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The Musk Incident



失われた秘宝

Ushina Wareta Hihou

Lost Divided Secret Treasure

Volume 24 Part 3

Page 38:

The inset in the topmost panel shows us the outside of Tendo-ke at night. The main body of the uppermost panel shows us a very frustrated Ranma Saotome, stewing in the Tendo furo. Ranma's girl half, unlike his male half, tends to cry in these situations and this snafu is no exception. Ranma is saying:

どーなってるんだー。

Doo nattendā (natte no da)

How ??????

I can't be sure of what Ranma is saying here, but I'll take a guess.

"How the hell did THIS happen?"

One panel down and to the right, Shanpu and Kolon enter the Tendo furo sans a knock. Both of them are looking very worried and Shanpu cries out:

乱馬！男に戻らなくなった本当か！？

Ranma! Otoko ni modoranaku natta honto ka!

Ranma! Male in returning not
death, the dead or broken things.)

true ? ("-naku" is normally only used in reference to

"Ranma! Is it true you cannot return to manhood?"

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In the panel to the left, we get a close up of Kolon's face, gulp, and Kolon says:

やはりな。。。心配したとりじゃ。

Yahari na ... shinpaishita tori ja
As expected worried about same this ("Tori" is actually used as "in the manner or way previously mentioned" wherein that phrase refers to something mentioned in the preceding clause. You can see the translator's problem here.)

"Just as I expected. I was worried about this very thing."

In the bottommost panel the view of the room is reversed and we can see what is going on around the furo and we almost wish we couldn't. Why because we may never get our breath back, that's why! On the far left and behind Soun Tendo is a weeping pandateki Genma Saotome. Soun is dabbing at his weeping eyes with a handkerchief as he pours hot water out of a dipper onto the head of a very weebegone looking Saotome Childe. Just to the right of Ranma is Akane, sitting in seiza on the bathing room floor, making my ankles hurt as I watch. Akane is looking back towards us and the Amazons as she asks:

なにか知ってるの！？おばーさん。

Nani ka shiratteru no? Obaasan.
Anything knowing of Grandmother (Actually, in this context, "Honored Elderly Lady. One may well use this term when speaking to one's own grandmother.)

"Do you know anything about this, Honored Elder?"

Our semi-beloved and thoroughly withered crone reaches back across her ages of experience and wisdom for a reply and then answers:

うむ。。。

"Um, ah..."

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In the uppermost right panel of page 39 there is a depiction of the salient event which previously occurred at the Nekohanten just a short time ago, to wit: Haabu splashing water on onnateki Ranma with that peculiar looking bucket and ladle. Included in this reminder of that tragic happenstance is a dialogue balloon. We may safely assume that it is Kolon explaining why said event is of greater importance than anything else that occurred during this afternoon's imbroglio:

先ほど闘いでハーブがかけた止水桶の水。。。。

Sakihodo tatakai de Haabu ga kaketa chisuiton no mizu...
A little while ago fighting with Haabu asfor put stop water bucket of water

あれが原因じゃ。

are ga genin ja.
That asfor cause is.

"A little while ago, during he fight, Haabu put water from the Stop Water Bucket on Ranma. That is the cause." A smoother interpretation might go, "A little while ago, Haabu threw water from the Stopwater Bucket on Ranma. That's why he cannot change back into is native form."

One panel to the left we find that our concerned conferees have adjourned themselves to the dojo for tea and discussion rather than the more usual blood, sweat and tears. All said and done, this is a curiously moving scene. Pandateki Genma is seated with his back to the wall. Onnateki Ranma, looking very frail, is sitting near his ursine father who has gently rested a paw on his son's left shoulder in a gesture of loving support. Next to Ranma is seated the Tendo patriarch and next to her father sits the lovely Akane Tendo. Across from Soun is the Lovely Goddess in Purple Tresses and next to her, the Amazon Matriarch. All save Genma and Kolon are seated in seiza. Genma cannot possibly sit in this fashion whilst in panda form and Kolon is, as ever, perched and balanced upon her over-sized walking stick.

There are, you will notice, six people in the room and therefore there are six cups of tea available, but notice that the sixth cup of tea has been set upon the floor rather than the platter. I am certain that this is no accident. In the United States dishes are, as a rule, sold in sets of two, four or six. In Japan, and parts of San Francisco, they are only ever sold in sets of five. I am reliably informed that if you buy an American made set of dishes for a Japanese friend, be double damned sure to remove one of each item prior to shipping so that there are only five place settings in the box. Apparently, the numbers four and six are both ritually unclean and people do not want anything ritually unclean associated with their food. We barbarians are not meant understand, but are expected to do dishes in fives whenever our Nihonjin brethren are involved.

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Oh, and Soun Tendo is asking:

止水桶？

Chisuiton?

"Stopwater Bucket?"

We are treated to yet another close up of the venerable Kolon in the next panel. You may pause in your reading for a moment and here have a good shiver if you must. In this frame, Kolon hastens to explain the nature of Ranma's problem:

やつらジアコウ王朝の秘宝。。。。

Yatsura Jiakou Ouchou no hihou...
Asshole Musk Dynasty of secret treasure...

止水桶で汲んだ水は、姿を

Chisuiton de kunda mizu wa sugata o (ku no da)
Stopwaterbucke dipped water asfor shape obj

留め置く神秘の水。

tome oku shinpi no mizu (The meaning of "shinpi" is dismissed as "mysterious" in the dictionaries. locked place god touched of water. "sacred secret" is more accurate, if you go by the two kanji making up the word. The first kanji in shinpi, is also Kami or Shin, meaning god-like spirit. They don't mean the same thing by "god" as we westerners do. Substitute "very powerful" for omnipotent and you'll start getting a grip on it.)

Notice that there are a number of ambiguities and that the process involved in all this is more complex than one might initially think. This is important in this story, and will be in CtCD. Making an ambiguous statement in an English translation of this statement is, curiously enough, a tough challenge.

"A secret treasure of that Asshole Musk Dynasty. Water ladled from the Stopwater bucket will lock in place the shapes caused by waters touched by kami."

