

THE ADVENTURES OF NAGO AND MIRI

THE JEWEL OF THE KALINAGO



Written by Gregory Rabess



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THE JEWEL OF THE KALINAGO



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LAYOUT BY PETREA HONYCHURCH SEAMAN

ABOUT THE BOOK

The Jewel of the Kalinago is a comic book for young children and students. The story is anchored on Kalinago folk beliefs, myths, legends and cultural traditions and set in present day Kalinago Territory.

Nago, a Kalinago boy and Miri, a Kalinago girl, both approximately twelve (12) years old, have a chance encounter with the spirit of Maruka who directs them to carry out a series of tasks/actions in order to receive a precious jewel representing Kalinago strength and wisdom. The story unfolds by revealing how they go about accomplishing the various tasks. In so doing, current issues such as environment degradation and depletion of resources will sometimes manifest themselves and pose challenges while carrying out the set tasks. These tasks are essentially preparation for a visit to the giant boa snake which lives in a cave in the mountains of Madjini in the Kalinago Territory. On the appointed day, with the moon at last quarter, Nago and Miri visit the snake, give it an offering, perform a ritual dance and make a wish for strength and wisdom. The snake in return grants them their wish by gifting each of them a jewel of strength and wisdom. The spirit of Maruka then reappears, congratulates Nago and Miri and sets them off on a new mission.

The story as a whole portrays a rite of passage from child to adulthood, in essence, the key things every Kalinago child should learn, know and do in relation to Kalinago heritage and traditions in order to become an adult, a brave and confident Kalinago warrior worthy of the ancestors.

This book is one of two publications produced as part of booklet project implemented under the Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods Project (SSLR) undertaken in the Kalinago Territory by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in collaboration with the Kalinago Council and the Government of Dominica through the Ministry of the Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment during 2021 and 2022. The booklet project is linked to Project Objective 4 of the SSLR programme i.e. Institutional Strengthening - boost institutional capacities of the Kalinago Council for improved participative and inclusive decision-making and planning. The booklet project is aimed at retelling the Kalinago narrative and raising awareness of Kalinago history and culture and Kalinago contribution to Dominica's development and progress.

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Thanks to the Kalinago elders and tradition bearers both past and present for passing on Kalinago stories, myths, traditions and knowledge to successive generations.

Thanks to former Kalinago Chiefs - Garnette Joseph, Irvince Auguiste, Faustulus Frederick, Charles Williams and MasClem Frederick; Principals of the Atkinson, Concord, Salybia and Sineku Primary Schools; Kalinago Cultural Officer Prosper Paris; Kalinago Webinar Panelists: Shaman Gerald 'Mabrika' Langlais, Senator Anette Sanford, Claudius Sanford, Louis Patrick Hill, Willa Cyrille, Natasha Green, Devon Cuffy, Miranda Langlais, Gweneth Frederick, Jumadine Frederick, Alexia Burton, Ferdison Valmond, Jason Jones; Coralie Paris, Arlington James, agronomist Marcus Phillip, boat builder Napoleon Sanford, former school principal Alice LaRonde, historian Dr. Lennox Honychurch, storyteller David Marcellin (deceased), manager and the staff of the Kalinago Barana Aute.

500CE: Two brothers Maruka and Simanari lived in Waitukubuli. They would often visit a cave in the mountains of Madjini where uanasai the Great Boa lived. They would burn tobacco on a paddle as an offering. The Great Boa in return would grant them whatever they wished. When they became old men they returned to the Orinoco.

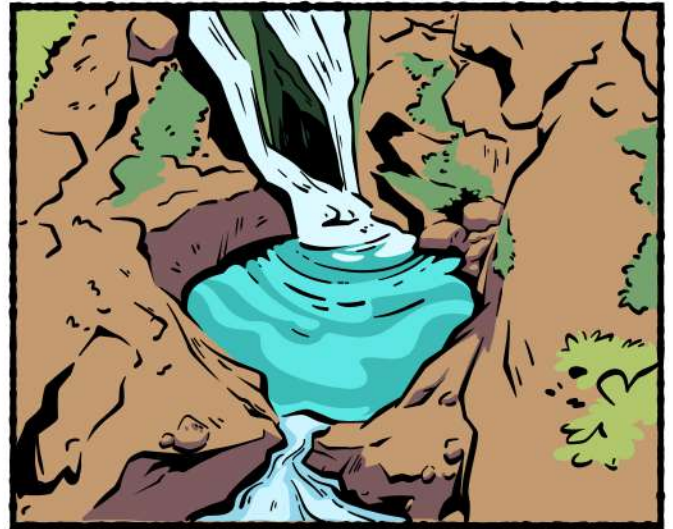


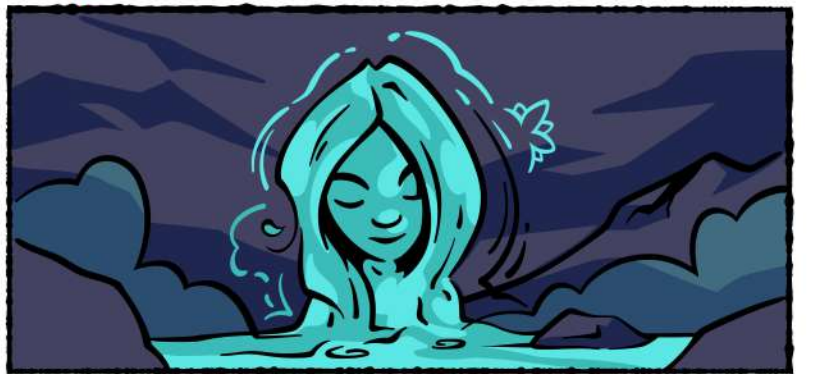
On arrival there, they dived into a river and when they surfaced they became young boys once again.



