



A Hospital for Toys

Morning Speech #12

By Sophie

Good morning everyone! Recently I read an article about a toy hospital called Natsumi Clinic. In this clinic customers can send in a dearly beloved soft toy for repairs. This clinic can be found in Tokyo, and the reputation of their work is very high. The reputation is so good that people from around the world want to send their lifelong friend there to get 'new life'.

The founder, Natsumi Hakozaiki, originally was a clothing alterer and would fix clothing for customers in her clothing repair shop. Over some years she found many customers requesting repairs for their soft toys and teddy bears. It became such a



frequent request she opened up a shop in Tokyo dedicated to toy repairs. She is so popular now that customers have to go on a wait list months in advance. The reason she said people are so passionate about their toys is because people see their toys as members of the family. In some cases, toys are believed to have spirits inside, so we should treat them with kindness.

One lady sent in a lamb plushie, called Yuki-chan to get repairs because it was very old and loved. For treatment, the stuffing was removed and the skin was washed in a special bath, like a 'spa' treatment. While the toy was undergoing treatment, the worker posted photos of Yuki-chan's progress for the owner to see and enjoy. Yuki-chan was filled with new stuffing, except for a small pink heart that had some of the original stuffing inside. By putting just a small amount of the original stuffing into Yuki-chan, we can keep the original soul of the toy. Yuki-chan's treatment wasn't a cheap price and came in at about \$1,000 (¥100,000).



Hakozaiki's service is so popular worldwide customers are sending in their toys from countries such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, France and the UK and some have to wait up to a year to get 'treatment'. Repairs can also take up to ten days to complete the transformation. But for many customers the wait, price and treatment is all worth it. The owner of Yuki-chan said, "My memories with Yuki-chan are more important than money, so I don't regret it".

Maybe we all have something to learn from Yuki-chan's owner, that some toys are with us for a lifetime and worth the effort to restore to its former glory rather than buying something new.

Please choose the correct answer:

1) What the Natsumi Clinic? A) A hospital B) A toy store C) A children's hospital D) A hospital for plushies	2) What made Hakozaiki start the clinic? A) She enjoys repairing toys B) Many customers were asking about toy repairs C) It was a good business D) Tokyo has many old toys to repair
3) Why do people choose to repair their toys? A) They are part of the family B) They have bonded with the toy since childhood C) They think toys have spirits D) All of the above	4) How long does it take to repair a toy? A) Up to ten days B) Ten days C) One year D) Many months