Muusu and Riyouga will misconstrue the meaning of Kolon's explanation in this story. I have given her explication considerable thought, and hit upon several ideas to use in CtCD.)

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Kolon explains further in the bottommost right panel where there is another depiction of Jusenkyou being used by a pair of masculine Muskovites. The one in the background is throwing a fox, yes, a fox, into the Spring of Drowned Girl, while the big ugly fellow in the foreground is pouring water on a nude woman from our now infamous bucket and ladle. Kolon's dialogue reads:

娘溺泉で女にしたどーぶつにこれを使い、

Nianniichiuwan de onna ni shita doubutsu ni kore wo tsukai
Girldrownspring of onna made animal of this obj useing

永久に女にしたとの言い伝えがある。

eikyuu ni onna ni shita to no ii tsutae ga aru.
Permanently woman becomesand of said saying asfor is. (If you think I could have heard this and understood it, I have a few bridges for sale.)

"They use it to make the women made from animals in the Spring of Drowned Girl into permanent women."

One panel to the left we see the horrified expressions of Kolon's listener's. Soun Tendo seems to be the hardest hit by this news. There is a "radiant" type dialogue cloud in this frame suggesting that the text within it is a chilling thought being repeated in the minds of those depicted in the picture. It reads:

永久に女のまま。。。？

eikyuu ni onna no mama...
permanently woman of remaining in the same state...? (Yep! That's what "mama" means in Japanese.)

"Permanently a woman, in the same state forever?"

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The uppermost right panel depicts Ranma speaking with Kolon. They are shown against a black background with a white "flare spot," I don't know how else to describe it, between them. A very frustrated onnateki Ranma shouts:

治す方法ないのか？

Naosu houhou nai no ka?
Recover method not of ?

"There is no method of recovery?"

To which Kolon replies in the same panel with:

あるにわある。

Aru ni wa aru.
As best as I can decipher this:

"A certain method, does exist."

It is often more difficult to deal with these shorter sentences in Japanese. The language allows a speaker to say something about the subject of the other person's previous sentence without mentioning that subject directly. "Aru" can mean "A certain" or "some" as well as some conjugation of the verb "to be," or "to exist." It drives the translator up a wall sometimes. What is also implied in this sentence is "if you can get your hands on it."

A brief note on hiragana. If, in Japanese writing, the kanji were used in every instance where they were applicable, translation of Japanese text would be much simpler. However, such text is hard on the eyes and most Japanese have little or no trouble parsing hiragana and are able to pick out individual words quickly. It can be tricky because Japanese has a huge number of homophones. For instance, the Merriam-Webster Japanese-English Learner's Dictionary lists the verb "iru" five times in order of most frequent use. The first has, get this, four regular usages and two idiomatic usages. If "iru" is written in hiragana, rather than kanji, it becomes necessary to pick a potential meaning of "iru" that matches the context. The postpositional particles, such as ni, to, mo, de, da, and no each have numerous potential meanings entirely dependent on context and they are always written in hiragana. The word "ni," written in hiragana, can have any one of seventeen potential meanings, and only one or two of them can be translated into English with a single word. This is not as bad as it sounds, but it can be challenging from time to time for the poorly educated reader, which by Japanese standards, I am.

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In the next panel, a very ornate kettle of ancient, two-piece design is depicted floating in mid-air. The background is of some mountainous and very picaresque region of China. There are parts of China that really do resemble these old pen and ink drawings, many of which are about to disappear beneath what will soon be the largest man-made lake on earth, but I digress. There are two large dialogue clouds in this panel, both of which belong to Kolon. She is saying:

I do not have the last character for the name of this second treasure in my font set and therefore resorted to using the Japanese kanji for kettle, or "kama," rather than the Chinese "fuu." I suppose I could load the "Big Five" Chinese character set, but my system file already takes up an enormous amount of RAM.

止水桶と対をなすジアコウ王朝の秘宝、開水釜。

Chisuiton to tsui o nasu Jiakou Ouchou no hihou , kaisuifuu
SWBucket and opposite obj do Musk Dynasty of secret treasure OpenWaterKettle.

開水釜にて沸いた湯をかければ、

kaisuifuu nite waita yuu o kakereba,
OWKettle boils boiled hot water obj running? (very tricky verb tense. Would or might be running.)

たちどころに止水桶の

tachidokoro ni chisuiton no
immediately SWBucket of

効きめがなくなるという。

kikime ga naku naru to iu.
Effect, asfor abolish change emphatic phrase used in explanations.
Effects,

Efficacy Well, a long explanation of the translation is in order, but I'll do the interpretation first:

The Stop-water Bucket and that which does the opposite, the Open-water Kettle, are secret treasures of the Musk Dynasty. The Open-water Kettle can make boiling hot running water instantly and abolishes the effects of the Stop-water Bucket."

I do not understand why Kolon said the word boiling twice the way she did. The word "nite" means boiling as a status of something and waita is the past tense of waiu, meaning to boil. The suffixes, "ereba" and "naraba" are conditional inflections of verbs, for which there are about a half-dozen potential uses. I chose the one that seemed to make the most sense in this context. This coupled with "tachidokoro ni" which means immediately or instantly implies a condition, but said condition is never specifically stated. I assume it means on contact with water, but it may work with other liquids, gasoline, maybe? Of course, everything in the Ranma 1/2 series revolves around water so I'll assume it only works with water.

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The picture in the next panel is something of a puzzle. There are two men seated at a table. The house appears to be of Japanese architecture, but the furniture appears to be of Chinese design. The man on the right is wearing his hair and is dressed in period garb. The man on the left is wearing his hair in the old fashioned style you see in the Samurai movies. I am guessing that this must have occurred in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries. The actual location of the pair is not at all clear. They could have been in the Japanese legation in Beijing, or just as easily been somewhere in Japan. For that matter, they could have been somewhere in Korea. The Japanese man is well dressed, but his outer clothing is plainly patterned, suggesting that he is a merchant rather than a Samurai (the Tokugawa Shogunate imposed very strict dress codes), which would suggest that this happened during the Edo period of Japan's history. My guess is that the Japanese gentleman is a merchant with a passion for all things Chinese. Today he would be called a "Chugoku otaku." Kolon continues:

開水釜は中国動乱の歴史の中で

Kaisuifuu wa Chuugoku douran no rekishi no naka de
OWKettle asfor China upheaval of history of internal is/was

次々と人手に渡れ、

tsukitsuki to hito te ni watari
oneafterother and person hand in crossed over.

