





# THE PANDEMIC CHRONICLES

Covid-19 tales inspired by the diverse experiences of Aotearoa's Chinese diaspora

These comics offer a glimpse into the experiences of people of ethnic Chinese background who lived through the Covid-19 pandemic in Aotearoa New Zealand. While the characters and storylines are fictionalised, they take inspiration from the real-life experiences of the participants who were interviewed between May 2020 and early 2021 as part of Te Papa's Making Histories Covid-19 project.

Among the interviewees were third-generation Cantonese Chinese New Zealanders, international students from Wuhan, people of Taiwanese and Singaporean Chinese backgrounds, senior citizens, single mothers, and business owners. Added to the participants' voices here are my own, and those of the two talented illustrators who helped bring these stories to life: MZ and Chloe de la Lune. In our interviews and conversations together, we traversed much honest and wide-ranging territory, from teddy bears and lockdown crafts to anti-Chinese racism.

These comics do not represent 'typical' or 'representative' Chinese New Zealand stories. Rather, they incorporate highlights drawn from the interviews and subsequent comic collaborations in what we hope is an engaging and safe manner, enabling interviewees who wished to remain anonymous to do so.

We hope these comics offer rich food for discussion and add to our collective memory of this historic moment in time.

Kám-siā 感謝 Grace Gassin (Lîm Sö-chin 林素真)









POMINION RP WAS BLEAK.





MY DAD, ALWAYS HELPING ME WITH PRACTICAL THINGS. MY MUM, MAKING SURE I EAT WELL. THEY NEVER SAY IT, BUT I KNOW THEY CARE.