KALINAGO TERRITORY. PRESENT DAY...



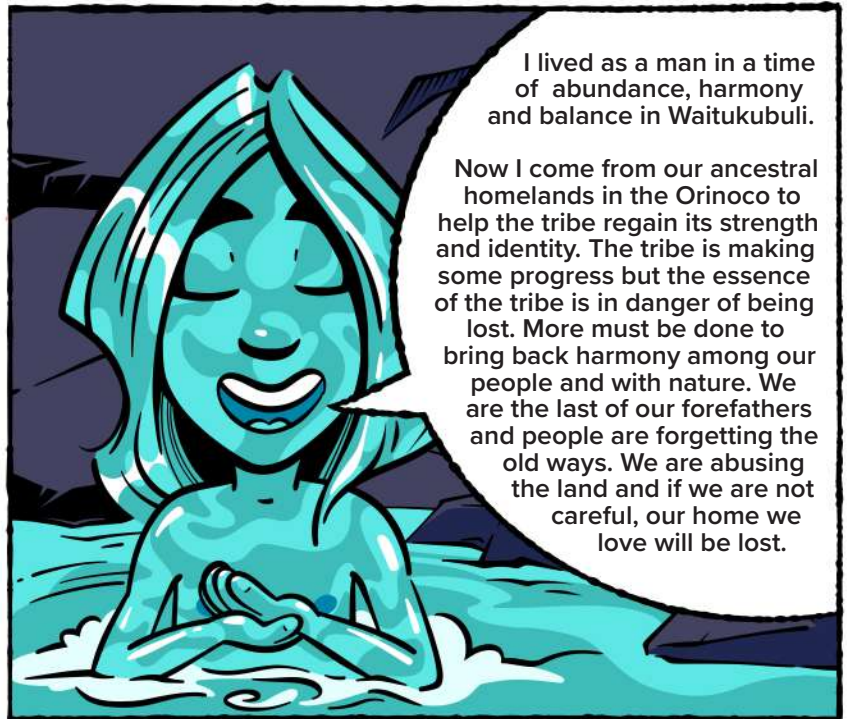






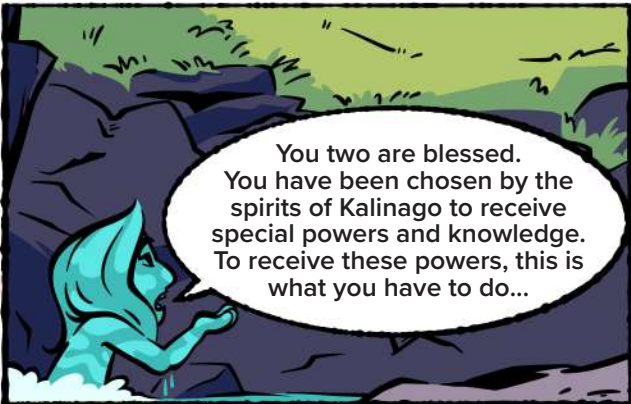
Do not be afraid, I am your friend, I am here to help you and deliver a message...

I am Maruka, the spirit of your ancestors.

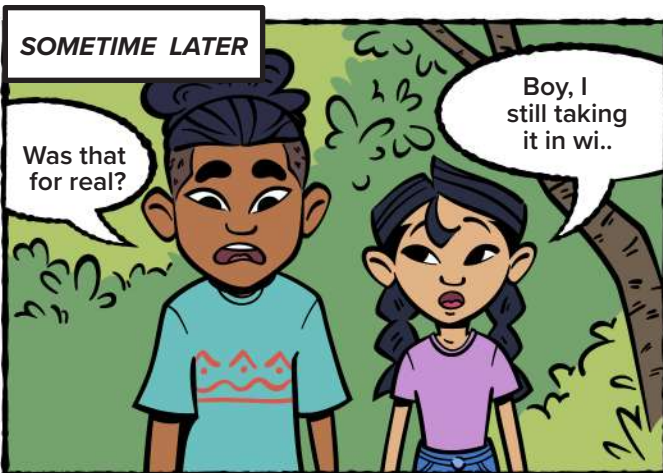


I lived as a man in a time of abundance, harmony and balance in Waitukubuli.

