



Gerdha

ACTARUS: a prince, an alien? (surely the reason for an MM...)

Tue Dec 3 03:19:38 2002

57.67.17.3

DISCLAIMER: I am sorry for the MM in English; I am on my knees praying for forgiveness from friends here who have difficulties with this language :-)

I promised to finish some suspended topics when I brought my monitor at home, so here I am. Taking aside for the moment Jerome's question about the Italian version of ep 39 – which requires for me a longer time so my answer will arrive in the coming days – plus other MMs I have still in my agenda (go figure!!!), I would like to add some reflections of mine about what in previous posts Agnes said about Actarus being unable to accept greytones in life and his alien nature coupling them with some ideas Jerome has let born in my mind talking about Actarus behaviours due to himself being a prince from another planet.

First of all, as I told in an old post, this remark about Actarus being a prince can be found only in the French edition. The Italian version never ever talks about it excluding ep2 when Procton, revealing to Alcor Actarus' real identity, says he was a prince in planet Fleed (maybe also Hydargos and Gandal remark it in ep2 but I don't recall it for sure). No other explicit mentions are made about this aspect in the whole serie and nobody calls him "prince" or reminds this fact in any occasion in any episode. I would like however to underline that Actarus incarnation in Duke Fleed in Italy was appealed "Goldrake" like the robot from ep 3 on (in the first 2 episodes we maintained the original Japanese name), instead of the French edition which remarks always the difference between the robot (Goldorak) and Duke Fleed (Prince D'Euphor). As far as I know the Italian choice was due to aesthetic reasons as we preserved the original name of his planet Fleed, and Duke had a bad sound for us. From what I have read up to now in the episode transcriptions I own, there are several differences in the two versions, and the numerous French remarks about Actarus being a prince in dialogues between characters is certainly one of the most relevant.

I wrote this premises with the purpose to underline the fact that without knowing the Japanese dialogues is very difficult to understand if really the authors wanted or not to remark explicitly his role in Fleed society through explicit references in dialogues. But I tend to exclude it for a simple reason: strangely, we don't get in the whole anime that a very few news about Actarus life on his planet. As other people have noticed around the web, in 74 episodes all the information we get are some flashbacks of the invasion, a girlfriend with a brother and an official engagement, a public holiday, a little local animal, a best friend from another planet, a younger sister (which appears suddenly without any previous recall for instance), a friend of her, the fact that he personally knows the majority of Vega officials and some crucial information about the enemy in general. He never talks about his relationship with his parents, even if we can understand something by his attachment to Procton and his reactions in ep 32 and 70 – what a joy, another possible MM! ;-) - nor he or any other person tell a word about his lifestyle in Fleed (I cannot consider his 3 seconds of flashback with Aphelie enough for this purpose). Lots of Grendizer fans complain about this fact and think that the anime could have been better developed if Nagai had told us more about Actarus past, and to a certain extent they are right. I could think however that it was a direct Nagai's choice as an important matter like this is part of an overall strategy for sure. For example, the first version of the manga (= the edition written by Nagai

himself) gave to readers more hints of life on Planet Flead than the whole anime. So I can argue that being a prince was not such an important part of his personality throughout the anime, at least until the final arc (aarrgghh another MM floating around! I know I will be banned from this forum one day..;-))))) That's why I tend to think that in this aspect the Italian version could be more correct, even if – I reiterate – I don't know it for sure.

But now my question is: in order to focus better the alien prince factor in the story, is it possible to reconstruct anyway the puzzle of Actarus personality in order to understand the STARTING POINT of his evolution along the anime, or – in other words – who is Actarus as a person IN EPISODE 1? Well, the crazy person I am is going to try.

I did not meant that his past life is not relevant in Actarus evolution. On the contrary, I believe it's crucial. It's impossible in my opinion to understand Actarus character evolution in the anime without taking into account that he WAS RAISED as a prince. A beautiful, intelligent, healthy, rich and respected boy, probably used to get everything he desired without asking two times. A boy grown up on a wonderful planet full of resources plus a high level of science which meant a high quality of life for everybody but especially for a member of the royal family. A boy used to travel a lot and to meet people from other planets and cultures. But as a counterpart, a boy entitled to assume big responsibilities even at a very young age. I mean, it's likely that Actarus life on Planet Flead was a golden jail, so to speak.

