

“Time to get into the garden,” said Grandad, hauling himself out of his seat. “Who will help me with the veges?”

Vika and Kele groaned. They liked eating Grandad’s veges, but they hated gardening. It was hard work. They got hot and sweaty, and their backs hurt because they had to bend over to pull out the weeds. The spade and pitchfork gave them blisters. They got dirt under their fingernails and prickles in their hands. Grandad was fussy too, so it always took a long time ... there were lots of other things they would rather be doing.

“Come on, you two,” laughed Dad. “The ‘umu is tomorrow. If you don’t garden, you don’t eat!”

Kele sighed and went to get his shoes.

As soon as Kele left the room, Vika sighed, too. “Oh, Grandad,” she said. “I’d love to help you – really I would, but I promised to help Rishi with his maths homework.” She ignored Dad’s surprised look and sighed again. “I suppose I *could* help you, instead,” she said. “Rishi *might* be able to figure it out on his own ...”

Dad raised an eyebrow, but Grandad smiled at her.

“You go and help your friend,” he said. “Kele can help me.”

“Thanks, Grandad,” said Vika, and she went to get her maths book.

“Such a helpful child!” said Grandad.

Dad shook his head.



When Kele came back with his shoes, Vika beamed at him. “I’m sorry, Kele. I won’t be helping you with the gardening after all,” she said.

Kele dumped his shoes on the floor. “What?” he said. “Why not?”

“She’s helping a friend instead,” said Grandad. “Come on, Kele. This will only take a couple of hours.” He put on his gardening hat and went outside.

Just then, the phone rang. Dad went to answer it.

Kele stomped outside. He sat on the steps and yanked on his shoes.





Next door, Matt was playing basketball. Kele loved basketball, even more than he hated gardening. He waved at Matt as he went to get a spade out of the shed.

“Hey, Kele!” called Matt. “Come and do some shots. You can teach me some moves.”

Kele shook his head. “Not today,” he said. “I have to help Grandad.”

“Have fun,” said Vika, smiling as she went past with her maths book. “Sorry I can’t help.”

“Oh, but you can!” said Dad. He came down the steps, grinning. “That was Rishi on the phone. They’ve got visitors, so you can’t go over today. I told him you’d go tomorrow – after the ‘umu.”

Vika’s mouth dropped open. She stared at Dad. “I knew you wouldn’t mind,” said Dad. “After all, you love to help Grandad in the garden!” Vika rolled her eyes. Then she laughed. “Fair enough,” she said. She put her book on the steps. “Come on, Kele. It won’t take long if we both help Grandad.”

Dad gave Kele a nudge. “What did Matt want?” he asked. “I heard him say something about wanting help.”

“He wanted me to help with his basketball moves,” Kele said.



