

An illustration of a clothesline with various items of laundry hanging on it. From top to bottom, there is a pink patterned cloth, a yellow cloth, a light blue cloth, a dark blue cloth, a purple cloth, and a white sheet. Several colorful clothespins (pink, blue, yellow, brown) are used to hold the laundry in place. In the background, there is a green hillside and a grey structure, possibly a house or shed. In the foreground, the faces of three children are visible, looking towards the viewer. The child on the left has dark, curly hair and a serious expression. The child on the right has dark hair and a neutral expression. A girl with brown hair and a pink shirt is partially visible at the bottom right.

SCHOOL JOURNAL

NOVEMBER 2017

TITLE	READING YEAR LEVEL
No Fangs	6
The Matriarch's Tale	6
The Fantail	5
Stand Up: A History of Protest in New Zealand	6
New New Zealanders	5
The Village Beach	5
My Name Is Rez	6

This Journal supports learning across the New Zealand Curriculum at level 3. It supports literacy learning by providing opportunities for students to develop the knowledge and skills they need to meet the reading demands of the curriculum at this level. Each text has been carefully levelled in relation to these demands; its reading year level is indicated above.

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CONTENTS

STORIES

2 *No Fangs* by Hera Lindsay Bird
“It was midnight in Transylvania,
and Madeline was bored.”

24 *The Matriarch’s Tale*
by Meshack Asare
A story from Ghana especially
written for the *School Journal*

28 *The Fantail* by Steph Matuku
Why are the cousins freaking out?

ARTICLES

8 *Stand Up: A History of Protest
in New Zealand* by Dylan Owen
What issues have got New Zealanders
really upset over the last 150 years?

34 *New New Zealanders*
by Adrienne Jansen
Two years ago, Christian Kaka was
living in Syria.

PLAY

19 *The Village Beach*
by Tanya Muagututi’a
A beach, a coconut grove ...
and a new hotel.

SCHOOL JOURNAL

**LEVEL 3
NOVEMBER
2017**



MEMOIR

42 *My Name Is Rez*
as told to Toby Morris
Rez Gardi is Kurdish, and now
she’s a New Zealander too.

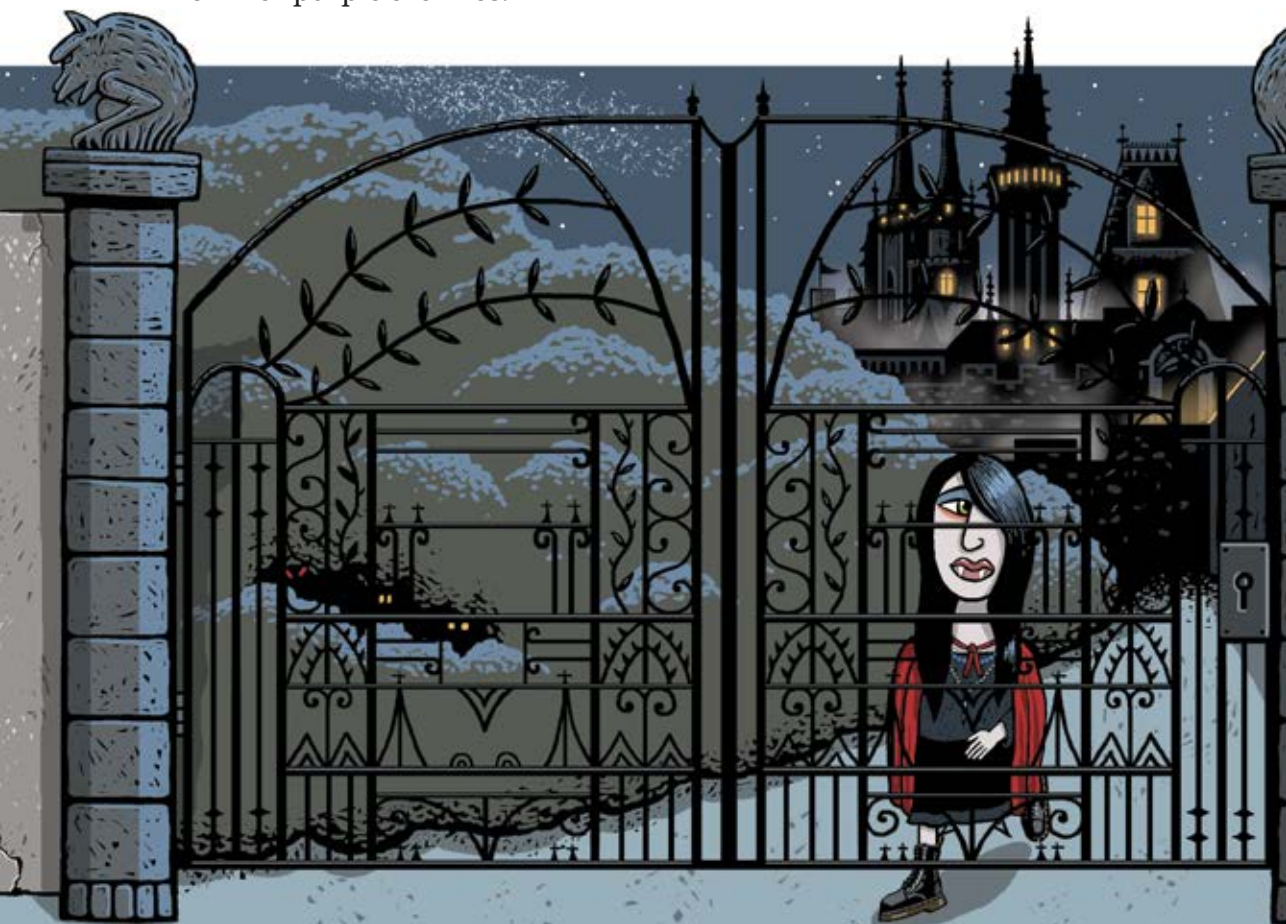
NO FANGS

by Hera Lindsay Bird

It was midnight in Transylvania, and Madeline was bored. She decided to go for a walk. The night was warm and full of stars, and sitting outside the wrought iron gates was a girl. Madeline had very little contact with humans. Nobody ever came to the castle – not on *purpose*. The villagers were scared of them, which wasn't surprising. Besides, as Great Aunt Lilith said, it wasn't polite to chit-chat with your food.

The girl was holding a sign. "Fangs but NO Fangs!" it said. She looked to be about Madeline's age, give or take four hundred years.

"Hi," the girl said cheerfully, as if Madeline weren't a supernatural being who could drain her blood in ten minutes. The girl poured a drink from her purple thermos.



“What are you doing?” Madeline asked.

“Protesting,” the girl said.

“About what?”

“You, I guess.”

They looked at each other for a moment. The girl had blue hair. Her jeans had rips in the knees.

“I’m Lydia, from the village. People are terrified of you. They won’t leave their houses – and I understand why. One night, on my way home from tennis, I had to knock your father out with my racquet!”

“We’re vampires,” Madeline said.

“Well *obviously*. But that doesn’t mean you can drink people’s blood without their permission.”

“It’s not like we have a choice,” Madeline said. “It’s genetic.”

“It’s the twenty-first century. You have choices!”

Madeline ignored this. “Listen. You should leave. My father will be back soon. He’ll probably recognise you.”

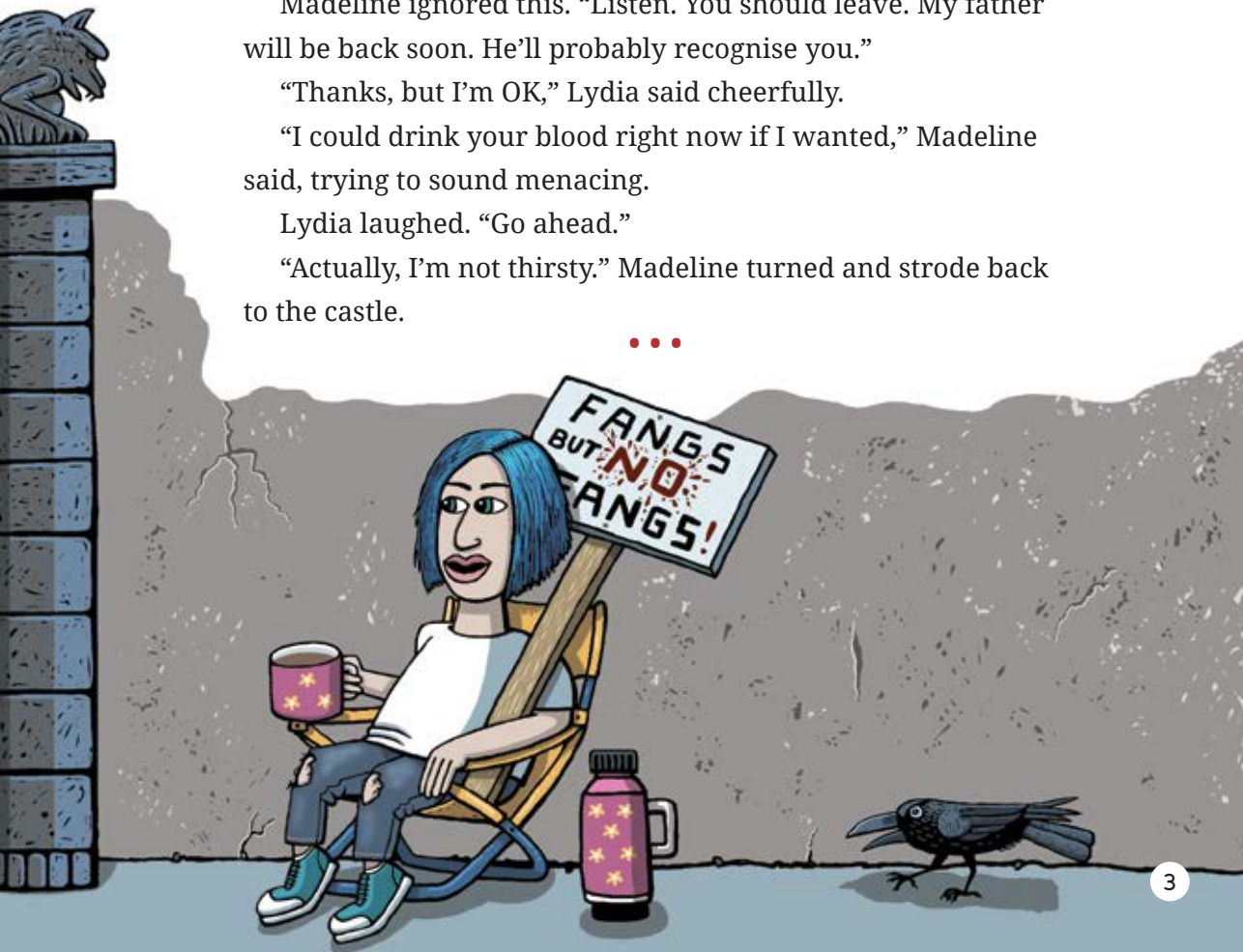
“Thanks, but I’m OK,” Lydia said cheerfully.