According to the timeline, four years after the attack to Flead Actarus arrives on Planet Earth. We know absolutely nothing about what happened in that period, and the only thing we can do is to assume he continued to escape and hide from Vega with Grendizer, so adding awful experiences to the terrible event of the invasion and destruction of Flead. Finally Actarus can say to be lucky: a planet with more or less the same nature of Euphor, a less advanced population but similar to himself, and a man (Procyon) who is willing to aid him. He must hide his real identity for the rest of his life, but who cares? He is still young, he's alive and kicking, he is used to relate to different cultures, so he will start a new life. Helping his new father in his researches is the best way to demonstrate his gratitude; on the other side Procyon thinks that working at Rigel's ranch could be a good way for Actarus to establish really a new life. So the prince becomes a farmhand. In Italy we say "dalle stelle alle stalle" and really for Actarus it was literally "from stars to stables". Was it an easy task for him to be accomplished? I can believe not, considering also the short time allowed for the process – less than two years. And in fact we see throughout the whole anime so many hints of Actarus struggling between his desire of a quite normal life and not being able to accept completely his new status or at least being overcome but his past education especially in critical situations. I personally think this double-face personality is one of the most intriguing aspects of his personality. That's why I believe that his inability to accept greytones in life – which is probably in any case a natural aspect of his own personality – is not the only explanation of a large number of Actarus behaviours that at first sight can leave the viewers a bit perplex.

I would add that – as Jerome pointed out – he has anyway special powers as an alien. As a matter of fact it's something I didn't focused on before, but actually his special powers have to be considered in this analysis. His alien nature is something Actarus cannot cancel, and probably he must force himself a lot to not use them in his new life in order to not discover his true identity. Another difficult task to accomplish, isn't it? And maybe this one is even more difficult than being a farmhand, because one can find so many temptations... for example, how easier would be life at the ranch using his special strength or eyesight? Instead he must act in a completely "earthling" way if he wants to live together with inhabitants of Planet Earth. In the end, he chooses a "compromise": to undersize himself for having the chance to be happy.

Actarus seems to me after all satisfied of his new life as I don't get in his behaviours (especially in the first part of the anime when the ordinary life at the ranch takes up a big part of the episodes) any regret for his lost royal lifestyle and he seems often amused by being a farmhand. I don't remember him complaining neither expressly – and I would say also nor implicitly – for not being a prince anymore, but only feeling sadness for the destruction of his planet Euphor. So I would assume that Actarus did his

best to succeed in the two tasks (overcoming his royal lifestyle and his alien powers). The past cannot be cancelled, but can be put aside and considered as it is, even when it hurts coming back to the memory: his own history. But when Actarus finally thinks to have resulted in the process, Vega forces arrives. And we are shown from ep 1 to ep 74 what this will mean to him.

One last note about the "alien factor". Actarus will face lots of questions from his conscience (amongst the others: may I escape the task to fight? Am I the only one who can save this planet? Am I responsible for all this pain? Could I save this planet if I escape again? May I trust somebody or have I to rely on my own resources? Why destiny is contrary to me being happy? How will react other people knowing my true identity? Is it possible to live a normal life even during war times? How could we possibly win this war?) and his answers will change throughout the story depending on his natural evolution as a person, his relationship with the other characters and the events of the war. That's why I believe Actarus is one of the most incredible characters in the whole anime history: he is wonderfully described as a multi-layered person exactly as all human beings are. His internal questions are totally "human" because everywhere in the universe the livings are forced to face sooner or later the biggest question: who am I and what's the reason why I am living? Actarus will search the answer throughout 74 episodes, trying to balance all of himself (the alien, the prince, the fugitive, the saviour, the sick man, the son, the friend, the brother, the lover, the enemy,...). I suspect it's possible that his alien nature, even if existing, after all is not an important factor in the deep meaning of the story, but of course I could be completely wrong.

Well, at this point I promise I will EVER say NO MORE to ANYBODY that he/she has the tendency to overanalysing. ;-) I have already smashed myself in the face for this, and sprinkled my head with a lot of ash. For more, I cordially invite EVERYBODY to comment about these reflections of mine - I am here anxiously waiting to read your opinions in whatever language with a wholeheartedly welcome. :-)))))

Did I already say I LOVE this Forum?

Ciao to all.
Gerdha

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Agnès

WARNING! More MMmmm :-)

Tue Dec 3 23:55:44 2002

193.168.1.253

MM indeed ... 3 pages (when pasted into a Word document). Well it's a pleasure to read this Gerdha, and like you, I am sacrificing my lunch break to read and answer your MM. I hope I can do justice to it.

