

# Animexpress

## Super-Deformed Special Edition

Available free to members  
May, 2009

Kelly Lu

### Preparing for Anime North

Cosplay and photography  
An introduction for first-time con-goers

### Akihabara

The place to go in Tokyo

### And Don't Forget

Tutorials, fiction, manga, and art

# CTRL-A

## The Club That Really Likes Anime

### What is CTRL-A?

CTRL-A is the University of Waterloo's *Club That Really Likes Anime*, founded in 1992.

### What does CTRL-A do?

The club shows anime at different times during the week, has get-togethers such as meetings and lunches, holds contests, and generally just has fun.

### How Can I Find Out More?

The club website is located at [www.ctrl-a.org](http://www.ctrl-a.org), and the club puts up posters for upcoming shows around the campus. You can also join the club mailing list!



# Contents

## Anime Express Super-Deformed Special Edition

May, 2009

### Miscellaneous

- 4** Masthead, contributors, editor's scrawl

### Features

- 6** A Short Introduction to Akihabara  
Tokyo's otaku mecca explained  
*Aaron Tang*
- 8** Taking Cosplay Photos  
Tips for both photographers and cosplayers  
*Yuki Ng*
- 9** Anime North in Photos  
Cosplay photographs from various contributors
- 10** How to Survive Anime North  
A short guide for first time convention-goers  
*Yuki Ng*

### Departments

#### Please Teacher—Tutorial

- 12** Art Tutorial—Lazy Coloring 101  
*Lizeth Hallington*

#### Read Or Die—Short Fiction

- 14** Intrigue at the Sinclair Estate  
Fanfiction using characters from *Detective Conan*, *Artemis Fowl*, and *The Adept*  
*Lizeth Hallington*

- 16** Fading Hearts-Alex  
A prequel for one of the characters from upcoming visual novel, *Fading Hearts*  
*Alfe Clemencio*

- 18** Unspoken – Tifa's Story  
The events of the *FFVII* series told through the eyes of Tifa Lockheart  
*Kurai-Hisaki*

#### Comic Party—Dojinshi

- 21** Anim-Explanations  
Sasuke explains UW's mysteries  
*Kelly Lu*

- 22** All the King's Horses  
An excerpt from a popular cross-over fanfic of *Bleach* and *Kingdom Hearts*  
*Lizeth Hallington*

#### FLCL—Extras

- 23** What Is...  
A short explanation of visual novels  
*Kaitlan Huckabone and Alfe Clemencio*

### On the Cover

Emiko, the CTRL-A club mascot  
*Kelly Lu*

### Illustrations

*Lizeth Hallington*

### Photos

*Hannah Buclaras, Jennifer Lee, Yuki Ng, Aaron Tang, YuChun Yang,*

Anime Express  
Super-Deformed  
Special Edition

111 Rokkenjima Heights  
Neo-Tokyo 3, Canada  
F4K 3PC

Volume 1 Issue 1, May 2009

Editor

Kaitlan Huckabone

Contributors

Alfe Clemencio  
Lizeth Hallington  
Kurai-Hisaki  
Kelly Lu  
Yuki Ng  
Aaron Tang

Graphics

Hannah Buclaras  
Lizeth Hallington  
Jennifer Lee  
Kelly Lu  
Yuki Ng  
YuChun Yang

Anime Express Super-Deformed Special Edition (Volume I, issue i) is a club fanzine for anime fans in CTRL-A. The magazine provides a venue for the creative expression of the club's members. It was created as part of a course project. AESDSE is published once per millenium, and there's no subscription. Any statements or views belong to the contributors, not the editor, unless she's the contributor. Everything in the magazine belongs to the people who made it.

This issue was completed through the use of Adobe Creative Suites 3.

The CTRL-A website can be found at <http://www.ctrl-a.org/cms/index.php>.

# Contributors

**Aaron Tang** is a former exec of CTRL-A, who's in nanotechnology engineering. I'm heading into 4A once I get back. As a part of coop, I've taken a posting in the country that interests me most, which just happens to be Japan. Instead of simply forgetting all the exciting things that happen to me over here, I bought a camera and decided that documenting everything would be a much better way to go. While writing my blog ([aaroninjapan09.wordpress.com](http://aaroninjapan09.wordpress.com)), I realized that the material also could be quite useful to someone planning on heading to Japan, so I've decided to share it in this fan magazine.

**Alfe Clemencio** is a computer science major and anime fan. He's currently working on a visual novel, *Fading Hearts*. Find out more at the website [www.sakurariver.ca](http://www.sakurariver.ca).

**Kaitlan Huckabone** is a fourth-year English student with interests in both editing and anime, so this worked out pretty well! Like all good editors-in-chief, she spends her time piling work onto stressed-out contributors, barely making deadlines, adding in commas (then taking them out again), playing Tetris with the layout, and harassing freelance photographers for pictures of Spider-man.

**Kelly Lu** is a first year Accounting student at UW. She loves musical theatre and has even been a part of them in high school. Her hobbies are singing and drawing, and of course, anime and manga! Kelly blames the bad quality art on lack of time, although that was probably not true. Although she wasn't here the last time the magazine was up, she would like to extend congratulations on reviving it!

**Lizeth Hallington** is the penname of English student, Edith Nataprawira. Lizeth is an established artist on deviantart and a relatively infamous author on fanfiction.net. To date, her most recognizable works in anime fandom include a series of pictures of Kyuubi (the Nine-tailed fox demon) adopting young Naruto and a Yugioh/Harry Potter crossover fanfiction called History of Magic. In her spare time, Lizeth can often be found practicing tai chi, practicing calligraphy or poking her younger siblings (just to annoy them). Lizeth is also looking forward to cosplaying for the first time this year at Anime North. Hope to see you there!

**Manz** (known online as **Kurai-Hisaki**) is a 2nd Year student majoring in Mathematics, minor in Music; hopefully she'll be going to teachers college after being in the 'Loo for a couple years. She's part of a band where she sings and plays the piano – shel loves jamming/writing music. Manz also enjoys drawing, writing, and modelling in photo-shoots – oh, she also LOVES sleeping and eating. She first got into anime because of the awesome art. The art, fashion, and characters were always fresh and detailed. Manga's great to look at, especially when you want to daydream!

**Yuki Ng** is an avid anime fan that has been going to Anime North since 2003. Her main activities at conventions are cosplay and paneling. Her favourite genres are paranormal, horror and macabre, romantic comedy, psychological, magical girls, and anything by CLAMP. She's currently watching Soul Eater and Minami-ke Okaeri and reading Ouran High School Host Club and Futari H. She's a collector of her favourite manga, plushies, and Pinky St: figurines. She loves cosplaying outside of conventions and events and her favourite Pocky flavour is Men's.



# Editor's Scrawl

While sorting through the odd assortment of stuff that can be found in the CTRL-A club office one day, I came upon a little collection of fanzines. I was surprised to learn that CTRL-A had once supported its own 'zine, and, since I knew there were many creative people in the club just looking for an outlet, I've been waiting for an opportunity to resurrect it. Seven magical balls of crystal plus one class project later, and it seems I got my wish.

This particular resurrection is a bit different from the original, as zombies often are. The previous club magazine contained a lot of news content that's generally found on the internet these days. This issue, however, focuses on creative contributions: non-fiction, short stories, manga, art, and anything else people were interested in creating.