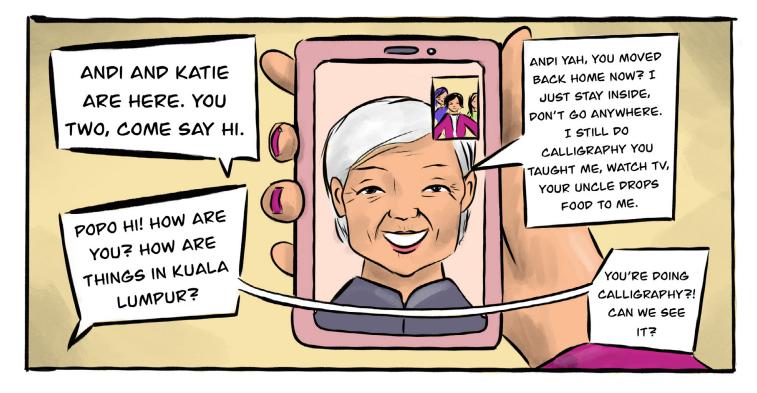


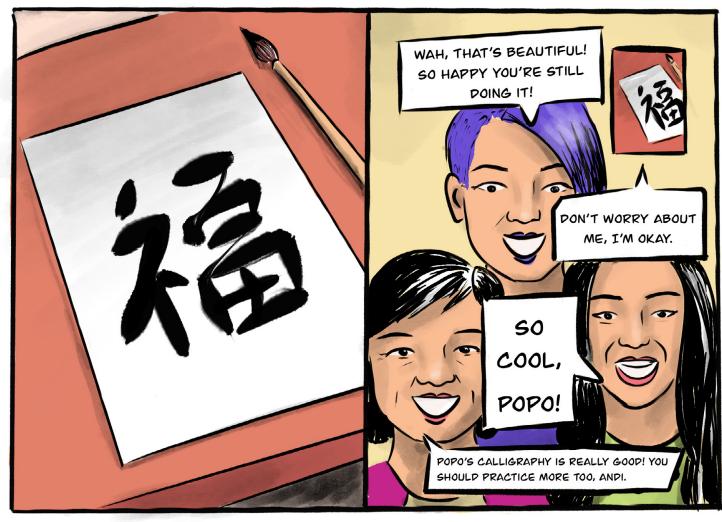
PIP YOU SEE THAT SAT (SUBTLE YEAH, TOTALLY. I LIKE SO MUCH OF THE ASIAN TRAITS) CHANGED THEIR SEEING THE ASIAN WISDOM FROM POLICY AGAINST POLITICAL POSTS AMERICANS ORGANISING ASIAN QUEER AND FOR BLACK LIVES MATTER? TRANS DISABILITY AROUND ANTI-ASIAN JUSTICE ACTIVISTS RACISM TOO. I LOVED THE IS SO RELEVANT ASIAN AMERICAN FEMINIST TO US HERE ZINE YOU SENT ME! AND NOW. OH YEAH, I PIP. HAVE YOU SEEN THE COMMENTS ABOUT HONG KONG AND UYGHUR YOU SHOULD MAKE CONCENTRATION CAMPS AFTER THEY DID THAT? SO MANY WUMAO.\* AT LEAST IT'S NOT ONE FOR HERE! JUST A BUBBLE TEA APPRECIATION CLUB ANYMORE. \$50 CENTS, REFERS TO INTERNET COMMENTATORS WHO MAY OR MAY NOT BE PAID TO SPREAD PRO-CCP PROPAGANDA. IT'S HARD TO TALK ABOUT, I'VE BEEN WATCHING SOME WEBINARS FROM THE US THOUGH. WITH EVERYTHING THAT'S ON HOW THEY'VE BEEN DEALING WITH IT. THEY HAVE BEEN HAPPENING IN THE US AND A LONG HISTORY OF ASIAN-AMERICAN ORGANISING, ND THERE ARE SIMILAR HISTORIES OF ANTI-CHINESE ANTI-BLACK POLICE VIOLENCE. IMMIGRATION LAWS LIKE THE POLL TAX HERE. HOW DO WE TALK ABOUT THE ANTI-ASIAN STUFF WITHOUT TAKING AWAY FROM THE URGENCY OF ANTI-BLACK OR ANTI-MÃORI RACISM HERE? YOU WERE PROBABLY TOO YOUNG TO NONE OF THIS IS REALLY NEW. IN THE LATE

NONE OF THIS IS REALLY NEW. IN THE LATE 1800S DURING THE SMALLPOX EPIDEMIC, THE RESIDENTS OF SAN FRANCISCO CHINATOWN WERE ALSO BLAMED AND SCAPEGOATED FOR THE DISEASE.





