi? Huh?” - Ataru.

Okayu is essentially pre-cooked rice that is boiled to make a kind of porridge. Leftover rice is sometimes used to make okayu for infants.

Gyuudon (Beefbowl, i.e. beef topping over rice) and Tanukidon (Tempura batter topping over

rice) are popular dishes often served in lesser expensive establishments. The joke here is that even beefbowl or tanukidon are only a minor step above okayu in the fanciness scale.

“That's the power limit of kiosk noodles. That idiot's strength is way above ours!” - Megane.
Cheaper noodle shops and kiosks usually do not have any room for customers to sit, hence the name ‘tachigui soba,’ or eat-while-standing noodles.

“You're under arrest!” - Police.

Numerous pop culture icons are visible in this scene. Among them, that of a marathon runner arriving at the goal: the official logo of a famous confectionary, known for its soft caramels.

“Is this where the grape harvest is being held?” - Cherry.

Many farms operate separate fields where they allow the public to pick and gather their own fruits and vegetables. Do-It-Yourself picking of strawberries, grapes, mushrooms and potatoes has always been popular.

“So I had all these damned ‘2’ pieces, and I was like?” - Megane.

This is a reference to Mah-jong, a popular game, usually of gambling nature.

Episode 94, Story 117: The Story of a Traveling Snowman

“The water heater breaks down, and it's freezing outside, too! I'll be frozen before I get home.” - Ataru.

Most bathtubs in Japanese houses are jacuzzi-like structures with water heaters connected to them. Thus, a phrase such as ‘furo ga kowareru’ (literally: bath breaks down) does not refer to the actual structure breaking down!

“Being young means being naïve, thus society is like the world of stubborn old people.” - Chibi.
This chaotic sequence containing seemingly random, nonsensical dialogues uses references from current events, TV, history, and literature. The end result, of course, is essentially non-sense!

“Being naïve is like fresh vegetables, and so ‘it ain't right!’, if you don't eat them, as everybody knows” - Chibi.

One of the most successful TV commercials from that time employed an actor using a northern dialect and thick accent, who proclaimed: ‘Yasai o taanto toranyaa dachikanzo!’ which loosely translates to ‘It ain't right if ya don't eat enough veggies!’