Now I come from our ancestral homelands in the Orinoco to help the tribe regain its strength and identity. The tribe is making some progress but the essence of the tribe is in danger of being lost. More must be done to bring back harmony among our people and with nature. We are the last of our forefathers and people are forgetting the old ways. We are abusing the land and if we are not careful, our home we love will be lost.



You two are blessed. You have been chosen by the spirits of Kalinago to receive special powers and knowledge. To receive these powers, this is what you have to do...



SOMETIME LATER

Was that for real?

Boy, I still taking it in wi..



eh eh..nothing happen to dem buildings..what boy...

Dat is where we strong. And Hurricane Maria doh mash dem up either eh!



They have a word for dat wi...re.. re..



RESILIENT!





THE FOLLOWING DAY...

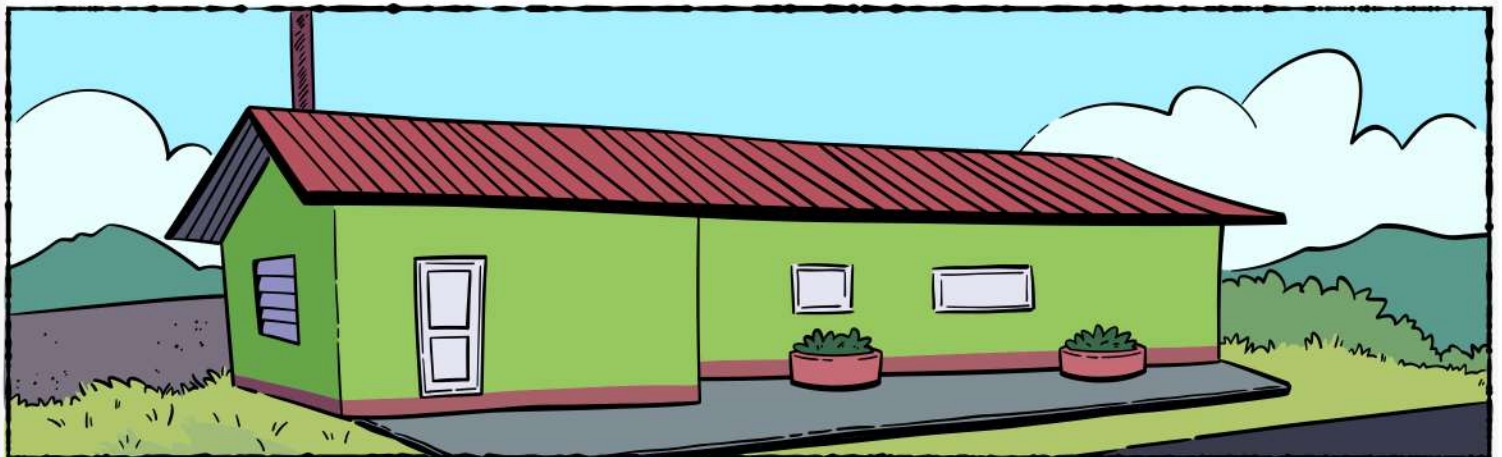