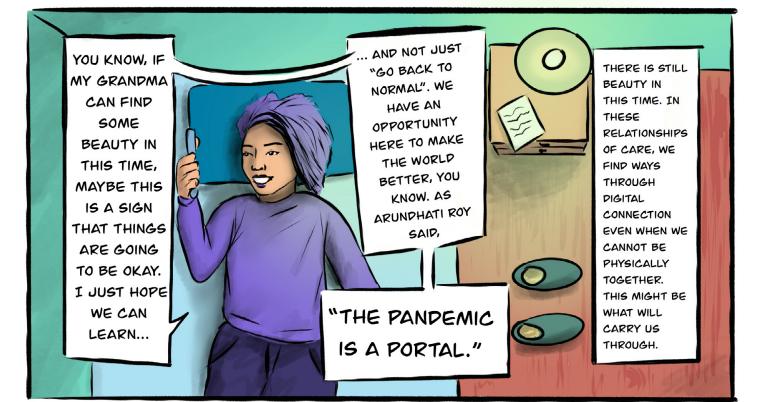




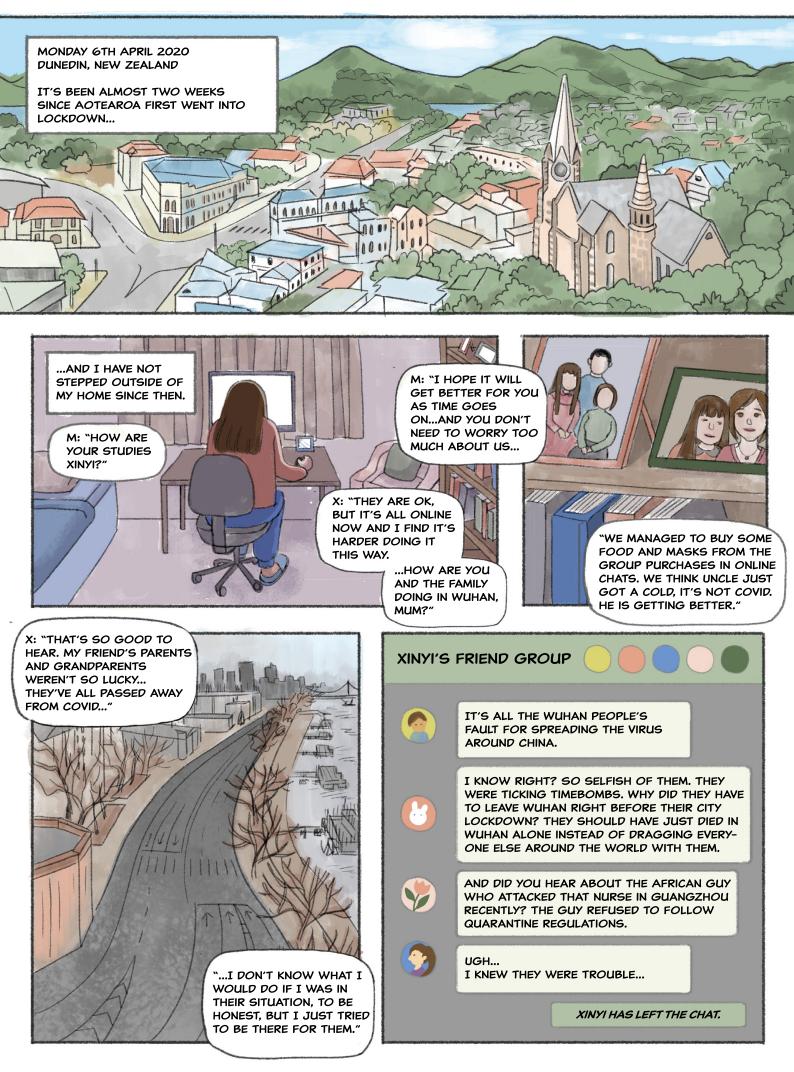


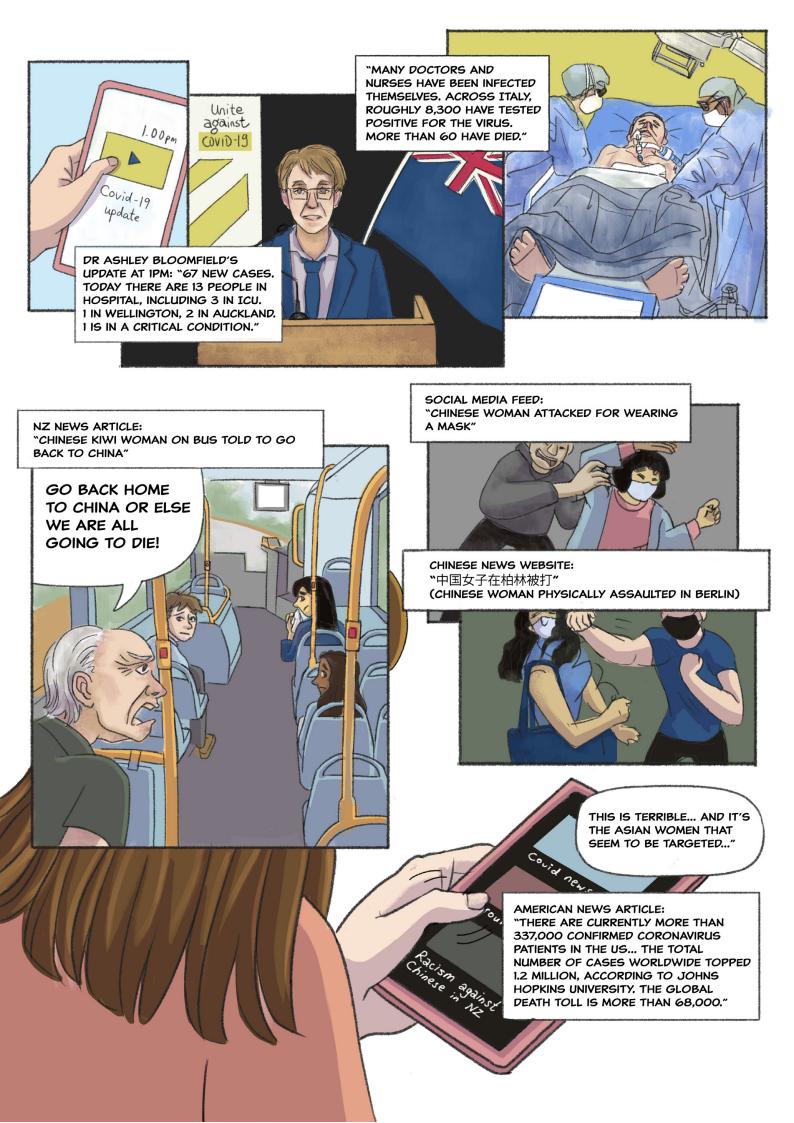




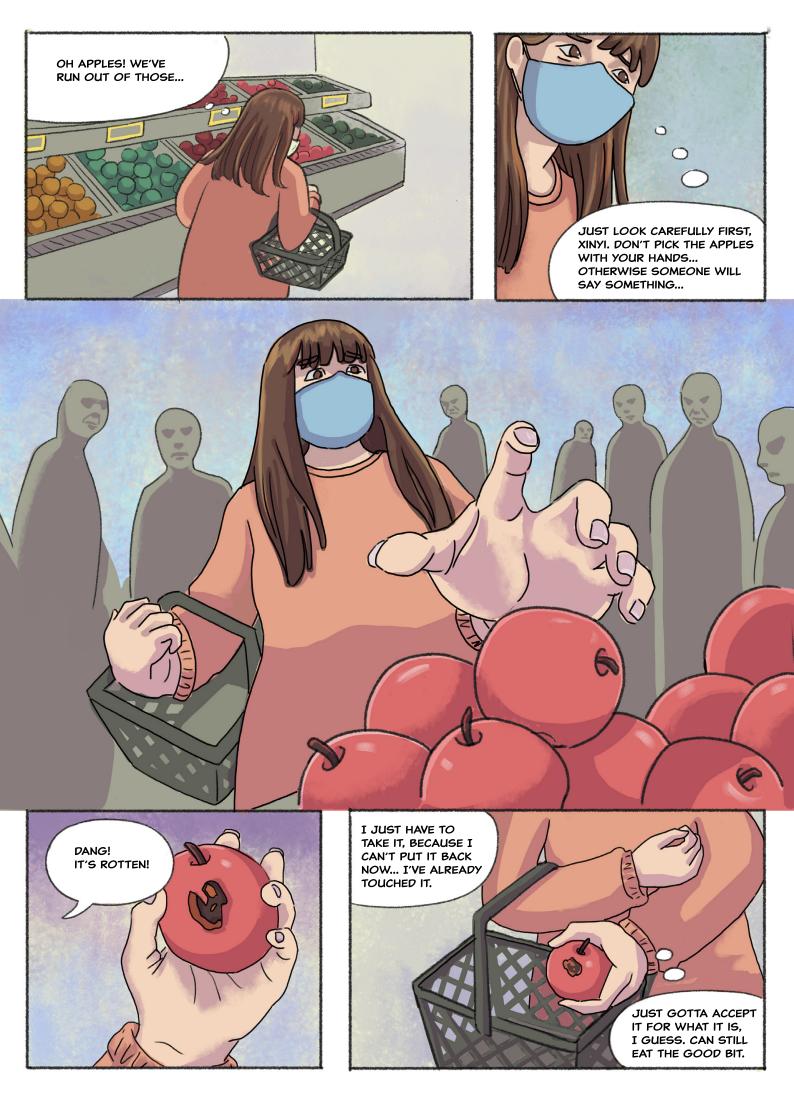


#### 'THE WORLDS I LIVE IN' - XINYI'S STORY



