

responsibility than I could handle. I never used to consider myself a very empathetic person. I would say I was very emotionally distant actually. Very black & white, super logical and I felt like feelings were better left out of the equation if possible. But the community that now surrounded me was ALL feelings! I was so overwhelmed haha. I felt like when I shared stories with you in my videos that it all kind of disappeared into the world and no one would care or remember anything; that it was filler 'noise' for videos that showed what people were really here for...

mamegoma
tenori size no azarashi.
mamegoma katte mimasenka?

5

Fairies & Mermaids halahalo!

But you listened! Then you responded! And you changed me and softened me up ☺. It felt very real. I didn't think anyone would care about what I was sharing, let alone care enough to share a kind comment or a personal anecdote in the comment section. You started to relate to me and, feeling very alone when I moved here to the U.S, I felt like: maybe I wasn't so alone? You will never know how important that was to me. I struggled with loneliness for many years when I moved here. I also



Struggled through some of the most awful experiences of my adult life and, even though I wouldn't talk to you about them, I would read your comments and find comfort in knowing that my life wasn't all bad... it wasn't all falling apart. Because look! I did something that someone liked! And for a brief moment, I found strength in the hope that I was doing something right.

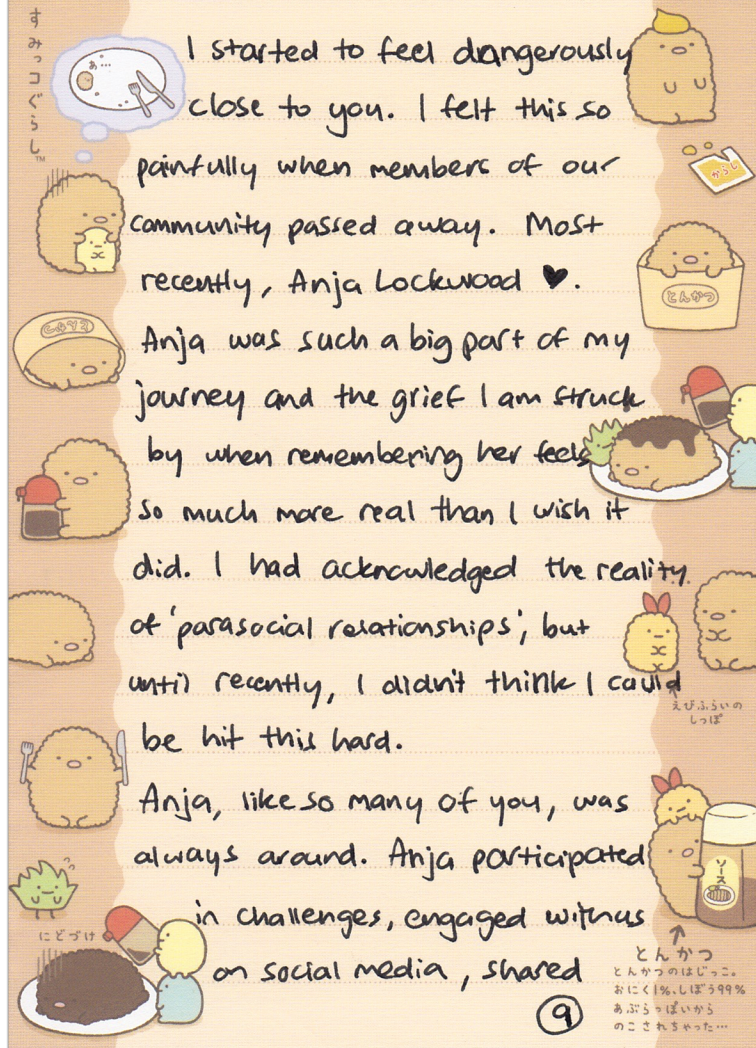
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幸せ21倍

shabonni notte
huwahuwa kerori.

I've never seen such supportive and generous people in my whole life. You would send me art supplies that you loved so that I could enjoy them too, encourage me to do all the crazy ideas I would dream up so you could come along for the ride too - and just left kind comments and messages here and there, lifting me up and making me feel so overly appreciated. Not just me - anyone I would bring around, like Steve and Stella! You all came into this community with great attitudes, respect for one another, and a willingness to add your voice to the mix. It all made for a wonderfully exciting environment to share in. ☺ BUT....

