

# J-POW



Skiing in Japan  
and other adventures  
by Angela Melick

Trevor and I have a  
"bi-annual adventure pact":  
We go somewhere  
every other year.



We'd been pretty good  
about keeping it, UNTIL-

... events conspired to  
keep us on separate  
adventures. It's been  
four years since our  
last "big trip":



### MEANWHILE

UGH, everything is  
tracked out, what's  
the POINT?

You should  
go skiing  
in Japan.

Tons of  
powder  
there.

What-  
really?



What iiiiff  
we went to  
Japan. To ski

Sounds  
insanely  
awesome.

Yeah  
Right.



Do you want  
to go to  
JAPAN, tho?

Ummm only  
since I was,  
like, FIFTEEN,  
dude.

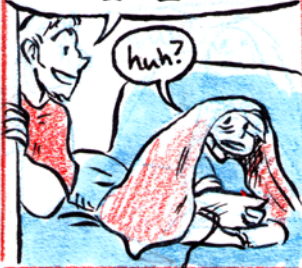
(not  
happening.)



### BUT THEN

I need you to  
book time off -  
we're going to Japan.

huh?



### AND

I bought  
flights to  
Japan!

wait-



(1 month ago)

So now we're  
Going??????  
To JAPAN?????

? What? ? do? ?  
?? ? ? ?



East Mt. [イースト]  
標高868m



16.-2.15  
**領収書**  
入館料(大人)  
¥600-  
白銀荘  
吹上温泉保養センター

ANA

ECONOMY CLASS  
12FEB

ANGELA

MRS  
NH 0115  
VANCOUVER CA  
TOKYO-HND JAPAN

便名/ FLIGHT  
出発/ FROM  
行先/ TO

搭乗口  
GATE  
D66

座席番号  
SEAT NO.  
15K

搭乗時刻  
Boarding Time  
14:30

062

API / --  
ETKT:

TICKET ADULT  
4時間券

Asahi  
旭岳ロープウェイ/区

14時  
00分まで  
[not refund]

2016. 2. 15

領収書  
スタオル  
300-  
白銀荘  
上温泉保養センター

発行日  
2016.02.16  
09:05

2016-02-07781

**1日券 大人**

一般料金  
**16,020**

氷のレストランでスイーツbuffet開催中  
ナイター終了まで有効 ¥5,400 別途

斜面構成 ..... 初級30%・中級40%・上級30%

ゲレンデ斜面情報 ..... 未圧雪30%・圧雪70%

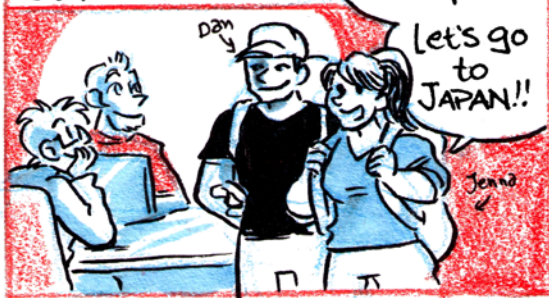
未圧雪コース  
ウエストMt. サイドカントリーパーク/林間コース/タイガーコース  
イーストMt. スーパーイーストコース/アクロスAコース/アクロスBコース  
Mt.イゾラ イゾラA・Bコース/ルスツNO.1コース/ヘブンリーキャニオンコース/ヘブンリースピリットコース

初級コース 2. 中級コースを経て「イゾラ第2クワッド」へ、3. 「イゾラ第2クワッド」で、Mt.イゾラへ。

ゲレンデでも  
K-LOU  
ドリンクや雑  
ありながらホ  
グレードな体  
場所 イースト  
イゾラへ  
料金 おとな1

DAY 1 → 2

Meet Dan & Jenna  
at YVR Airport



So excited to  
go somewhere  
I'm considered  
tall (ish)!



YVR → HND

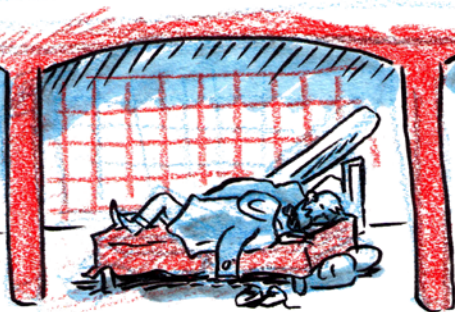
Kinda nice to sit in a tube for  
ten hours after running around  
like a maniac the last two weeks.