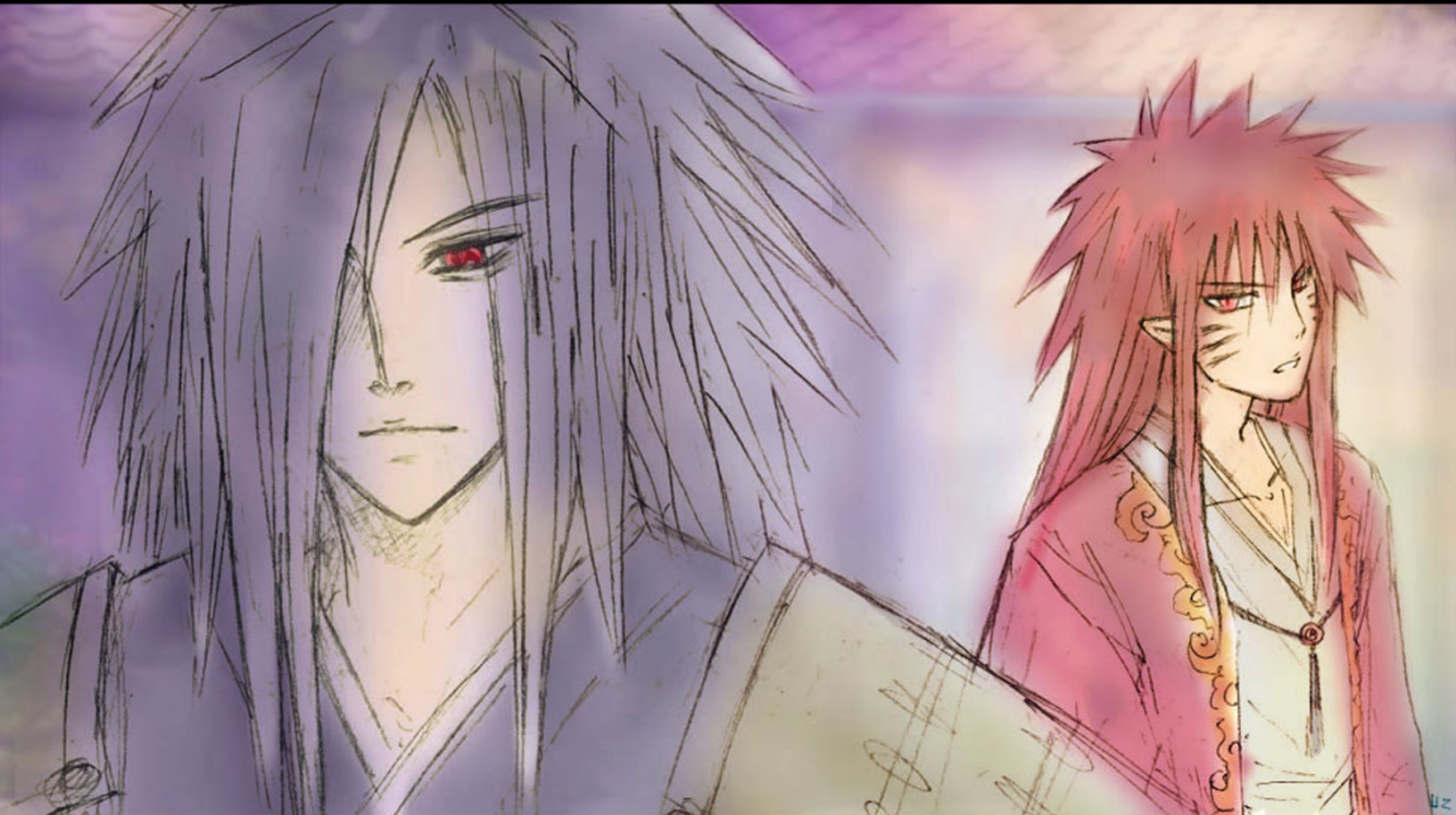
Since the original request went out, I've been blown away by both the energy and the creativity of the club members. Without so many people willing to contribute, this issue would never have gotten off the ground. In spite of the short deadline, and the end-of-term workload that students suffer, club members were willing to help out, and they brought a wide variety of talents to the table.

I'd like to thank everyone who contributed for the phenomenal content that they provided. I would also like to thank CTRL-A for allowing me to do this and for supporting my effort. Finally, thank you to my professor for providing me with the opportunity to create this magazine.

*Kaitlan Huckabone*

Madara\_kyuubi

Uchiha Madara and Kyuubi (The Nine-Tailed Fox) from Naruto



Lizeth Hallington





# Akihabara

A short introduction to Tokyo's most famous otaku neighbourhood  
By Aaron Tang



**Top:** Animate and Comic Toranoana. Animate was the anime store brought up in Lucky Star. Comic Toranoana is the NO. 1 store for Doujinshi in the area.

**Bottom:** The front of Gamers Akiba Headquarters.

So Akihabara or Akihabara Electric Town 秋葉原電気街, everyone talks about Akihabara all the time as if it's some kind of holy place, but what exactly is Akihabara? Modern day Akihabara started off as a black market selling goods such as vacuum tubes shortly after World War II. A number of shops gathered around the Akihabara station of the Sobu Main Line, that was built in 1894 and remains in service today. Those shops became what is now known as Akihabara Chuo Dori. The region has always been well known for capturing trends around Japan's young, and the otaku trend seems to be the most recent trend that it has caught. Almost every store on the main street, Chuo Dori 中央通り, sells anime, character goods, games (anime and non-anime), computer parts or electronics. The main street is best for newly released extremely popular goods, while the backstreets are still home to some of the small dealers, where you can haggle prices, get used goods, or some rarer goods that have been long sold out on main street. Also, to accommodate the increasing number of foreigners shopping at Akiba, most of the large stores are all Duty Free stores. If your purchase exceeds 10,000 yen, present your

passport at a Duty Free booth to get 5% off your purchase. So what places are great in Akihabara? Read on!

First stop, Yodobashi Camera! Yodobashi Camera features a huge section of cameras (who would have guessed!), video cameras, Audio Visual Equipment, personal electronics, and a *very* robust hobby, video games, and toys section. Yodobashi has been the bane of many of the smaller shops in Akiba, wiping out their business entirely. I, myself, ended up spending most of my money at Yodobashi as well. You should see Yodobashi almost immediately if you take the east exit out of Akihabara.

When spending at Yodobashi and the same as any major electronics manufacturer, keep this in mind. All the major stores in Akiba price match. My camera cost the same in Yodobashi as it did in Bic Camera, and as well as Sofmap. Also, when paying you also have two options. One, is the previously mentioned Duty-Free and get 5% off your purchase. The second option, what I did, masquerade as a local, and create yourself one of these.

The real sticking point is the address, just make sure your Japanese is reasonably fluent, and put in your hotel's address to get





**Top:** The Yodobashi Camera building.

**Bottom:** An example of the Japanese Point Cards.

one. What this thing does, is that for every full price purchase you make at Yodobashi Camera, 10% of that gets converted into points. 1 point = 1 yen. For example, I paid approximately 58,000 yen for my camera. Along with all the other bonuses, I got 6,011 points. The next business day, you are able to use these 6,011 points for 6,011 yen of stuff. The downside is that you don't get the 5% off for duty free. Which one is better is up to you.

Next stop, Gamers Akiba Headquarters. Exit out the west end of Akihabara, and Gamers will literally be in your face. Probably, the best place in Akihabara if you are looking for official periodicals.

Gamers, like just about every large store in Akiba, is split into multiple stores. There is a "blue" Game ゲームshop. and red アニメ shop. Time for a bit of specialized vocab run down!

アニメ館

1F - 雑誌・新商品 - zashi shin-shouhin - magazines and new goods of any category

2F /3F - Just CD's and DVD's, but 2F has the new goodies

4F - コミック - komikku - comics! Manga! (Naruto!)

5F - 小説 - shousetsu - light novels! (Shana, Louise no Tsukaima, Full Metal Panic!)