First of all, I agree with a lot of your ideas, as usual with some ideas of my own ... :-)

And I'll start with the issue of "princes and translations". Just like you, I have never had access to the original version, and I know from comments read on the net and in magazines that the French translation is not always very "close" to the original.

I do wonder about this issue though. You say that in Italian, he is only referred to as "Duke" a couple of times, and you relate this to the fact that for an Italian audience, this may raise the spectre of uncomfortable memories. That is very possible, and it might also explain that the distinction between Actarus' two identities is perhaps less clear in the Italian version. Yet, I do believe that the distinction must be "present" in one way or another.

Indeed, the anime is Japanese, and Japanese society is less flexible in its hierarchies than in most European and Western society. This is an issue I talked about a lot with a very dear Japanese friend, when I was a student. Her perception of social hierarchies was much more developed than my own, and included a "hierarchy of age" and a "hierarchy of gender" as well (but then, we have that one too ...). Our different perceptions of social order often created "funny" misunderstandings and conflicts because we were both taking our own backgrounds and codes of behaviour for granted. Interestingly, one of these "conflicts" was about Grendizer ... :-). I don't want to go into detail here, but from our discussions, I did get a sense that Japanese society does put a lot of weight on this concept of hierarchy and that behaviours are codified in a more complex, but also more rigid way.

As I said, these are personal impressions, which are, however, supported by the things I have read about Japanese society since then. To get back to Grendizer, I believe that the French insistence on Actarus' past as "prince" may be an attempt to convey this hierarchy to an audience of French post-1968 kids. "Duke" in French would not have the same effect ... in a children's world of fairy-tales (in France, and probably in much of the Western world too), the highest possible rank in society is that of "king". In terms of children, the highest possible rank is that of "prince", the son of the king, who is active – he saves the Poor Girl/Princess from the evil witch/wizard/ogre – in opposition to his father (whose main occupation is to sit on his throne or marry witches). A duke just would not have the same effect in French, and might not convey this notion of status and hierarchy to a very young audience.

To really understand the connotations "Duke Fleed" would have for a Japanese audience, one would have to know Japanese, and its equivalent in Japanese society/history, a knowledge which I do not have, I'm afraid. But I do think that the distinction must have been made at some level. Indeed, I cannot imagine otherwise, especially considering some of Actarus' downright arrogant facial expressions at the very beginning of the series. The only clue I have as to how he is referred to in the original version are the images from the Robotaisen games, where he is referred to as "Duke". This is not very much, I grant you! I do agree with you that he has to negotiate his identity between past and present, as we all have to, and I also agree that things being as they are, he also loves his new identity as a farmhand at Rigel's ranch.

Again, I do agree that the story doesn't give us many hints or insights into his former life, but my interpretation is slightly different. For me it is not a matter of "consciously" regretting or accepting what he was/has become: not thinking about his past, in a sense is a vital necessity for him.

Indeed, the destruction of Euphor and the killing of his parents and of his people is so traumatic that most of the time, thinking about them or his previous life is too hard to bear, and indeed he only ever talks about it when prompted by events or by people. Sometimes, it seems as if his mind had remained "stuck" at the precise moment where this world ceased to be, and that everything that existed before had become inconsequential.

Psychologically, this seems very plausible, and it reminds me of people who escaped the Nazi concentration camps (or other extremely traumatic experiences). Talking to them, one always has the feeling that anything that preceded their traumatic experience was cancelled out by this same experience – their "normal" mindset in the present is one that cannot be separated from this experience. On very rare occasions, when you catch them unawares, they will tell you about life as it was "before", and they will escape, for one brief moment, into a world where the tragedy of their life had not yet happened.

In my opinion, this also applies to Actarus. His encounter with Aphelie allows him to "escape" for one brief moment into happier times, when his world was not yet corrupted and destroyed, but reality claims his attention with a vengeance: indeed, Aphelie's "revelation" that her brother was killed "by a traitor" brings home the full extent of the tragedy he has undergone. In a sense, fresh wounds are inflicted on old wounds and the resulting trauma contributes to take the destruction of his world one step further. Indeed, thinking about the past, in his situation, always involves a very real danger to his personality and mental/emotional balance, as episode 25 proves in a sense: with each reminiscence, he opens himself up to further heartache, damage and destruction. In this sense, the character of Actarus is internally coherent, and to me, the fact that he does not talk much about his past is not an indication that he has accepted it or his present situation. On the contrary, the acuteness of the pain he feels each time he remembers the destruction of this world seems to suggest that it is still very much a part of him, a part that he cannot afford to dwell on, because doing so would destroy him.

