

Halt. Who goes there?

Hi _____

Freestyle Area - Let your parent know why you sent this story & what's happening that's new in your life.

Kia ora - For most of my childhood I couldn't read, write or talk. When I was 10 years old a couple of major changes occurred in my life & one of the outcomes was that I found the ability to read. Suddenly I could escape from my world which was full of upheaval and abuse into a world of my choosing by simply opening a book.

I didn't do well at school & so when I was in prison, I started to do re-do my school work. I've only recently finished my NCEA Level 2 English. Before doing NCEA I had no idea how to write properly or where to put all the grammar stuff.

Anyway - I guess what I'm trying to say is that I'm a long way off being a good writer & so I'm asking for your patience when I don't tell a story 'quite right.' Also, never think I'm judging in my stories especially like when I talk about gang stuff etc.

Finding ourselves & **then** being able to live the life we want to, can be a hard & long road. During my years I've seen so many of my whanau stuck in the 'same old same old' & of course I came across so many gifted & talented youth in prison. For this reason, one theme that does run through a lot of my stories is 'finding yourself.'

The other thing I want to add in here is that when I was a kid & then a young adult, I had no idea how many awesome & exciting things there are to do in this world - I mean how could I? I'd been a foster kid from 8 weeks old & all I knew was a whole lot of pain - but trust me on this. Take the time now, while you're in prison to explore your mind & make some plans & goals. This is definitely a journey you can share over the on-coming years with your kids.

Arohanai to you from Daryl

Halt, who goes there? Part 1-2

As night comes creeping, I grow purposeful and focused. When it's truly dark, the blood in my veins throbs and I know that my pupils dilate. When everyone else in the world's fast asleep in their good beds, I become self-crowned, King of the Night.

I'd been surveying the property for hours. Patiently sitting, just watching and waiting. A short while ago a man and woman had come out of the house and hopped into an expensive looking car parked in the driveway.

For a split-second before they'd driven off, I'd got a heck of a fright when I'd noticed that my warm breath mingling with the cold night air had created this billowing white cloud hovering directly above my hiding place. Luckily the couple hadn't noticed the giveaway sign.

Admittedly the most un-fun part of my nighttime domain is the cold. Like right now I'm frozen solid and my wet jeans have shrunk to cling uncomfortably to my legs.

Sensing my opportunity, I unfold from my hiding place amongst the dark bushes and move silently towards the house. As I walk confidently around the house, my fingers are skillfully hard at work massaging and probing at the wooden joinery with loving caresses. I see myself as a house whisperer.

Bulls eye. A loose window.

My trusty screwdriver steals into the slight gap, then after skillfully teasing and jiggling at the window for ages, I smile when both latches give with a satisfying pop.

Climbing nimbly into the room, I take a step, only to hear the telltale sound of the security system start to beep.

"Damn."

Moving quick as a cat back out through the wide-open window, I hurry back into the safety of the darkness. While still in midflight, I paused momentarily to listen to out for any sound that could mean danger for me. But I can't hear anything apart from that pissing burglar alarm now splitting the night apart with its loud wailing.

Right about now I'm expecting the neighbors to start poking around playing at heroes.

With any luck, I'm hoping that they'll think it's only a faulty alarm and not notice the busted latches on the window that I'd quickly shoved shut.

Jumping over a fence I take on my stance of position purple.

I'd learnt all about how you can **slow-down-time** by using this technique years ago.

And this's how you do it:

1. Firstly, you pretend that you're a superhero.
2. Secondly, you talk to yourself in your head and give yourself clear instructions, just like you're looking down on yourself and not actually in yourself.

3. Thirdly, once you have come up with a plan of action, you coolly and calmly act.

Position purple that's the secret to my success.

Q: Okay Ruka my main man, what's the number one danger I'm facing?

A: The coppers and their dogs.

Q: Okay, so what do I need to do?

A: Be aware of my scent and try to get as far away as I can.