6F - キャラクターグッズ - kyarakutaa guzzu - Character goods (Posters, keychains, trinkets, etc.)



**Above:** The Don Quixote Building. This building has a karaoke parlour, pachinko, anime goods, and electronics, plus an arcade on the top two floors.

7F - トレカ デュエルスペース

- toreka dyueruspeesu - trading cards and duel space (yugioh, pokemon, digimon etc.!)  
ゲーム館

5F - 女性向けフロア - jousei muke furoa - Female Oriented Floor (Men stay out, no seriously, the floor is full of BL stuff, unless you're an otaku that bends both ways and don't mind being seen as such)

6F - ホビー - Hobby (this refers to everything ranging from plastic models to train sets, but in anime shops this always means FIGURES)

8F - イベントスペース - Event Space

Props to you if you recognized Digi Charat, Asu no Yoichi, Kannagi, Haruhi, and Hyakko from that picture

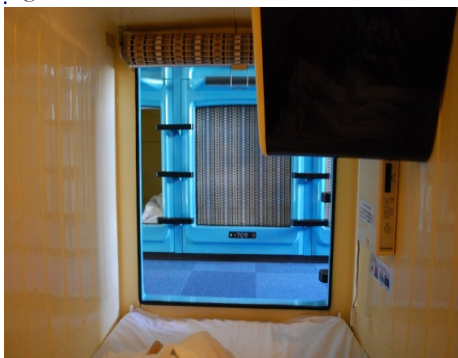
*There's so much more to Akiba than just these two shops, and much more to Tokyo! Be sure to check out Aaron's blog as he records all his explorations at [aaroninjapan09.wordpress.com](http://aaroninjapan09.wordpress.com).*

## Capsule Hotels

If you're looking for an extremely cheap place to stay, you should check out Japan's now extremely famous capsule hotels. They are a steal for 4,000 yen a night. Exit out the east side of Akihabara station, and then head north along Showa Dori, until you see this! カプセル = Capsule.

The staff inside are largely English Capable, and they always have a sizable foreign guest contingent. They have some fairly strict rules, and men and women are seperated onto different floors. They also do not share washrooms, baths, or anything of the sort.

The capsules are actually fairly wide, a little over 6 feet long. It was a little short for me, but I didn't feel claustrophobic at all. The capsules come with radio, alarm clock, TV, and a wall outlet. The capsules definitely reminded me of *The Fifth Element* though. I enjoyed staying there, and will probably stay there again, if I go to Akiba again.



**Above:** Inside a capsule hotel room.

# Taking Cosplay Photos

## What to do and what *not* to do

By Yuki Ng

### Cosplayers

As a cosplayer, please assume that there will be people stopping you on your way to somewhere or maybe when you're just hanging out, for a picture. Don't be shy and strike a pose! If they request a certain pose from you, only agree to it if you're comfortable with it. It's not rude to deny a request to do a pose you're not comfy with. Also, people not from the convention may come up to you and ask you what all the people in costumes is all about. They're not being rude or mean, they're just very curious about something they probably haven't seen. Just explain to them that it's an anime convention. Believe it or not, much of the western world knows what anime is. If they don't know, you can just say "Japanese animation". Don't be weirded out or put off by them. I know many cosplayers that take offence to people coming up to them, but there's no need to be. Remember, you're in a costume, so you're bound to get all sorts of attention.

### Photographers

There's a certain etiquette to taking pictures of cosplayers at a convention. The procedure goes roughly like this:

- 1) You spot a cosplayer that you *just* have to take a picture of
- 2) You see they're not eating or in a hurry. (*Very Important!*)
- 3) You go up to them and ask "Can I take your picture?" They say "Sure!"
- 4) You take their picture and say "Thanks!" They say "No problem!" (Also very important. The thanks lets them know that you took the picture so they can stop posing.)
- 5) You go on your way.

### No-no's of photo taking

**Don't** take a picture of them without asking them, unless you were taking a picture of the room, and there just happened to be cosplayers.

**Don't** take a picture in a super crowded place like the Dealer's Room because you could be blocking a lot of people's way.

**Don't** go up to them if they seem to be running somewhere. If you do this and they deny your request, they're not being rude, they just really have to be somewhere.

**Don't** and I mean **Don't** take a picture of them when they are eating! They are obviously busy with food in their mouth so either wait around for them, or look for them later. But don't stand near them and actually wait there! That's creepy.

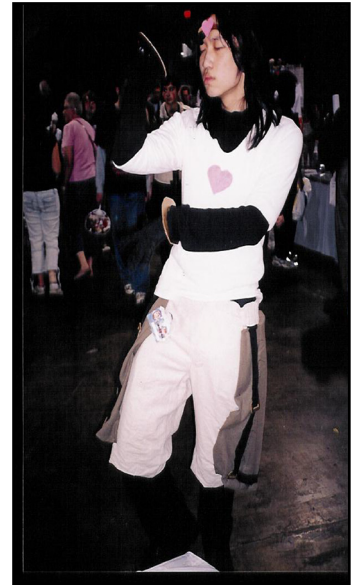


Model: Yuki Ng  
Photographer: Hannah Buclaras  
*Cherry lolita outside the Crowne Plaza*



# Anime North Cosplay Photos

An anime convention through the lens of a camera



## Clockwise from Top

Models: Yuki Ng (left) and YuChun Yang (right)  
Photographer: Jennifer Lee  
*Pedobear terrorizes a maid at the TCC*



Model: YuChun Yang  
Photographer: Yuki Ng  
*Zappa from GuiltyGear in the Toronto Congress Center*

Model: Machiko  
Photographer: Yuki Ng  
*Adora from MagnaCarta outside the DoubleTree Hotel*

Model: Yuki Ng  
Photographer: YuChun Yang  
*Maid cosplay in a hotel room at Anime North*

# SURVIVING ANIME NORTH

## A SHORT GUIDE FOR FIRST TIME CONVENTION GOERS

By Yuki Ng

When I went to my first Anime North 7 years ago, I was floored by how big it was and how overwhelming everything seemed to be. At that time, I could really have used a guide, but none seemed to exist. So if this is your first time or your 3rd time, I hope you can learn something new and get the most out of Canada's largest anime convention.

### Preparation

So you've bought your tickets, booked your hotel, and arranged transportation to and from the Congress Centre. Now all you have to do is count down the days right? Not quite. There are a couple of other things you should prepare for.

### Money

When you're in the Dealer's Room (The area with all the merchandise), the last thing you want is to not be able to buy that special something because you spent your money on that "plushie you just had to have!" Make sure to save at least \$100 before the con! That may seem a lot to a starving student, but manga after manga after figurine after anime pile up and you run out of money very fast, no matter how good the deals are. ATM machines around the convention run out of money very fast during the weekend (Yes! They can actually run out!), so don't depend on them for cash. The majority of vendors only accept cash and don't have machines on hand for debit and visa. So make your life easier by saving up your cash or making a nice big withdrawal before the con.

### Food

Yes, there will be fast food restaurants near the convention centre, and even a Japanese restaurant! Food is also sold in the Dealer's Room and at the Double Tree Hotel. But

food will be extremely expensive and the wait at fast food restaurants will stretch to tomorrow! Don't try making reservations either. Those nicer restaurants don't accept reservations on convention weekends. So hit your closest grocery store a day or two before the convention and stock up on some small snacks! Something to tide you over for most the day. Muffins, candies, Pocky (A fan favourite and a must have at the convention), cup noodles, and those Singles snack packs are a great choice.