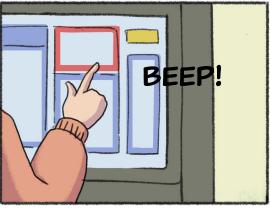








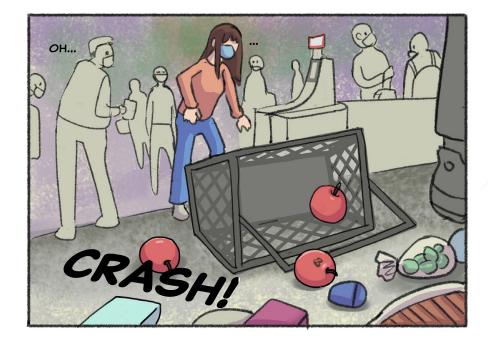




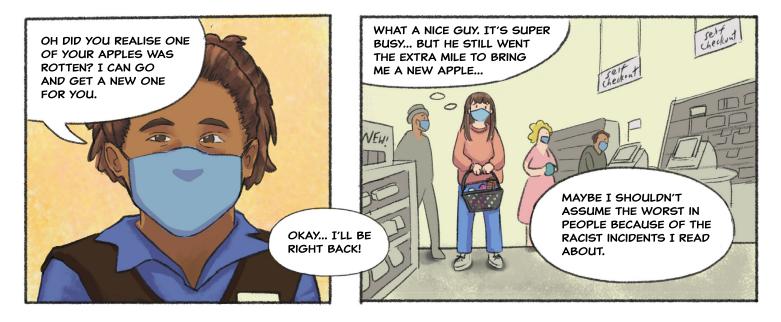


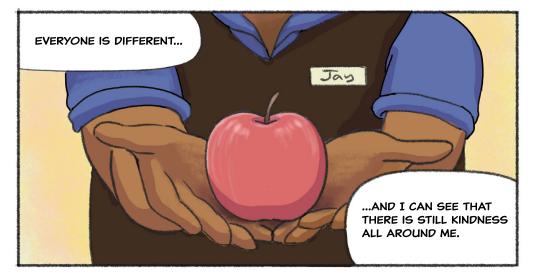




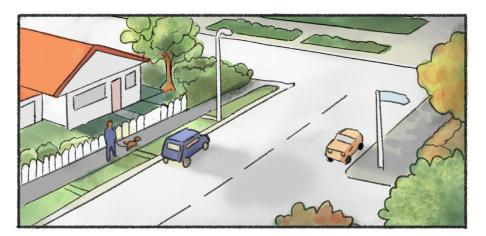