When we landed, a lot of things happened  
that we struggled to deal with in our sleep-  
deprived delirium. Neither of us speak Japanese.



Anyway, the  
result is  
our connecting  
flight to  
Sapporo was  
cancelled.



We  
slept on  
a bench  
under a  
decorative  
bridge.

DAY 3: Let's try this AGAIN



**CRASH**

Reunite w/ Dan & Jenna (whose flight didn't get cancelled)



A taste of Sapporo...

The architecture here ... kinda sucks? Reminds me of Anchorage.

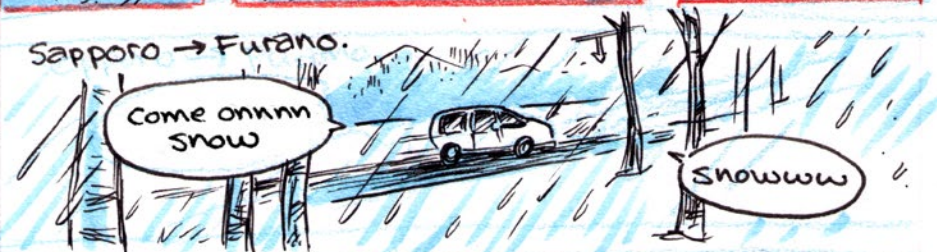


Eating is gonna be hard :(

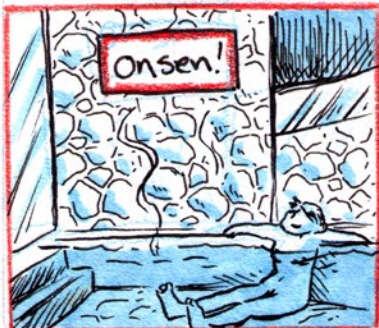
how do you ask: "does this have meat in it?" in Japanese?



Sapporo → Furano.



**Onsen!**



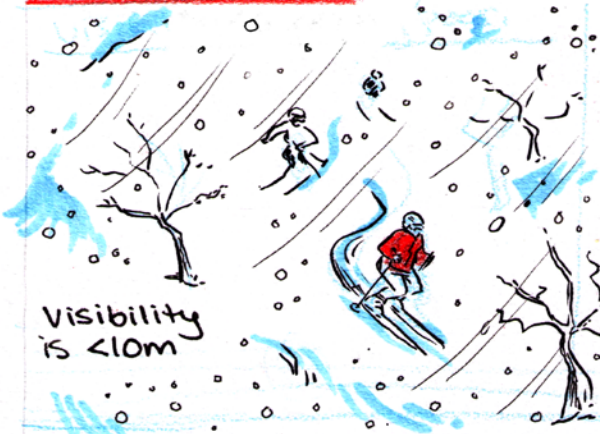
**BED!**



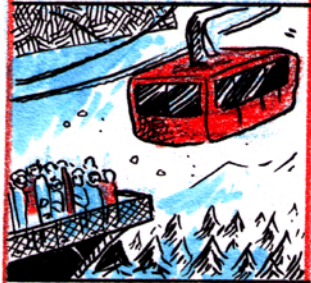
**DAY 4:  
Skiing Asahidake**

Well... there's definitely snow!

There's only a single tram here. Not a ton of people, though

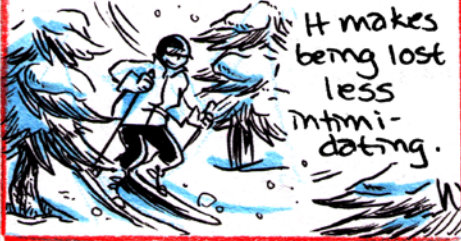


Visibility is <10m



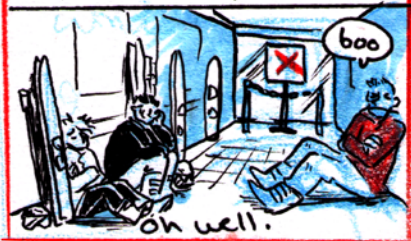
80% are "gaijin" from around the world.