### A List

No, not A-List, a list! What would you need a list for, you ask? Other than money, a list is your best friend in the Dealer's room. Walking into that room is like walking into a treasure cove or a toy store. There's a lot of things and you don't know where to start! Most vendors have rows upon rows of manga and anime lined up on tables. If you don't know what you're looking for, all those titles could be blinding when you're going through them and you might be deterred from them. Write a list of all the manga and anime you are either collecting or want to start. Conventions are a great place to start or add to a collection because of the mass quantities or each title available. A list is also good if you're having a hard time looking for that specific title. The people standing behind the vendors' tables are there to help you, so if you've found a vendor with the right prices, you can pass them your list and they will assemble all of them for you! I can't tell you how much time and headaches I saved when I discovered I could do that! Walking through the long tables, looking over other people's shoulders to find the one volume I'm looking for was way too much for me. Going into the Dealer's Room with a list of what you know you want can also mean you'll most likely be able to get what you want. If what you wanted was a popular title

that had just released a new volume, and you remembered on Sunday you wanted it, chances of finding it are slim.

### At the convention

So now you've done all your preparation. Time to hit the con! Here are some tips to help you ease into the convention with little trouble.

### Be Early

How early can you get to your hotel? Getting there early is key to a headache-less start to your weekend. All the hotels of the area are booked full of convention goers that will all be checking in at the same time. If you can get there early, you can miss the long lines of people waiting to be checked in. Disregard the check-in time on the hotel's website. That's the time for when your room will be ready, but they will gladly check you in at the front desk at an earlier time.

So what do you do after you're checked in and your room is not ready? Split up your party and have one half get in line to pick up your convention badge at the Congress centre and the other half wait at the hotel until it's time to check into the rooms. Here's where coming early is an asset. The line for pre-registered folk and non-pre-registered folk are equally long and often wrap around the perimeter of the building. So get in the line early and wait for the convention to begin. It would be wise to be something to sit on and play with while you're there.

### Dealer's Room

I've already mentioned this place earlier in the article. This is the large area of the centre filled with vendors from all over Canada (And some from the US) that have brought their anime merchandise to sell. When you





go in, DON'T and I repeat, DON'T spend money at the first booth full of manga or plushies that you see. Take your time to walk all around the room, asking about their prices and any possible deals. After you've looked at every booth, then you can go back to the vendor that had the lowest price or the best deal. Also, most people will be selling manga at US cover price. What that means is that you'll be paying for the US equivalent of the manga with Canadian dollars. When that was first introduced to conventions, we were all floored. But now, fans are looking for better deals, and there are many people willing to provide them. So be cautious and check out all the vendors before you start spending your hard-earned money.

### Program Book

This is what you'll get when you get your badge. A book that lists all of the events of the weekend, where they are, when they are, and what they're about. It's a good idea at the beginning of the con to sit down and go through all the events that are happening and maybe circle some of the ones you just can't miss. It's horrible to go home from a convention just to find out that you missed an event you really wanted to go to! Also, this is a good way of preventing the dreaded "Now what?" moment when you and your friends are sitting in the hotel lobby, bored and wondering what there is to do at a convention.

### Comic Market and Crafter's Corner (Originally Artist's Alley)

Because this is the first time Anime North has had this, I don't know much about it. I'm unclear of the rules and what to expect specifically, but I have a general idea about it.

This is the place where everyday people get to show off their art and sell it to other

fans. Some people make buttons or pins and key chains that they sell here. Most artists are open for commission, meaning they take requests for specific drawings for a fee. If you commission them on Friday, they can usually have the picture ready for you by Sunday. Prices vary from artist to artist according to their skill and the details of the picture. For example, one person costs less than 2 people, and black and white (inked) costs less than coloured, and so on. I often commission at least two people because I like to support budding anime artists. If you happen to really like someone's drawing or style, don't be shy to ask them to draw your favourite pairing or character!

### Panels

So many people don't know what these are, and that's shocking! A convention is nothing without panels. Panels are basically discussion rooms where you go to room and talk about the topic that the panel is on. For example, during a Shakugan no Shana panel, there will be people at the front of the room that have volunteered to lead the discussion, and an audience and all you do is talk about the anime/manga for an hour! It's a great way to meet people that are just as into a series as you are and also to maybe learn something new about it. You can talk about the plot, the characters, the creators, anything that comes up about the series, you talk about. There are also panels lead by more qualified people, such as a Props panel or a voice-acting 101 panel where you can learn how to do something. So don't be afraid to check these out!

### Major Events

The major events that happen at AN is the Friday Skit Contest, Saturday night Dance, and the Saturday night Masquerade. I recommend going to the first two. To even get in to watch the Masq, you'll need to line up for a wrist band, then you'll need to line up

for a good seat, then you spend 3 hrs watching mediocre skits and costumes run up and off stage in less than a minute. Many many people make it their mission to video tape the Masq and then put them up on Y-Tube. So go do something more fun and watch the more interesting skits online when you get home.

The Friday skit is a contest where groups are given a longer time for their acts and are much more entertaining than the Masq.

The Saturday night dance is just your regular dance with a DJ that plays anime and Japanese music all night! If you plan to go to the dance, I suggest you pack lighter clothes to wear because it can get VERY hot on the dance floor. And no, I'm not talking about that girl in the Yoko costume or that guy in a Kamina costume.

### Conclusion

And thus ends my short guide for first-timers. There's still a lot I can say, but it's much better to find them out for yourselves. I hope you have a great time and plan to come back next year!

# Art Tutorial

by Lizeth Hallington

**WELCOME!**  
**LAZY COLORING 101 - Gradient, dodge and burn**  
IN PHOTOSHOP 6.0

First, you need some lineart.

Smudges D:

I don't actually mind the smudges much, so I'm going to leave some in.

If you need to, use the **dodge tool** (10-15% exposure) to get rid of the smudges.

Create a new layer, name it and set the opacity to 50% or less.

Select the **Gradient Tool**

Select one light color, click the flip arrow then pick a dark color.

Drag the Gradient Tool from one corner to another. Make sure the lighter color shows up in the direction of the light source.

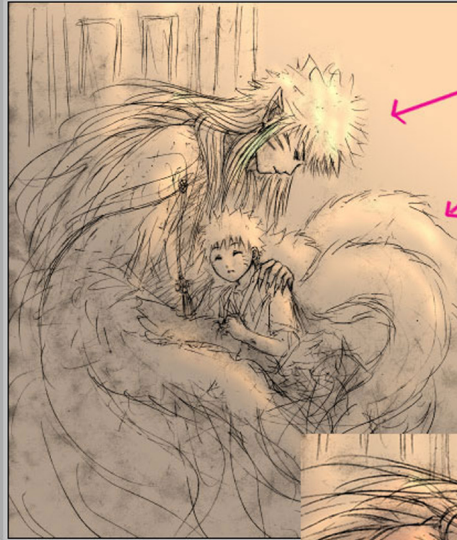
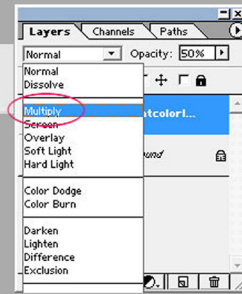


## ! Disappearing Lineart

If all the layers above your lineart are set to "multiply", your lineart will always show.

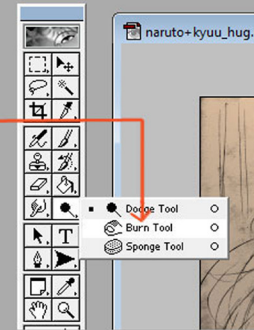


If you want the lineart to show up more, set the layer property of your colored layer to "multiply".



