

Hemingway Readability Score: Grade 6

Title: Japan Livestream Homicide (Ai Mogami / Airi Sato Murder)

Hook:

A Japanese female streamer met a terrible end while live with her fans. The video went viral on social media with much sympathy expressed, yet the public opinion changed overnight.

Her murderer was a man two decades older than her, but this was no random killing. What was his motive for killing her, and how did their shared history lead up to this nightmare? And most of all—why did the public decide to side with a murderer?

Here's how the shocking case unfolded.

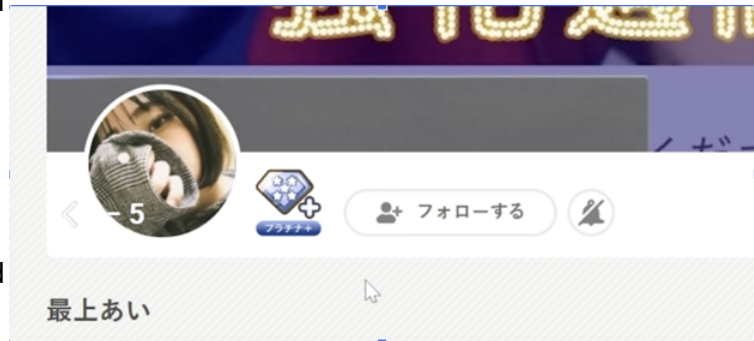
Body:

- The case starts with a 22-year-old woman named Sato Airi. She went by the name Mogami Ai on the streaming platform WhoWatch.tv (known as “*fuwacchi*” among Japanese viewers). She had thousands of followers and did livestreams visiting outdoor sites or talking with strangers. [Crossover promotions with bars and concept cafes](#) were also a part of her streaming style.
 - Working in bars and other social places wasn't new to Airi. Her former jobs included a restaurant and a cabaret club before she started streaming full-time.
 - She landed in this world of nightlife work [due to the difficult upbringing she had](#). Her mother often wandered the streets while drunk and neglected Airi as a child.
 - Unfortunately, Airi followed a similar path of alcohol problems. She [drank every night after her cabaret shifts](#). This habit led to financial trouble and, among other issues, caused her to quit her cabaret gig in Yamagata City.
- Airi soon ended up in Tokyo, where she started livestreaming and became one of *fuwacchi*'s top streamers, sporting a Platinum Badge. Her fans sent her regular donations. One of these fans was the 42-year-old Takano Kenichi. He started donating

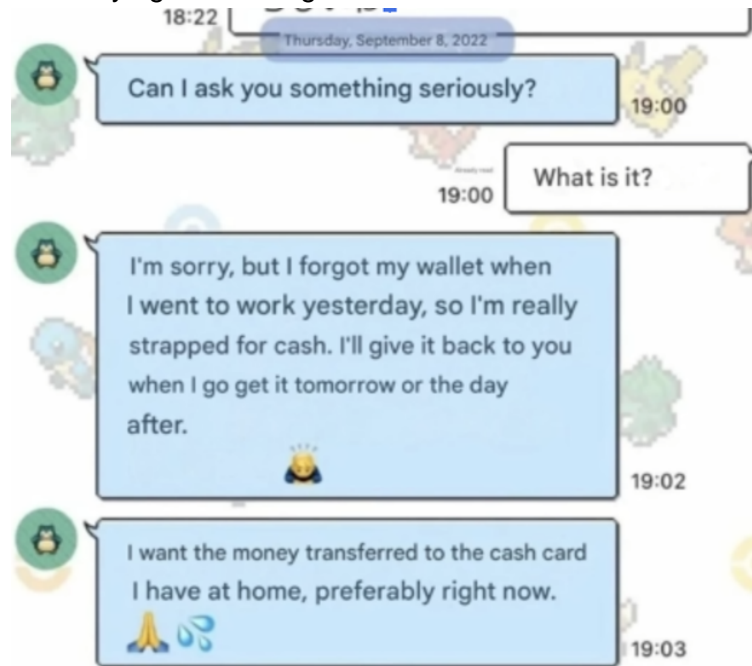


to Airi in December 2021 after he met her at a bar and started watching her streams.

- These donations began stacking up to as much as 100,000 yen (\$800 USD) a month, which caught Airi's attention. In early 2022, she connected with Kenichi on the Japanese-based messaging app LINE.