The terrain isn't too challenging, but I'm glad we're all confident skiers.



It makes being lost less intimidating.

After 3 runs, the cable car shuts down due to 70km/hr winds.



Lucky: Dan is a Geologist with tons of experience on Northern roads.



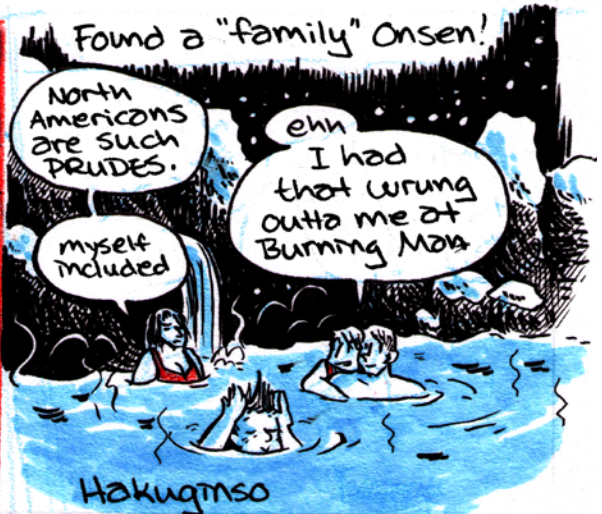
I'd be stressed driving here.

Found a "family" Onsen!

North Americans are such PRIDES.

myself included

ehh I had that wrong outta me at Burning Man



Hakugunso

**DAY 5:**  
**SKIING TOMOMU**

5cm of snow  
over SOLID ICE.



Everything in  
Hokkaido's been  
ruined by last  
weekend's rotm.

Don't worry,  
we'll get our  
powder day.

Do you  
promise?



I  
promise.

DO YOU  
PROMISE??

Yes, I'm  
GOD



We ate dinner  
at a conveyor  
sushi place.  
I kept  
messing  
things up.



Trevor tried to  
eat an ice-cream ...

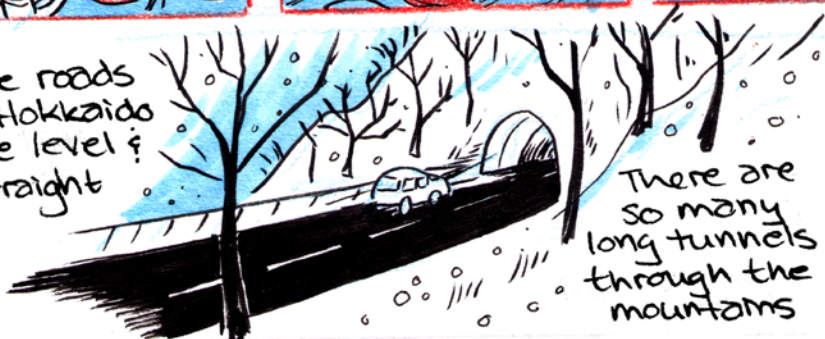


... but it was  
a PROP!



I hope  
they  
found  
the  
random  
gijm  
entertaining  
...

The roads  
in Hokkaido  
are level &  
straight

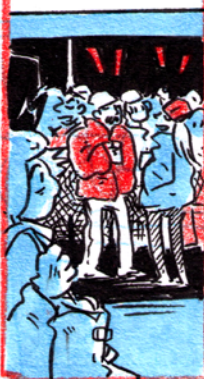


There are  
so many  
long tunnels  
through the  
mountains

**DAY 6**  
The legends are TRUE.  
Niseko gets MASSIVE  
powder!



...and it's  
FULL OF  
AUSTRALIANS



but we have a  
car, so we went  
to Rusutsu.



Finally.  
FINALLY!!



Weaving fresh tracks  
between birch trees.  
It's HEAVENLY.

That night  
had the  
feeling of a  
doubtful  
mission  
finally  
accomplished.



\$500  
flight!!  
Yesh

"hotel is full  
of stinkbugs!"

Next mission: get  
off of Hokkaido.