Next, on your color layer, select the **Dodge Tool** at 15-35% exposure (an **oval-shaped soft brush**, if you can) and use it on the areas where the **light hits** in your picture.

Then select the **Burn Tool** and repeat the process for the shadowed areas.



Duplicate your lineart layer and set the layer opacity to 20% or less.

Go to Filter -> Artistic -> **Underpainting** and make sure the texture is set to "canvas".

Click "ok".

Duplicate your color layer (it should already be at 50% opacity or so).

Do the **underpainting** filter again. Your image should look softer now and have a slight texture to it.



You can always add more layers and experiment with different levels of opacity and different modes (normal/multiply) for your colored layers.

<- For this one, the colored underpainting layer is set to "normal", while the first colored layer is set to "multiply".

At the end, I also usually merge all the layers and **mess with the color balance** (ctrl-b).



THE END

# Intrigue at the Sinclair Estate

By Lizeth Hallington

Here,” Artemis said, tapping his keyboard. “Sir Adam upgraded security half a year ago, after a break-in and the attempted kidnapping of his protégé. His systems are state of the art, as expected from a very wealthy man working part-time as a police consultant. Fortunately, my technology is still far superior to his *and* we have a valid excuse for entry. The daylight will make them less prone to suspicion, where they might have been wary at night. “

From his standpoint at the back of the van, Conan could clearly imagine the other boy’s self-satisfied, cat-like smile, reflected in the computer’s luminescent screens. Butler secured a two-way communicator behind Conan’s ear.

“Conan,” Butler said gravely, and waited until the child’s eyes where on him before continuing. “I understand that you are capable of performing an investigation on your own, but this is a joint operation. While you’re in that house, you are my principal and *I* am your bodyguard. You do *not* endanger your own life. You do *not* take planned risks. If I say drop, you *drop*. Are we clear?”

“Yes,” the young detective answered, matching Butler’s severity with his own.

He knew for a fact that Butler was totally loyal to Artemis Fowl. It cost the big bodyguard something dear to leave his charge and take up another principal, no matter how temporarily. He doubted there was ever a time since Artemis was born that the man hadn’t been close enough to physically shield the boy from danger. Now, Conan and Butler would be entering a secured estate, while Artemis stayed behind, monitoring the situation only through the eyes of two tiny cameras and hidden transmitters.

*If Artemis died, Butler would be Ronin. A masterless samurai without his Shogun,* the detective thought as he double-checked his gear. Conan decided that was the last thing he wanted, no matter how aggravating Fowl could be.

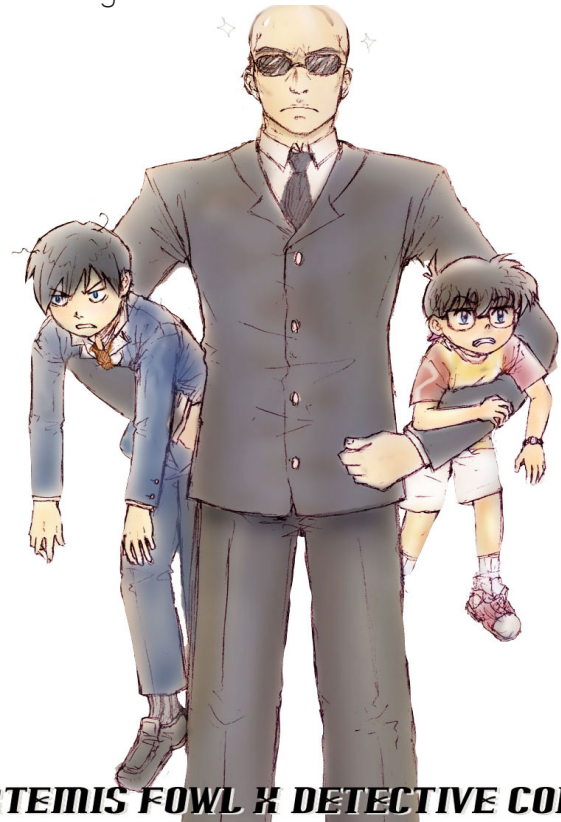
“Alright, I’m ready.”

Artemis pivoted in his chair, fingers laced gracefully, and smirked. “Shall I wish you luck?”

Conan snorted as he popped the doors of the van, spilling bright sunlight into the dim interior. The golden light stopped just short of Fowl’s feet.

“Your brand of luck, I can do without.”

Lizeth Hallington



**ARTEMIS FOWL X DETECTIVE CONAN**

\* \* \*

Conan’s first impression of Sir Adam’s protégé was that he seemed rather like Officer Takagi. The little detective could see that the man had the same slightly naive, well-meaning manner. His dusty-blond hair was combed, but slightly dishevelled. He smelled of oil paint and turpentine.

“Come in, please,” the man said cheerfully, holding the door open for them. “Is this your son?”

“Yes,” Butler lied smoothly, “This is Conan. Say hello to Mr. Lovat, son.”

“Hi Mister!” Conan chirped, sliding easily into his childish persona. He could pass for a boy a bit younger than his supposed age, given his small stature, but he would have to limit his speech. A bit of awkwardness here and there could be excused as a childish lisp, but if he started saying full sentences,



it would be fairly obvious that his accent was *not* the same as his so-called father's.

"I saw some of your work at the gallery and I was very impressed, Mr. Lovat. I thought we might discuss a commission."

"Call me Peregrine, please, I'd much prefer it," he said with a sheepish smile. "Julia, my wife, is out at the moment, but I can whip up a quick cup of tea for you if you'd like. Biscuits?"

"Biscuits?" Conan asked eagerly.

"Don't be rude," Butler chided.

"...Biscuits *please*?" Conan said after a moment of contemplation.

Butler sighed. "I'm very sorry Mr. Lovat. My wife spoils him. We had a light lunch on the plane over..."

Peregrine chuckled. "It's Peregrine! And he's very well behaved for someone so young." He gave Conan a smile. "Now, my old housekeeper just sent me some scones this morning. I believe they'll be perfect for the occasion..."

"Then at least let me help with the tea," Butler offered.

"Conan, I expect you to sit and behave. Look at that book you brought with you."

"Kay Daddy!"

"Oh no, Mr. Rankin, that's no necessary--"

"We can discuss a few things in a kitchen, if you would, Peregrine. You see..."

The boy waited until light sounds were heard from the kitchen before darting through the hallway, pulling gloves on as he went. Stepping into the studio, he took a slow, cursory glance around the room. It wasn't long before his eyes settled on the wooden box by the door.

\* \* \*

Artemis watched as Conan riffled through the sheets of a sketchbook in the art kit. Mr. Lovat was in fact a remarkably skilled artist. *Under different circumstances, I might've actually hired him, but--*

"These sketches, they're..." Artemis frowned.

The page they were currently on had a quick drawing of a murder scene in the woods. An old man's broken body lay in a pool of black blood, several footprints circling his corpse in the snow.

Conan flipped the page.

The next was of the old man, blindfolded and on his knees as his masked captors loomed over him.

The next was a close up of a masked man, raising a dagger over his head in supplication. Drawn in the margins was apparently an attempted detail of the murder weapon, but only revealed the dagger's general shape.

The next was a gruesome picture of the old man as he was strangled from behind with a long length of rope.

"...A little too strong for mere speculation," Artemis commented as Conan dug out his camera and started taking pictures of the book's contents. "One would almost think..."

"He's witnessing crimes as they happen, instead of recording crime scenes as a forensic artist. Looks like most of this is cult-related crime," Conan said, flipping through the book. "But it's in the wrong order..."

"Wrong order?"

"Yes, if someone's taking pictures of something they're witnessing, it would logically be in chronological order. Lovat's drawings always start with the police at the crime scene, but then it jumps back to the time of the crime and moves forward from there." Conan frowned.