This being said, I do not disagree with your analysis of his life on earth among us "earthlings". I do believe that what you say is true, and that he is grateful to have found a world to live in and people to love. His relationship with Procyon is crucial here, and beautiful also (and yes, I agree, there's definitely an MM in there). In this way, he is eminently "human" as we would have it in our homo-sapiens-centred world. Yet, to me, these few moments of active recollection, sparse as they are, are nevertheless essential to a complete understanding of the character of Actarus. They are, for one brief moment, "islands" or "havens" of peace in the story-line, allowing the character(s) reconnect with aspects of their personalities that belong to another time and place. They also act as contrasts to the present situation of the characters, and to the route that brought them there. Most importantly, however, they function as signifiers of the extent and power of the destructive energy deployed by Vega and his army: the fact that (nearly) all of these moments are followed by a shattering revelation or event, shattering in the most literal sense, is crucial. Indeed, one of their structural purposes is to shift the focus of the narrative from physical destruction (golgoths and battles) to psychological destruction, thus highlighting the real cruelty and (in-human) savagery of Vega's regime.*

All that is left to the characters, of their former lives and loves, is not more consistent than a soap bubble – the merest hint of reality is enough for them to just "pop". (the inference of auto-destruction implied in this metaphor is interesting, and worthy of more consideration, I think, though, perhaps in another thread ...)

To end on a more positive note, I should perhaps mention the only episode of this kind that is not (immediately) followed by tragedy and destruction – the conversation between Phenicia and Actarus in ep.72, where they talk about the seasons and lakes on Euphor. Of course, the narrative is preparing the audience for the encounter between Actarus and Vegalia, but this particular moment is a genuine

moment of peace. They are brought back to their present reality not by enemies or by a horrible event, but by the arrival of Alcor and Venusia. Venusia's poignant reaction to Actarus' explanation that they were talking about their own planet and her realisation that they would like to go back also teaches us, subliminally, that this is becoming a real possibility. In this scene, there is no destruction – the focus firmly remains the relationship between the different characters and on the natural world (Actarus observes a line of ants as they cross a dead branch – a symbol perhaps for crossing borders and their impending, though yet unexpected departure?).

Indeed, of all the "soap bubbles" we encounter in the series, this seems to be the only one that is allowed to escape into the sky "unharmred". In that sense, perhaps, it prefigures a future of a different for the heroes whose destiny we have been so closely involved in for 72 episodes. In a sense it also indicates that they will also escape us.

Thanks for reading this, and sorry about the language. Do ask/answer in French if you prefer!

Oh, and Gerdha – where did you read/hear that there is a period of 4 years between the destruction of Euphor and Actarus' arrival on earth? Please, tell me!!!

* I think that the way we shape notions of the "human" and "inhuman" is essential here, because it is precisely our notion of the human/inhuman that is challenged and subverted in the series as a whole. That however, is another MM! ;-)

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Jérôme

Duke and co...

Wed Dec 4 19:34:06 2002

212.198.0.97

OK ladies. Interesting posts as usual. Just a quick note, not a MM to give you hints for your MMs. A historical point of view as usual here:

In Japanese, Actarus is called Duke Flead as you know (pronounced Diuku Furido and written in katakana showing the foreigner origin of the word). I do believe that the Name was chosen in order to show the fact that Actarus came from a different world but with a strong hierarchy as well, as in Japan. Duke doesn't mean anything in particular in ancient Japan. But as I wrote it in a former post, Japan developed the same feudal organisation as our western European countries. The difference, rather important, is that this feudal organisation with the Shogun at the Head of a military state and clans (the Emperor having no real power apart from this divine superiority for he's the direct descendant of the Goddess Amaterasu/ The imperial family of Japan is the most ancient reigning family in the world in direct descent, amazing almost 2000 years!) disappeared only in 1868 with the Meiji revolution. The Emperor Mutsu Hito seized power destituted the Shogun Tokugawa Keiki and established a new form of government. He wanted to have Japan to enter the new industrialized era in order not to be occupied or dismantled like China at the same time by European imperialist countries. The samourai were not allowed to wear their Katana and swords any longer and most entered the army or became industrial tycoons.