DAY 7

It's warming up in Niseko, but there's still tons of snow.



We skied An'nupuri - bell to bell (skipping lunch)

It's crowded, but the adventurous traveller can still find untouched terrain.

For supper, we found an awesome roadside okonomiyaki restaurant.



Tonight's hotel has an awesome natural-spring mixed-gender onsen.



Life's preeettyyy pretty good.

**DAY 8** 3pm  
flight to Tokyo.  
We chance a half-  
day ski at Hanazono.



The lift  
etiquette here  
is... interesting.

What lift  
etiquette??

Yeah,  
exactly.



We... underestimated how long it would  
take to drive to Sapporo Airport.



I feel like I spend a  
lot of time apologising.

sumimasen!  
3pm flight!  
Gomenezai!!!

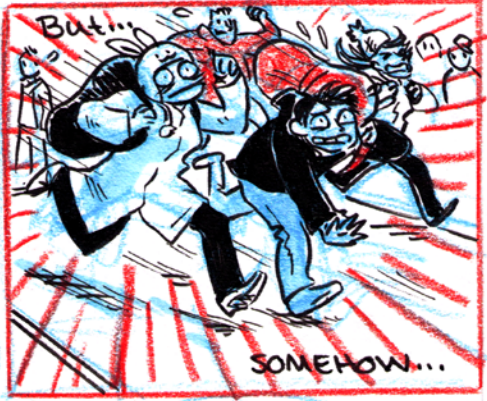
Ehhh??

2:40pm

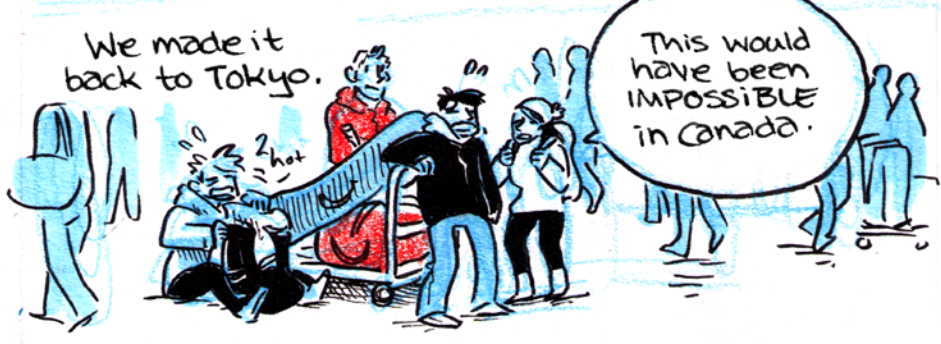


But...

SOMEHOW...



We made it  
back to Tokyo.



This would  
have been  
IMPOSSIBLE  
in Canada.

～野生のドラマに出会う場所～



入苑券  
**地獄谷  
野猿公園**  
GOKUDANI YAEN-KOEN

大人 / Adult

お客様控

クレジットカードご利用票 / CREDIT CARD SALES SLIP

会社名・会員番号  
取引内容: お買上

支払区分: UC-XXXXXXXXXXXXX 一括

R213  
有XX-XX  
(JR東海)  
¥15,360

商品名: (一括発券) 自由席券  
2月21日 東京→長野 乗車券込み  
乗車変更や払戻しの取扱箇所、内容、方法  
払戻しの際は購入時のカードをお持ちくだ  
この控は大切に保存してください。  
28.-2.21 10050-04

2枚(冊)