“I could drink your blood right now if I wanted,” Madeline said, trying to sound menacing.

Lydia laughed. “Go ahead.”

“Actually, I’m not thirsty.” Madeline turned and strode back to the castle.

...



The next night, Lydia was back. Madeline watched through her binoculars. She was sitting in her yellow deck chair reading *Dracula* by Bram Stoker. Madeline couldn't decide if Lydia was brave or plain stupid.

In the meantime, she would do some research. Lydia was right. It was the twenty-first century. There were options.

Madeline typed "blood substitute" into her laptop. Hundreds of results came up. There were products made to taste like athletes' blood, and there was "blood" from vegetarians. One brand – Fangs for Nothing – promised all the nutritional benefits of real blood with a money-back guarantee. Madeline wrinkled her nose. Despite the options, nothing appealed.

That night at dinner, she told her father about Lydia. He was incredulous. "Does she know we're *vampires*?"

"I think that's the whole point," Madeline said.

"I guess we can always drink her blood if she gets too irritating."

Madeline sighed and put down her soup spoon.

"What's wrong?" her father asked. "It's B negative, your favourite."

"Why is blood your solution to everything? You know there are new products on the market that taste just like the real thing."

"While you're under this roof, you'll respect tradition!"

"And if I refuse?"

"Then you'll go hungry." Her father turned into a bat and flew away.

...



On the third night, it rained. After her father left, Madeline went downstairs with an umbrella.

Lydia was shivering.

“Why don’t you protest inside?”

Madeline asked. “We could play cards.”

“Not until your father stops drinking my friends,” said Lydia politely.

If it were possible, Madeline would have blushed. “He’s been getting his own way for five thousand years,” she said. “He won’t change.”

Lydia held up her book. “In the end, even Dracula was beaten by a girl.”

• • •

The fourth night, Madeline decided to cook. She had a recipe book: *The Ethical Bloodsucker*. Her aunt had sent it from California. The recipe required plasma substitute and tomato soup. To be on the safe side, Madeline added red food colouring and an extra handful of salt. Then she poured the blood-warm liquid into two bowls.

Her father was in a very good mood. “Some high school students were having a party in the cemetery,” he said. “I jumped out from behind a tombstone. You should have seen their faces!” He sat down at the table, pleased with himself. “I’m hungry,” he said. “Is that girl still outside?”

“Yes. I’ve been getting to know her,” Madeline said.



“What’s her blood type?”

Madeline ignored this. “I made dinner,” she said.

Her father took a spoonful of soup. And then another. Then he spat the red liquid all over the table. “What is that?” he gasped. “Are you trying to poison me?”

“It’s from a recipe book,” Madeline said, affronted.

“We don’t need recipe books. We’re vampires!”

“Would it hurt to be a little less prehistoric?”

Has it ever occurred to you that the only reason I don’t have friends is because you treat the locals like human milkshakes?”

“Well I’m certainly not drinking this stuff every night.”

Madeline tasted the soup and choked a little herself. “We can order a synthetic substitute off the Internet. You won’t know the difference.”

“I won’t have you turning into a shampire like that crazy aunt of yours! Drinking blood is nothing to be ashamed of. It’s what we do.”

“I’d rather have friends.”

“I won’t discuss this,” her father said. He took his napkin and wiped angrily at his mouth. “And I won’t be told what to do by a pair of eleven-year-old girls.”

“I’ve been eleven for four hundred years!”

“Then start acting like it,” he snapped.

Madeline stood abruptly, knocking her bowl of soup. The thick red liquid dripped slowly onto the stone floor. She was sick of this gloomy, depressing castle with all its candles and black velvet. She was sick of the way people looked at her. She was sick of being alone.

Madeline left the room, crossed the courtyard, flung open the main door, and marched straight into ... sunlight!

Her skin began to fizz like a carbonated drink. She could hear her father yelling to get back inside, but her legs had no bones. She closed her eyes and felt warm waves of light. She had been so busy pretending she wasn’t a vampire, she’d forgotten that whole thing with sunlight.



Then, somehow, the sunlight was blocked. Someone was holding a large blue umbrella. Lydia. She was dragging Madeline back to safety. The door slammed shut, and the sun was gone. Inside, the castle was as dark as the grave.

Madeline's father swooped down from the rafters, his already bloodless complexion paler than usual. He knelt beside Madeline and put a cool hand on her forehead. Then he turned to Lydia.

"Can I have access to one of your main arteries for a second? This is a medical emergency. My daughter needs blood."

"Actually," Madeline said, cautiously sitting up. "She needs credit card details and a courier. It's rude to eat guests."

Madeline's father seemed like he was about to say something, then thought better of it.

Lydia smiled at him sweetly. "Once I've helped Madeline make the order, we should have a game of tennis."





STAND UP

A HISTORY OF PROTEST IN NEW ZEALAND

BY DYLAN OWEN

Everyone in New Zealand has the right to protest. There's even a law that safeguards this right (the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990). With permission, we can protest on the grounds of parliament!

Protesters like to be seen and heard, and there are lots of ways to make this happen. Petitions, strikes, rallies, meetings, and marches all draw attention to an issue. Over the years, a lot of protests in Aotearoa have been successful. Some have helped stop the destruction of our native forests. Others have helped make New Zealand nuclear free.

What else have New Zealanders protested about over the last 150 years? And what forms did their protests take?

PARIHAKA, 1881

One of New Zealand's first big protests was at Parihaka, a kāinga in Taranaki. Māori living there wanted the government to stop taking their land for Pākehā settlers. Led by Te Whiti-o-Rongomai and Tohu Kākahi, the people of Parihaka used a form of non-violent protest called passive resistance. They pulled out government survey pegs on **confiscated** Māori land and rebuilt fences taken down to make way for new roads.

When soldiers invaded Parihaka on 5 November 1881, Māori didn't fight back. Instead, they made bread to share with the soldiers and sent their children to greet them. Most of the village was still destroyed, and Parihaka's leaders – along with many others – were arrested and jailed. In June 2017, the government formally apologised to the people of Parihaka for its actions. Today, Parihaka stands as a symbol for peace.