It's interesting to see that at the same time, the blend between the western culture and the Japanese one started in the elite led by the emperor. At that time, some of the samourai who had succeeded the most for instance started to borrow western nobility titles and add them to their names. I do think it was a way of acknowledging the fact that they were powerful and that when they were dealing with westerners, those latter would understand their status/title at once. They wore western outfits as well (tuxedos, monocle, etc.)

It's interesting to see that in "Forbidden colors"/ (les amours interdites) de Mishima, one of the Character is a count, another a Duke as far as I can remember. Women of the high society are often referred to as Lady X, as in Britain. And no wonder! why? Because many elite members of the beginning of the century until the 1930s and after in the 50s if they still had the money to, went to Britain in the best colleges. (i don't think that the Japanese post position or rather termination/flexional ending (in french desinence) 'sama' or 'san' after a word gives the exact translation of Lady or Sir, although it's used in that way.

Nakamurasan means 'monsieur Nakamura', we can agree on that but it only shows whether a hierarchy between the 2 persons who are addressing each other, or politeness between the 2, But not the nobility of one at least at once. Other codes would show it, the importance of the bow for instance. that's why many Japanese nobles preferred to add a western title to their name especially to deal with foreigners who might have misunderstood the exact rank of the Japanese in front of them. It was a way as well I think to overcome in a way racism or the western superiority. Indeed, the classicfications of the races were in the end of the 19th century a hobby for many Europeans and Americans as well. Since they dominated the world, the other races/cultures were de facto inferior. Showing strongly, as many Japanese did and having this pride (most similar to the European one, one could mention contempt) prevented the Japanese from being taken as inferiors. (I'm not saying that there was no contempt or racism on the western side, there was, but there was the same on the opposite side!). That's why somehow Japan could become the Ally of Nazi Germany in the Anti-Comintern Pact signed by the 2 countries and joined LATER by Italy. (here the chronology is most interesting).

Back to Grendizer....

So To me Actarus is definitely referred to as a Duke because in that word appear both his alien origin and his position in the social hierarchy. Your analysis on the translation into Prince in French is most convincing and somehow is linked to mine in Japanese. It all comes back to codes and their comprehension in a defined society/culture.

I love your 'bubble of soap' metaphore. It's beautiful and poetic. And indeed grasps the idea of the opposition between destruction/dream, war/peace...

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Gerdha

Dukes and farmhands

Wed Dec 4 21:51:03 2002

57.67.17.3

Nice to see you around, Jerome. As usual your posts are accurate and I totally agree with you. We share the vision about the meaning of Actarus being appealing Duke Fleed.

The difference between italian and french edition lies in the fact that in your translation earthlings refer to Actarus as "prince" often, instead of the italian one where it does never happen and he is called everytime with the adoptive name; for us Goldrake/Duke Fleed (with all the implications you have pointed out) exists only after metamorphose and only towards Vega people and the others characters coming from his past. This is the reason why me and Agnes have a different interpretation of some situations in the story. My MM had the purpose to demonstrate that probably the italian edition is more correct respect to the french one because of the clearer boundary between the two situations. But of course I could be completely wrong.

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Jérôme

I'm sure you're right

Thu Dec 5 05:50:17 2002

212.198.0.96

The reason is simple. I bought the Mazinger Z movie DVD in Japanese with English subtitles. Well the subtitles are excruciating but enable to understand somehow the story, my little Japanese is helpful as well. I was cautious to listen carefully to the names and the dialogues (which unfortunately I couldn't understand perfectly or even close to OK) But once in a while I got words or bits of sentences and it appears clear that the Italian translation is far more accurate than the French one. But I was surprised to hear Venusia call him Duke Fleed most of the time and not Daisuke...Is this because he's her 'prince charming'??

But it's true as well that he was in Grendizer and she was worried about him!

I should watch it back!!!

Hopefully we'll have for the 25th anniversary of Grendizer in Europe the series in DVD. Let's pray for that....

bye bye...

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Gerdha

We shouldn't scare to death our friends here this way...

Wed Dec 4 08:34:21 2002

151.26.145.106

... attacking this forum through serial Montrogoth Messages! We can't complain for Bernie thinking we are on crack or something similar ;-) But you know, I have personally nicknamed this place Pandora, guess why... And call me crazy, I love this game!!!!