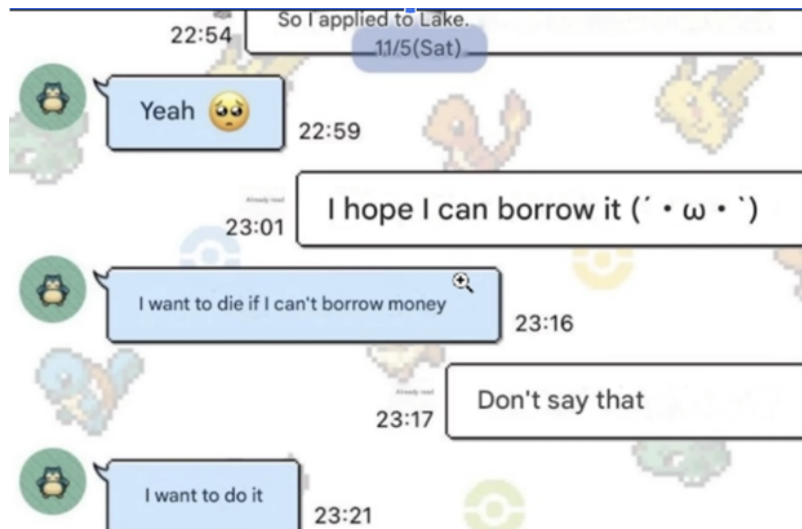


- Airi made money from her streams, though it's not clear exactly how much she was taking in. But she soon began asking Kenichi for money through LINE—small amounts at first, like 20,000 or 50,000 yen (\$126 to \$317 USD). She'd give reasons like forgetting her wallet, needing money to help her sister in a tough situation, or needing cash after buying coworker gifts.

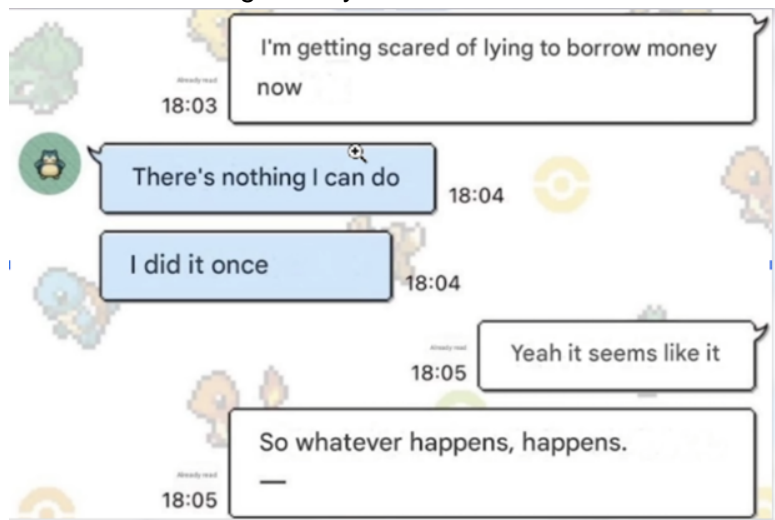


- The amounts rose through the last months of 2022 as Airi increased the pressure. She even told Kenichi “I won't ask you again” and said that she wanted to die if she couldn't borrow money.

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- As Kenichi sent money, his worries grew. He wanted to support this streamer he'd become obsessed with, but where would he find the funds? He didn't have the kind of job that would let him send big amounts without emptying his pockets.
 - Kenichi found an answer: He began taking out loans from the finance companies Lake and Aiful. How did he do it with his penniless status? He lied about the money he made, where he worked, and even his address, using his parents' address instead.
 - He worried about being found out, but Airi told him there was nothing she could do about it—and she'd done the same before. In other words, why stress if others could also get away with it?



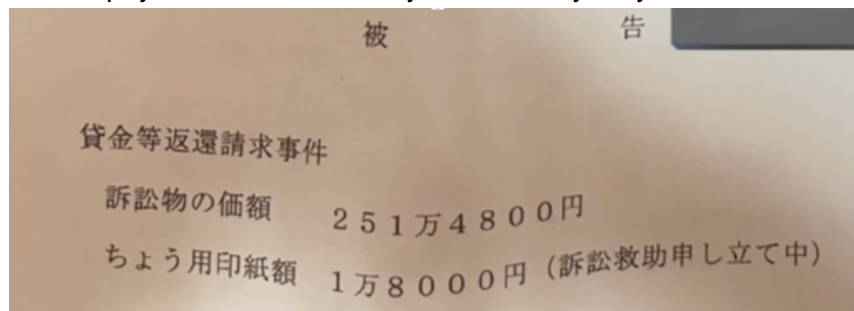
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- She also suggested borrowing from a third loan company to pay off the first two.
- They got to the point of swapping more emotional texts. Airi told Kenichi that she couldn't live without him and that she loved him, and he returned the feelings.
- All in all, Kenichi sent 2.5 million yen to Airi, which is about \$16,000 USD. Half of this was from loans.
- At the end of January 2023, Kenichi faced a new money problem: creditors. He started asking Airi to pay him back, and she requested a delay of two days.

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- The days passed, and still no money appeared. Kenichi reached out. On February 5, Airi told him she'd pay him back "soon."
- Kenichi's money was very tight, so there was no way for him to pay the companies back without Airi's repayments.
- Kenichi would later claim after his arrest that [she repaid only 30,000 yen](#) (\$190 USD) of the amount. After this small payment, she stopped all contact.
- 2023 passed with no more money repaid. In the meantime, Airi got engaged to a man and moved into a high-rise with him. Her former life, which included a small child with an ex-boyfriend, was forgotten. Her livestreams continued.
 - While Airi still lived in Yamagata City, her child was placed into a child welfare center because of her neglect—a repeat of her mother's behavior. As of today, there's no other information on the child.
- Later on, Kenichi would find out that Airi had likely spent some of the money he gave her on poker. The tip-off was a photo he saw on her Twitter/X account, which was dedicated to poker. In the image, she was holding a bag of poker chips worth 542,000 yen.