confiscate: to take something away as punishment



Parihaka in the 1880s

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE PETITION, 1893

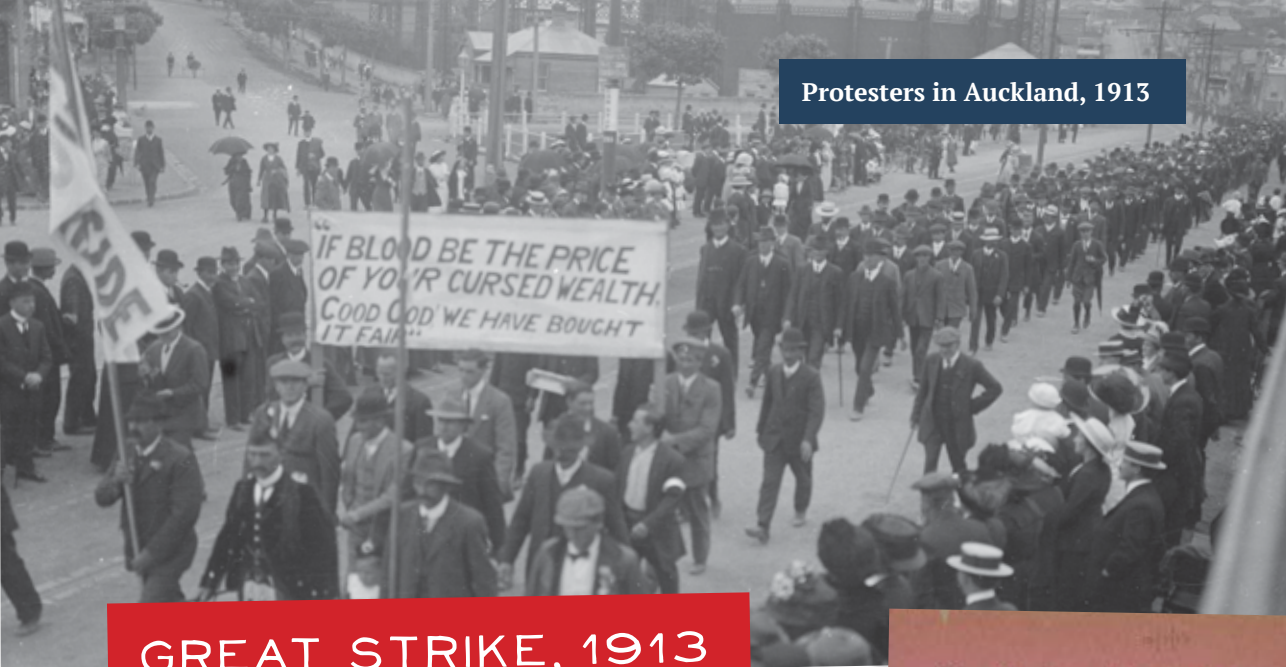
"I felt it was something to be proud of." Kate Sheppard wrote this after the women's **suffrage** petition had been delivered to parliament in July 1893. She was right to be proud. The petition was more than five hundred pages long and signed by over 25,000 women. This was around a quarter of the adult female population. The petition asked that New Zealand women be allowed to vote. At the time, only men could help choose the country's government, and some people didn't want this to change. They said that a woman's "proper place" was at home – politics was for men.

But in the end, the suffrage petition helped to bring about a huge victory. A few months after the petition was presented, a law was made that gave all women in New Zealand the right to vote – a world first!

suffrage: the right to vote

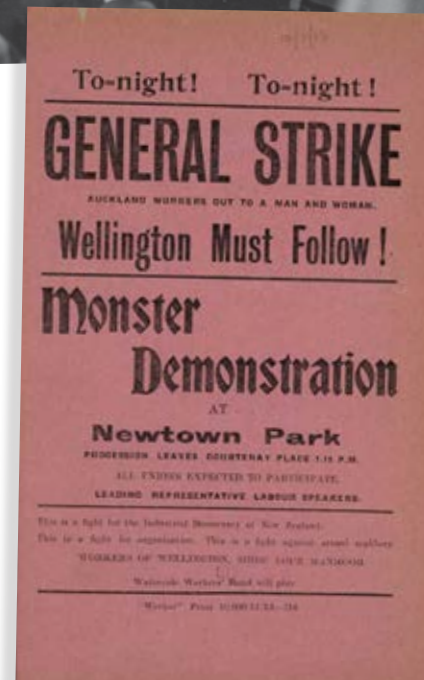


Women voters in Tahakopa, 1893



GREAT STRIKE, 1913

Strikes were a common form of protest last century. In 1913, a strike by **watersiders** in Wellington and miners in Huntly quickly spread around the country. The workers went on strike to defend their working conditions and support sacked workmates, but the real issue was who would have the most power in the workplace: the **unions** or the employers? Thousands joined in, including over seven thousand workers in Auckland. Prime Minister William Massey wanted to end the strike. There were violent confrontations, and special police on horseback charged at strikers and beat them with batons. The strike lasted eight weeks but failed. Several of the leaders were arrested, but a few of these men went on to become politicians. They helped to make new laws to improve the lives of workers.



union: an organised group of workers that negotiates with employers for better pay and working conditions

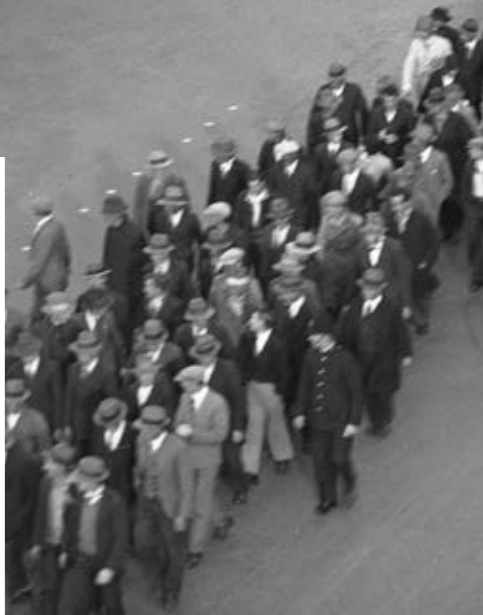
watersider: a person who works on a wharf

DEPRESSION RIOTS, 1932

Sometimes a protest can turn ugly, especially when times are tough. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, a lot of people were unemployed and frustrated. Many believed that the government wasn't doing enough to help them, so they began to protest. Marches became riots, the first one in Dunedin in January 1932. A few months later, unemployed men in Auckland fought with police and stormed down Queen Street, smashing shop windows and looting. The same thing happened on Lambton Quay in Wellington. During the depression, some people ate at soup kitchens, and many more went hungry. Women sewed clothing for their children from flour bags. It was a time of great hardship for many New Zealanders.



Unemployed workers clashing with police, Wellington, 1932



Unemployed workers marching towards parliament, 1932

WATERFRONT DISPUTE, 1951

Imagine: you are involved in a dispute with your boss, and the government introduces laws to punish you. One of these laws makes it illegal for people to give you food, even though you have no money. This happened in 1951, when the men who worked on the wharves loading and unloading cargo asked for better wages. The watersiders were offered only a very small pay increase. They protested, refusing to do any overtime. The employers locked out the watersiders, saying they couldn't come to work until they agreed to do what they were told. Thousands of workers went on strike to support the watersiders.



Striking watersiders on Cuba Street, Wellington, 1951

Closed wharves would mean disaster for New Zealand's economy, so the government declared a state of emergency. Then it passed new laws that allowed soldiers to work on the wharves. The government also gave police special powers to break up marching protesters. It was a bitter fight. One politician called the protesters "worse than a disease". After 151 days, the watersiders finally gave in and went back to work. Later, many of these men had trouble getting work because they had been involved with the dispute.

ANTI-VIETNAM WAR PROTESTS, 1960s

"One, two, three, four, we don't want your bloody war!" chanted a new kind of protester in the 1960s. These protesters were anti-war and opposed to New Zealand soldiers fighting in Vietnam. They believed the Vietnam war was a civil war and New Zealanders shouldn't be supporting one side or the other. Hundreds of protests took place around the country between 1965 and 1970. These involved thousands of people. Many of the protesters were university students who used new protest tactics, such as sit-ins, occupations, graffiti, music, and street theatre. At one protest in Auckland, people smeared their bodies with red paint to symbolise the deaths of Vietnamese civilians.



A young anti-Vietnam war protester at parliament, 1967

MĀORI LAND MARCH, 1975

A march or hīkoi is a long journey made on foot. It's become a very Kiwi way of protesting. New Zealand's most famous hīkoi began in September 1975, when a small group of Māori left Te Hāpua in Northland. Their goal was to walk the length of Te Ika-a-Māui to protest over the loss of Māori land. Their slogan was "Not one acre more". Leading the hīkoi was the 79-year-old kuia, Whina Cooper.

Sleeping and eating at marae on the way, the hīkoi took twenty days to reach Wellington. Five thousand protesters joined the marchers at parliament. Prime Minister Bill Rowling was handed a petition, which asked that no more land be taken from Māori. Did the hīkoi succeed? Yes. It increased Pākehā awareness of the importance of whenua and tikanga to Māori. It also inspired other Māori protesters to fight for their land, culture, and language.



SPRINGBOK TOUR, 1981

“Whose side are you on?” That was the question on everyone’s lips during the Springbok rugby tour of New Zealand in 1981. At the time, the South African government enforced a policy of apartheid (meaning “apartness”). Apartheid laws denied basic human rights to millions of black South Africans.

During the tour, New Zealand became a divided nation. Some people said sport and politics shouldn’t mix. But anti-apartheid demonstrators were determined to stop the games. There were violent clashes, including one at Rugby Park in Hamilton, when protesters stormed the rugby field and stopped the game. The marches and violence lasted the Springboks’ entire tour – fifty-six days. Thousands of protesters were arrested.

One man in a South African prison heard about the protests. Later, he said he’d never forget the day the game in Hamilton was cancelled. “It was,” he said, “like the sun coming out.” That man was Nelson Mandela.



Anti-apartheid protesters
in Wellington, 1981





Anti-GE protesters in Auckland

GE-FREE MARCHES, 2003

Since the 1960s, protesters have worked to save our native forests, rivers, lakes, and endangered species. But one of the biggest environmental protests happened in 2003, when thousands of people demonstrated against **genetic engineering** (GE). Many New Zealanders felt uneasy about GE. They didn't like the idea that plants and animals could be changed in unnatural ways. They also felt there were unknown risks. Did we really know if it was safe to eat genetically engineered food?