現在はこの日本に。。。

gensai wa kono Nippon ni...
now asfor thing of japan in

"The Open-water Kettle changed hands during China's historic upheavals which came one upon another. It is now in Japan."

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At the bottom of the page, in the right corner we have another close up rendering of Kolon. Feel free to shudder. In the panel over which she is superimposed, is a rendering of our three Muskovites, Haabu, Raimu and Minto. Kolon continues to speak:

ハーブたちが来日したの

Haabu tachi ga rainichi shita no
Haabu and company asfor trip to Japan of

は失われし秘宝を

wa ushina wareshi hihou o
asfor lost divided secret treasure obj

とり戻すため。

tori modosu tame.
Same return purpose

"The reason Haabu and Company came to Japan is to return this lost and divided secret treasure."

Okay, Haabu has come to Japan in order to recover this item that was almost certainly stolen from the Muskovite royal house many, many moons ago. Her claim to it is almost certainly valid, but why has it suddenly become important enough to risk as much as she is now in order to recover it. Let's say this leads to an international incident. Will the House of Musk get its kettle back? No way! Peking will get it! Worse, the Musk will come under the scrutiny of those racist and paranoid megalomaniacs running the Peoples Republic of China. Whatever deals have been struck in the past that allow the Musk Dynasty to survive today, would burn up like cobwebs in a candle flame should this search go badly. Haabu is risking everything on this trip and even though she is young, she must understand the situation. OTOH, you might argue that Takahashi uses China because it is a handy source of weird and legendary stuff and you would probably be right. Inventiveness was invented in China. Confucianism, however, is not conducive to technological development. Such development disturbs established order and changes the rules. No self-respecting bureaucrat wants a rule change to occur on his watch. (See Hall, *Japan: From Pre-history to Modern Times*. 8-71) Also, there really were Amazon tribes in northern and western China. They tended to live in forested areas. Takahashi has placed her version of the Joketsuzoku right on the edge of arable country where forest meets arid plain. Nomadic tribes living in the planes tended to be patriarchies. Oh, and their languages were forms of Altaic. I am treating the interior of China much the same way Takahashi is; as a rich source of interesting surprises. Think of it as being similar to the great abyssal plains. Known of, but little known.

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In the upper right panel Takahashi has depicted onnateki Ranma squatting in the position adopted by Samurai when wearing armor and needing a brief rest from standing up under all that weight. It is, actually, a ready position from which iaijutsu (quick draw sword) is often practiced. It is, in short, the pose of a man whose mind, body and spirit are ready for battle. Indicating himself with his right hand, Ranma says:

よーするにその開水釜の湯をかぶれば。

Yousuru ni sono Kaisuifuu no yuu o kabureba.
Afterall that OW Kettle of hot water will cover

男に戻れるんだな。

otoko ni modorerunda na (no da na).

Man near return because emph, masc. (Tough one from Ranma again. Partly because of the tenses involved.)

"If I can cover myself with water from the Open-water Kettle, I can become a guy again?"

One panel to the left we see that onnateki Ranma has perked up considerably. On his right, a happy Akane exclaims to Kolon:

なーんだよかった。

Nanda yokkata.

Whaat is that right (assuming this is a contraction of yoku aru or something similar)

The following interpretation is mostly guess work.

"What? Is that true?" conceivably, "What, is it that good?"

Ranma happily exclaims:

よおしつ。ばーさん、開水釜のありがを教えるつ。

Yooshi. Baasan, Kaisiufuu no ariga o oshieru.
Okay! Granny, OWKettle of is (location) obj tell.

"Okay! Granny, tell me where this Open-water Kettle is."

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One panel down, a grim-faced Kolon (Shudder hard. Shudder very hard) replies:

開水釜を手に入れるということは、

Kaisiufuu o te ni ireru toiu koto wa,
OWKettle obj hand in enclosed ask thing asfor

とりもなおさず再びハーブと闘うと。。。。

tori mo naosazu tabi Haabu to tatakau to...
same all healed again Haabu and fight and...

Well, it is hard to say for sure. The sentence is incomplete, or appears to be and it is a complicated one to boot. I'll try.

"To have the Open-water Kettle in hand, I ask you this, are you healed enough to fight Haabu again and..."

In the lowermost right hand panel, we see a depiction of Haabu using the Dragon Spirit Flight attack on a hapless otokoteki Ranma in the background. Onnateki Ranma has crossed his arms and is saying:

ま、当然だろうな。仕返ししたいしー。

Ma, touzen darou na . Shikaeshi shittaishii.
Well, naturally I think Revenge great? Would be great?

"Well, naturally, I should think. Revenge would be great."

Kolon replies to this braggadocio with:

なにを気楽な。。。勝算はあるのか婿どの。

Nani o kirakuna... shousan wa aru no ka Mukodono.
What obj optimism prospect of victory as for is of ? Son-in-law.

"What optimism! You think you have a chance to win, Son-in-law?"

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In the lowermost, left frame, Ranma is in the center of the frame and we get a much better view of his stance. From here, he could leap to his feet and snatch both your ears off your head with either hand, step back and laugh at you before your poor brain understood that he was changing positions. This not peculiar to a Ranma Saotome. Most of the well-trained artists could do the same from this position. I believe that a lot of the art martial arts is anticipating your opponent's next move. In front of Ranma is Kolon, still perched upon her staff and behind him sits pandateki Genma. A voice from outside the frame speaks and says:

なんにしたって行くしかねーだろ。

Nan ni shitatte (gatte) iku shikanee daro.
Many therefore go no other way I think. Frankly, my dear, this sounds like a line from a damn Samurai movie.