"He might be skipping pages and filling them in later."

"No, see..." Conan closed the book and held it at eye-level. "With the pages stacked like this in a sketchbook, a person would start drawing on the top-most pages and work their way down as they fill more and more of the book."

Conan opened the book again. "If Lovat had skipped pages..."

He flipped to the back of a page. "Then the back of a skipped page would have smudge marks from the page underneath it. Bits of charcoal would've rubbed off, since he puts pressure on a page as he draws. I doubt he'd carry a can of fixative with him, and there's no wax paper in his kit, so there's no way to keep the pictures from smudging."

Very faintly, there was the sound of breaking glass, and Conan put everything back in order, hastily heading for the door. It was a prearranged signal that, after keeping Lovat occupied in the kitchen for a while, Butler would drop something to stall for time and to warn Conan of their imminent return.

The detective popped the memory stick out of the camera and slipped it into his shirt pocket, replacing the stick with an identical one that contained pre-arranged photos of Irish sheep from various angles, rolling green hills, someone's right foot, and Daddy-Butler pretending to snore on the airplane trip over.

"We'll analyze the photos after we leave," said the boy, peeking out the door before speed-walking back to the first room and stuffing his gloves and camera back into his knapsack. Settling on the couch, he tried to look sufficiently preoccupied with a picture book he'd brought. "Can you find photo documentation of those crime scenes? I want to see how Lovat's sketches match up... Fowl? Are you listening?"

From the adjoining room, he heard Butler apologizing again for the shattered cup, accompanied now by two sets of footfalls.

From the earpiece, there was stark silence.

# Fading Hearts

By Alfe Clemencio

I see trees and mountains pass outside the train window. Sitting down beside the window I hear the sounds of metal wheels on metal tracks. I wonder just how far am I now from the things I left behind. This express train is bringing me to a new life. It sounds like I'm the main character of an anime. Soon the countryside changes into urban buildings and I arrive.

After a day of unpacking and a night of rest I head to the school that I will be attending. I brought some manga to read along with the documents I need in a backpack. I went while classes were going on. Meeting the school principal and going through all the details was pretty uneventful. Some students noticed me just because I wasn't wearing a uniform. Great, now everyone will know about the "Mysterious Transfer Student." I definitely don't want to have a high profile now. I need to do something that group from my past won't find me.

I leave the school and head to the first barber shop I could find. I get a new haircut so that people won't recognize me. Now that I think about it, I should have gotten the haircut before going to the school. I hate it when I forget stuff like that. I mentally kick myself for that and explore until I find a place to relax and think.

I find a park. There is a small stream flowing through it and a water fountain. The sounds of the park wildlife and the water flow are relaxing to hear. I find a bench near the water and sit down. I remember the manga that I brought with me. I decide to start reading.

After reading for some time, I notice that there are students in uniforms walking around now. I totally lost track of time and I didn't realize that I actually visited the school in the afternoon. I must have overslept. My stomach was growling at me so I decide to get something to eat. I put away my manga and I was about to stand up when a girl in school uniform walked towards me. She adjusted her glasses and lips had a small smile.

"Excuse me but are you the new transfer student?" She asked. "I don't think I've ever seen you around before." I feel a bit scared that someone found me. But I don't think she knew just who I was. Alright, I'll act like a normal person.

"It depends..." I say with a sly grin on my face. "Who's asking?" No! I wasn't supposed to act cool. I know, I'll laugh it off and pretend it was a joke. I smiled at her like it was a joke while holding in a laugh. "Yeah... I'm the new transfer student." She smiled back at me.

"I'm Sophia."

"I'm Alex." I replied back. Thank goodness I stopped acting cool. "I like that name. It's the name of the goddess of wisdom right?" She looked surprised.

"Really? I never knew that." Her eyes told me that she really didn't know and was utterly surprised.

"The irony astounds me." I say shaking my head, partly because of the irony and partly because I acted cool again. Then my stomach started to growl again.

"Hey! Since you're new here I'll take you to a place to eat. It's really popular."

"Sure." I'm really hungry so I decide to take her on her offer.

We arrived at a bubble tea cafe while Sophia told about the city along the way. It was filled with other students in their school uniforms. Sophia and I both sat down and we both received our menus. I read it and it looks like they have more than just drinks but also some good food as well. Some of the other students were looking in our direction. It almost seems like a date or something. I feel a little guilty especially concerning why I left.

"Don't mind them Alex." Sophia spoke up. I guess she's trying to make me feel comfortable. "You should know where the good places around here as well as the places you're not supposed to go to."

"Everyone being excited about new transfer student?" I wondered aloud.

"Not really... it's just something else to talk about for them." Sophia smiled at me. "So tell me a little bit about yourself and why you came to a place like this?" Oh shoot... what's my story? Right when I was about to blurt out an answer Sophia started to speak. "Ah... you don't have to say it if you don't want to. Really... you don't have to answer. Oh... what am I saying? I must sound strange to you." Watching this flustered girl in front of me looked cute. I thought it was a perfectly natural question.

"Don't worry about it." I held in a laugh.

"So Alex... do you like games?" Sophia asked. Her eyes told me that she was really looking for something to talk about.

"Oh yeah. I love games." Sophia's eyes lit up. I continued to elaborate. "I like playing online. I play first person shooters and RPGs."

"Oh... I meant board games..." Sophia looked downward.



“Why do you look so down Sophia? I play board games sometimes as well. You really wanted to meet someone to play board games with?”

“That’s...” Sophia fell silent for a moment. Then she asked another question. “How about programming?”

“That’s a really specific question to be asking someone you just met.” I replied. Is she one of those girls that has a specific kind of guy they are looking for? Maybe I remind her of someone. I might as well repay the kindness she has given me by helping her out a bit. “Sophia, you shouldn’t place so much expectations on someone you’ve just met. Learn to relax and enjoy getting to know about someone slowly. It’s more enjoyable like that.” I smiled at Sophia although I feel like I should tell myself that. “Enjoy life Sophia. You might not know when you might not be able to”

“... you’re right Alex.” Sophia took a breath. “It’s just that it’s a little hard sometimes.”

“Don’t sweat it. You’ll get there.” Our food then arrived. “Let’s start with something simple like enjoying this food. How about it Sophia?” Sophia giggled.

“You really have a way with words Alex.” I would really have liked to not use those sweet words Sophia. I had to do something about that nervousness. Then we started to eat. She seemed a bit happier which made me a bit happier too.

After we both finished eating I left the table to relieve myself. When I came back I started to hear Sophia’s voice along with a few other voices.

“Putting on an act to dig up more dirt on the transfer student?” I stopped walking from the force of the voice. It seemed like it came from a female student’s mouth although I can’t see them from where I was. “How far are you willing to go for a story anyways?” A story? As in what?

“You really like getting on my case don’t you? I do what is needed. Information is key in this day and age and you know nothing!” Sophia spoke sternly to the other girl. She sounded completely different than before.

“Journalists always twist the truth around to sell papers till it barely resembles the truth. Even a school newspaper reporter like you.” Wait... Sophia is the school newspaper reporter? The worst kind of person I could be around when I’m trying to hide my past. “Now I see you flirting with the transfer student just to get more information. You NEVER act sweet like this.” I... I can’t believe it... She totally had me fooled. I step out from behind the corner and put down more than enough money to pay for both Sophia and my own meals.

“Alex?” Sophia’s eyes widen as I stare into them trying to figure out what goes on in her head. Her face was still as she was probably shocked.

“Sophia...” I start saying in a voice that is forcefully calm. “Are you really the school newspaper reporter?”