The result was large anti-GE protests in our major cities, including two GE-free hīkoi that travelled from Auckland to Wellington. The largest protest saw 35,000 people marching down Auckland's Queen Street. Their efforts had some success. New Zealand now has some of the strictest laws about genetic engineering in the world.

genetic engineering: deliberately changing a living thing's genetic material





ANTI-TPPA PROTESTS, 2012–2016

We were once part of negotiations for the biggest trade deal ever: the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA). The agreement was big enough, officials said, to eventually add \$2.7 billion each year to our economy. So why were thousands of people against it?

Many were upset that the trade talks were held in secret. They also believed that the New Zealand government might lose the ability to uphold some of its laws and regulations because of the trade agreement. Others were worried that essential items like medicines might become more expensive. Over four years, protesters held rallies, meetings, and demonstrations. Three families even led a hīkoi from Christchurch to parliament.

The New Zealand government signed the TPPA agreement on 4 February 2016. Again, thousands protested on the streets. A year later, the president of the United States, Donald Trump, withdrew the United States from the deal. The world's biggest trade agreement was over.

The Village Beach

by Tanya Muagututi'a

LA'AU

SINA

POPO

ELIOTA

GRANDAD

Scene. Sāmoa. A village beach. **SINA** and her cousins **POPO**, **LA'AU**, and **ELIOTA** have been swimming. They are chatting in the shade of some coconut trees. **SINA** has a bottle of coconut oil.

POPO. Hey, Sina. My skin's dry. Can I borrow some of your coconut oil?

SINA hands **POPO** the oil. **POPO** puts some on her arms.

LA'AU. It's sad we won't be able to hang out here much longer.

POPO (surprised). How come?

LA'AU. There's a new building coming.

ELIOTA. A building coming? Where from?

LA'AU. It's being built here, you egg.

ELIOTA. Who's building it?

POPO. What are they building?

LA'AU. Guess.

ELIOTA. A burger bar?

SINA. A dive shop?

LA'AU. No. A new hotel!

ELIOTA, POPO, and SINA *sigh and grumble.*

LA'AU. What's the problem? It's a good thing.

ELIOTA (*considering the idea*). I guess. It depends.

Will the hotel have a big restaurant – with burgers?

LA'AU. That's what I heard.

ELIOTA. Yes! I'll be able to go there for my birthday.

POPO. But why do they have to build it here? This is our beach.

This is where we grew up.

ELIOTA. You mean it's going to be *right* here?

LA'AU. Yep. Right here.

They ALL look down at the sand, out to sea, and then at each other.

POPO. Stink!

LA'AU. But my brother's going to work at the hotel, and it's going to be really flash. Famous people will come. We'll be able to get their autographs.

SINA (*unhappily*). Lots of other people will come, too. Lots of not-famous people.

GRANDAD *enters.*

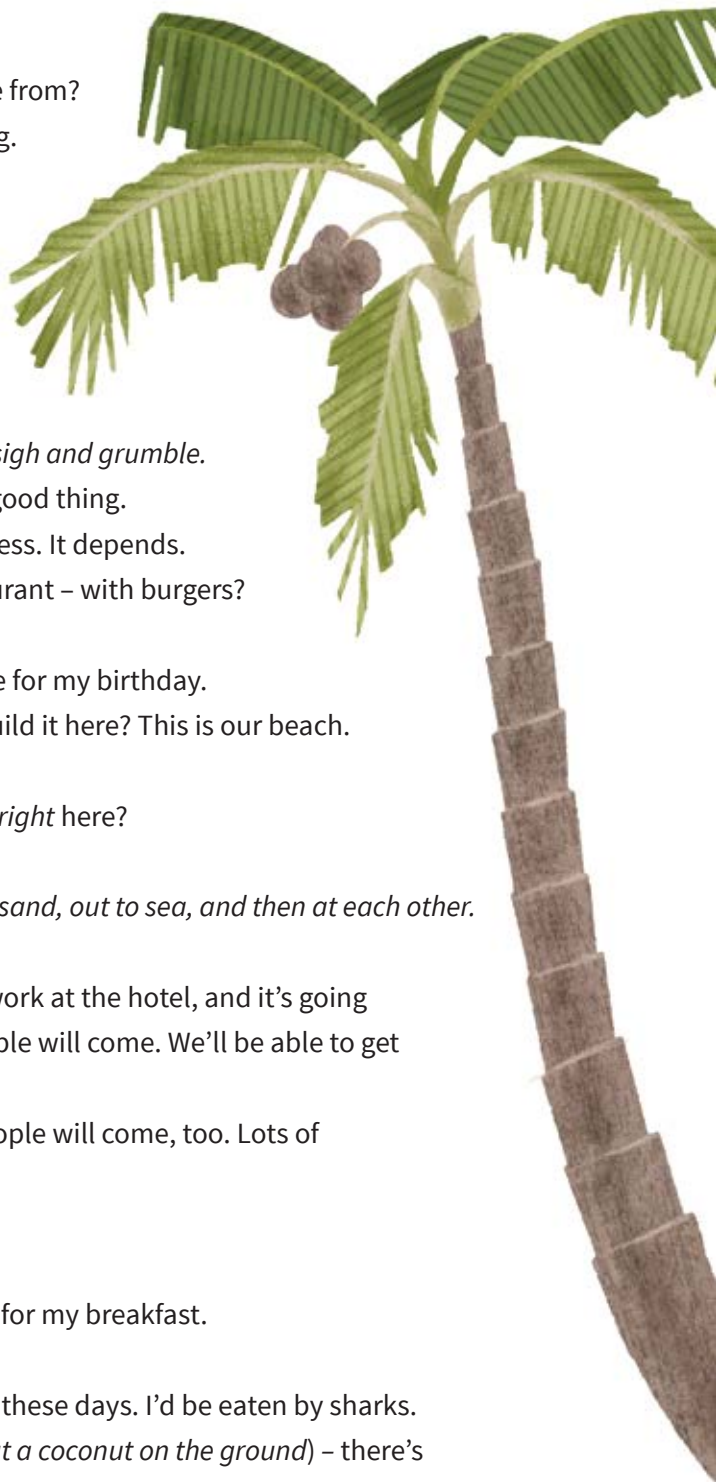
SINA. Hi, Grandad.


GRANDAD. Tālofa, Sina. I've come for my breakfast.

ELIOTA. Are you going fishing?

GRANDAD. No, I'm much too slow these days. I'd be eaten by sharks. I have a better plan (*pointing at a coconut on the ground*) – there's my breakfast.

POPO *picks up the coconut and passes it to GRANDAD.*





POPO (to **GRANDAD**). We're talking about the new hotel.

GRANDAD. Yes, I heard about that.

ELIOTA. There's going to be a restaurant. I'm going there for my birthday.

POPO (still grumbling). But why does it have to be here?

GRANDAD. This spot has the best views. It's paradise. People like paradise.

POPO. But where will we swim? And what about our trees?

SINA. Do you remember that story you used to tell us, Grandad? When we were little? The one about Sina and the eel and the coconut tree?

GRANDAD. Of course.

ELIOTA. I don't know that one.

LA'AU. I do! Sina was a beautiful girl who –

ELIOTA (interrupting). It can't have been you then, Sina.

SINA. Very funny!

POPO. Sina played in the rock pool with her friend the eel.

ELIOTA. Eww!

LA'AU. They grew up together, and then he fell in love with her.

ELIOTA. Eww!

SINA. But Sina had to marry a man, and the eel was jealous ...

GRANDAD. That's right. What happened next?

POPO. Sina told her brothers and father about the eel, and they got really angry. An eel, in love with their sister!

SINA. So they went after the eel and killed him. As the eel was dying, he told Sina's brothers to cut off his head and bury it.

ELIOTA. Why would he say that?

LA'AU. And he said to water the spot where his head was buried.

ELIOTA (exasperated). What has this got to do with the new hotel?

GRANDAD. Be patient, Eliota. Sina watered the spot every day, and what happened?

SINA. The eel grew into a coconut tree.



GRANDAD. That's right. The very first one. And what do you see?

He holds up the coconut.

ELIOTA (*looking closely*). Umm. A coconut?

SINA. Those dark spots are two eyes and a mouth. It's the eel's face.

GRANDAD. The coconut tree was the eel's gift to Sina. That way, he knew she would always be looked after. 'O le niu lava ia, 'o le olaga fa'a-Sāmoa: The coconut itself is Samoan life. My mother taught me that. The trees give us so much.

SINA. Leaves for making mats and baskets.

ELIOTA. Trunks for canoes.

SINA and **POPO.** Coconut oil.

GRANDAD. Yes, all of that – and coconuts for my breakfast.

ELIOTA. You won't be getting your breakfast here once the hotel's built.

POPO. It's not fair. The trees were here first.

LA'AU. What about my brother? He needs a job.

GRANDAD (*nodding*). Yes, we all need money to live.

POPO. But you said the coconut is Samoan life!

GRANDAD (*nodding*). It is – but the hotel's coming, and maybe more hotels after that. If you kids are so worried about the trees, you should do something.

POPO. Like what?

GRANDAD. Start a group. Have a meeting. That's how our people have always done it.

SINA. We could start a conservation group!

ELIOTA. A what?

SINA. A group to look after the trees and the beach.

ELIOTA. And the eels?

GRANDAD (*laughing*). Yes, and the eels! You could invite the owners of the new hotel to the meeting.

SINA. Maybe the hotel people will sponsor us or something.