人景券  
三鷹の森ジブリ美術館

会員番号  
内容: お買上

区分: 一括



GHIBLI MUSEUM,  
MITAKA

京都市交通局・京都バス(株)  
京都市バス  
City Bus & Kyoto Bus  
One-day Pass  
巴土・京都巴土一日遊運賃

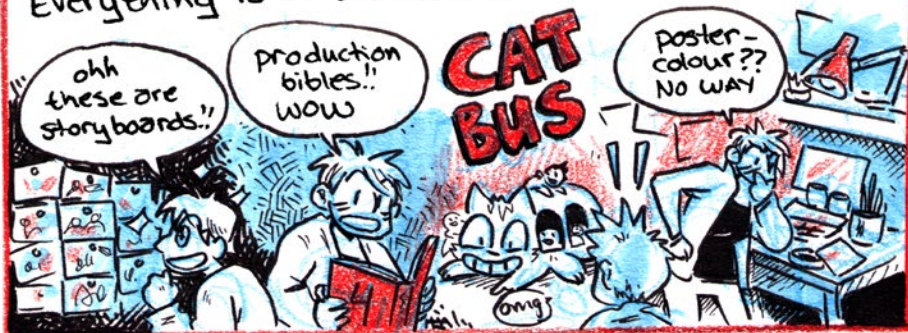
三鷹区間内有効  
Jinthe  
三鷹区間内有効

**DAY 9**

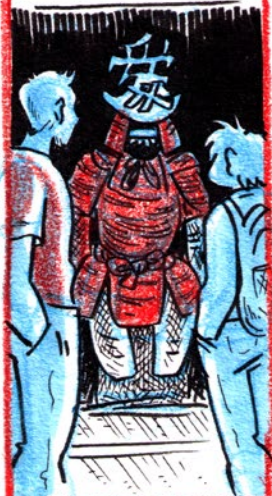
Dan & Jenna  
head to  
Nagano for  
a fishing trip.  
Trevor & I  
are going to...



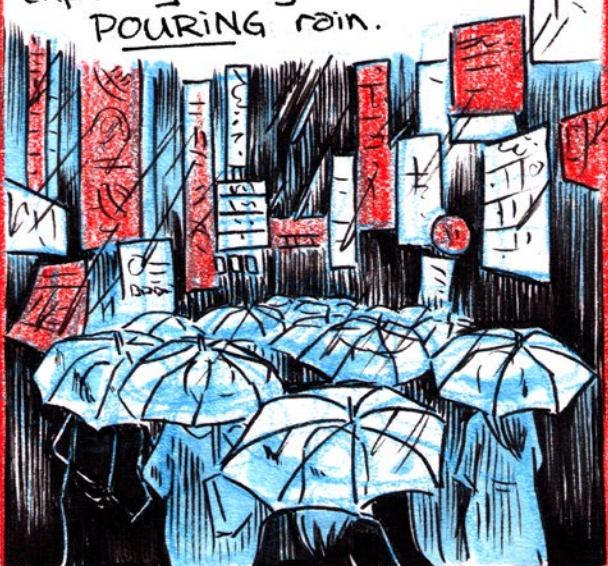
I got the last two tickets available in Vancouver for ALL of February. It's a dream come true! Everything is so beautiful & meticulously arranged.



Stopped in at  
a Samurai  
museum



Spent the rest of the day  
exploring Shinjuku in the  
POURING rain.



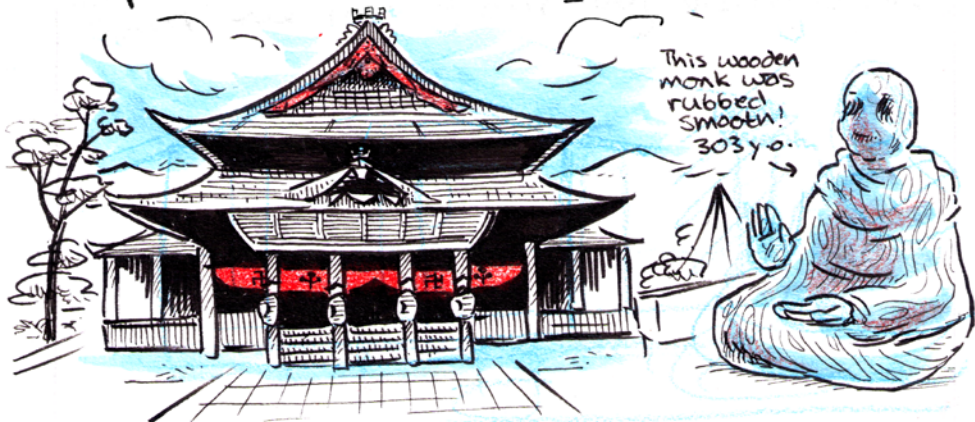
# DAY 10 MISSION - Hot Spring Monkeys!