Nice to see my effort was worth to be read; you know, our previous discussions during my PC illness brought so many ideas to my mind. :-)))) But I have still nevertheless some comments on your comments (uh, I am afraid we could going on and on and on... oops!)

First of all, my goal was NOT to start an analysis of Actarus personality THROUGHOUT the anime. It would be a matter of a number of further MM, wouldn't it? In particular I am not going to comment here and now about ep 25 and 72 because – this is one of the thing I know for sure – these 2 particular episodes contain the most incredible differences between the two editions, and really could potentially bring me from one side and all of you on the other in total misunderstanding of our posts. That's why I limited my MM (yeah, right :-))) to what I think is Actarus personality AT EP 1: exactly to avoid to include ep 25 and 72 in the discussion. I don't feel it's convenient for me to share my thoughts about them here and now – highly hoping for your forgiveness. For sure ep25 and 72 are topics I would like to discuss in the forum, but as I suppose all of you talked about them hundreds of times before my arrival here I am still a bit "afraid" to add my 2 cents, because firstly I would not like to let you scream "oh no, not again THEM!" and secondly – I reiterate – my vision of their meaning could be very distant and in some cases nearly opposite from French friends and I am somewhat reticent to face the topic. A bit like for ep 39, where the edition issue seems once again a potential mess (I promised an answer to Jerome and I am gladly going to accomplish my task in the next days, don't worry my friend! :-)))).

Anyway, I am happy you appreciated most of my ideas. I see we don't agree about the reason of Actarus' silence about his past life, but never mind. I mean, I agree with your notes about the natural reaction to a shocking experience, but I see it as an added factor to another psychological situation. I see Actarus in ep1 – and for a big part of the story too - having a more "positive" attitude and being more concentrated in his new life respect to think mainly to his past. Of course he has flashbacks, and suffers for recalling what happened to Fleed, but I see it as a way to underline his different state of life on Earth. Remember: I am talking about ep1 and at least the first part of the anime. I limited my analysis to this because, again, if I have to discuss about his whole personality I would have to write a book of MM...;-)

Am I blinded from my personal attitude towards MY life issues? I cannot exclude it, I have to say. I mean, both our interpretations are feasible, and probably my approach is concentrated more on Actarus hope for a better future instead of the sadness of his losses for a personal attitude, or maybe for uncounsciously hoping to have this personal attitude. I must admit that honestly I don't know. For sure our personalities are the guiding light in our life, and a Grendizer analysis cannot be an exception.

About the prince/duke factor, I would like to explain deeply my theory. I admit I never talked deeply with

my stepsister about japanese society, shame on me. Such a reliable source available and no information to share with you. Actually my cousin told me something but he's a western guy, so his opinion can be partial. Speaking about Grendizer, I have the impression though that focusing on japanese culture we are at risk to waste a more larger scenario that I am convinced Nagai has applied to THIS particular anime, like if it was the opportunity for him to experiment a new type of narrative approach. I don't know if I am able to explain clearly my thought, but I have always get the FEELING that Grendizer was a tentative from Nagai to create an "universal" story, located in Japan but not "culturally" limited to that nation, in the way that approaching characters strictly comparing them to the japanese ambient COULD be wrong. I mean, if I think to the two Mazingers and Jeeg I see clearly not only the japanese location but also the typical japanese "spirit". Strangely, I don't get the same feeling from Grendizer and even from Gaiking, and they are both animes involving "goods" and "evils" coming from other planets. Be aware: it's a personal feeling, and it's possible that the Italian edition has reinforced a totally wrong approach of mine.

But that's more. I don't want to take the role of the revolutionary in this forum, but to tell the complete truth I find totally unusual that we don't know Actarus name at all. Duke Fleed is his title in Euphor society, right? So what's his real name? Because I cannot think to Duke as a first name. Do we have a prince without a name? How strange is a man who is called by his title (Duke Fleed/Prince D'Euphor) by all the people coming from his past including two girlfriends, and by first name from people he knows from only 2 years? Even his sister calls him with the adoptive name! I hope to be able to explain well what I have in mind, but if my theory is correct Grendizer's driver only name used in the story is the one he takes as an earthling, and this author's choice must have a sense. What's more important for a person than his first name? Without getting psychological, I believe everybody can agree that we are recognised by our name since our first breath, and we socialise at first impact through it most of the times, so in a sense it's our "ticket" for life. What I am trying to say is that I suspect Nagai could have wanted to underline that before arriving on Planet Earth Actarus was identified by his role and only here can be recognized for his personality. If this is true, Actarus life on Planet Earth is the core of his character in the anime and his complex and terrible past have to be considered mainly as a device to explain who he is now by comparison. That's why I see Actarus as a character more focused on the future instead of the past, at least for the first part of the anime, which is anyway the period considered by my original MM.

