It’s starting to feel like fall in Kyoto. The air is much cooler, and at school we often go for walks to the nearby temples. Wally and I are getting used to riding on the bicycle with Mama or Daddy. On days when there is no rain, we ride with Daddy to school.

At first Wally didn’t like his helmet at all. He kept saying “No helmet! No helmet!” But when he heard that Dora, Isa and Benny (characters from the Dora and Boots series) wear helmets when they ride on spaceships, he changed his mind and seems happy to put his helmet on.

Last weekend there was the yearly “undookai” at school, where the children and parents participate in all sorts of organized games that involve movement and body expression. Our class pretended to be caterpillars meeting various other animals and then finally turning into butterflies. Wally’s class was in search of ‘Mama’ or ‘Papa’, who took the form of an elusive ghost until the final scene when each child was reunited with their real parent. Later I went through an obstacle course that got progressively harder for older classes. Holding my Mama’s hand for part of the time, I climbed a ramp made out of a ladder, jumped off onto a mattress while hitting a tambourine, crawled under a net, did a hanging move on a bar, walked on upside down cups that you hold by attached strings, and jumped into rings spread out on the ground.
In the photos you can see the flags that each of the children made with their parents. Ours said our names “Alex” and “Ella” and had pictures of stars and rainbows. Other ones had pictures of animals and cartoon characters like Wally and my favorite: Anpanman.

I’m beginning to enjoy my piano lessons, and like to practice every night before I go to bed. My teacher gave me a book to use for my lessons. Each page has pictures that tell which fingers to use, and which notes to play. When I show the teacher that I’ve understood a page, and done all the work, she draws a big round spiral with petals around it on that page. When I practice at home, I’m supposed to review those pages with the spiral flowers, but I also like to try to go ahead to the pages we haven’t done yet.

At school, for the last couple of weeks I’ve been playing with origami a lot, mostly asking my teacher to make me things that I point out in the book. I come home with my bag full of nice origami animals and things, but a few days ago Mama told me I should start making things on my own. That made me mad at first, but then I tried, and I made a little house out of blocks. It has Mama and Daddy and Wally in it!
I’ve also been drawing pictures by myself too. Here are pictures of Daddy and Mama, and a picture of some fish and rocks. All my pictures have a blue roof on top.
It’s been getting colder these days. Sometimes we have to really bundle up. Wally looks a little like Bob the builder with his helmet and jacket on.

This past weekend the weather was clear and warm. We went to Takaragaike, which is a big park with lots of trees and acorns. I helped Mama row while Daddy relaxed in the sun.