Q: How's that best done then?

A: Find a bike to escape on.

Quickly jumping a couple more fences to create a bit more distance between me and the coppers, I kept my eyes wide open, looking for a bike, any bike. In one carport there was an old Raleigh 20 just like the one I used to play on when I was a kid at Nan's.

The rusty wheels made such a racket that I had to pick the bike up before continuing towards the letterbox. Once I'd got there, I took a quick look down towards the place where I'd tried to do that burglary.

Dang! There were blue and red cop lights flashing all over the place. And to top it off, I could hear coppers' dogs barking.

Jumping onto the rickety bike I started peddling up the grass berm which was hard going thanks to all the rain we'd had. The wheels dug too deeply into the spongy grass slowing me down. But I knew that I'd best keep going so that I could take advantage of the deep shadows cast by the fence.

Racing through an alleyway between Fantham and Kamahi Streets, I figured that if I could just make it across Turuturu Road and into the big park with all the soccer fields that the coppers' dogs would hold little hope of following my scent.

But just as I was nearing the end of the alleyway, this bloody cop car slammed on its brakes blocking my exit. In one motion, I flipped the bike about and tore back the way I'd just come.

Position purple, remember position purple, I kept repeating as I sped down Turuturu Road.

The road wound its way downhill for a bit, so I pumped my legs for all they were worth. Behind me, I could hear sirens and dogs barking and now I could also pick up the faint sound of a siren coming along Ohangai Road somewhere ahead of me.

Knowing that I'd get trapped if I didn't take immediate action, I swung a hard-left and skidded into the entrance way of the abandoned Turuturu Mokai pa site.

I knew the layout of the pa inside-out and upside-down. My Nan use to bring me down here when I was a kid to help her hunt out hidden patches of fresh watercress. Those were the best times of my life. Nan never failed to make any trip feel special. Even if all she'd done was wrap some scones into a threadbare tea towel or sneak a couple of chocolate bars for us to share.

The only time I'd never been here was at nighttime because my nan had always made sure that we'd be long gone before the shadows lengthened.

Hurrying in, I paused to chuck the bike off the small bridge. The intention of this manoeuvre was to hide the bike in the reeds so that it wouldn't give me away.

Pushing my way through the old wooden gate that sat at the end of the bridge, I started running.



I'd just worked my way around the big ox-bow bend that ran around the back perimeter of the pa when I found myself struggling to run through an unseen barrier. The air felt dark and dense. I stopped to take a moment to try and figure this out.

Making the most of my unexpected breather, I listened out for any sign of the cops. Standing bent over with my hands braced on my knees, I gulped in as much air as my lungs could take.

Great! I can't hear them. Stupid coppers!

The hairs on the back of my neck had risen even before I'd realized that something wasn't right. I couldn't hear anything. Not even the stream.

The more I listened the quieter it became.

After a bit, the sound of a faint murmuring could be heard coming from below me.

Below me?

WTF!

There was only the cold ground under me.

Frightened senseless, I took off, blindly running about like a headless chook. I'd soon found myself battling against this thick and cold mist that'd appeared out of nowhere. I was finding it hard trying to keep a hold of the ballooning panic threatening to overwhelm me.

Position purple. Remember position purple, I reminded myself.

I'd clamped my hand tightly over my mouth and nose as I swear the mist was trying to suffocate me. Just as my terror was mounting to fever pitch, I burst free. Standing right in front of me was this tall rangy copper dressed in a thick blue uniform who loudly bellowed out:

“Halt. Who goes there?”

His gun blasted making me dive to the ground. Why on earth would the copper be shooting at me? I hadn't even had the time to nick anything from that house!

A deafening volley of shots was immediately fired back at the copper who'd just fired his gun. Oh, far man! A bullet must've hit him as the force of it literally threw him off his feet.

He landed flat on his back but as he'd fallen, he'd screamed out loudly;

To be continued in part two