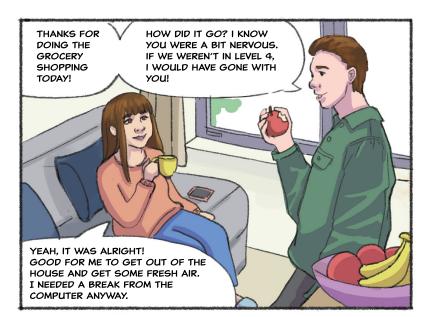






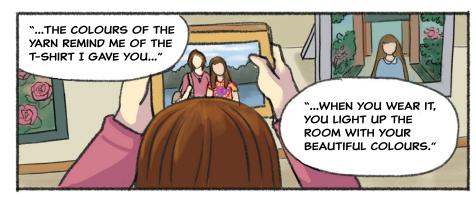








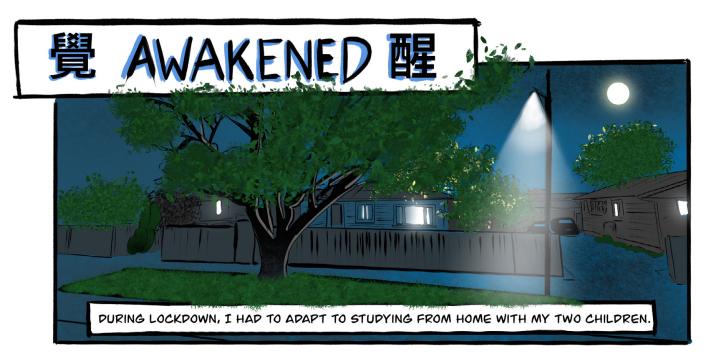






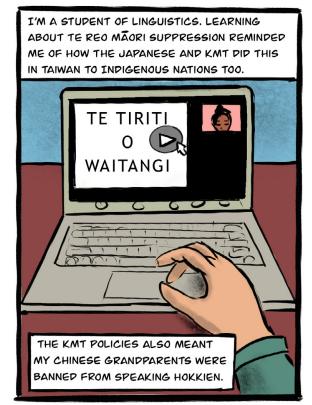






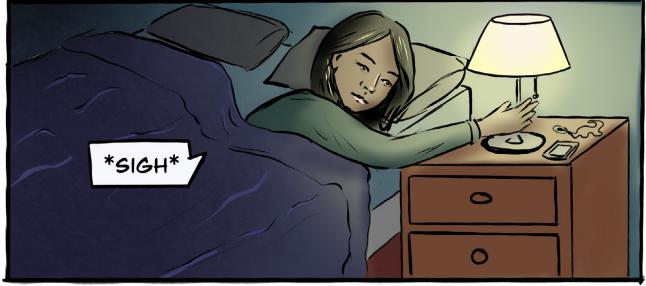