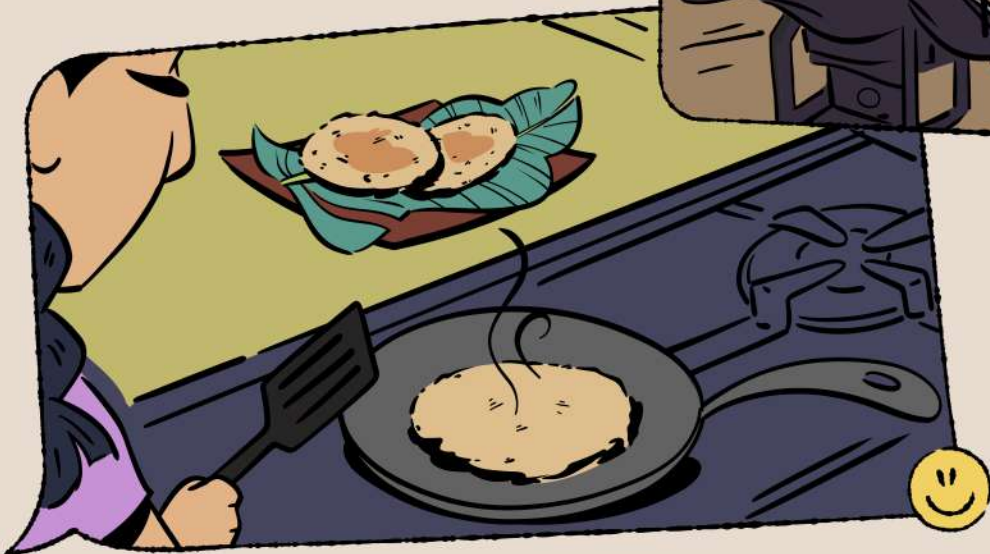


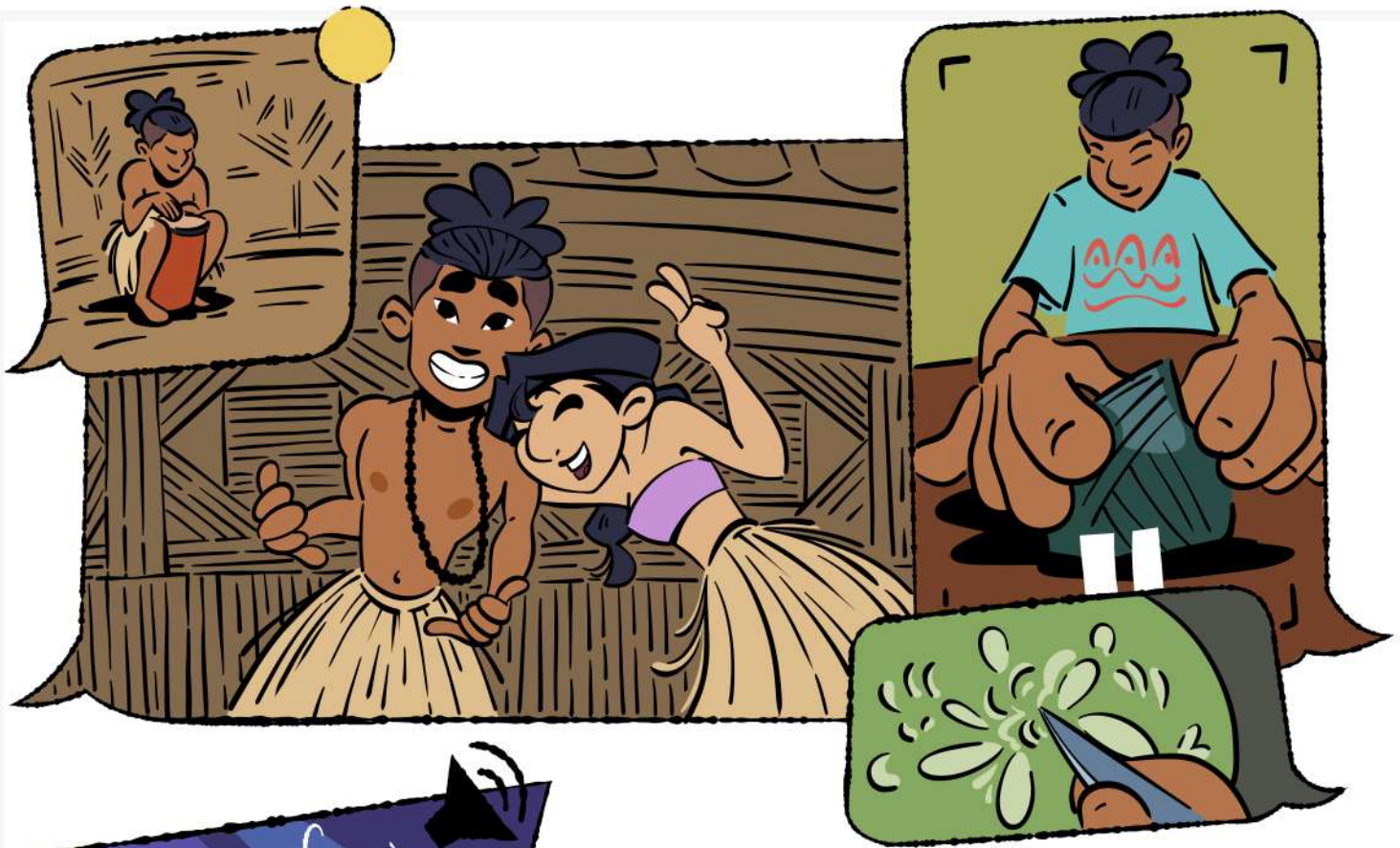


THE FOLLOWING DAY...









INCOMING CALL
"Miri"

I had a problem to get tobacco. People not planting dat at all. Luckily I get some by de Shaman

Me aself - I had to go all de way behind Horseback ridge to get some good lawouman. Anyway I make a nice basket as you see in the photo I sent you.

But you doh hearing, for me to get de tobacco from de Shaman, I had to promise him I will make a little herbal garden at home. And he say he will check on me to make sure I keep my promise. If not, crapaud smoke my pipe.

But wait, that's a good idea. I will make a little garden in my backyard too. With all that pandemic thing there, that's the best thing.

THE NAMING CEREMONY



Your name is Kalinago identity. You are the future of the tribe.



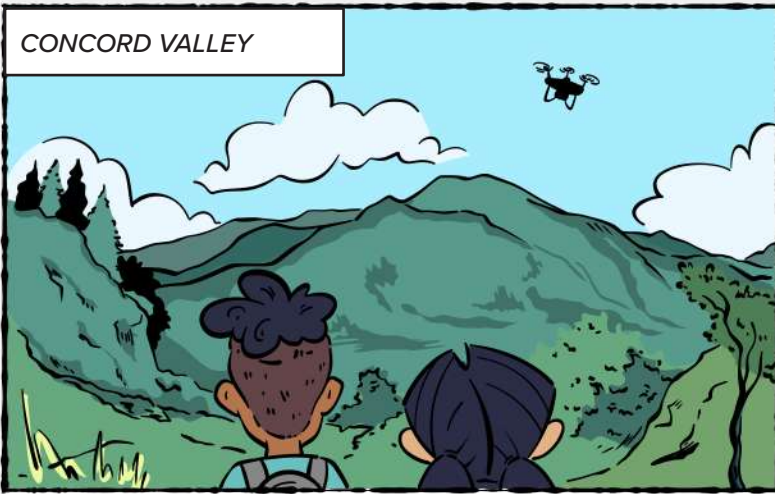
Miri, dat was great you dancing well. What we doing next?