8:05am Shinkansen: Tokyo → Nagano



Spent the rest of the day visiting shrines



Nagano is what I'd imagine a quiet mountain town in Japan to be. (Niseko was like a Japanese-themed version of Whistler.)

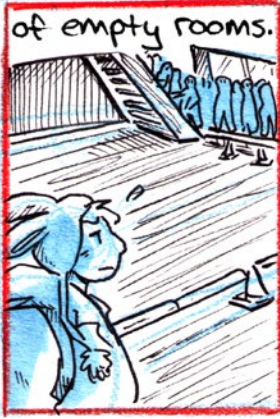
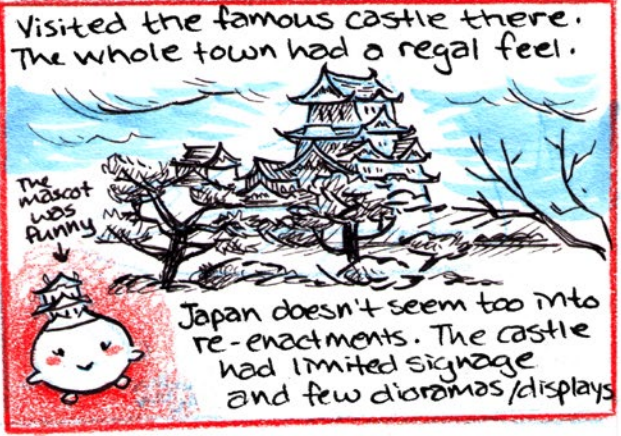


I like it a lot! But I'm tired of being cold :/



\*can't eat meat or fish





Ended our day by paying our respects at Hiroshima.



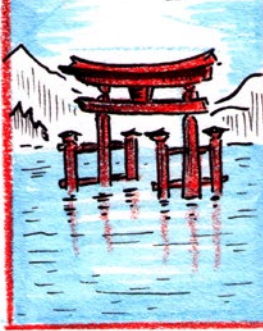


**DAY 14**

Took a ferry to Miyajima



It was ... as advertised.  
(very pretty, though!)



There were tons of tame deer around.



Got kinda lost on a hike, but I didn't mind.



To be honest some nature was just what I needed...



... before heading back to the crush of Tokyo



Had dinner with Don's expat friend, Kei



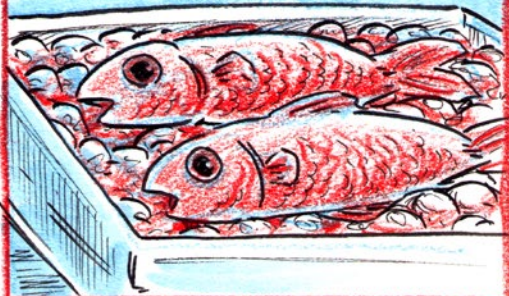
He calls the Shinkansen "the Shink"

## DAY 15

Dan & Jenna really wanted to see the Tsukigi Fish Market



...but it really wasn't the place for me :(



We went to the National Museum of Science & Innovation

got to see ASIMO! → (robot)



Three major exhibits were closed (Games, Robotics & Space)

Things that have been closed for renovation during our visit:

- Sapporo museum
- Kyoto Manga museum
- Half of the Hiroshima Museum
- Miyajima tram

**DON'T VISIT IN FEBRUARY**

The day wasn't a total wash, there was...

### ACTUAL VEGETARIAN RAMEN



and uniqlo!  
it fits!



I dunno



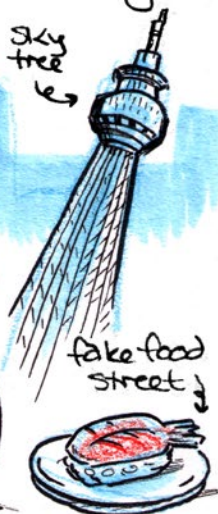
it's just one of those grumpy travel days...