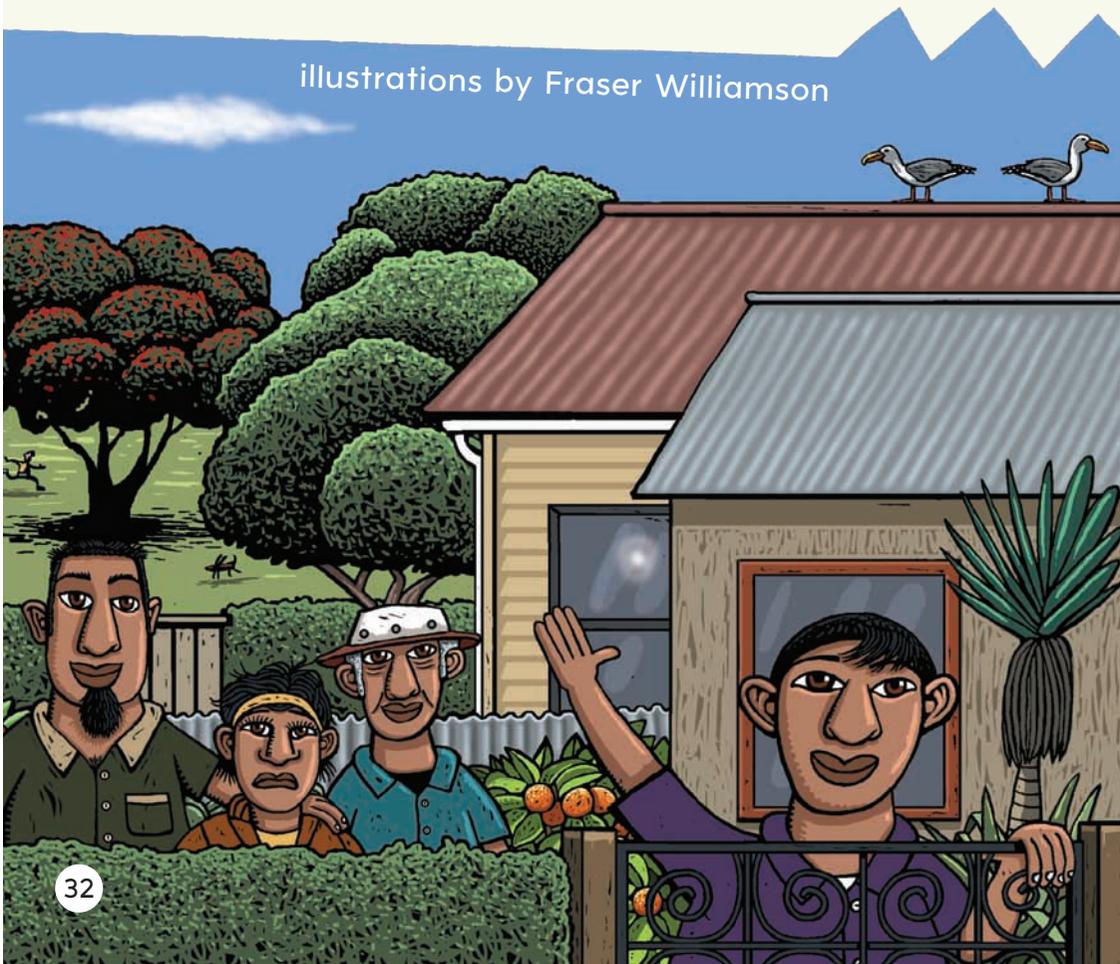
Vika shook her head, but Grandad was nodding.
“Off you go, Kele. It’s always good to help your friends. We’ll be fine here, won’t we, Vika?”

Vika didn’t say anything.

“Thanks, Grandad,” said Kele. “Have fun, Vika!”
He rushed straight to the gate before Grandad could change his mind.

Dad laughed and patted Vika on the back.
“Such helpful children!” he said.

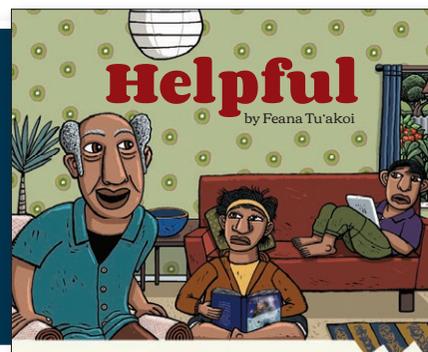
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Helpful

by Feana Tu'akoi

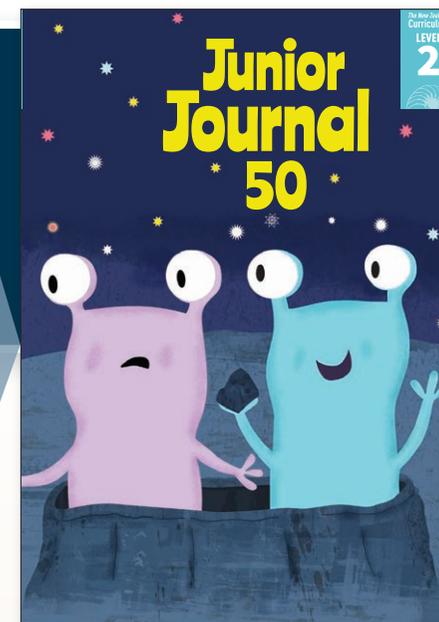
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