We have to take a trip to the forest in the Concord valley.



CONCORD VALLEY



We going to follow the Kanawa Trail. We will start from the Lagli end and burst out in Chapara.



Good, we have to get some gommier sap for incense, one or two siwik, maybe a crayfish if we lucky.



Those people have some serious equipment there wi...



And they doh forget de old vibes non. See how they using vetive grass to protect de soil...



They sapping all dem gommier wi.



Maria self give de trees a bad beating.

See how it messing up de trees



Let me send some pictures to de ouboutou.





So this is where they make dem boats.

Yes. It have plenty gommier trees around here.



Here far wi, and they have to pull dem boats down to a main road, boy that is hard work.

And is fiberglass boat everybody buying now. So is only one or two fellahs still making gommier boat.



Nago, look de gonndi stay in my finger



you have to wait for thunder to roll for dat to let go



Haaa..gonndi gone...see I have power!



Hahaha... Boasta!



Makrabutina. I am thirsty. My water bottle nearly empty.

Check this out.



You see this big vine, they call it kòd glo. You can get water from it.



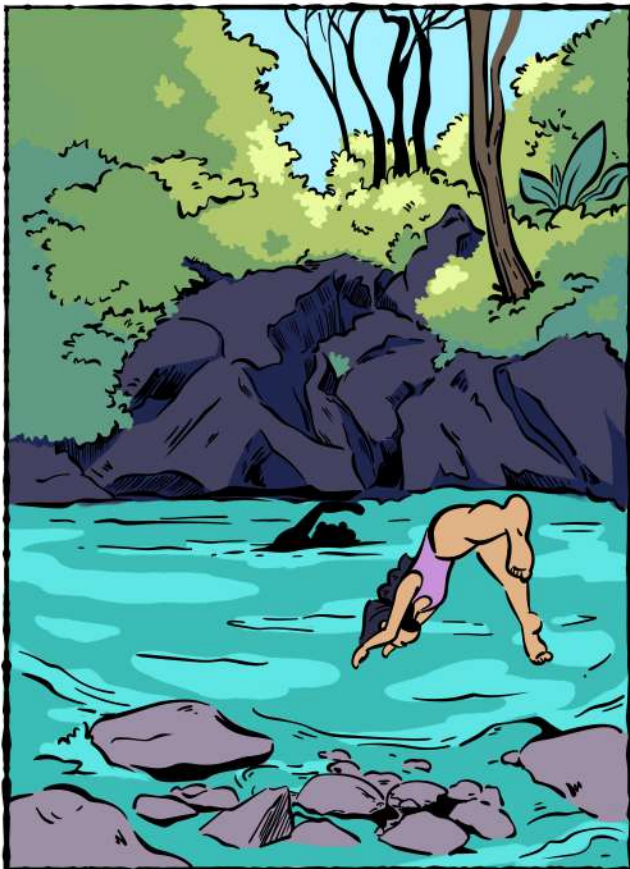
not bad...de forest is life for real.



Wow another landslide...it have quite a few of them in de bush.



Hurricane Maria really shake up de place... make sure you record dat, you know.



This is nature island for real!



Let me see if I get a crayfish in de water.



de Manman Glo help me ketch dat quick



Awa, you know Manman Glo not staying right up here, they prefer to be nearer de sea.



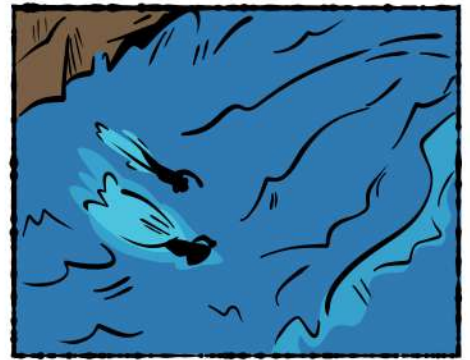
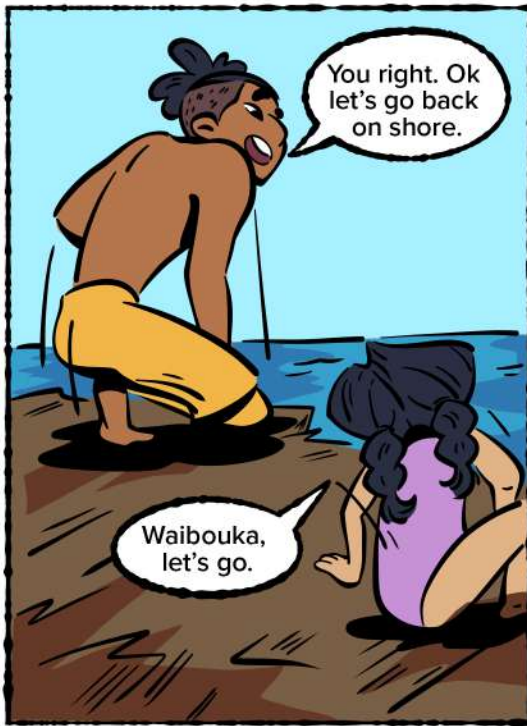
Ayahora Bibi Touna. Thank you Manman Glo wherever you are.