# DAY 16 BIKE TOUR OF TOKYO!

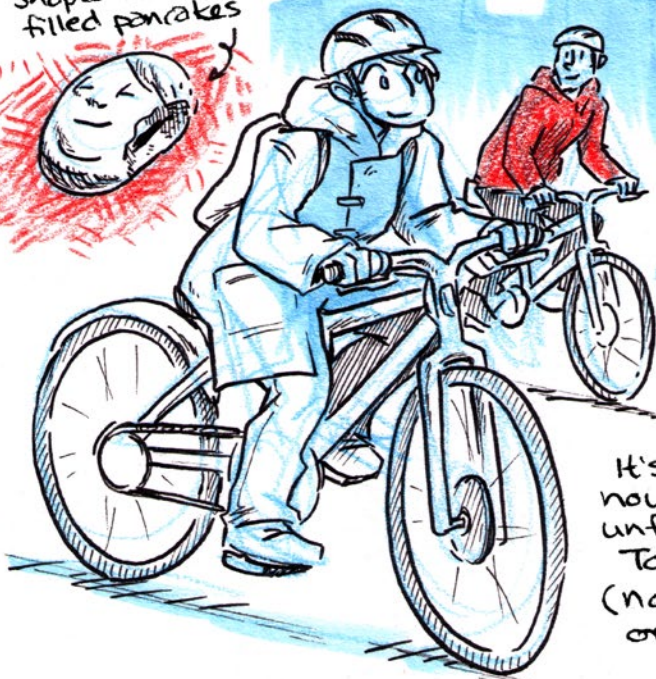
an easy 20km compared to our 40km in Kyoto

saw cool face-shaped red-bean filled panakes

sky tree

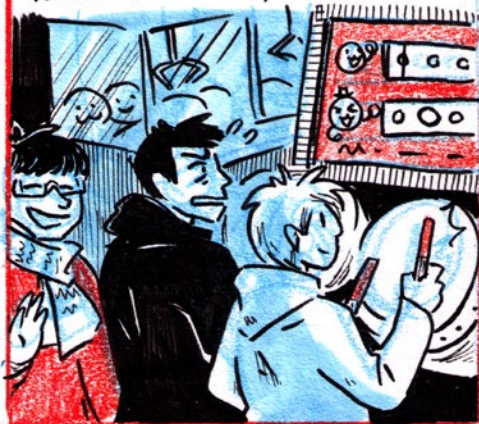


fake food street



It's strange how bike-unfriendly Tokyo is (no bike lanes or paths!)

Had dinner in Akihabara with another of Dan's local friends, Sunao-san



I lied. I'm not doing any better finding veg food



and it sucks :(

**DAY 17**  
Dan & Jenna leave Japan

See you soon!

byeeee this was fun!

We'd been staying in the Red Light District.

All of these places sell lap dances and BJs

oh ok what would i do without u

I went to a proper ont supply store (sekaido)

**TONES!!**

reference books

POSE CATALOGUE

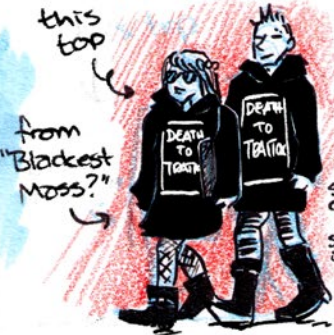
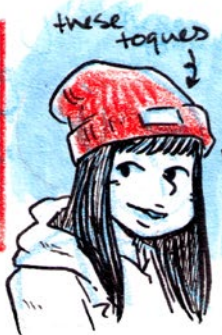
50

MAY

WOW

**TOP TRENDS**

Went trend-spotting in Hara-juku



wearing the exact same thing as your friend



(Gacha) ©

click click

¥200

I

Spent the rest of the day at AKIHABARA!!! (finally!!!)

LOVE GASHAPON!!!

**DAY 18** We went to an amusement park (Fuji-Q Highlands.) Kind of a tradition for us because we love roller coasters

The two coasters we rode were EPIC!!

- Echanika
- Takabisha



...and even for a rainy Monday in February, we spent the entire day in line!! (2+ hrs/ride)

So the day was kind of a bust.



cannot recommend

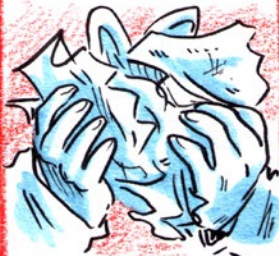
On our last day we visited the history museum and caught the view at the top of the Sky Tree



In Japan, every-  
thing is repeated  
over & over on  
a loudspeaker.  
Until all meaning  
seems lost



Everything comes  
wrapped in layers  
of plastic ...



but there are  
hardly any  
garbage cans.