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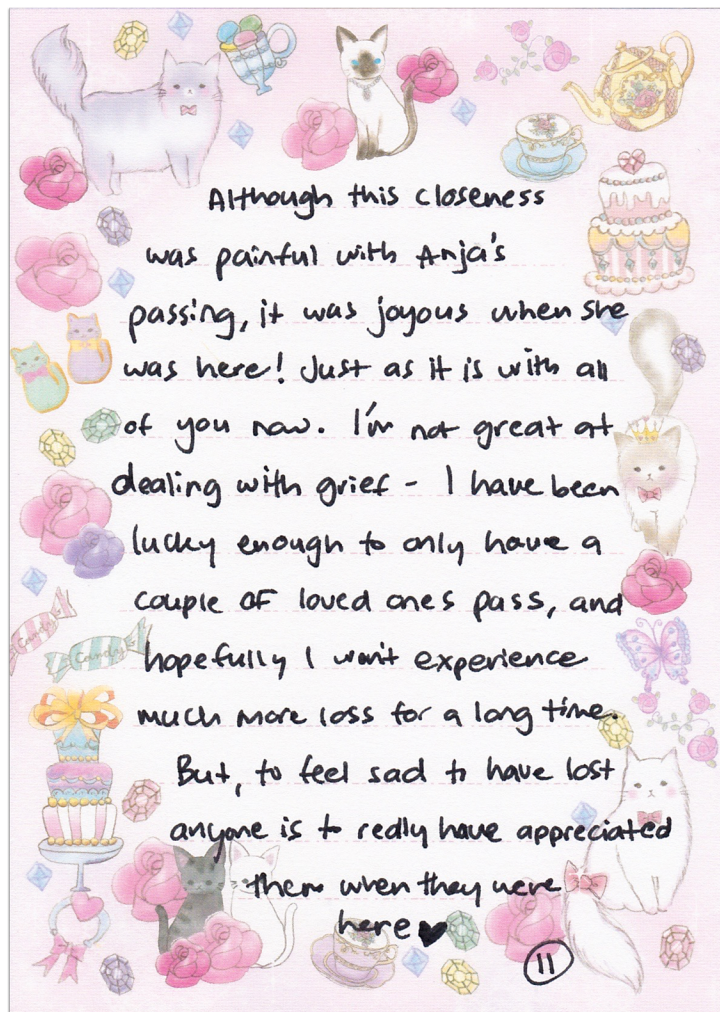


her beautiful work with us all (even sending me originals and art supplies she loved for me to try) and was also a great member of our workshops. I have the wildest lump in my throat just writing about her.

When Anja's husband wrote to me about her brave battle with Cancer, he spoke of her love for art journaling and our community. It was a great joy for her in life and will live on as a reminder of her vibrant soul.

It feels too real. I miss her. I see stickers she made for me floating through my this and a pain hits my chest. I see her name signed on the back of her handmade Christmas card and I have to catch my breath again.

I have grown so close to you. I didn't know I had and I certainly tried hard not to! I guess it was meant to be? You're all very special, I can't help but feel so attached to you. We've



So, it is a blessing that it hurts.

It is a scary blessing that I've become connected to you all hahaha.

Thank you so much for how you walked this journey with me. I often relied on your support and hopelessly tried to show my gratitude as often as I could. I could never come close to showing you how grateful I truly am!

I am really sad to be leaving this art journaling community. Obviously not totally leaving, but it will be different... I'm worried for how life will change and scared that I might need to lean on you again and you won't be here....

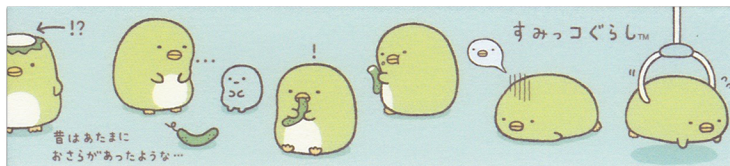
I feel like life is pushing me out of the nest and you're all excited to watch me fly but I am panicking a little bit and feel like I'll reach out to hang on.

I guess I'm ready to admit that, as happy as I am, I'm a little scared for all the change. You know I was never very good at being flexible hahaha. Creature of habit and comfort and all that.

It's ok though. It will all be ok!

I am ready to close this chapter. So difficult but also so rewarding!

(13)



Thank you for being here. For being my community ♥

I will think of you often, and fondly. Also, sorry for how messy my handwriting gets! I always start out OK, then I get excited and write too fast and it's a mess hahaha.

It's not forever, I'll "never say never," See you real soon and all that, but for now...

farewell.

Love,

James.

xoxo

(15)

べんざん? じぶんはべんざん? じぶんが"だん"...



It feels right and I have always just wanted to do right by you ☺.

From the bottom of my heart:

THANK YOU

for being there for me this past decade!

Thank you for every like, comment, message, gift, word of encouragement,

Spell-check, supply recommendation,

check-in, purchase, Christmas card,

meme, photo, conversation, question, word of wisdom, hug, moment of forgiveness,

your patience and your understanding.

Thank you for every laugh.

Those were my favorite and we have

shared so many priceless laughs together!

Thank you for your support ♥

すみっコぐらし

(14)