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- The situation's intensity rose as Airi's silence stretched on. In December of 2023, Kenichi sued Airi through the Tachikawa Branch of the Tokyo District Court. The court ordered her to pay him the 2.5 million yen with 3% yearly interest.



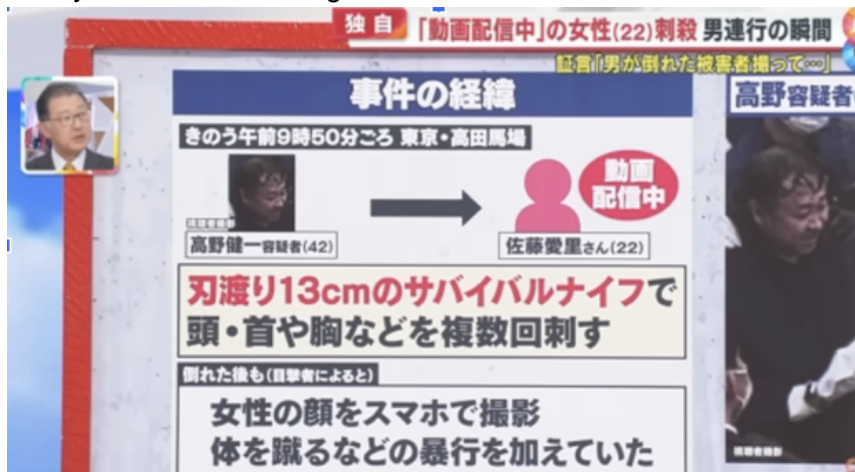
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- In one of her later streams, Airi spoke of the lawsuit like a minor irritation. She showed no intent of paying the money.

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- In March of 2025, Kenichi sent Airi a final message: "It was my fault for falling in love and being deceived... Please give me my money back. I'm in the negative because of the consumer loans I borrowed to lend to you, and I can't live."
 - Still, she didn't send any money or reply to his messages.
 - It's possible she wasn't getting his messages at all. In the previously mentioned livestream, she said she'd blocked a fan who'd been asking her to send money.
- At this point, Kenichi was likely driven by many emotions, such as anger and shame. These feelings reached toxic levels, leading him to commit a horrifying act.
- On March 11, Airi was near the Shin-Okubo, Tokyo, area doing a livestream she'd named "A walk around the Yamanote Line."
 - Kenichi was one of many who tuned into the stream. Recognizing the area she was in, he took a train from Oyama Station in Tochigi Prefecture. He traveled nearly 2 hours and [60 miles](#) to reach her location.



- At 9:50 a.m., Kenichi approached Airi at Takadanobaba Station in Shinjuku, Tokyo, wearing a hat and mask. He then began stabbing her face and upper body with a 13 centimeter hunting knife as she screamed for help. His rage-filled frenzy led to him stabbing her over 30 times.



- During this terrifying experience, Airi tried to escape her attacker but fell and couldn't get back up. Disturbingly, Kenichi stared dead-eyed into the camera while kicking her and asking, "Are you dead yet?"



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- The police arrived quickly after the attack, possibly alerted by the stream's viewers and a nearby witness.



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- While Airi was in critical condition, they arrested Kenichi on the spot, taking him to Totsuka Police Station. He is still in custody today, with no details yet known about how his case is progressing.

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- Despite efforts to save Airi, she was declared dead soon after being taken to the hospital. One [knife wound to the neck](#) was the fatal injury. In just minutes, her life was snuffed out in broad daylight.
- Because the murder was captured live, the general public soon made the video go viral. They expressed their sympathies for Airi before the video was taken down.
 - But people's feelings changed after learning of the LINE messages and unpaid money. The public's tone turned into shaming of Airi and sympathy for Kenichi. Showing no mercy, many social media posts insisted she'd gotten what she deserved.
 - Just days after Airi's death, people [were destroying her memorial](#) at the spot where she'd been killed by stomping on the flowers left for her. In a sickening twist, a video of this act *also* went viral, racking up 20 million views.
 - By the afternoon of that same day on March 16th, the memorial was cleared except for a few items.



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- Since then, people on social media and even Airi's fiance have defended her against internet commenters' vile misogyny. According to her fiance, Kenichi was angry about more than debt. He wanted a relationship with Airi that he would never have.



Outro:

What exactly triggered this brutal murder? Likely, it's what Airi's fiance has said. Along with the debt, Kenichi's ego couldn't take the radio silence after he'd "fallen in love," especially after Airi found a fiance. Their large age gap might've also played a role in his decision to take her life. Maybe he initially thought it would be easy to take advantage of a young girl, with Airi being only 18 when they met. Instead, he was the one humiliated through manipulation.

This murder and the reactions to it have shown how cruel society can be toward women. Especially those who make bad decisions. We all know manipulating someone for money is wrong, but the price to pay for it shouldn't be death.