GRANDAD. Good idea. I'll look forward to my invitation, too. Now, all this talking has made me extra hungry. I'm going to need two coconuts for my breakfast. Someone climb up and get me another one.

The Samoan saying and translation is by Muagututi'a Pulusila Meafou Sagapolutele.



illustrations by Josh Morgan

The Matriarch's Tale

*story and illustrations
by Meshack Asare*

Once, somewhere in Africa, a small herd of elephants disappeared suddenly, without trace. It was a long time ago, but some people still remember this story. They believe that descendants from those elephants live among us.

The elephants were led by the wisest female, the Matriarch. Her wisdom came from her mother, who had been the matriarch before her. It had been this way since the beginning of a time that only elephants can remember.

The herd loved and respected their young matriarch beyond compare. They were loyal and obedient. In return, their leader had to follow one rule: she was to birth a female calf, never a male. A male might one day try to seize power, and this herd accepted only female leaders.

When the Matriarch became older and got big with baby, the elephants rejoiced. They waited patiently for two years until, one day, the chief midwife finally made the much-anticipated announcement: "Our beloved Matriarch has delivered a healthy infant!"

The younger elephants raised their trunks to the sky to trumpet the happy news, which echoed across the plains. "We have an heiress. Rejoice!"



But inside the enclosure, the mood was solemn, for the story was quite different. The Matriarch had given birth to twins, and the second was a boy.

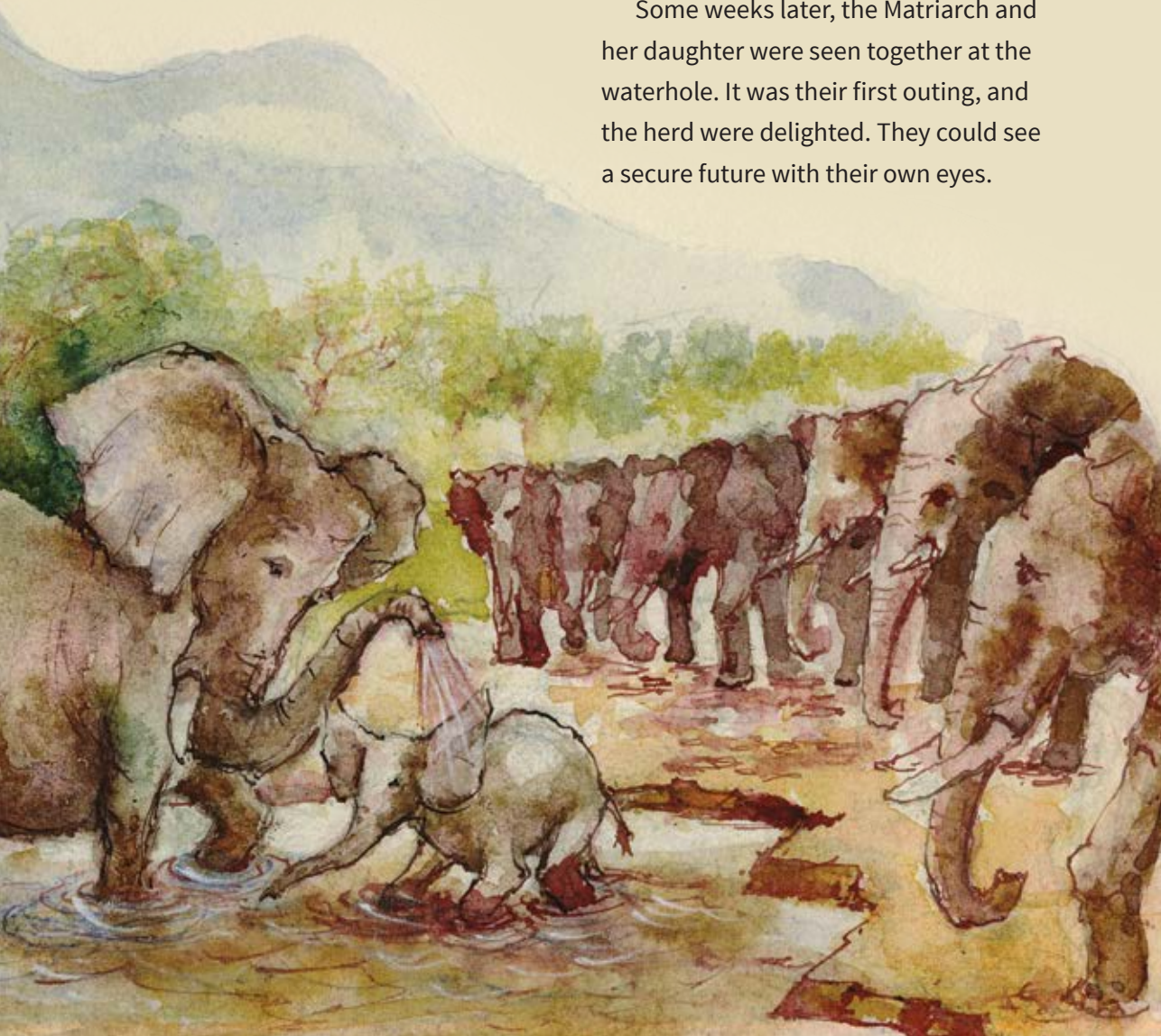
The Matriarch was conflicted. She had produced a female heir – as was her duty – but now she was a mother, and it was also her duty to care for her offspring, whether male or female. Both were vulnerable and needed her protection.

The Matriarch called for her most trusted confidantes. “At my feet now you see a healthy female,” she said. “But the male calf is also mine. Nothing will make me leave him for the hyenas.”

“What will we do?” the head midwife said fearfully.

“I will think of something. In the meantime, we must keep this problem secret,” the Matriarch replied.

Some weeks later, the Matriarch and her daughter were seen together at the waterhole. It was their first outing, and the herd were delighted. They could see a secure future with their own eyes.



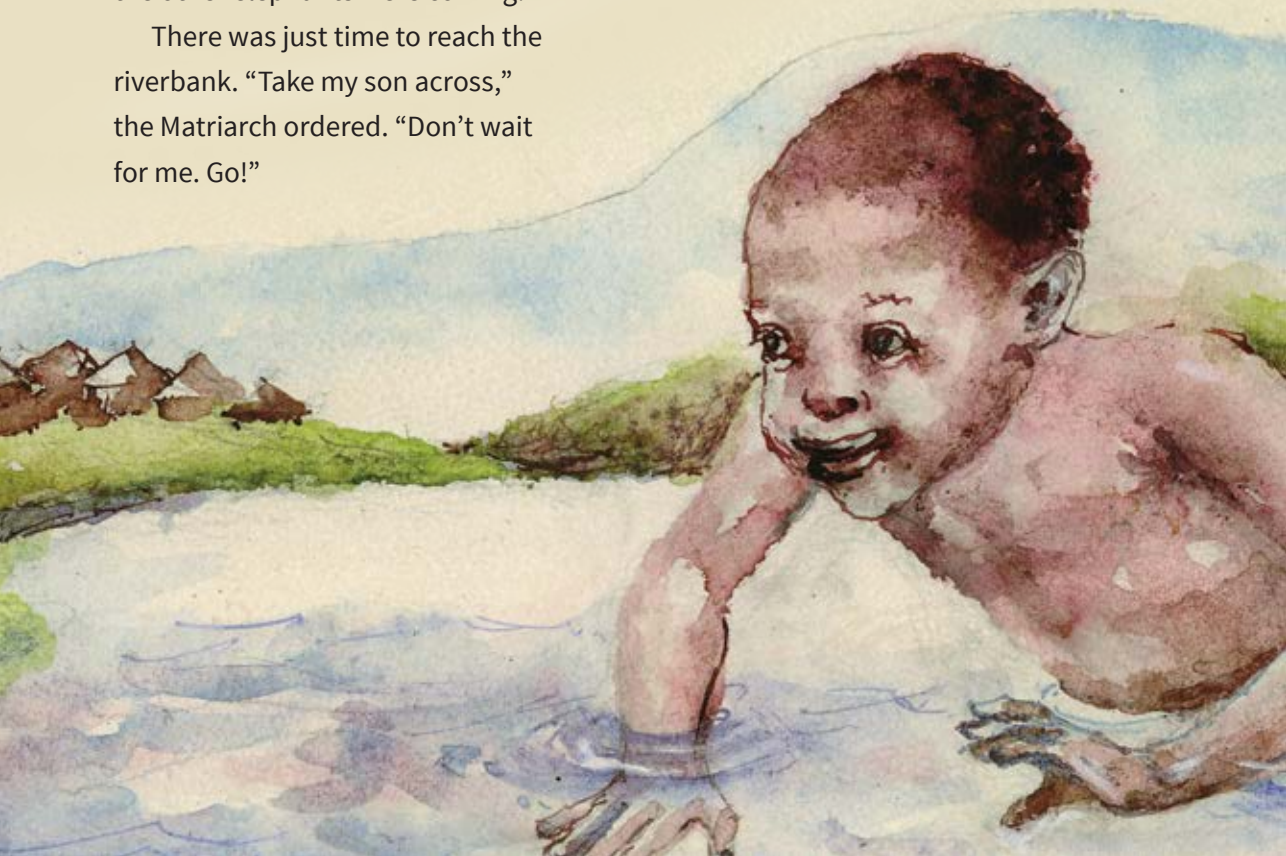
But the Matriarch was deeply troubled. Eventually, she knew her son would be discovered, and they would be parted. It was inevitable. So she began to plot their escape, making plans with her bodyguards. Years earlier, she had heard talk of a powerful river. They would go there, and on the other side, her family would be safe. They could start a new life.