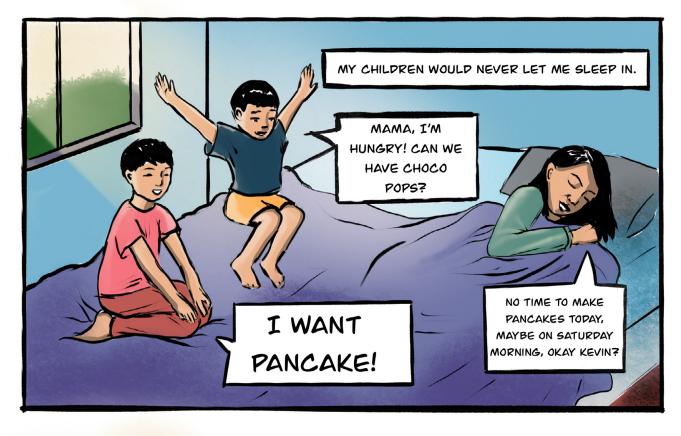






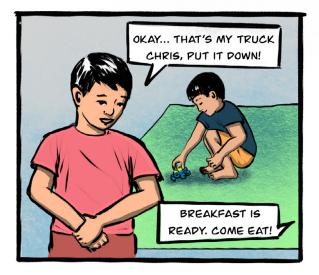


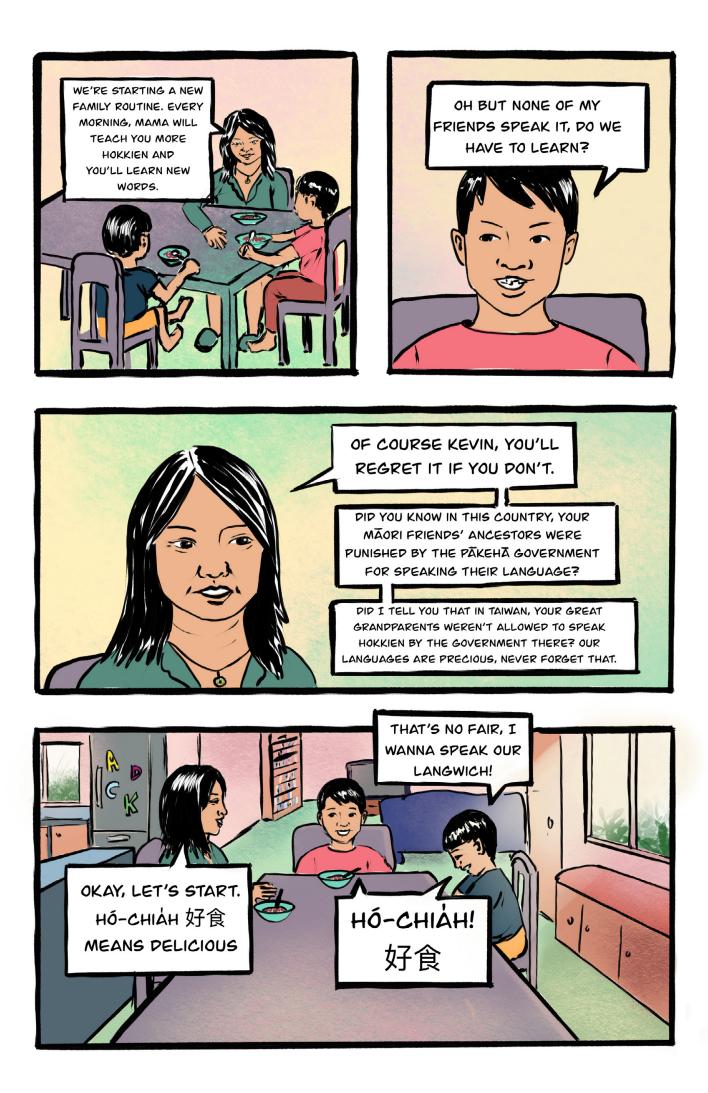












STUDYING AOTEAROA'S HISTORY AND FOLLOWING TAIWAN THROUGH THE PANDEMIC, MY OWN