I think we done now, let's head back home.

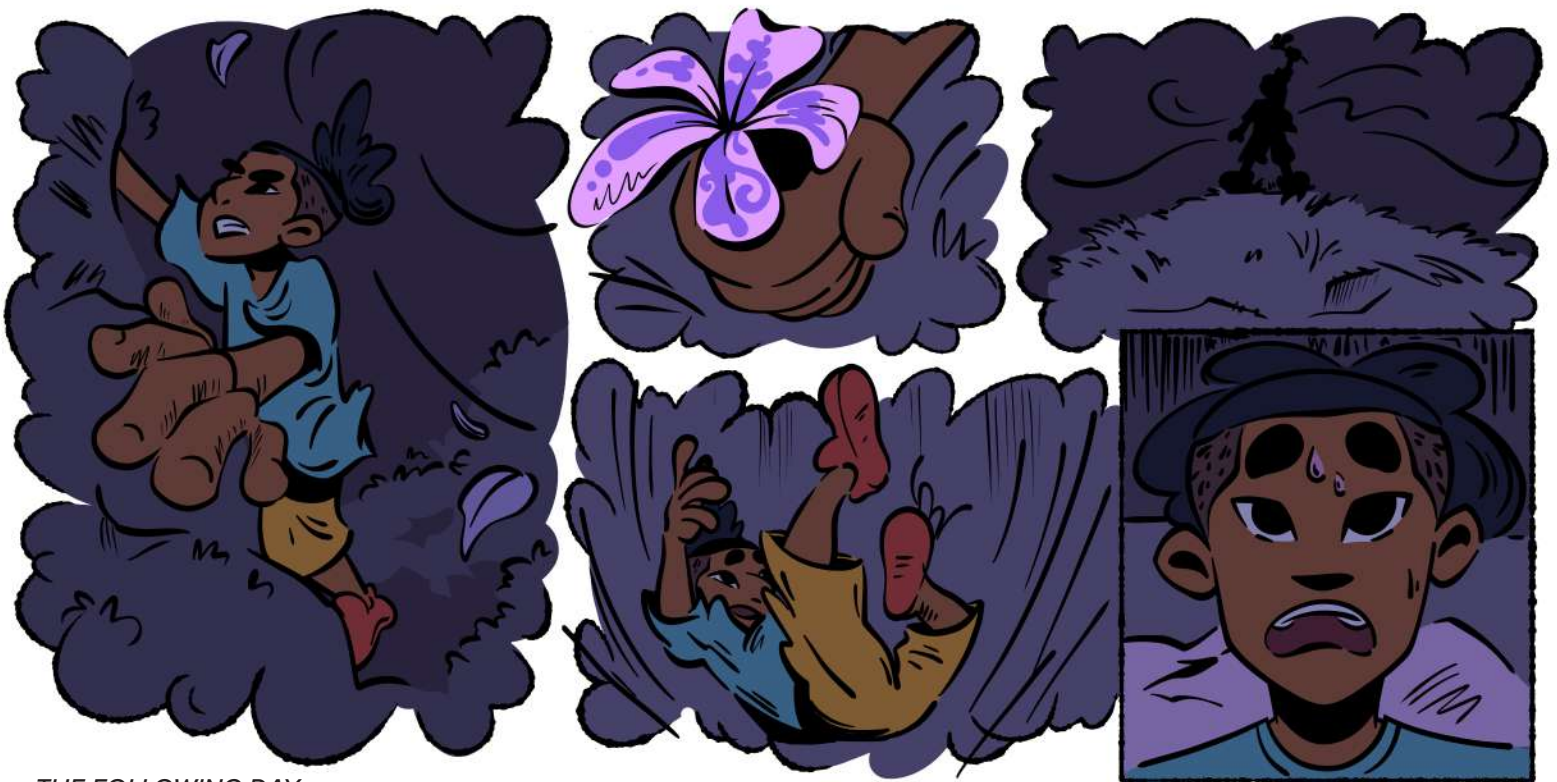
Waibouka.. let's go



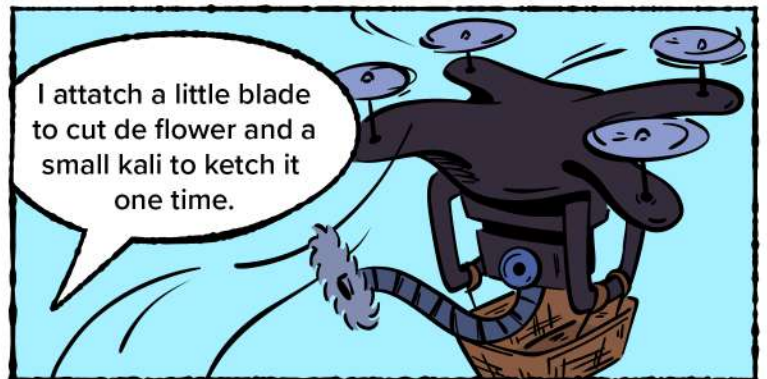
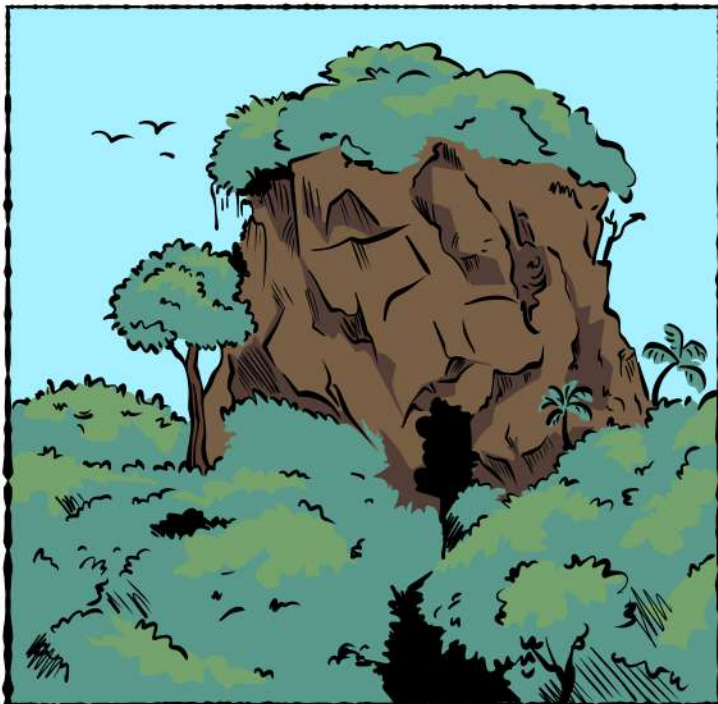


SEVERAL EVENINGS LATER...