When the right time came, the small party of elephants headed east across the savannah. All went well until sunrise, when the ground began to shake and rumble. In the distance, the Matriarch could see a great billowing cloud of dust: the other elephants were coming.

There was just time to reach the riverbank. “Take my son across,” the Matriarch ordered. “Don’t wait for me. Go!”

The excited young male rushed forward. He disappeared as soon as his foot touched the water. Loyal to the end, the bodyguards followed – vanishing in the same way.

Great uncertainty suddenly rose up in the Matriarch. She only had to nudge her daughter and follow, and her family would have a peaceful future with no need for secrecy. But as the feet thundered closer, she couldn’t move. She thought of her mother and grandmother and of what they would do in her position. Then she thought of her herd. How would they live without her?



With a heavy heart, the Matriarch turned her back on the river. Her son was safe with familiar companions. Her daughter was at her side. She had a duty to perform. Calmly, her fate decided, the Matriarch waited for the oncoming stampede.

“Is everything all right, our matriarch?” the leading bull asked.

“It is,” she replied. “Let us go back.”

Somewhere, on the other side of the river, a small group slipped quietly from the water. Not a herd of elephants, as you might expect, but people with a young boy in their midst. And like any child, the boy broke away from the group to bound ahead ...



Author's Note

Why do rivers flow? Why does fire burn? Where did mountains come from? How did the leopard get its spots? People have always asked questions like these and looked for answers. Philosophers find them by using reason. Scientists gather and study facts. But some of our earliest thinkers were storytellers. They came up with fables, myths, and legends to explain why some things are so.

This story is part of that tradition, inspired by the beliefs of the Ashanti people and other ethnic groups in Ghana. In that part of the world, people belong to family groups known as clans. These clans are each represented by a totem – a natural object or an animal that was chosen because of its spiritual importance. My story is a way to explain why one clan chose the elephant as its totem.

Storytellers do not usually want their words to be taken only literally. They use their imaginations to create different ways of seeing the world. Traditional stories encourage people to think and talk about ideas. I have tried to do this, too. However, unlike traditional stories, mine is completely new. It has never been told before.



The Fantail

BY STEPH MATUKU

It was the holidays. My sister Jojo and I were at our cousin Piri's house. We weren't doing much, just sitting around in Piri's bedroom listening to music and arguing about everything and nothing – when this *thing* flew in through the open window.

“Get out of here! Hurry!” Piri yelled, taking off out the door.

Well, we didn't stick around to figure out what was going on. We just sprinted after him. We followed Piri through the kitchen and into the back garden. He stopped by the clothes line, panting, his eyes wide and scared.

“What's wrong?” Jojo asked.

“Yeah, Piri!” I said. My heart was pounding hard in my chest. “You nearly gave me a heart attack! What's the matter? What was that thing?”

“It was a pīwaiwaka!” Piri said. “A fantail. It flew through the window! And you know what that means ...”



We shook our heads. We didn't have a clue what Piri was on about.

"When a fantail flies into your house, it's really bad luck."

"I don't believe that," said Jojo. Nothing scared her. "That's just a superstition. Some people say it's bad luck to walk under a ladder – and that's not true, either."

"It'd be bad luck if someone was up the ladder painting and the bucket of paint dropped on your head," Piri said.

He had a point.

"What kind of bad luck could a fantail bring?" I asked. I didn't believe him. Not really. But what if he was telling the truth?

We hunkered down under the clothes line. Towels flapped in the breeze, casting flickering shadows across our faces.

Piri leant in close, his voice low. “The fantail thing starts with Māui. A long time ago, he decided he wanted to cheat death.”

“Yeah right!” said Jojo. She folded her arms, her top lip curling in disbelief. “Māui isn’t real. He’s from legends.”

“How do you know?” asked Piri. “Were you there?”

Again, Piri had a point. Jojo didn’t say anything.

“Anyway, his plan was to beat Hine-nui-te-pō, the goddess of death, by travelling through her body.”

“Ew,” said Jojo.

“Be quiet!” I said. I wanted to hear what happened next. Even if it wasn’t true, it was a pretty good story.

“Māui waited until Hine-nui-te-pō fell asleep, but just as he was going in, a fantail started laughing, and the goddess woke up and killed Māui. She won, and that’s why we don’t live forever.”

“And that’s why a fantail’s bad luck!” I said. “But what *kind* of bad luck?” I thought it might be forgetting your togs for swimming sports, crash-landing your bike in gravel instead of grass, or having your stink cousin rip a hole in your favourite T-shirt. I frowned at Piri, remembering. I loved that T-shirt.

“Duh! What do you think?” Jojo said. “He means if a fantail flies into your house, someone is going to die.”

“What?” I gasped. That had to be the worst luck ever.

“Don’t blame me,” said Piri. “I didn’t make it up. That’s just what they say.”

“And who’s *they*?” said Jojo.

“Everyone,” said Piri.

“Whatever,” Jojo groaned.

“But ...” I was shocked. Someone I knew might die? It could be Jojo. Or Piri. It could be Mum or Dad or my teacher ... or any of my friends. It could be the guy at the dairy! But *who*?

“How do you know it was a fantail, anyway?” Jojo said. “We took off before we could tell for sure. It could’ve been a waxeye or a sparrow. They’re not bad luck.”



“It’ll be bad luck if it poos on my bed,” Piri said gloomily.

“Shouldn’t you go inside and check?” Jojo said. “You could be freaking out for no reason.”

“I’m not going in there!” Piri said. “Then I’ll get double bad luck!”

“I’m not going, either,” I said. “No way. Not ever.”

“Well, someone’s going to have to get the bird out,” Jojo said. “What if it can’t figure the way out by itself? It’ll be stuck in your room forever. You’ll have to sleep in the shed.”

“I’d rather sleep in the shed than go back in there,” said Piri.

Another shadow fell across us, a big one this time. We looked up to see my aunty taking the towels off the line. We watched as she folded and stacked them in the washing basket.

“What’s up?” she said. “You kids seem quiet.”

“There’s a fantail in my room!” Piri said.

Aunty stopped folding, and a serious look came over her face.

“Come on, Aunty. You don’t believe that fantails are bad luck, do you?” said Jojo.

“Well,” she said slowly. “I don’t want to scare you kids ... but the day before Uncle Wiremu died, a pīwaiwaka flew in through the lounge window and out the back door – and that’s the truth. Some people said it was a tohu – a sign.”

“I told you!” said Piri.

“But then he was an old man,” Aunty said, “and sick.”

“So he would have died anyway,” Jojo said, scowling at Piri.

“Yeah, but why then? Why just after the fantail?”

Piri insisted. He looked at Aunty. “We were just sitting in my room, and it came flying through the window – really fast. It was just a blur.”

Aunty broke into a huge smile.

“You mean about five minutes ago?”

“Yes,” we said.

Aunty started laughing.





“I just chucked a pair of clean socks through the window! And what have I told you about keeping your washing away from the towels? You’ve got to wash them separately or else your clothes get covered in fluff. Auē. A fantail? You kids have too much imagination.”

She stacked the rest of the towels and took them away. We could still hear her laughing as she went into the house.

“See?” said Jojo. “I told you it wasn’t a fantail.”

“It might have been!” Piri said. His face was red and cross. “And if it was, someone we know could have died. You heard Mum’s story about Uncle Wiremu!”

Jojo turned to me. “So what do you think? Are fantails bad luck or not?”

I didn’t know what to say. I liked watching the little fantails in our garden. I liked their cheerful “peep, peep” and the way they flew in real close to say hello. I decided that fantails might be bad luck for some people, but they weren’t bad luck for me.

“I’m pretty sure fantails are OK,” I said slowly. “But ...”

“But what?” asked Jojo.

“What does it mean if a pair of grey socks flies in through your window? Is that bad luck?”

We looked at each other in silence.

Was it?

NEW NEW

Most days, Christian Kaka walks to school with his little sister, Georgette. It's just a short, ten-minute walk ... no big deal. But two years ago, Christian was living in Damascus, Syria, a country in the grip of war. Life there was so dangerous his family couldn't go anywhere. So for Christian, being able to walk to school in New Zealand *is* a big deal.

A JOURNEY TO FIND SAFETY

The Kaka family are Assyrian. Christian's father, Toma, is a priest. He's from a city in northern Iraq called Nineveh, but Christian was born in Baghdad.

Baghdad was once a safe and beautiful city, but then came many wars: with Iran, with America, with terrorists. By the time Christian was born, Iraq had become very dangerous. "We wanted to stay," says Christian's mother, Kathreen, "because when you leave your country, you become homeless ..." But Christian's parents were afraid. In 2007, they decided to leave and go to Syria. Over a million Iraqis had already fled there.

"In Iraq, we had no freedom," Kathreen says. "It was as though we couldn't breathe. But in Syria, there was freedom for Christians, for Muslims, for everyone. We lived peacefully together." The family settled in Syria's capital city, Damascus. They registered as refugees. That way, the Syrian government couldn't send them back.