“Alex! Let me explain.” Sophia pleaded to me.

“You’re a pretty good actress Sophia. Far beyond a level I thought possible. I admit defeat.” I say in a now gentler voice. “This will take care of the bill.” Now even the other girl arguing with her had her eyes widen as both just stared at me.

“You got it wrong Alex! You have to listen to me.” I continued to walk towards the door. At the other side of the door there were three other students about to enter. Two girls and a guy about to head inside. I opened the door right before they did. Like an aggressive but controlled style, that feeling of high level competitive play of those games. This is how I react when I meet people with a really high skill level. I walked past the three students with that stride of confidence... even if it’s just in my own mind. I will enjoy this feeling.

Two weeks has passed since then. I started school in my new life. Also I keep anything I do on the computer at home encrypted to hide who I am. I still talk to my old wingmen using secure connections over the Internet. I go to this spy shop in town that gets me gadgets that help protect my privacy. I was spending time there when I saw the girl that was arguing with Sophia there. She told me that she thought that I was an otaku because of the manga I was reading in the park that day. Her name was Tracy and she worked for a local cosplay cafe. She wanted to talk to me but Sophia got to me first. She was worried that my otakuness would be exposed in the school newspaper. That gave me an idea on how to really send a distraction flare to throw people off my trail.

I became a regular at Tracy’s cosplay cafe and got lost in the world Japanese Animation. All the details and the passion of the high art of Anime and Visual Novels that was once a small passing interest in me would be fully realized. I barely remember the sad past of mine. Now those who would try to find me would never find me through rumors just because I was an otaku. And hey! It’s wouldn’t be a lie would it?

That’s how my new life started in Trident City.

*This story is for one of the characters from the visual novel, Fading Hearts. Find out more at the website [www.sakurariver.ca](http://www.sakurariver.ca). Visual novels are also the “What Is...” concept for this issue on page 23!*

# Unspoken – Tifa's Story

By Kurai-Hisaki

**W**e were always together... weren't we? I remember when we were small, I would always come over and you would look after me when my parents weren't home. We would stay up all night playing games or camping out and watching the stars. When I got cold or sleepy, you'd keep me warm and take me somewhere safe to sleep. I remember I was over so much that you gave me my own cup to use at your place. You always made me my favourite drink and always put the right amount of ingredients in it. You'd keep me company, and I would always have fun with you. Looking at those little clay sculptures that you made with me, or rather for me, I wonder why we aren't together now.

I remember growing up wanting to be like you. Being cool, warm-hearted and strong was everything I wanted to be. When other people picked on me, you'd be there to comfort me and to chase away my enemies. I would tell my friends that I have this really cool childhood friend that will always be with me when I needed help. You were like a big brother to me. I swore that when I grew up, I'll be as strong as you so you wouldn't have to protect me anymore.

When you left for SOLDIER, I worried everyday that you wouldn't return ever again. Who would I talk to now? Where would I go when I felt lonely? Who'd protect me when the world was against me? Who do I fight with? Who would teach me to be stronger? And when I was stronger, who'd be there to congratulate me? You said you wanted to get stronger to protect me, but I really just needed you here with me. Those years have been the loneliest days of my life.

And when you returned, I was left to face my feelings again. What did I feel for you exactly? You were different. You didn't remember how much time has passed. You were cold and distant to people like they were strangers. What happened during the years of being in SOLDIER? Why did other people fear you, yet I felt completely safe with you? It didn't make a difference to me; you were still my one and only best childhood friend, but did I still think of you as only that? Were you still the big brother that I looked up to? When other people feared you, my feelings remained the same. I felt as if I could support anything that you did – good or bad. Why was I feeling this way?

Sometimes, I want to ask *'What's up?'* or *'Are you okay?'* but I never got the courage to ask. Sometimes I want to just start

a conversation with you. It used to be something that came to me so easily, why is it that I am having so much difficulty now? I really wanted to know what happened to you... What happened with all those years that we've been apart? All those years I haven't seen you... If I asked would I seem weak? Would you think I'm weird? Maybe I'm not supposed to ask. Maybe I'm not supposed to know.

Our homes were destroyed and long gone when you decided to move in with me in Edge. I had persuaded you to stay with me so I could watch over you. I felt like I was reliving my childhood again. I felt that maybe we could make up all the lost time to each other. Things were great; we started talking to each other again. We would hang out and watch the stars like old times. Things started to change once again. Why was it that I stutter when I talked to you? Every time you flashed me a smile, I would feel my face heat up. My heart raced. I would try to get your attention in everything I did or said. What's wrong with me? Was I in love? Is this what love is? This was a nice change.

One time, when I finally thought that you were opening up to me again and we were closer than ever, you pushed me away. I have always wondered why... Why would you do that to me? It was the one time that I thought I could tell you my feelings. I never said the words, but I tried my best to express it through my actions. It was the one time that you threw my feelings back to my face. You told me that you never cared for me.

I couldn't believe it. So I asked you again, and you said that you never once cared for me or loved me in any way.

What was going on? If you never cared, why did you treat me so nice all these years? If you never cared, why were you always there for me? This confused me – so much.

I thought that throughout all these years, you would be able to develop some feelings for me – even as a friend or a sister. Was I wrong? I kept telling myself that you had reasons for saying that to me, that maybe you were looking out for me. I was in denial. I didn't want to believe you. What happened to the nice big brother that I grew up with?

Then you drifted away from me. Things got awkward for the next few years.

You were busy with your delivery services while I was occupied with things at the bar. We would occasionally bump into each other, say *'hi'*, and that was it. Sometimes it

felt like you were avoiding me on purpose. You returned at times when you would not cross paths with me. We use to see each other every day, now we would go on for weeks and months without seeing each other. When our group had our get-togethers – which were rare and rarer the times that you show up, you'd stand in the furthest location away from me. Conversations between us never happened. What happened to our relationship – even as just friends?

When Marlene and Denzel were left in our care, you seemed to be around a bit more. When I was busy, you took responsibility for them. Once again, you were helping me and were there for me, even if it was unintentional. I saw your gentle smile again and this warmed me up immensely. Slowly, you opened up once again, and I wondered if I should pretend not to notice. What happens if things became awkward again after I say something? What should I do? I hate it when I am useless to do anything or can't change a negative situation into a positive one.

Through other people and something unseen, you slowly healed and you even directed some of your light smiles at me. I felt like I could melt on the spot when you smiled at me. I was right; a smile definitely suits you better than your cool exterior. Even though I wished that I could have been the one to heal you, I accepted the fact that I wasn't that person.

I promised myself that I would be the person who would be here for you whenever you needed help, just like how you were to me many years ago... I cannot be your healer, but I will always be your endless support. I have decided that I will silently be by your side. I'll continue to watch you heal, and watch over you. I'll be there when the day comes and you can laugh again.

I have always wished that I had always been with you, but I guess I should be content with the ways things are now – after all, they probably won't change. I should be happy now; you are smiling at me and talking to me again, but why am I not? Why do I feel that something is missing? Why do I still dream about you being by my side at night – just like old times?

Things have changed. You were always within arms reach, physically there, but never really there with me. Sometimes you'd give me the feeling that you feel something for me. You always do things for me; treat me nice. You were always there to protect me, just like you promised when we were just children. You'd give me hugs when I least expect it. You would drive me to anywhere I wanted, regardless of the time and weather, and you would stay up to talk to me deep into the night. But you have this distant look in your eyes... you were never really here with me at all, were you...?

Cloud Strife (left) and Tifa Lockheart (right) from Final Fantasy VII





If there is any wish that you would like to be granted...

If it is in my power, I will try my hardest to grant it.