Lastly, referring to your opinion about the meaning of the final of the serie, it would take me a more complex post to explain why I don't completely agree with you. I hope my life will be long enough to resurrect the topic one day :-)

Thanks for your reply, Agnes, it's always a great pleasure to share opinions with you. I hope I have scared nobody with these MM and that my English is affordable for everyone.

But I wait for more contributions from all the other Forum visitors in whatever language!!!!!! I will take them as a personal gift :-))))

Salut.
Gerdha

PS for Agnes: both Italian and French editions finally agree about something!!! The timeline was discussed here a couple of months ago during a post exchange about the possible age of main characters, and we all agreed about it. According to what is said by Procton in ep 2 Actarus was arrived on Planet Earth 2 years before and Zuril affirms in ep 72 that Actarus and Rubina engaged eight years before. So as the war lasts nearly 2 years, as a consequence Actarus may have been a fugitive for circa four years after Fleed destruction.

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Agnès

no indeed ... :-)

Wed Dec 4 09:10:16 2002

212.24.201.34

Thanks, Gerdha, for your replies ... and just a couple of comments before I go to bed ... no MMs tonight!

On the names: that is a very interesting comment, and indeed, first names are essential.

The French edition circumvented that issue: indeed, Actarus' first name is always Actarus, whether on earth or in former times. Hydargos calls him Actarus or Prince (in a very sneering voice; I guess he says "Prince" when Actarus is referred to as "Duke" in the original version; it would be interesting to know, wouldn't it?), Aphelie also calls him Actarus, as does Pollux, I think, and other characters, though I am not sure about Vegalia (she says Prince in a romantic way a lot).

As for the time-line, I didn't realise/remember Horos (Zuril?) mentioned WHEN they had been engaged. That is interesting indeed - I was wondering about that(I must have missed that discussion).

Okay, that's about it for tonight ... the rest is for tomorrow.

ciao,ciao.

A.

He usually introduces himself to potential adversaries as Actarus, Prince d'Euphor. I know that this cannot be consistent with the original version because his name (Daisuke), I think, is pointedly Japanese.

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Jérôme

insight, insight...you're good!

Wed Dec 4 19:50:03 2002

212.198.0.97

You Wrote: "to tell the complete truth I find totally unusual that we don't know Actarus name at all. Duke Flead is his title in Euphor society, right? So what's his real name? Because I cannot think to Duke as a first name. Do we have a prince without a name? How strange is a man who is called by his title (Duke Flead/Prince D'Euphor) by all the people coming from his past including two girlfriends, and by first name from people he knows from only 2 years?"

well that's something that has bothered me for a long time!!! yes yes yes!!!
But I might have a beginning of an answer: as i mentioned it in my previous post in that thread (answer to Agnès), In Japan most of the interaction between people are made on the name basis (as in ours I must admit, i'm stupid sometimes), but here as in my example Nakamurasan/ Duke Flead is his name, in the sense that Flead is his family name, like any Major reigning House (Ok France was not called Bourbonia under Louis XIV, but we talk about the House of the Bourbons) and I think it's the same here. But he must have had a first name, Vegalia has one, We must speculate that his real 1st name was not mentioned. It can't be Actarus or its Japanese original translation because his 1st name (I can't remember it at the moment) is japanese (which is not the case for Actarus, it's not really a French name!!). Well the mystery remains complete!!

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Gerdha
Thankst! And a further insight
Wed Dec 4 22:02:00 2002
57.67.17.3

To add more fuel to the mistery, I would add that the official japanese definition of Grendizer's characters specifies that Daisuke Umon is Duke Fleed's ADOPTIVE NAME.

So to me this implies that Actarus did not select his own first name in Fleed also to live on Planet Earth. If my theory is correct, this would reinforce my opinion that he is presented by the Author like a character who wanted really to have a complete new life and was totally focused on his own future, plus all my considerations about the meaning of the lack of news about his real first name.

Gosh, please somebody stop me, I have discovered how funny is the overanalyzing process!!!! Help! :-)))

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Jérôme

I've watched in Japanese and...