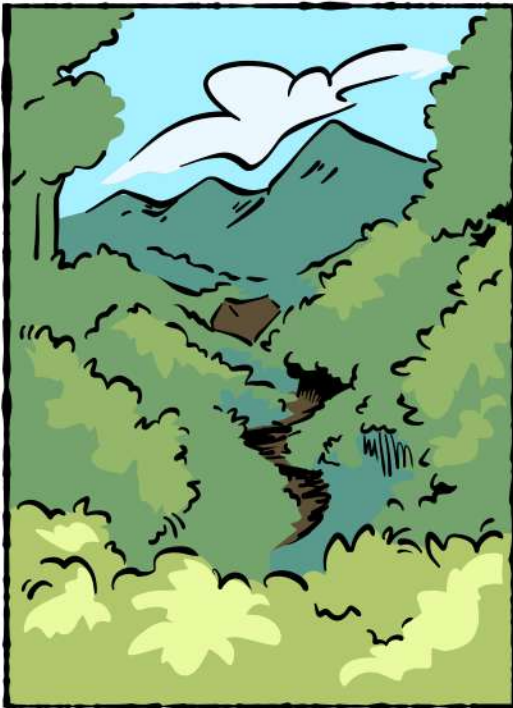
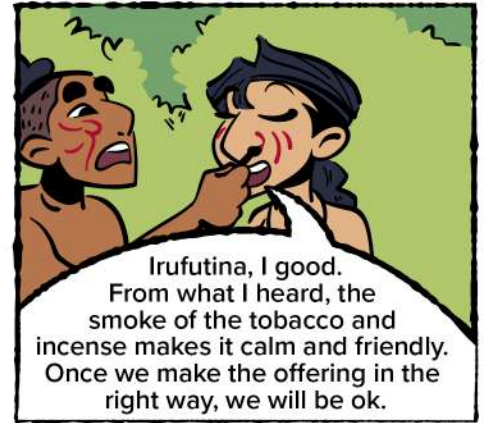




THE FOLLOWING DAY...









Katabou?
Who are you?



Ao Nago

Ao Miri

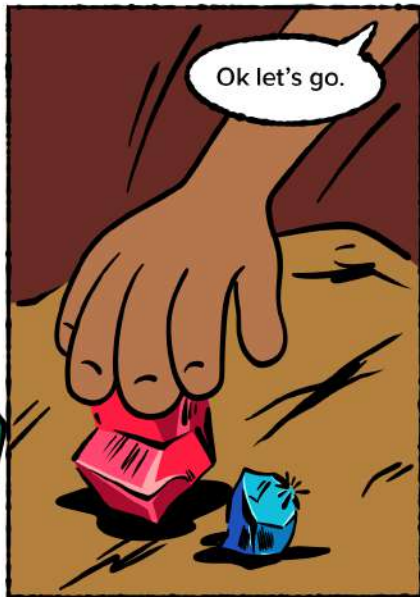


Kata bayoumouracoua?
What is your wish?