POLITICAL VOICE HAS GROWN LOUDER AS I'VE LEARNT FROM MÃORI.



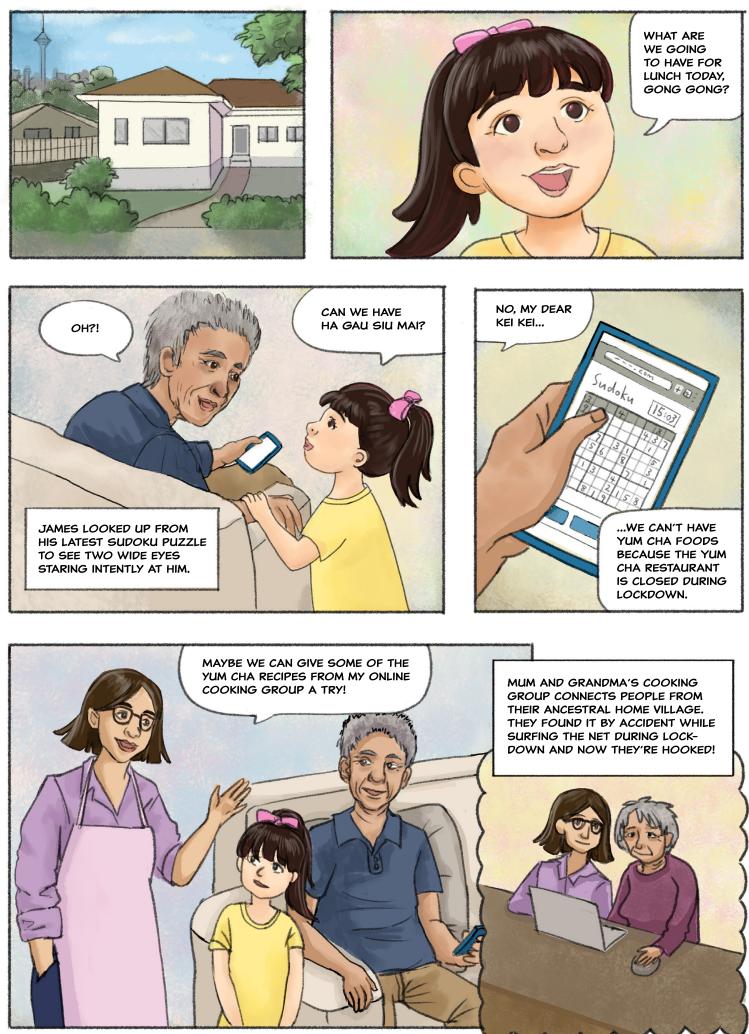
I'M STILL LEARNING ABOUT HOW TO USE MY NEWFOUND VOICE ON ISSUES AFFECTING TAIWAN, AND LOCALLY TO BETTER HONOUR TE TIRITI.