With all my heart.

xxxHolic  
Dream End //

LIZ



# Anim - Explanations

Strange things at UW, explained!

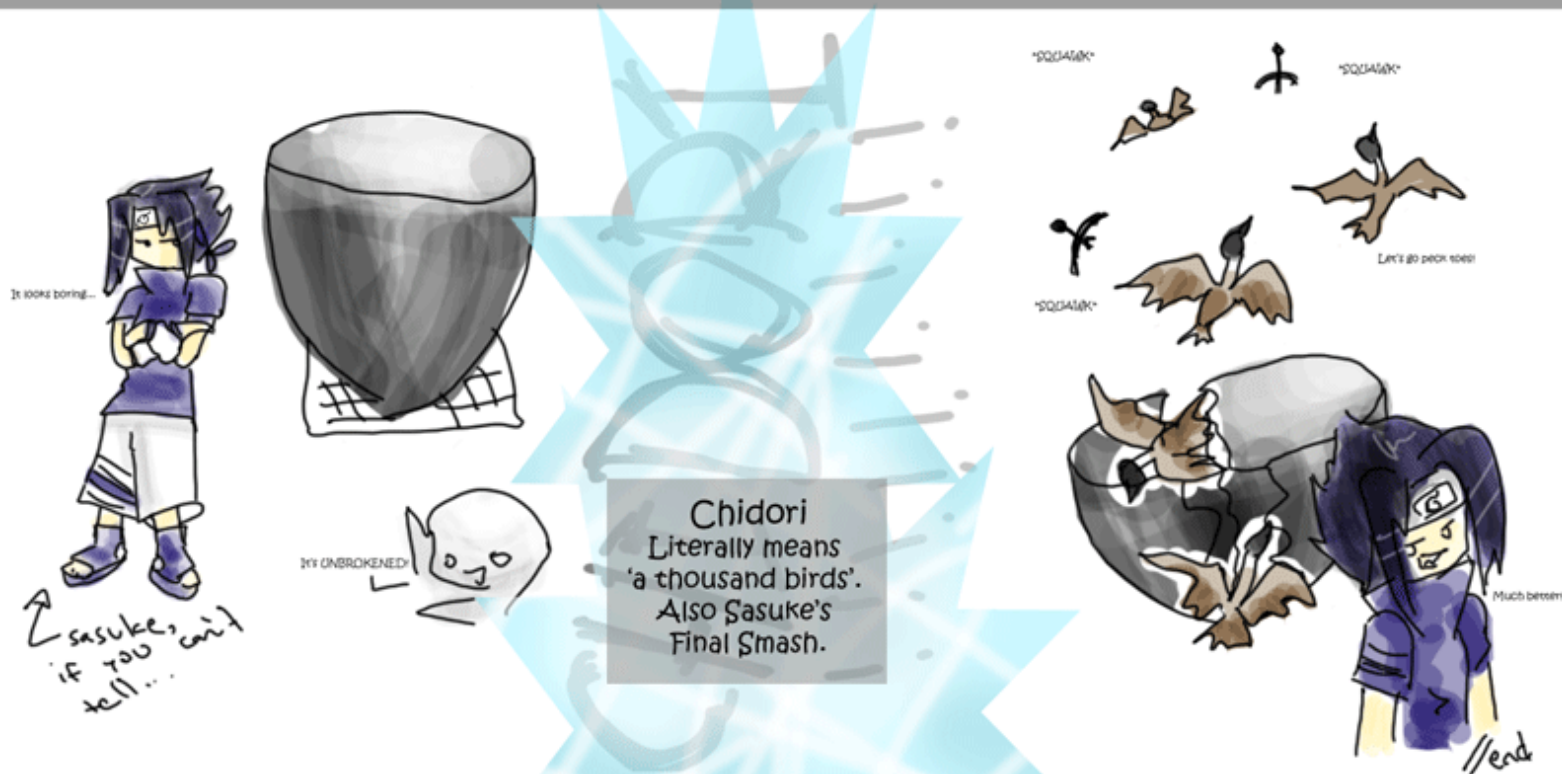
by: Kelly



Have you ever wondered?

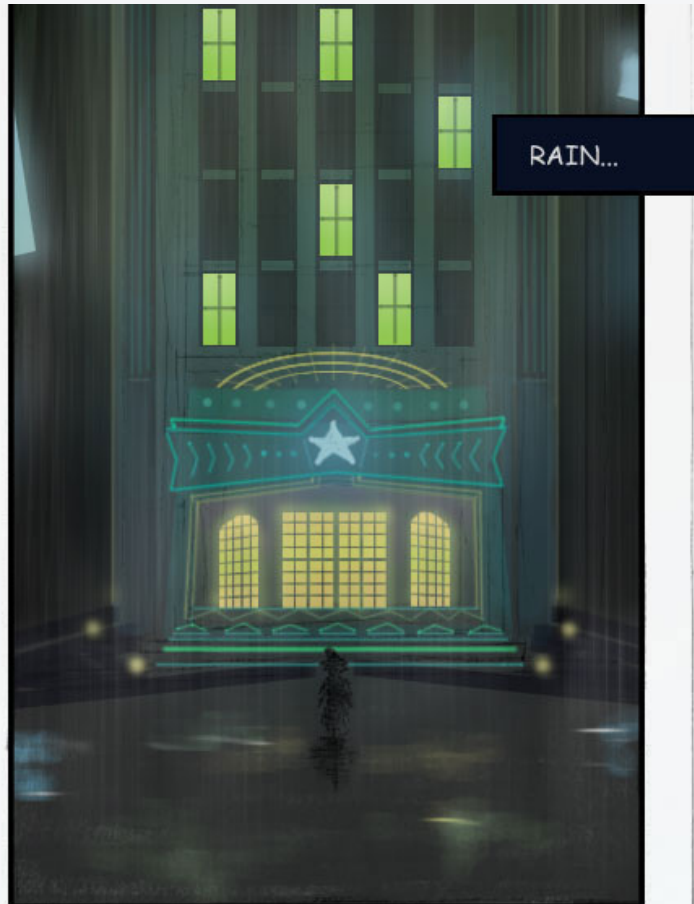


This should explain it all!



# All the King's Horses

By Lizeth Hallington



All the King's Horses is a fanfic by Chained-to-a-kiwi, found at [http://www.fanfiction.net/s/3753096/1/All\\_the\\_Kings\\_Horses](http://www.fanfiction.net/s/3753096/1/All_the_Kings_Horses)



# What is... A Visual Novel?

By Kaitlan Huckabone and Alfe Clemencio

A visual novel is a multimedia interactive story that can be played on video game consoles or the computer. In some, you take on the role of a main character and as the story progresses, you are given a choice. What you choose could potentially change the storyline. Sometimes the choice completely changes the direction of the storyline. Other times, the story might be completely linear.

While visual novels typically include themes of romance, the range of genres is very wide. Everything from sci-fi and fantasy, to normal everyday life is well within the realm of visual novels.

It is becoming more frequent for a popular visual novel to be turned into anime or manga. Some series that have been shown by CTRL-A include *Fate/Stay Night*, *Higurashi no Naku Koro Ni*, and *Tsukibime*.



**Above:** Phoenix Wright (left) and Apollo Justice (right) from the popular Ace Attorney visual novels.

Left panel: Sora from Kingdom Hearts and Ichigo from Bleach

Right panel: Roxas from Kingdom Hearts and Hichigo from Bleach



Lizeth Hallington



# 続 夏目友人帳

"Natsume, don't you think  
it's time for you to decide?  
What's more important to  
you, humans  
or demons?"



Natsume Takashi and Madara from Natsume Yuujin Chou

Lizeth Hallington