"Many go, therefore. There is no other way, I think."

Page 42:

The right hand side of this page is comprised of a single panel in which Muusu and Riyouga are rendered standing shoulder to shoulder. Both are looking grimly determined. Riyouga says:

話しはすべて聞いた。

Hanashi wa subete kiita.
Said asfor failed hear.

"You didn't hear what I said."

To which Muusu adds:

おらたちが協力するだ。

Oratachi ga kyouryokusuru da.
We asfor cooperation is.

"We work together."

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In the uppermost left panel we are treated to the sight of three very lovely, and very startled examples of femininity. One of them being a wide-eyed onnateki Ranma, the others being Akane and Shanpu. Akane stutters:

良牙くん。。。

"Riyouga-kun..."

While the startled Shanpu says:

ムース。。。

"Muusu..."

In the next frame, our hero's posture has collapsed into that of a shocked, delighted and bewildered teenaged girl. Only teenaged girls can sit the way Ranma is sitting on the dojo floor in this picture. His calves are folded back under him with his posterior on the floor and his feet are splayed out to either side. It is impossible for a male to do this at any age and difficult for any woman over twenty-five. Ranma has his hands clasped together in the front and his face has softened like that of a girl attending her sweet sixteen birthday party who has just been given the keys to the family's old station wagon. Ryouga is patting Ranma on the shoulder and saying:

かわいそうになあ乱馬。

Kawaisouninaa,
Cute looking

Ranma.
Ranma

"You look so cute, Ranma!"

In the foreground of this same panel, Muusu (sans glasses) is standing next to Soun Tendo with his right hand on the older man's shoulder as he says:

女のひとり旅はなにかと物騒じゃ。

Onna no hitori tabi wa nani kato busuo ja
Woman of alone travel asfor what hard rowdies is.

"A woman traveling alone may have rowdies to deal with."

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To which the flustered Soun sarcastically replies:

きみい。

Kimii.

"I feel better already."

In the bottom panel, we see concerned looking onnateki Ranma with his left hand placed upon a grimacing Riyouga's forehead and saying in very masculine Japanese:

おめーら熱あるんじゃないか？

Omeera netsu aru no ja nee ka?
You guys fever have do you not?

"You're runnin' a fever, ain'tcha?"

The picture does not match Ranma's speech. If you forget that this is Ranma and Riyouga, it looks for all the world like a girl checking on her brother's or her boyfriend's well being. Takahashi loves these contrasty little scenes.

Page 43:

In the uppermost panel, Akane and Shanpu are both having words with the abashed Riyouga and Muusu, respectively. Riyouga is "patting," more like "pounding" Ranma on the shoulder to cope with this sudden and, like as not, unexpected attention from Akane. She is saying to him:

ありがとう、良牙くん。

Arigato Riyouga-kun.
Thank you, Riyouga-kun.

いざとるとやっぱり乱馬の友だちね。

Iza to naru to yappari Ranma no tomodachi ne.
Excl. become after all Ranma of friend (Iza is supposed to be dated per Hepburne's. That sort of language went out at the end of the Edo Period. The power of cinema at work?)

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"Thank you, Riyouga. "You became a friend to Ranma after all." Or possibly, "Thank, you Riyouga. "You are being a friend to Ranma after all."

The Big Boar Hibiki, now thoroughly embarrassed replies with:

はっはっはっ、当然ですよ。

Laughter, touzen desu yo.
Hahaha, naturally is (that's so.)

"Hahaha, naturally!"

In the background, Shanpu accosts Muusu with:

ムースが友情に厚い男とは思わなかな。

Muusu, ga yuujou ni atsui otoko to wa omo wana kata na.
Muusu asfor friendly ? thick man not think trap form (masc)emph.
 friendship deep necessarily

"Muusu, you aren't exactly the friendliest guy in the world, I think this is some form of trap." She may also be saying, "You aren't very friendly. What are you thinking?" I a very dubious of the latter.

Between Shanpu and I we may have this so screwed up that no one can figure out what she is saying.

Muusu carefully adjusts his glasses with the thumb and forefinger of his right hand as he answers:

はっはっはっ、今ごろ気いついたか。

Laughter imga goro kii tsuita ka. (Carefully?)
Hahaha, about now kiitsui taka (stern hawk)

It is hard to be sure of what Muusu is saying here. It varies according to how the hiragana is parsed. The last phrase could be kitsui taka, "stern hawk," or kii tsuita "was careful," or "carefully." The particle on the end, "ka," indicates that he is asking a question. The dialogue balloon indicates that he is speaking aloud, not thinking privately. I don't think there is much question about "imagoro," that means "about now." Neither answer makes a lot of sense in the context of Shanpu's statement—assuming I have gotten one of those translations right. The following INTERPRETATION should be taken with a grain of salt.

"Ha, ha, ah, about now, I'm being very careful."

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In the next panel we find out what Muusu and Riyouga are actually thinking about:

開水釜なんぞどーでもいい！目的は姿を固定する止水桶。

Kaisuifuu nan zoodoo de moiii Mokuteki wa sugata o koteisuru Chisuiton.
OW Kettle very? useless? is soever Objective asfor shap obj shapefixing SWBucket.

"Never mind the Open-water kettle! The objective is that shape fixing Stop-water Bucket."

In the lowermost right and center panels, this less than charitable line of thought continues with:

人間の姿で止水桶を使えば。。。。

Ningen no sugata de Chisuiton o tsukaeba...
Human of shape is SWBucket obj will use...

変身体質が治るはずつ！！

Henshin daishitsu ga naoru wazuu!!
Changebody consitution curing method!!

In the left most panel of the bottom row, we see the anti-heroic pair's vision of Ranma's future. He lies partially buried in a shallow grave. The dialogue balloon reads:

ついだに乱馬を始末すれば。。。。

Tsuida ni Ranma o shimatsusureba...
Chance to Ranma obj dispose of... What these two assholes are thinking, in essence:

"We'll use the Stop-water Bucket to lock ourselves into our human forms, and we'll have the chance to dispose of Ranma!"

