

01

The Crybaby: Usagi's Beautiful Transformation

(泣き虫うさぎの華麗なる変身)

Writer

Sukehiro Tomita

Episode Director

Junichi Sato

Animation Director

Hiromi Matsushita

Blurb

A junior high school girl saves a cat and learns she is a magical super hero named Sailor Moon. She must face the forces of evil to save her friend before it's too late.

The episode opens with Usagi Tsukino, our main protagonist, waking up late for school. As she races out of the house, we're briefly introduced to Usagi's mother, Ikuko, who seems all too used to this routine.

Usagi is stopped on her frantic dash to school when she sees a group of kids bullying a cat with a bandage on its forehead. After chasing the kids off, Usagi removes the bandage from the cat, revealing a mysterious moon-shaped mark underneath. With that out of the way, Usagi is off to school.

Inconsistency

Despite not knowing who she is in this scene, later in the episode we can see a Sailor V manga in Usagi's room.

Unfortunately, no good deed goes unpunished. Haruna Sakurada, Usagi's homeroom teacher, is pretty upset over her tardiness. Making things worse, Usagi scored a measly 30% on her last test.

Later that afternoon, Usagi and her friend, Naru Osaka, joined by classmate, Gurio Umino, discuss the latest gossip, including the mysterious Sailor V.

While they're talking, Naru mentions that the Osa-P, her family's jewelry shop, is holding a sale and selling off jewelry at almost unbelievable prices. Needing very little convincing, Usagi excitedly agrees to visit after school.

After a scene transition, we find ourselves face-to-face with Queen Beryl, ruler of the Dark Kingdom and our main antagonist of the season. Out

from the darkness steps Jadeite, the first of her minions to be sent to collect energy for Queen Metalia and search for the “Legendary Silver Crystal.”

While we're on the subject, it's unclear what Queen Beryl/Metalia intend to do with the Silver Crystal. Unless Sailor V was able to single-handedly keep them at bay, you'd think they'd be able to conquer the world without it, right?

Back in Tokyo, the Osa-P is filled with bargain-hungry shoppers. While the prices are pretty cheap, am I the only one who thinks there are way too many school girls in this scene? Even at these steep discounts, these kids shouldn't be able to afford most of what we're shown here!

Unable to find anything in her limited budget, Usagi leaves the Osa-P empty-handed to head for home. In a fit of frustration over the impending scolding from her mother about her poor test scores, Usagi crumples up the test and throws it over her shoulder, only to hit a man standing behind her.

Enter Mamoru Chiba, a university student with a surprising amount of free time and absolutely no moral qualms with teasing a 14 year old girl. Mamoru criticizes the poor girl's low test score and the two bicker for a bit, before Usagi finally storms off for home.

The cat from earlier –who we'll later learn is named Luna – steps out from behind a sign and makes a curious remark: “Usagi Tsukino... I've found you at last.”

Are we supposed to take this line to mean that Luna had been wandering the streets and looking for a girl named Usagi Tsukino? Or that she knows she was looking for Sailor Moon, and now has a name to put to the face? For the rest of the Sailor Guardians, she only senses a “strange power” upon their first meeting. I guess this can be chalked up to her faulty memory?



Trivia

Though never named, this large woman with showy costume jewelry is a recurring background character throughout the first season.

She often appears in episodes animated by Studio Live, so maybe she was a team favorite?

Before we can think too hard about this statement, we cut to commercial!

Back from the break, Ikuko is livid over Usagi's poor test score and sends her daughter out of the house. As if on cue, Usagi's younger brother Shingo makes his appearance and can't help but make a few snide remarks at Usagi's expense before quickly escaping inside. Poor girl!

Trivia

This is the only time in the season where the male voice cast was used for both eyecatches before and after the commercial.

The scene fades to the Osa-P, where we see Jadeite's evil plan start to unfold: all of the jewelry bought in the sale had been cursed, and is now draining the life energy from the eager customers!

When Naru confronts her "mother" – actually Jadeite's minion Morga in disguise – about the customers collapsing, she quickly realizes that something is really wrong here.

We transition back to Usagi, who has been woken up by the cat from earlier. After getting over her initial shock of being face-to-face with a talking cat, Usagi is surprisingly receptive to Luna's story about destiny, magic, and fighting the forces of evil.



Trivia

For the first six episodes, the transformation scene opens up showing Usagi's sleeve. Since this required the animators to re-draw it every time to match Usagi's clothes, it was later changed to just her hand.

With little convincing needed, Usagi transforms into Sailor Moon for the first time and the two, hearing Naru's cries for help, head off to rescue Usagi's friend.

"I am the sailor-suited guardian of love and justice, Sailor Moon! In the name of the moon, I'll punish you!"

It looks like reading all that manga has paid off for Usagi, because she is able to not only come up with a great opening speech, but strike some impressive poses while doing it.

Unfortunately, super hero-ing is more than cool speeches. Faced with the hordes of drained shop patrons now under Morga's command, Usagi takes off running for her life.

Usagi is quickly surrounded by her pursuers and does what any 14 year old girl in her position would do: she breaks down into tears. But before Morga can deliver her final blow, a red rose pierces through the air and lands between Sailor Moon and her enemy.

*“It is I, Tuxedo Mask!
Crying won't solve anything, Sailor Moon.”*

Blatantly disregarding Tuxedo Mask's words of encouragement, Sailor Moon begins crying even louder than before. Her hair ornaments resonate with her cries, letting loose an ultra-sonic wave that distracts Morga and the zombie-shoppers. This is one of only two times that we'll see this “attack.”

Taking advantage of the distraction, Luna tells Sailor Moon how to use her Moon Tiara Action attack, which makes quick work of Morga, turning the monster into dust.

The closing scene of today's episode takes us to the next day, where we find Naru telling her rightfully skeptical classmates about the events of the previous evening. As the camera pans down, we find Usagi – the magical heroine behind last night's adventure – trying to sleep at her desk.



Error

If you watch closely, the animators forgot to color in the lower-left part of Sailor Moon's bow in this scene.

Score

3/5

Review

The episode tells a nice, concise story and gets across all the basics of what the viewer needs to know. It has action, it's playful, and it makes you want to know more about the story. However, pacing is a pretty serious problem due to the constant scene transitions, some of which seem to exist for no reason other than to set up other characters. If you can overlook these flaws, I'd say it's a pretty enjoyable episode!