ZEALANDERS

by Adrienne Jansen



ANOTHER WAR

Then in 2011, war began in Syria.

Eventually the fighting came to Damascus.

Bombs fell near the Kaka family's home.

They fell on a coffee shop, a school, a football field. Every day was dangerous. "You might

go out to buy bread and not come back," Kathreen says. The children didn't have a normal life. They would hear screams. They would hear explosions and military helicopters. "Don't worry. It's only Esho's motorbike," Kathreen would tell them. She couldn't always protect her children from the war.

One day, a car tried to come into their neighbourhood. A helicopter destroyed it. The family could see the whole thing from their balcony.



"IN ONE HOUR, YOUR LIFE COULD CHANGE"

Christian was still going to school, but life became more and more difficult. One day, Christian was in his classroom drawing. "A man came in and said 'Run!'" Christian remembers. "So we ran." Things like that happened a lot. "I really hated going outside because there were helicopters and people who searched cars. They were strict and angry. I didn't even want to go out to play with other kids, so I just stayed home."

There was no playing or school. There was nothing for the children to do. The family was frightened about what might happen next. "In one hour, your life could change," Kathreen says. "The terrorists come, and you run and hide."

Finally, in 2015, the family left for Lebanon. It was only an hour's drive, yet once they crossed the border, they felt safe. Still, they could only stay a short time. Toma couldn't work in Lebanon as a priest, and the country was very expensive. Then the church in Lebanon said it could help the family get to New Zealand. "Where was New Zealand?" Christian wanted to know. A search on the Internet gave him the answer: it was a small country at the bottom of the world. He read about its history, and he watched Māori perform the haka – Christian loved the haka!

THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD

The Kaka family has been in New Zealand for eighteen months. What did they notice on their first day? “The trees,” Christian says. “There were no trees in Syria. And I felt safe. I was so happy.”

Kathreen also remembers how beautiful everything was. “Iraq once had green countryside, but because of the war, it had become like a desert. And in Baghdad, all we saw were big walls dividing the city. In Syria, everything was dirty and dusty because of the bombs – even the air.”



Life in New Zealand still had difficulties. The biggest challenge was the language. Kathreen spoke a little English, which she had learnt at school, but the rest of the family didn't speak any English at all. How did that make them feel? Kathreen checks her phone. It can translate Arabic to English. "Discontented," she says.

Once the family was settled in Wellington, Christian started school. He was excited and wanted to make friends but found this difficult. There was the problem of language. And all those months alone in Syria with no contact with other children didn't help. "I couldn't understand them, and they couldn't understand me," he says. Sometimes, Christian felt left out.

DAY BY DAY

Every day, Christian learnt one new word. A friend who spoke Arabic translated for him. And his mother gave Christian some good advice. "Give the other children time, and they'll get to know you," she said. Christian's teacher encouraged him to talk about school in Syria, and the principal spent time helping him learn to play with other children again.

In the beginning, loneliness was a problem, not just for Christian but for the whole family. Their relatives are now spread all over the world – in Australia, Canada, Europe, Germany, America, and Iraq.

"As Assyrians, we like to be together," Kathreen says, "especially at Easter and Christmas. It's very important to us. But when families become refugees, they are often split up. The United Nations Refugee Agency sends one brother to Sweden, parents to Chicago, sisters to Germany – and people accept this because they want to survive. But then they are alone in the new country, and it's very hard. Our children don't have any grandparents here. They're in Iraq and Canada, and that's very sad for us."





Now, the family feels more comfortable here. They've all learnt English through classes, a home tutor, the dictionary, and friends. Online translators are also useful. Now Christian can speak three languages – Arabic, Assyrian, and English. When he grows up, he wants to be a software designer.

NO GOING BACK

Christian and his family can't go back to Iraq – not any time soon, at least. Baghdad is now one of the most dangerous cities in the world. Kathreen says, "When we think about this, we feel sad. The Iraq I grew up in doesn't exist now. We hope that Iraq comes back, but we don't think it will. I wonder how people can still be alive there."

Kathreen wants New Zealanders to know what happened to her country. "Some understand, but some don't know anything. We want them to know we are Assyrian Christians. We would never hurt anyone. We want to help build this country."





Assyrian Christians

Assyria was an ancient kingdom that ruled over Mesopotamia (a very old name for most of Iraq and parts of Syria and Turkey). The kingdom's centre was Nineveh, which has history dating back at least eight thousand years. When the kingdom fell in 612 BC, Assyrians fled to different parts of Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syria. Although the Assyrians don't have their own country, they have a flag and their own language. All Assyrians are Christian. Now, because of war, they are scattered all over the world. There are around three thousand Assyrians in New Zealand, many of them in Wellington.



MY NAME IS REZ

as told to Toby Morris



HOW ARE YOU?

UH ... MY NAME IS REZ.

SHE'S LIKE A ROBOT!
"MY NAME IS REZ.
MY NAME IS REZ."

THAT'S ME IN THE MIDDLE. WHY ARE THOSE OTHER KIDS LAUGHING AT ME? WELL, IT'S KIND OF A LONG STORY. LET ME EXPLAIN.

MY FAMILY IS KURDISH. WE COME FROM KURDISTAN. THIS ISN'T A COUNTRY YOU'LL FIND ON A MAP. IT'S A REGION WHERE THE KURDS HAVE ALWAYS LIVED.



WE'VE NEVER HAD OUR OWN HOMELAND. THIS HAS MADE LIFE TOUGH FOR US.

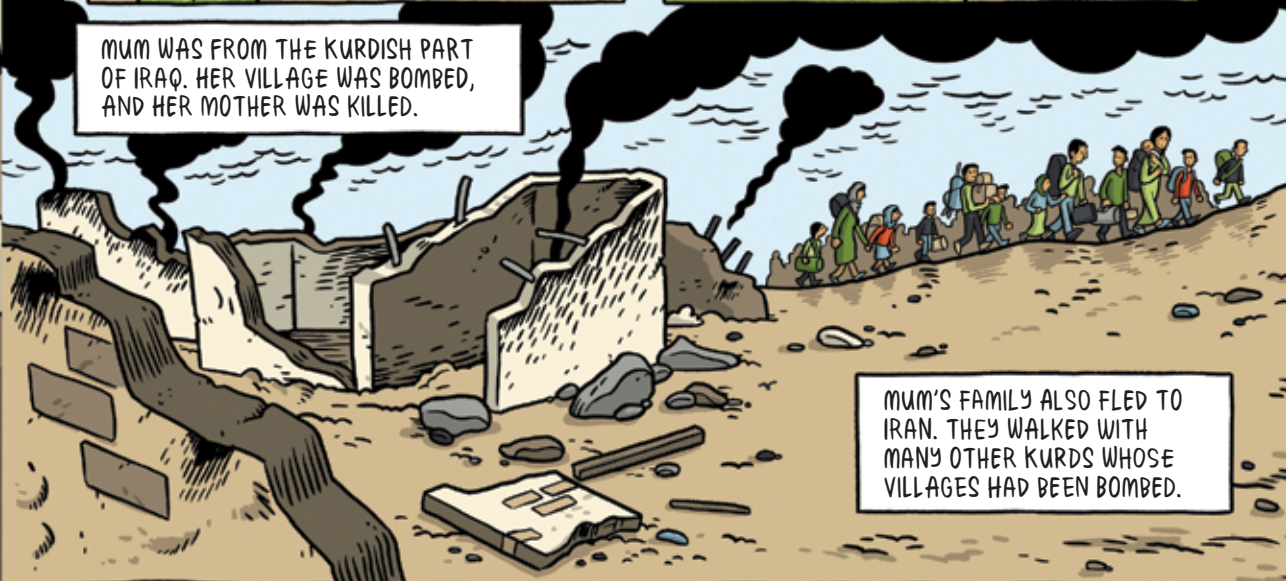
MY DAD GREW UP IN THE KURDISH PART OF TURKEY. HIS PEOPLE WANTED INDEPENDENCE, AND THERE WAS FIGHTING. AS PUNISHMENT, IT BECAME ILLEGAL TO HAVE A KURDISH NAME OR TO SPEAK KURDISH IN PUBLIC. IT WAS ILLEGAL TO PLAY KURDISH MUSIC ... EVERYTHING KURDISH WAS BANNED!



THINGS GOT SO BAD THAT MY DAD HAD TO ESCAPE INTO IRAN.



MUM WAS FROM THE KURDISH PART OF IRAQ. HER VILLAGE WAS BOMBED, AND HER MOTHER WAS KILLED.



MUM'S FAMILY ALSO FLED TO IRAN. THEY WALKED WITH MANY OTHER KURDS WHOSE VILLAGES HAD BEEN BOMBED.

SO THAT'S WHERE MY PARENTS MET, IN IRAN. THEY GOT MARRIED AND HAD TWO KIDS. THEY ALSO BEGAN TO PROTEST FOR KURDISH RIGHTS.



THEN LIFE BECAME TOO DANGEROUS FOR MY PARENTS IN IRAN, SO THEY CRAMMED INTO THE BACK OF A TRUCK WITH THEIR CHILDREN AND CROSSED THE BORDER INTO PAKISTAN. THEY DECLARED THEMSELVES REFUGEES.



THEY WERE TOLD IT WOULD TAKE SIX MONTHS BEFORE THEY WERE RESETTLED.