Given my cultural background, these two guys are intolerably rotten. To the Japanese they may seem different, but to me they are despicable. Ranma, as cocksure and ill mannered as he is, strikes me as being very much the superior to these two little pimples. I know it is supposed to be comedy, but this sort of thing has never struck me as being particularly humorous, even though similar things are done all the time on American television. I find that despicable as well. This kind of story is only tolerable to me when this kind of character get his comeuppance in the end.

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In the uppermost panel, Muusu and Riyouga simultaneously become overly cheerful. Earning puzzled glances from Akane and deeply suspicious stares from Shanpu. Yes, Virginia, this is an example of haragei at work—to a bad end in this instance. Dialogue balloons reveal the innermost thoughts of this confused and unsavory pair of yatsu. Riyouga is thinking:

おれは晴れてあかねさんと。。。。

Ore wa harete Akane-san to ...
Me asfor good weather ("clear sailing") Akane to...

"Clear sailing for Akane and me!"

While Muusu is thinking:

おらはシャンプーとしあわせに一つ！！

Ora wa Shanpuu toshi awase niii!!
I or me? Asfor Shanpu soon together

"Shanpu and I will soon be together!"

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Kinda makes ya wanna quake in yer boots. Don't it, Pilgrim? No? Well, move down another panel so that you can see this close up of Kolon. She's thinking:

。。。にしても妙じゃな。

... ni shi te mo miyoushi jana.
... even if miraculous

何百年もほおておいた

Nan hyakunen mo ho o te oita.
Many centuries as far as sought

秘宝 開水釜を

hihou Kiasuifuu o
secret treasure OWKettle obj

やつらなぜ今頃になって

yatsura naze imagoro ni natte
assholes why about this time

"Even if it is miraculous, why have the Muskovites waited all these centuries until now to look for it?"

So the Wrecking Crew is getting off to an in auspicious beginning.

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

Page 45:

The uppermost panel runs across the entire page and is a beautiful rendering of a small town somewhere in the rural Japan. One small sign of this town's location is in the left corner of the picture. There is a fire watchman's tower complete with a large bell, but the absolute clincher is the upper part of a roof sticking up higher than the tile roofs in the foreground. It is the thatch roof of a Shinto Shrine. They are unmistakable. One panel down and to the right we find Minto and Raimu peering out from behind the trunk of a sizeable tree. Both of them are looking excited or nervous, possibly both. Judging from what can be seen in the background behind them, they are on the edge of town, staring at something as though it were prey. Moving one panel to the left we see what has the muddleheaded Muskovites panting in anticipation. We are looking into the broad open front of the village store. Inside, the bored cashier is sitting on the counter, reading a book. Given that this is Japan and not the United States, it is safe for us to assume that she has no customers at the moment. She appears to be about Nabiki's age and is wearing her hair in twin braids and is modestly dressed. There is a dialogue balloon, the pointy variety, which reads:

おつ女が店番をつ。

O...onna ga miseban o.

Wo...woman asfor store guard. Obj. (I don't know if our bumpkins are being bumpitious here or not. It seems likely that the Japanese would call their store clerks and cashiers "miseban" or "store watchmen," as a matter of course, but I cannot find the term in my dictionaries.)

"The store guard is a woman."

In the next panel, we are back to Raimu and Minto, who are now excitedly speaking with one another. The wolfish member of the pair says:

ライムさん、ぼ、ぼく女の

Raimu san, Bo, boku onna no
Raimu-san I I woman of

ひとから買い物するの

hito kara kaimonosuru no
person because will shop of

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

初めてですつ。

hajimete desu.
First is.

"Raimu-san, because it is a woman, I'll do my buying first."

The tiger-ish fellow replies:

あ、慌てるなミント！！

Ah, awateruna Minto!!
Ah, scatterbrained Minto!! (awateruna can also mean "flustered," fluttering, or in a dither, *et cetera*.)

"Ah, you're scatterbrained, Minto!"

Now this is interesting. At the beginning of this story, these two were introducing each other, not themselves. This has neatly fooled your poor translator into getting their names confused, but he must wonder, did it also confuse a Japanese schoolboy or two? What they did was a very old custom, that of introducing one's companion then allowing your companion to introduce you, rather than each person introducing himself. Plus, they used the term "otome" rather than "otomodachi" or "tomodachi." Otome can be taken to mean servant. All things considered, I am not sure whether Takahashi was making fun of the bumbling foolishness of tourists, or if I simply made a mistake. It matters little. The name of the wolfish chap is Minto and the tiger-ish fellow is named Raimu.

In the bottom panel we watch as the two bumbling bumpkins from Muskovy nervously and clumsily approach the cashier of the general store. Neither of them can speak coherently and the cashier, her duties being what they are, gives them the traditional Japanese proprietor's welcome, albeit in a very dubious tone of voice:

いらしゃーい。

Irashai!

"Welcome!"

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

Page 46:

In the upper right corner, Riamu, that is the big, tiger-ish bumpkin, has again gone into the spasms he had when he was last within the close proximity of the lovely Akane Tendo. He is saying:

女と哀話した。

Onna to aiwashta!

Minto, for his part, is simply staring at the cashier with tears of joy in his eyes. The bewildered and possibly alarmed cashier reacts with:

Haaaaaa?

One panel to the left, Minto seems to have suddenly gained some presence of mind. While searching about his person for something, he says:

あつそうだつ。あのつ、

Aa soudaa. Ano,
Oh, yes! This

In the next panel we see that he has produced what appears to be a writing pad of some sort, thrusts it out towards the puzzled cashier and asks enthusiastically:

記念にサインください。

kinen ni sain kudasia.
Memorial book sign please.

"Please sign my memorial book!"

Raimu appears to upset with Minto over this and admonishes him with:

ミント、きさまずるいぞ。

Minto, kisama zurui zo.
Minto you(derog) unfair emph.

"Minto, that's not fair!"