Thu Dec 5 19:06:32 2002

212.198.0.96

Ok it was buzzing in my head and I had the time so I watched Grendizer vs Great Mazinger in Japanese yesterday listening carefully to the dialogues and here are my conclusions:

- Actarus is referred to as Daisuke by everyone on earth all the time (Venusia, Procyon etc.).
- He's referred to as Duke Fleed by Vega forces (Hydargos and Minos)
- He becomes Duke Fleed when he metamorphoses. Actually whereas he was shouting 'Metamorphose' in French, he shouts 'Duke Fleed' in the Japanese version, hence becoming the prince d'Euphor!

maybe it can be of some help...

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[Jérôme](#)

Yes yes yes...

Thu Dec 5 05:42:51 2002

212.198.0.96

OK I've talked to a friend of mine today. She's lived in Japan for a year and she has the same opinion as yours! It's to her a way of cutting through difficult times and letting the past behind, hence focusing on his new life.

Is overanalysing so bad???

Sigmund Freud, help us!!!

Bye LOL

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Gerdha
:-)))))))))
Thu Dec 5 22:20:38 2002
57.67.17.3

I avoided to talk about Grendizer versus Mazinger movie because I wanted to take something apart for more posts as I have a little idea about it...

Anyway, I suspected the italian translation og Grendizer was far more accurate than the french one for various reasons, but I was afraid to say it explicitly because I am not sure 100%. But referring to that particular movie, Dynamic Italy released a VHS version in 1998 completely remastered an re-dubbed (with the original voices though!!!) respect of 1978 version which get the theaters here, which I know for sure is totally faithful to the original japanese dialogues. As a matter of fact when I thought about my theory these days I took the dialogues of the movie as a confirmation of it. :-)))

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Agnès
over-analysing ... (Me?!?)
Thu Dec 5 08:58:26 2002
212.24.201.126

This thread is interesting indeed ... and so is the name thing (Reminds me of *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, but that's another Forum, I'm afraid ...)

Just to make sure that what I wanted to say didn't just go "pop" with my soap bubble metaphors ...

I don't disagree with the idea that Actarus is focusing on his new life at all, or that he is trying to, at least. "Trying" is important here, in my opinion, because it implies a conscious effort: it's just that for me "focusing on one's new life" and "not being able to get over traumatic experiences" are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, even if most of the time one/Actarus is able to focus on the present and future, the past, memories as well as engrained habits and attitudes, are bound to emerge and claim his attention/personality from time to time, as they do ... (sorry, Gerdha, I was so excited about your mail, that I didn't really take in that you were only talking about ep.1)

It's just that I cannot imagine that one could go through something like that, and then shut oneself off completely to all that one used to be ... Just spending a few years in a country is "unalien" (or culturally close, in other words) as Scotland involves a constant renegotiation between who one is/was at home (and all the things one takes for granted in one's own culture) and who one is "now" ... (the *name* thing is important there too :-))

This is really what I was trying to say in my last MM ... I'll try to avoid soap bubbles and metaphors in the future, honest! (you know I can't ... wouldn't be half as much fun ... :-))

(i want us all to be right ... sniff ;-))

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Gedha
overanalyzing...US!!!
Thu Dec 5 22:42:37 2002
57.67.17.3

"... (sorry, Gerdha, I was so excited about your mail"
OMG, thank you so much, it's such a great compliment. I was afraid to have written a lot of craps...

"Trying" is important here, in my opinion, because it implies a conscious effort... Indeed, even if most of the time one/Actarus is able to focus on the present and future, the past, memories as well as engrained habits and attitudes, are bound to emerge and claim his attention/personality from time to time, as they do ... "

It's exactly what I meant. Sorry if I did not explain my opinion well, I am used to use technical and accountability english so I am experimenting myself on real time about (over)analysis... :-(

"It's just that I cannot imagine that one could go through something like that, and then shut oneself off completely to all that one used to be ... "

Without getting personal, IMO it depends on your personal attitude and strenghtness. And remember, Fled destruction happened 6 years before ep1. But, again, I was talking about Actarus in ep1. Of course Vega forces arrival to attack also Planet Earth will affect his attitude. But how many MM should we write about Actarus development as a character? ;-))) Hey, we have time fot it, right?

"(i want us all to be right ... sniff ;-)) "

But WE ARE ALL ALLRIGHT. When we talk about how we "feel" Grendizer we talk in the end about ourselves. So we are all allright for sure :-)))

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