It's a land of  
ten-thousand  
rules... and I  
constantly felt  
like I was  
"doing it wrong".  
whatever it was  
I was doing



Yet, when  
it all comes  
together...



Nothing in Japan is haphazard.



It's a place that would take years  
to unravel.

I missed travelling  
with Trevor



And hey, I've gotten  
pretty good at  
travel over the years.

oh! here! go... +travellin'!  
again!



It's fun  
to travel with  
some auxillary  
mission.



...and I  
love being  
out in nature,  
anywhere  
on earth

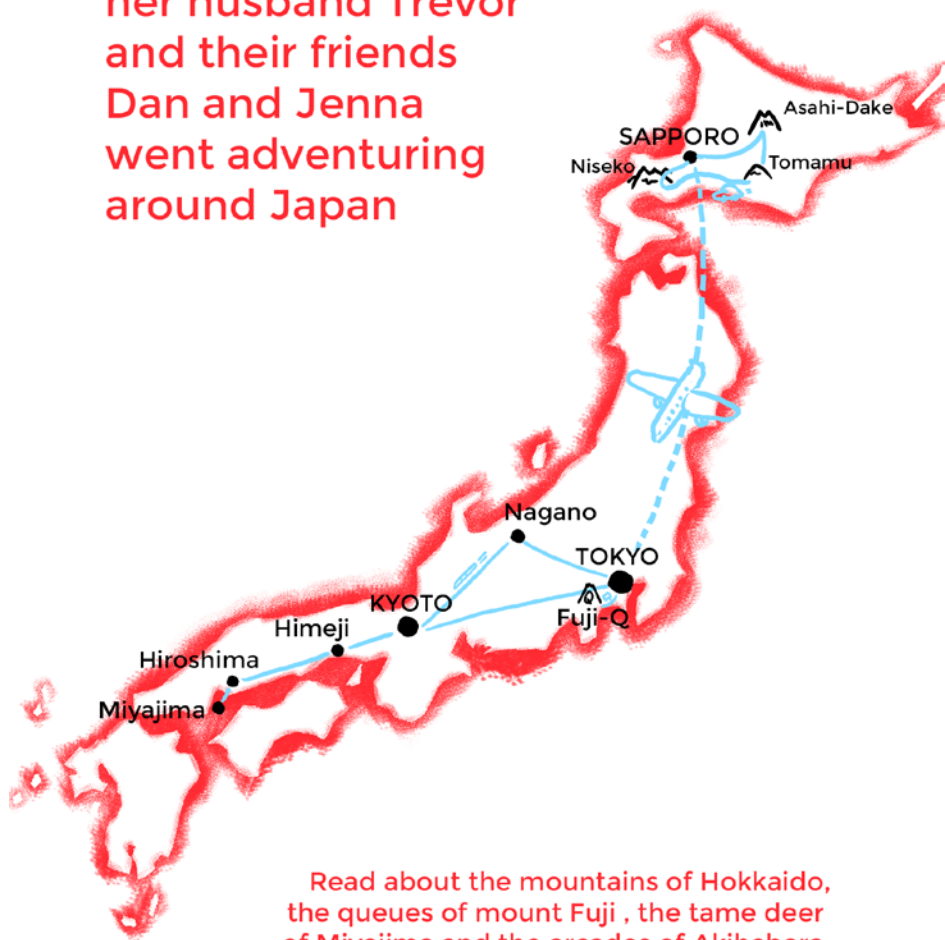
Despite my wanderlust, I've become quite  
attached to my quiet life where everything  
around me is "just so."



It's through  
that process of  
careful curation  
that I hope to  
be more like  
the Japanese.

2016

For eighteen days,  
cartoonist Angela Melick,  
her husband Trevor  
and their friends  
Dan and Jenna  
went adventuring  
around Japan



Read about the mountains of Hokkaido,  
the queues of mount Fuji , the tame deer  
of Miyajima and the arcades of Akihabara  
in Angela's travelogue!