A COUPLE OF YEARS LATER, I WAS BORN. SIX FAMILIES LIVED TOGETHER IN ONE TENT.



THE CAMP WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE PERMANENT, AND IT WAS OVERCROWDED. THERE WEREN'T ENOUGH TOILETS OR PLACES TO COOK, AND THERE WERE NO SCHOOLS.

THERE WAS A LOT OF DISEASE. CHILDREN GOT SICK, AND PEOPLE DIED. WE PROTESTED ABOUT THIS ALL THE TIME.

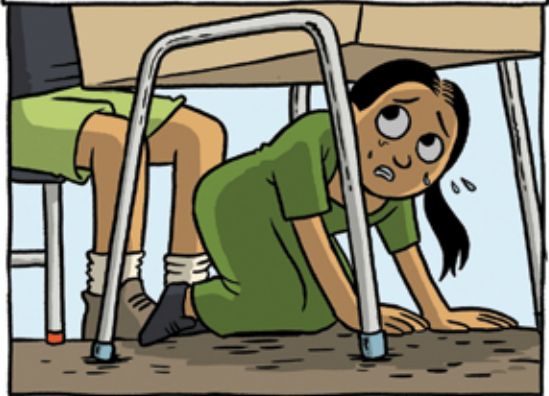


EVENTUALLY THE CHILDREN IN THE CAMP WERE ALLOWED TO GO TO A LOCAL SCHOOL. MY MEMORIES OF THAT TIME ARE HORRIBLE.



IN THE CAMP, PEOPLE SPOKE KURDISH, AND MY FAMILY SPOKE FARSI TOO. BUT EVERYONE AT THE NEARBY SCHOOL SPOKE URDU. I WAS ONLY FIVE, AND NOW I HAD A THIRD LANGUAGE TO LEARN.

I WAS PUNISHED WHEN I MADE MISTAKES. ONE TIME, I SPENT THE ENTIRE DAY HIDING UNDER MY BROTHER'S DESK.



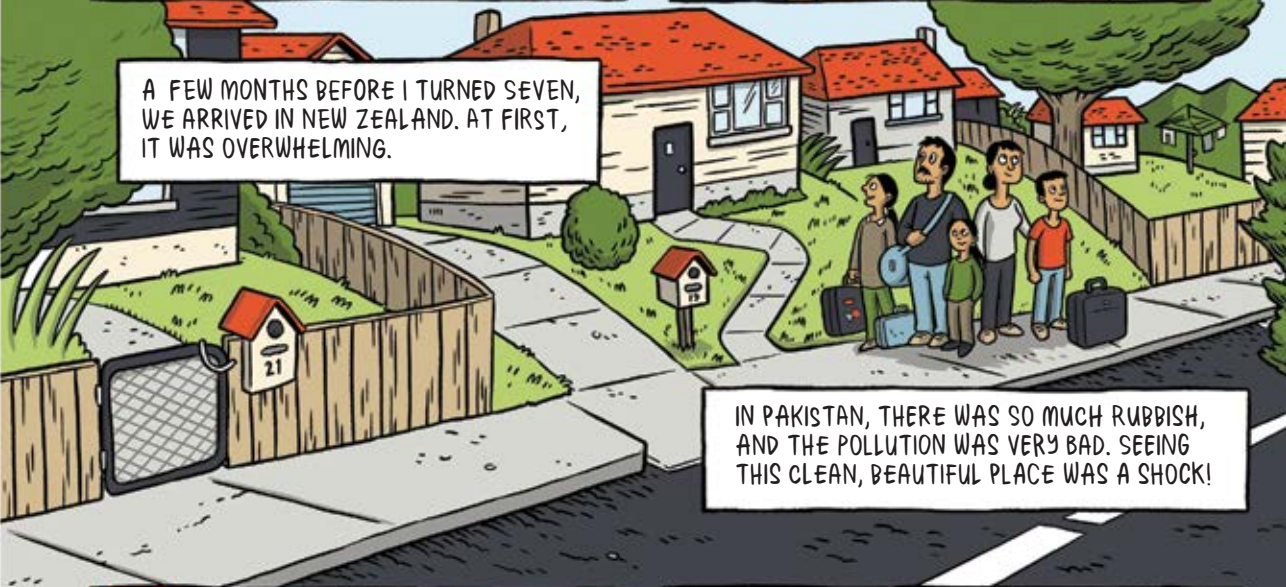
ONE DAY, AFTER NINE YEARS IN THE CAMP, MY PARENTS WERE TOLD WE WERE FINALLY BEING RESETTLED. WE WENT OUT FOR DINNER TO CELEBRATE. I ATE A BURGER AND DRANK COKE FOR THE FIRST TIME.



WE DIDN'T GET TO CHOOSE WHERE WE WERE SENT. WE HAD NO IDEA WHAT NEW ZEALAND WAS GOING TO BE LIKE, BUT ANYTHING WOULD BE BETTER THAN THE CAMP.



A FEW MONTHS BEFORE I TURNED SEVEN, WE ARRIVED IN NEW ZEALAND. AT FIRST, IT WAS OVERWHELMING.



IN PAKISTAN, THERE WAS SO MUCH RUBBISH, AND THE POLLUTION WAS VERY BAD. SEEING THIS CLEAN, BEAUTIFUL PLACE WAS A SHOCK!

AND WE HAD AN ENTIRE HOUSE TO OURSELVES!



IN THE BEGINNING, IT WAS SO EXCITING TO BE HERE AND SO POSITIVE - BUT THERE WERE ALSO CHALLENGES. MEETING PEOPLE AND ADJUSTING TO LIFE IN NEW ZEALAND WAS TRICKY.



AND OF COURSE I HAD TO START AT ANOTHER NEW SCHOOL AND LEARN MY FOURTH LANGUAGE!



I DIDN'T SPEAK ANY ENGLISH, AND I DIDN'T KNOW ANY KIDS. IT WAS REALLY INTIMIDATING.



IN THE CAMP, I'D LEARNT TO SAY ONE THING IN ENGLISH: "MY NAME IS REZ." SO WHEN PEOPLE ASKED, "HOW ARE YOU?" I WOULD REPLY, "MY NAME IS REZ." KIDS TEASED ME SO BADLY BECAUSE OF THAT!



SOMETIMES WHEN ONE PERSON TEASED ME, OTHERS WOULD LAUGH AND JOIN IN.



I DON'T THINK KIDS KNEW HOW MEAN THEY WERE BEING, BUT THE TEASING MADE IT REALLY HARD FOR ME TO FIT IN.



IT WASN'T ALL BAD. I SOON REALISED THAT SCHOOL IN NEW ZEALAND COULD BE DIFFERENT IN A GOOD WAY.



MY FIRST TEACHER WAS SO KIND AND SUPPORTIVE, AND I WAS SURPRISED. I WAS USED TO GETTING PUNISHED IF I GOT AN ANSWER WRONG. I THOUGHT THAT WAS HOW YOU LEARNT!

ONCE I KNEW I DIDN'T HAVE TO BE SCARED, I REALLY ENJOYED SCHOOL. AFTER ONE YEAR, I WENT FROM NOT SPEAKING ANY ENGLISH TO BEING MOVED TO A SPECIAL CLASS FOR TALENTED KIDS!

AND SOON I FOUND OTHER WAYS TO ACCESS KIWI CULTURE, LIKE JOINING THE SCHOOL KAPA HAKA GROUP.

IT TURNED OUT THAT MĀORI CULTURE WAS SIMILAR TO KURDISH CULTURE. MY FRIENDS SOMETIMES TOOK ME TO THEIR MARAE, AND I LOVED IT.

I MADE A FRIEND UP THE ROAD WHO GOT ME INTO PLAYING NETBALL. THAT WAS SO GREAT FOR ME - GIRLS DIDN'T PLAY SPORT IN PAKISTAN.

NETBALL WAS AWESOME FOR MY MUM TOO. IN PAKISTAN, SHE'D ORGANISE PROTESTS ON THE WEEKENDS. NOW SHE WATCHED ME PLAY SPORT. IT WAS SO NICE FOR HER.

SINCE THEN, I'VE GROWN UP AND BEEN PRETTY BUSY. I'VE BEEN A YOUTH ADVISOR FOR THE RED CROSS, I'VE WORKED TO HELP OTHER REFUGEES, AND I'VE EVEN REPRESENTED NEW ZEALAND AT CONFERENCES ALL AROUND THE WORLD.



NOW I'M A LAWYER AT A BIG LAW FIRM IN AUCKLAND. I STARTED A PROGRAMME TO HELP YOUNG REFUGEES, AND IN 2017, I WAS NAMED YOUNG NEW ZEALANDER OF THE YEAR.



I STILL THINK ABOUT THE KIDS WHO TEASED ME WHEN I WAS YOUNGER ...

WHAT WOULD I SAY TO THEM NOW?

EVEN IF YOU DON'T SPEAK THE SAME LANGUAGE, PEOPLE CAN STILL COMMUNICATE. THERE ARE LOTS OF DIFFERENT WAYS. PLAYING TOGETHER IS A GOOD START ...



WE ALL LIKE TO HAVE FUN. WE LAUGH AT A LOT OF THE SAME STUFF. WE GO TO SCHOOL AND LEARN TOGETHER. WE ALL HAVE PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.



IN THE END, WE'RE ALL PRETTY MUCH THE SAME.

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