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

One frame down there is nothing but dialogue balloons. They read:

ならばおれは握手だ握手だ一つ。

Naraba ore wa akushu da akushu daa
I asfor shook hands shookhands

"I shook hands with her! Shook hands!"

あ一つぼくも一つ。

Aaa boku moo!

"Ah, I could care less!"

あの一。

Anoo-.

"Yeah, right!"

In the lowermost panel, which takes more than half of this page, we find Haabu seated at the bole of a tree. She is leaning back against the trunk and wearing her hood. The large pack that Raimu normally carries is leaned up against the other side of the tree trunk. The tree is situated next to a dirt road. Two hens, "niwa tori" in Japanese, and their chicks are scratching about in the middle of the road, picking up gravel for their crops. One may gather from this that this is a distant town and that the road sees very little in the way of high-speed traffic. Be warned, dear reader, if you have never lived out in the country, that there are dirt roads which DO carry high-speed traffic and you should travel them with extreme caution and care. Lower down in this frame, Takahashi has superimposed an image of Haabu's bust and we become party to her thoughts:

秘宝開水釜一刻も早くわが手に。。。。

Hihou Kaisuifuu ichikoku mo hayaku waga te ni...

Secret treasure Open-water kettle (two hour period hurry) my hand in (I strongly suspect that "ichiko mo hayaku" is an idiom, but did not find it in my references. I will treat as such in the interpretation).

"The hour in which I will have the treasured Open-water Kettle in my hand is fast approaching."

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

Page 47:

In the uppermost panel we are still waiting with Haabu as the lesser Muskovites return. Both are still worked up over their recent adventure in the village. Minto is literally bouncing along as he shouts excitedly:

ハーブさまー！！
"Haabu-sama!"

To which Raimu adds:

女からパンと牛乳を買いましたっ！！

Onna kara pan to kyuunyuu o kaimashitaa!!
Woman from bread and milk obj purchased (The Japanese use the borrowed word "pan" for bread. It come from Portuguese, but Spanish, Italian, Latin and French all use the same word for it. I may be wrong about French.)

"We bought bread and milk from a woman!"

One panel down, the bumptious Raimu and Minto have withdrawn themselves to allow Haabu the chance to dine in peace. They also take the opportunity to quietly compare notes on something. Minto says:

でも驚きましたねライムさん。

Demo odorokimashita ne Raimu-san.
But astonishing huh Raimu-san.

"But it is astonishing, isn't it, Raimu-san."

To which Raimu responds:

うむ。ハーブさまのお体、初めて拝見したが。。。。

Umu, Haabu-sama no okarada, hajimete haikenshita ga...
Um, Lord Haabu of honorable body first time have honor to see ga...

"Uh, that was the first time I had the honor of seeing Lord Haabu's honorable body..."

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

One panel down and to the right, there is a picture of a shocked and angry Haabu with the front of her clothing pulled open. There is an arrow, of the sort used to point out details in a drawing, pointing at Haabu's left breast. Superimposed over this lovely image, a little farther down, so as to leave our view of the devastatingly beautiful Haabu unspoiled, are the images of a rapturous Minto and a very intense Raimu. **Minto waxes lyrical** (I'm not kidding. It is poetic dialogue. Try reading the Romanized Japanese aloud and you'll hear it for your self. TIP: There is very little difference in pronouncing Romanized Japanese and pronouncing textbook Spanish.):

それがあんなに美しい。。。。

Sore ga anna ni utsukushii...
It asfor such beautiful

あの胸についていたものはいったい。。。。

ano mune ni tsui teita mono wa ittai...
that chest pair (symbol of royal rank) thing asfor side beside...

"It was such a beautiful thing to see. That pair of royal rank things, nestled on his chest side by side!"

I am not at all sure there is a good way to get this across in single statement in English. Minto appears to have confused Haabu's breasts with "teita" or symbols of rank. Long ago in Japan, peers of the realm, referred to as "kuge," were required to carry wooden tablets whenever they were in the presence of the Emperor. The purpose of the teita was, presumably, for the courtier to keep notes on. In essence, a very early form of the clipboard became a symbol of royal rank in Japan. This is still the practice today on occasions of state. Don't take this the wrong way. Minto does not believe that breasts and clipboards are the same things. He just believes that they are the Musk Dynasty's symbols of rank. It is also pretty clear that he believes Haabu to be male. This situation implies that there must be a larger number of Musk than we see in this story. Otherwise, these two could not have possibly grown up and trained with Haabu and not ever have seen her without her shirt at one time or another. Or, at least seen her in clothing that did a better job of showing off her bust.

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

Raimu does his best to clarify things for Minto. This puts the translator in mind of a passage from The Olde Booke; "When one blind man leads another, both shall lie in the ditch." Raimu offers a speculation:

うむ、あれこそは、
Umu, are koso wa
Um, that indeed asfor

噂に聞いたちちというものでは。。。？
mune ni kiita chichi toiu mo no de wa...
chest hear titties people say ??????

"Uh, those are TITTIES, or at least that is what I hear people say..."

The word "chichi" can mean either father or breasts, in either case it is considered rather rude language. In written Japanese, the kanji is used in the first instance of the word to warn the reader that "father" is meant rather than breast or breasts. Japanese does very little in the way of plural forms. There is another oddity about this word, it is polite slang here in the American south and it means, guess what, "breast." How this came to be is a mystery. Perhaps it came about because we had Japanese rice farmers here for several decades prior to WWII.

To which the startled and puzzled Minto replies:

父！？胸に父が！？
Chichi!? Mune ni chichi ga!?
Father!? Chest father as for!?

"FATHER? His chest is a father?"

Raimu rubs his chin and answers in a confused tone:

うむ、そこがなんとも奇妙だが。。。
Umu, soko ga nanto mo kimiyou daga...
Um, that asfor inwhatway strange however (Okay, I'm as lost as these two guys are, but I'll try anyway.) many sure all I think I'll go with the second possible parsing of "nan tomo," rather than "nanto mo." Raimu, has "felt" a woman after all, having carried Akane around over half of Nerima.

"Um, I'm very sure of that, but there is something strange."
(Mind you, Raimu still does not understand that Minto is confused.)

