

## **7th April**

Dear diary, it's actually the first time I've written something about myself and my experiences. So, I'll start from the beginning. I'm Akiko, I live in Kōshū in Yamanashi prefecture, it's about a 1.5 hour drive from Tokyo. I moved here with my parents when I was 5. They were tired of living in a big city in England, they preferred something smaller, quiet and peaceful. I have never travelled beyond the area of Kōshū, my parents have always been against it, because of the many unpleasant situations in England (The area and the people living there weren't friendly at all). You can say that my social life had been ruined even before my birth. That's why I'm antisocial and shy. My parents say that I won't cope with the world outside. I'll prove that they are wrong! I want to be individual, independent, I want to spread my wings, rise into the air and fly away. I want to explore the whole world! Well... Maybe only Japan at first. I want to remember this trip forever.

So as I wrote before. Akiko. Live in Kōshū. Crazy little psycho (It's ok, I think it's because of anime and music, oh.) An antisocial weirdo. Hate meeting new people. Clumsy and unlucky person with a bunch of complexes. Yeah. That's me.

## **8th April**

### **Day I**

I left Kōshū at 9. As I'm usually out of luck, of course when I set off, I realized that I had left my wallet at home. I had to come back and wait for another transport. I went straight to Shiroishi, where I went to Zao Kitsune Mura - Fox Village in Miyagi.

Foxes, foxes, foxes everywhere!

You have to pay 1000 yen to get in, it's about 9 pounds and it's totally worth its price.

A cuddle of a cub fox costs 300 yen. I couldn't help it. Then I went to the other foxes. I bought food for them. They were all coming up to me, they were sniffing me and putting their little paws on my leg. One of them even fell asleep on me. I couldn't move, because when I tried, he growled immediately. Such a boor.

## **9th April**

### **Day II**

In the morning I went to the Cat Island. This place is amazing! I wanted to pet all the cats that live here. I bought some cat food to feed them. I don't know why, certainly about 50 cats ran up to me, they started to jump onto me and scratch my clothes. I threw the food on the ground. But it wasn't enough to rid myself of them. They didn't go away from me. On the way to Cat Shrine they were following me all the time. When I came to the temple, I felt like a goddess, the queen of cats. I could rule them if I wanted to. Seriously. But it wasn't a nice experience at all, these cats even wanted to go to the bathroom with me. It was a little awkward.

On the way to Tokyo an old lady sat next to me and started talking. I was only staring at her and nodding my head. Fortunately, she left me alone when she saw my black metal bands sew-on badges. Yes. It always works.

At the beginning I visited temples in Tokyo. It took longer than I expected. There were a lot of tourists, so I had to wait in queues. I didn't want anyone to start talking to me, so I tried not to push and touch anyone. I managed to do it! I'm proud of myself.

## **10th April**

### **Day III**

I decided to visit Kawaii Monster Cafe in Harajuku. It costs 500 yen to get in. There are a few areas: milk stand, mel-tea room, bar experiment.

There are a lot of big comfortable seats, so you can go there with a group of friends.

The whole room is suuuperbly colorful.

The menus are on tablets, so when you choose the food you like, you just click on it. The food is colorful too, rainbow pasta with various sauces, ice cream, pancakes, magical drinks that you have to make, mix on your own. I bought very colorful spaghetti and rainbow ice cream. The staff started talking to me. They asked if I like the food. It was very yummy. They looked like aliens or someone from other planets, in shiny dresses and neon hair.

They gave a performance with singing and dancing. Then I took a picture with the girls, and they gave me a postcard. It was really funny to eat here, but it will be funnier with friends... But one of the staff girls told me that I'm cute! I felt really, really nice.

## **11th April**

### **Day IV**

I went to MaindreaMin Maid Cafe. I decided to wear a Hanayo cosplay from Love Live, because she has worked in a cafe like this. I walked in, I got a pair of cat ears which I had to wear inside. I had to say 'Nyao Nyao' like a cat, instead of 'sumimasen' like in normal restaurants. I felt ashamed, I was preparing to call for a menu for about 10 minutes, and I pretended I was talking to someone on the phone. Embarrassing. I finally did it. A cute maid came up to me and gave me a menu. I ordered pancakes, tea with milk, and ice cream, of course. The girls organize live shows too, like in Kawaii Monster Cafe. They invited me on stage. One came to me and grabbed my hand. I was really frightened. I tried to repeat their steps, but, unfortunately, I tripped over and spoiled everything. I ran out of the cafe with tears in my eyes and a bad graze on my left knee. I will never go back there.

## **12th April**

### **Day V**

Today I wandered around Harajuku, looking for something interesting and less stressful. I noticed a large pink sign "Daiso". I went in. I felt like in a paradise. Thousands of colored sweet things. And all for 100 yen. P a r a d i s e. Cute decorations for cakes, cupcakes, you can also buy sweets, for example gummies or chocolate bars in all flavors you want, green tea snacks, anime cartoon themed macaroni and various choice of stickers.

Adorable mugs, cups, forks, plates and other things of everyday use, toothbrushes, towels and much more. I found some cute Rilakkuma forks and a plate. I already can feel how delicious the food will be with this set. Yum.

## **13th April**

### **Day VI**

Today I went to Nakano Broadway, it's outside of Nakano Station.

At first I went to the gacha machines. I found something really surprising and hilarious. Used lingerie. Yes. I'm not lying. And then models of Japanese toilets. Japan is a really weird country. On the 2nd floor there is a shop with mangas, there is also Nakano for cosplayers, you can buy wigs there, try them on to see if they suit you, dresses, socks, ribbons, round ears and everything which is necessary for your cosplay. Lizzy from Black Butler, Karuta from Inu x Boku, Amu from Shugo Chara... I want it all!

There are plushies and toy stores, too. I bought Pokemon plushies. Real gems.

## **14th April**

## Day VII

At the end of my trip I visited a few shops with sweets, for the first time in my life I ate taiyaki with red bean paste, dango and mochi. I went to a pet shop "Zoo". It wasn't an ordinary shop. Ladies and gentlemen, there were ... monkeys. Cats. Squirrels. And best of all, you can touch them, play with them. I gave a squirrel a nut, it almost bit me. Almost. Fortunately, I'm still alive!

I did a stupid thing. This monkey. I could not resist and I bought it. Then it turned out that I couldn't carry it to Kōshū, so I had to return it.

Then I had some second thoughts. I missed my home and I'd spent a lot of money. I'd gained weight, for 7 days I'd eaten a lot of sweets. After the incident in Maid Cafe I have got a restaurant-phobia and I earned a scar on my knee. Looks like I'm not cut out to be a traveller. Home, sweet home... I'm coming!