



ARK

ANIMAL REFUGE KANSAI

JAWS NOSE BRANCH

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Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

A month has already passed since you kindly sent a copy of 'In the Name of Mercy' and related articles, as well as such a warm letter of support. I'm really ashamed for this delay in answering. Our newsletter which should have been out by mid-February was far more complex to produce than I first envisaged. Apart from people being scattered and busy, launching a bi-lingual edition proved double the work, double the hassle. What with translation and getting Japanese characters to match English print. Well you know what it involves... We have no regular office as yet and have to beg/borrow other places' machines and know-how. I'm enclosing the first issue as promised.

As you can see we are dealing with basics. The English part is by and large irrelevant, more a decoration or an international flavour, which goes down well amongst Japanese. We are not trying to tell foreigners how to handle animals because we assume that they know this already. Japanese however are at square one and many of the problems leading to the abandonment and neglect of animals stems from basic ignorance. Thus our aim is to enlighten people at this point.

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The 'shock' approach doesn't work here. A picture of an animal undergoing an experiment on the publication will end up in the waste-paper basket. People just don't see what they don't want to see. Reports by the welfare organizations here go mostly unread, partly because they are unattractive in format but mostly because they contain page after page of misery. People who are concerned (the converted) will of course read these but it barely touches the masses. The kind which has a huge readership is the glossy cutesey approach showing colour photos of puppies frolicking in fields of flowers or kittens with hats and bows sitting in baskets - no message whatsoever except encouraging people without space, knowledge or time to keep puppies and kittens. Well you know the ending.

That's why I tried to aim somewhere in between, to start with a 'soft' approach, build up a steady readership, then filter in some hard facts gradually. We'll just have to see how it goes. Japanese are certainly not yet ready for 'animalines', 'Animal Voice', 'Animal Agenda', 'Animal Liberation' or any publications dealing with stark facts.

Before going further, I'd like to congratulate you on 'In the Name of Mercy'. Nobody else has had the courage to expose the animal welfare world with its eternal cycle of rescue and euthanasia as you have. I am involved with this work, although I deal with the nicer side, rescue and rehoming, but even though I don't physically wield the needle, I'm still part of the system.