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

Page 48:

In the uppermost panel, Minto and Raimu have allowed the volume of their conversation to become dangerously loud. How so, you ask? Simple, their voices have gotten so loud that Haabu can hear them speculate. She is furiously squeezing her milk carton, spewing its contents towards the sky as she listens to her bumptious companions give voice to their revelations. Raimu says, far too loudly:

なんでもちちというのは女の胸に

Nan de mo chichi toiu no wa onna no mune ni
They say titties people say of asfor woman of chest at
I hear
Anything(everything)
Whatever

ついているという。。。

tsuite iru toiu...
only have people say...

"I hear people say that only a woman's chest has titties, at least, that's what people say..."

Minto stares at Haabu in wide-eyed shock as he says:

おつ、女の胸につつ。

Aaa! Onna no mune nii.

"Ah, a woman's chest!"

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

The long recognized hazards of the blind leading the blind are now made manifest one panel down and to the right. The now livid Haabu sends his bumptious pair of boobs flying with a crackling stout ki blast from her left hand as she shouts:

ごちやごちやとやかましいっ！！

Gochiya gochiya to yakamashi!!

(gochisoosama used only to thank someone for a meal. "Yakamashi" means "noisy" or "rudely bothersome." An annoyed Japanese will often just shout "Yakamashi" when disapproving of such behavior.)

"Thanks for lunch. Now get the hell out of here!"

And our bumptious boobs go flying away, presumably to lie in a ditch somewhere until such time as they have recovered. "Oh, our chichi, who art heavenly, whatever be thy name!"

In the upper left panel, we can see the furiously frustrated Haabu grinding her teeth and clenching her left hand into such a tight fist that her knuckles are making a grinding noise. Shades of Darth Vader, Vato! One panel down from this one, Haabu begins thinking about Ranma. We know she is thinking about Ranma because we see a picture of him superimposed over a black background. Haabu is thinking:

おのれあの無礼者。よくもこの私に生き恥を。。。。

Onore ano bureimono Yoku mo ni no watashi ni iki haji o...
Him (derog) that rude person. Fully all ?????? I lifeofshame obj

I think, that Takahashi is portraying Haabu as being so angry that her thoughts are not entirely coherent or complete. From this we can safely infer that Ranma must have revealed an embarrassing secret during that fight at the nekohanten. Here is my interpretation:

"Thanks to him, that rude bastard, I'll live a life of shame..."

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

Page 49:

Haabu's thoughts continue in the uppermost panel:

許しはせん！一生女の姿のままで苦しむがよいわ！！

Yurushi wa sen Ishou onna no sugata no mama de kurushimu ga yoiwa!!
Permission asfor not Lifetime womanof shape of forever suffering asfor good
(Imperious expression)

"I will not permit this! A lifetime of suffering in a woman's form, will be good!"

Obviously, in this sentence, Haabu is thinking of Ranma, not himself. A better interpretation might be:

"I shall not permit this without exacting revenge! A lifetime of suffering in a woman's form will be perfect!"

Some inferences seem to be in order. Haabu's family and servants were very likely helping her, keep her sex a secret. Apparently, being male is important to her, but that could have been fixed by jumping into the Spring of Drowned man, right? Dodging hot water is a much simpler proposition than dodging cold water. So we must assume that Haabu is actually male and needs the Open-water Kettle for the same reasons Ranma does. Haabu, in short, is just a wee bit homicidal at the moment. He probably has been for months. Riding herd on the Muskovites as a female when you are expected to be male cannot possibly be a very appetizing prospect, given Haabu's cultural environment.

The next panel depicts the rooftops of Nerimaville, warning us of a change in scene. There is an inset in the next lower panel depicting the front gate of Tendo-ke, intended to inform us of where we are in this panel. The main body of the panel depicts onnateki Ranma loading his heavy backpack, that is to say, the sort of backpack one uses on long hikes. The lowermost panel shows Akane entering the room. She calls out Ranma's name in a tender voice. An inset shows Ranma's face as he looks up at Akane and the unspoken love between these two is resoundingly obvious.

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

Page 50:

In the top right panel, Akane sits in seiza next to onnateki Ranma who has resumed loading his pack. Akane is helping him by folding and handing him things. One frame to the left, Akane speaks up and says:

あたしのせいで。。。ごめんね。
Atashi no sei de ... Gomene.
You of sex condition ... I apologize.

"I apologize for your sexual condition."

To which Ranma calmly replies:

これはおれとハーブのケンカだ。
Kore wa ore to Haabu no kenka da.
This asfor my and Haabu of fight is.

(I am not sure why "kenka" is written in katakana. This suggests that it is either a borrowed word, or is considered to be so crude that it should be treated as a borrowed word. In any case, I did not find it in the modern dictionaries I have. I had to resort to Hepburne's to find a definition for it. BTW: Hepburne's does not use hiragana. He was unable to find hiragana type for his publisher and so only katakana is used throughout the work. I have found Hepburne's to be both blessing and curse. It often proves handy, demonstrating conjugations better than modern dictionaries, is considerably less Bowdlerized, but it is easy to misinterpret a given piece of text when using Hepburne's.)

"This is mine and Haabu's fight."

おめーのせいじゃねーよ。
Omee no sei ja nee yo
You of sex is yes emph.

"Your sex, yes? Or possibly, "The same sex as you, yes?"

I think Ranma is testing Akane's feelings on this issue. To Ranma, it must seem that Akane dislikes young men her age simply because they are male, but then he knows she is not a lesbian, either. Rather than trying to interpret this subtlety, I'll let the reader decide.

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

In the next panel we can see that Akane is not so terribly sure of this and starts to object:

でも。。。
Demo...

"But..."

Ranma cuts her off saying:

おい、おれが負けるとでも思っているのか？

Oi, ore ga makeru to de mo omotte no ka ?
Hey, I asfor defeat(ed) or something thinking of ?
Assumes "to" is being used to signal a change in condition.

"Hey, you are thinking I'm defeated or something, right?"

