



TOITOI

STORY SEARCH

Write a story or poem inspired by 12-year-old Jieun Kwon's fantastic artwork published in Toitōi 24.

You may submit in English or te reo Māori.

Send it to submit@toitōi.nz and include your name, age, school and a parent or teacher's contact details.

Submissions are due on October 1, 2021.

We will publish the best story in Toitōi 26 with additional illustrations by Jieun.

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#TOITOISTORYSEARCH



“Race You to the Cow Paddock!”

“Race you to the cow paddock!” Liam yelled as he leapt down the stairs. He was going to win the prize of extra pudding this time. He wouldn’t let Anahera beat him again.

The bathroom door swung open and a sleepy girl stepped out, still damp from the shower. She chased Liam into the lounge, down the dark hall, past the kitchen and out the front door. They scrambled over the fence and opened the gate to the paddock, dodging sheep as they ran through. The chooks squawked and the kunekune pigs snorted as they ran past, but Liam and Anahera kept going.

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They jumped a fence, ran through the apple orchard and rounded a corner to a large stream. The last thing that Liam had to do if he wanted to win this race was jump and land safely on the other side. A glance over his shoulder told him he would have to be quick — Anahera was close behind him. He leapt, stretching out to reach the other side. He landed flat on his stomach and raised his hands in victory.

Anahera stood on the opposite side of the stream, glaring at Liam in a rather mean way. “That wasn’t fair! You had a head start and if you didn’t, I would have won!”

“Well, that’s too bad. You were spending way too long in the shower!” Liam spluttered.

"There's no way that I'm going to give you my ice cream for pudding tonight because you cheated!" Anahera replied.

"I was thinking about the argument that we had this morning and I've come up with a great solution!"

"No, I didn't!" Liam declared, yelling loudly enough for even the neighbours to hear.

"Whatever — you totally did," Anahera snapped back.

They continued bickering until they noticed their dad's truck pulling up a few meters away. He wound down the window and said with a chuckle, "What are you two crazy tamariki arguing about this time? Let me guess, something to do with another one of your races?"

"He got a head start and now he expects me to agree that it was fair, but it wasn't!" Anahera said.

"But she always wins and every time we have pudding I have to give her half of mine!" Liam cried.

"Maybe you should just admit that I'm faster than you — which I am — and leave me alone for once," Anahera said.

"Well," Dad said, "you can't be fighting all day because there are lots of chores to do. Remember, if you don't finish them now, you'll be cleaning the pig pen tomorrow."

The kids sighed. No one ever wanted to clean the pig pen and Sunday was their only day off.

"Fine, I'll do my jobs today, but next time we race, it has to be fair," Anahera mumbled as they trudged away.

Later that day, Liam and Anahera were letting the cows back into the paddock. They were each carrying a large carton of fresh cream and were about to head back to the house for lunch when Liam brought up what had happened earlier.

"Sooooo," he said, trying to break the awkward silence between them, "I was thinking about the argument that we had this morning and I've come up with a great solution!"

"I doubt it," grumbled Anahera.

"I'll tell you anyway," Liam said enthusiastically. "I think that

because I won, and I deserve at least a small prize, you should just give me a quarter of your pudding instead of half. Boom! Problem solved."

"Absolutely not!" Anahera yelled, refusing to look at him.

"That's ridiculous, you cheated."

"Well, I still won," Liam interrupted.

"Just forget it, Liam, it doesn't even matter," Anahera said.

"Well, it does to me." Liam folded his arms, rolling his eyes.

"Too bad," Anahera grumbled as she walked away, muttering about how annoying little brothers can be. Liam followed her as she continued down the path, but stopped her just as she was about to cross the stream.

"You haven't changed your mind, have you?" he asked with a playful tone in his voice.

Anahera turned around, rolled her eyes and said with a cheeky little smile, "Maybe I have."