Ele aka iropómali
Strength and wisdom



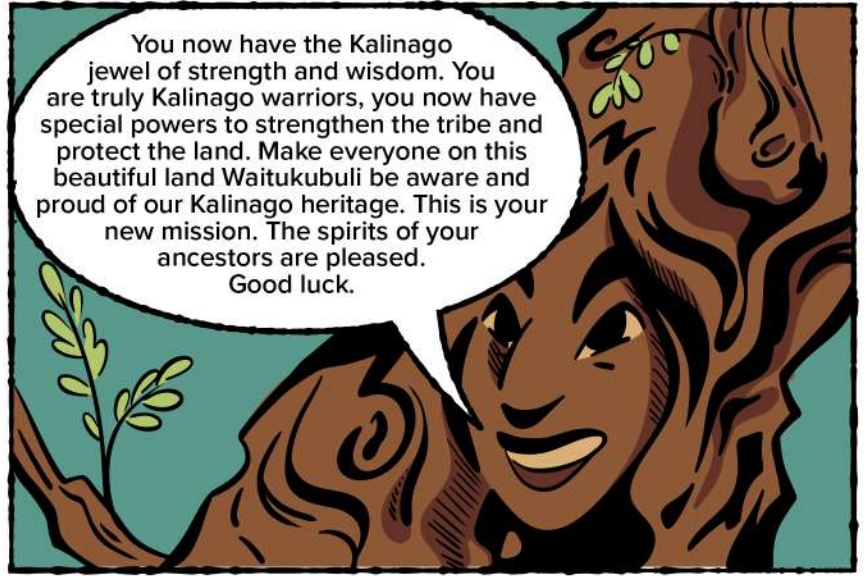
Ayahora...



Ok let's go.



Atukaha bumuti!



SEVERAL YEARS LATER: KALINGO AWARDS CEREMONY



The following glossary comprise words in Kalinago, Kwéyòl (French Creole) and Dominican English and their meanings in English.

KALINAGO

Aka	<i>And</i>
Anyan-Anyan	<i>A chant of the Kalinago while rowing their canoes</i>
Ao	<i>I am</i>
Atukaha bumuti	<i>You have done well</i>
Ayahora	<i>thank you</i>
Awa	<i>no</i>
Bibi touna	<i>mermaid</i>
Ele	<i>strength</i>
Hiyari hiya sosori so	<i>a chant whose meaning is unknown</i>
Icheiri	<i>God, great spirit</i>
Irufu	<i>good</i>
Iropomali	<i>wisdom</i>
Kanawa	<i>canoe</i>
Kalinago	<i>the kalinago people, the indigenous people of Dominica</i>
Katabou	<i>who are you?</i>
Kata biri	<i>what is your name?</i>
Kata bayoumouracoua	<i>what is your wish?</i>
Lawouman	<i>plant used for making baskets and other similar craft</i>
Mabrika	<i>good day, salutations</i>
Makrabutina	<i>I am thirsty</i>
Miri miriti	<i>brilliant, shiny</i>
Orinoco	<i>North east region of South America along the Orinoco river</i>
Ouboutou	<i>Chief</i>
Usanai	<i>Boa snake</i>
Waibouka	<i>Let's go</i>
Waitukubuli	<i>Kalinago name for Dominica meaning 'tall is her body'</i>
Zagaya	<i>A type of sea crab</i>

KWEYOL

Bwigo	<i>a type of large sea snail (West Indian top shell)</i>
Chaloup	<i>a type of small sea snail</i>
Gonndi	<i>pincer (of crab)</i>
Kòd glo	<i>water vine</i>
Lafen dimoun	<i>end of the world</i>
Manman glo	<i>mermaid</i>
Non	<i>no</i>
Papamèt	<i>Oh God, Oh gosh</i>
Papa bondyé	<i>God, Oh God</i>
Siwik	<i>a type of land crab</i>
Soukouyan	<i>witch</i>
Wi	<i>yes</i>
Woy	<i>oh gosh</i>

DOMINICAN ENGLISH

Aself	<i>myself</i>
Boasta	<i>boaster</i>
DA	<i>Dominica</i>
Dat	<i>that</i>
De	<i>the</i>
Dem	<i>them, these, those</i>
Dem man	<i>those men</i>
Dey	<i>they</i>
Doh	<i>though, do not, don't, did not,</i>
Eh eh	<i>"an exclamation of surprise"</i>
Fada	<i>father</i>
Fellahs	<i>fellows</i>
Fraid	<i>afraid</i>
It have	<i>there is</i>
Moda	<i>mother</i>
Na	<i>no</i>
Vari	<i>style</i>
Yes wi	<i>yes (literally yes yes)</i>
Ya wi	<i>yes (literally yes yes)</i>
Yo doh hearing	<i>you are not hearing.</i>