In the next panel, Akane agrees to this statement, saying:

ううん。乱馬は勝つわ。

Uun. (iya) Ranma wa katsuwa.
That's wrong Ranma asfor victory. (There is no English equivalent for "uun." If you watch Japanese movies in Japanese with English subtitles, you will hear young women and little girls make this noise as they nod their heads. I take it to mean "iya.")

"That's wrong. Ranma equals victory." Alternatively, "No, Ranma overcomes."

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

Page 52:

In the top row of panels on this page we are treated to another example of "haragei" or wordless communication on a gut level. In the right most panel we see an admiring Akane think:

よかった。。。いつもの強気の乱馬だ。

Yokatta... itsumono tsuyoki no Ranma da.
I believe? Always of powerful spirit Ranma is. ALSO
I have always of powerful feelings for Ranma is. This is an obvious double
entendre, depending upon how the listener or reader interprets "tsuyoki." It is also, a triple entendre if you are
won't to accept the subtler implications. Ranma is a powerful spirit. I have powerful feelings for him. I will be a
powerful spirit for him. Now, this artistic subtlety evaporates in English. Watch:

"I believe in him. Ranma is a powerful, unflagging spirit for whom my feelings run deep and are constant. I will be a powerful spirit for him."

In the middle panel of the top row we see Ranma silently thinking:

絶対負けないよね。

Zettai make nai yo ne.
Absolute defeated not I am

"I am absolutely undefeated."

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

Sadly and as ever, such profound moments are short lived around Ranma Saotome. In the leftmost of panel of the top row, a crying, nearly hysterical Soun Tendo bounds into the room and hugs onnateki Ranma to himself with his right arm while he speaks into a karaoke mike held in his left hand. Akane's face turns scarlet as she watches her father's unanticipated outburst. Soun cries out:

乱馬くん、万が一男に

Ranma-kun, mangaichi otoko ni
Ranma-kun if by any chance man in (mangaichi or manichi is idiomatic)

戻れないその時は、

Modore nai sono toki wa,
Returning not that time asfor
ever

天道家からお嫁に出して

Uchi kara oyome ni dashita te
Tendou-ke for honorable marriage hand in

あげるからね——つ。

ageru kara nee.
Give because ??? emph? Whoa! Soun is here being polite but insistent, as only a Japanese male can.
Lemme see can I render this in English.

"Ranma, if by any chance you cannot ever return to manhood, will you give me your hand in marriage for the sake of Tendo-ke?"

Who would ever have believed that Soun Tendo would prove himself such an effective motivational speaker? Go out and whip a dragon's ass after that little speech? NO PROBLEM! Ranma responds in this same panel with a horrified:

やめろおおつ！！

"Yamerooo!"

I choose to leave the interpretation of this exclamation as an exercise for the reader.

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

The lowermost panel, taking up a little more than half the page depicts Muusu and Riyouga some distance away in another part of the house. We know they are in another part of the house because their images have been faded. Superimposed over this at the bottom is a sharply focused picture of onnateki Ranma bearing a pack and looking as fierce as he can under the circumstances. Riyouga shouts:

行くぜ乱馬！！

Ikuze, Ranma!

"Let's go, Ranma!"

To which onnateki Ranma replies with a manly enunciation though probably not with a manly intonation:

おうっ！！

O-oo! (It's very hard for a round-eye to make this noise. It requires practice and you must have your breathing right.)

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

Page 52:

Ranma is marching out of the gates of Tendo-ke as Soun, Genma, Akane, Kolon and Shanpu bid him a tearful farewell in the uppermost panel. Ranma looking back over his shoulder and thinking:

待ってるよ、必ず男になって帰ってくる。

Mattero yo, kanarazu otoko ninatte kaette kuru.
Yall just wait, without fail man load return caused by or be caused by. The word "ninatte" appears to be a conjugation of the little used verb "ninau," which means to carry two buckets of water on a pole placed across the shoulders. There is a saying, "Ni ka no nimotsu o ikka ni awasete ninau." To carry in one load, the loads of two men. Ranma is, I think, referencing this sort of manly work. Pay this kid to sit behind a desk? Ferget it! It ain't manly enough, and besides, his mother would never approve.

"Ya'll just wait, without fail, I'll be able to do a man's work when I return."

In the next panel we can see that Akane is watching Ranma leave while thinking:

がんばって乱馬。信じてる。

Ganbatte, Ranma. Shinjiteru.
Persevere Ranma. Believing. ("Faith" is a better choice, but even that is ghost of what Akane means here.)

"Hang in there, Ranma! I believe in you."

乱馬 1 / 2

The Musk Incident

The next panel shows us a railway tunnel and there is a light at the end of it. Yes, the light appears to be the headlight of a locomotive. Writing on the left-hand side of the panel reads:

こうして苦難の旅は始まった！！

Koushite kunan no tabi wa hajimatta!!
In this way hardship of journey asfor commenced.

"In this way, the hardship of the journey commenced."

The last panel shows us Muusu, Ranma and Riyouga sitting in the passenger car of a train. Riyouga is seated to our right next to the aisle. Ranma is sitting on the same row as Riyouga but back against the window. Muusu is sitting across from Riyouga. The three of them are playing cards and Ranma is leaning forward in order to slip a card into Muusu's hand. Ranma is slipping Muusu the joker as he asks:

やけに楽しそーじゃねーか、おめーら。

Yake ni tanoshi soo ja nee ka, omera.
Desperately happy seem ? you guys or "ya'll.

"You guys are desperately happy, huh?"

To which Riyouga replies:

わーつはつはつはつ遠足みてーだなー。

Wahahaha, ensoku mitee danaa.
Laughter excursion seeing is like

"Wahahaha, this is like a sight-seeing trip."

To which Muusu adds:

おーつ、また乱馬がババ引きおった。

Ooo, mata Ranma ga baba hiki otsuta or otta.
Oh, besides Ranma asfor Granma draw (too many to list)
Again Tground pull
Also
Too

Without knowing what "baba" means or which verb "otte" is a conjunction of I am reluctant to say.