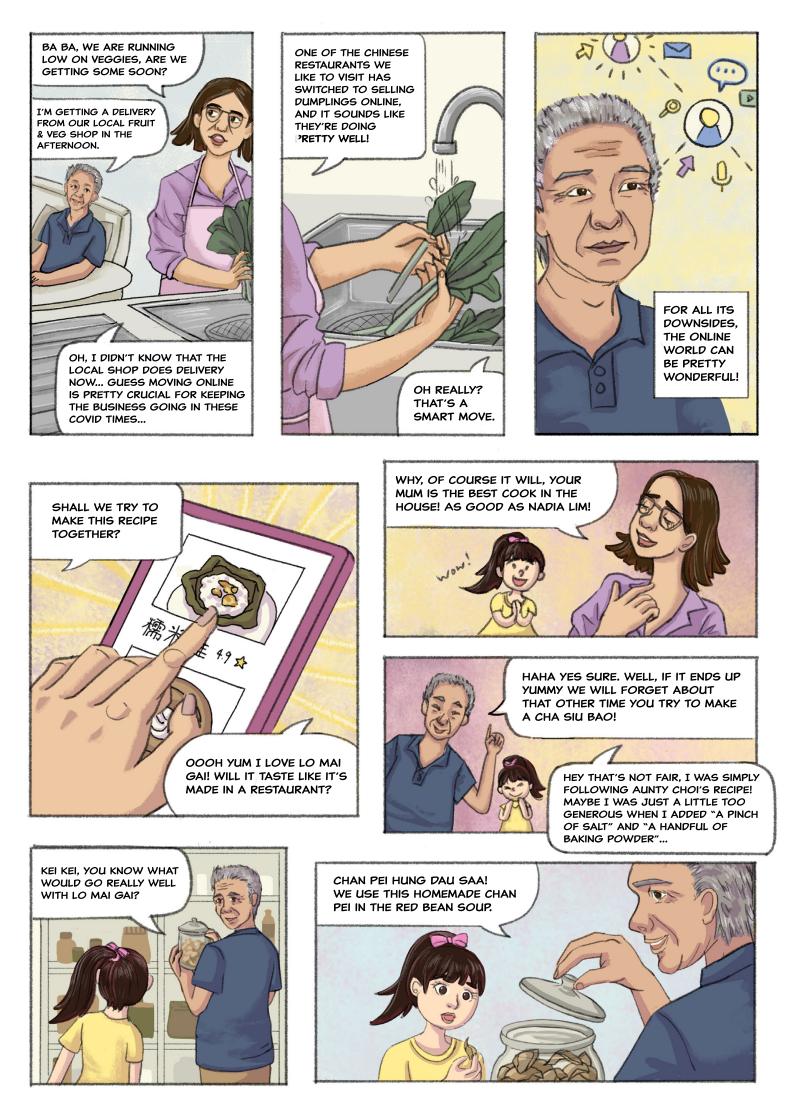
SCO

BUT IT SEEMS THAT, THOUGH I'P NEVER THOUGHT OF MYSELF AS POLITICAL, THIS PANDEMIC HAS...

AWAKENED ME.

### 'THE FOOD OF THE PEOPLE' - JAMES'S STORY



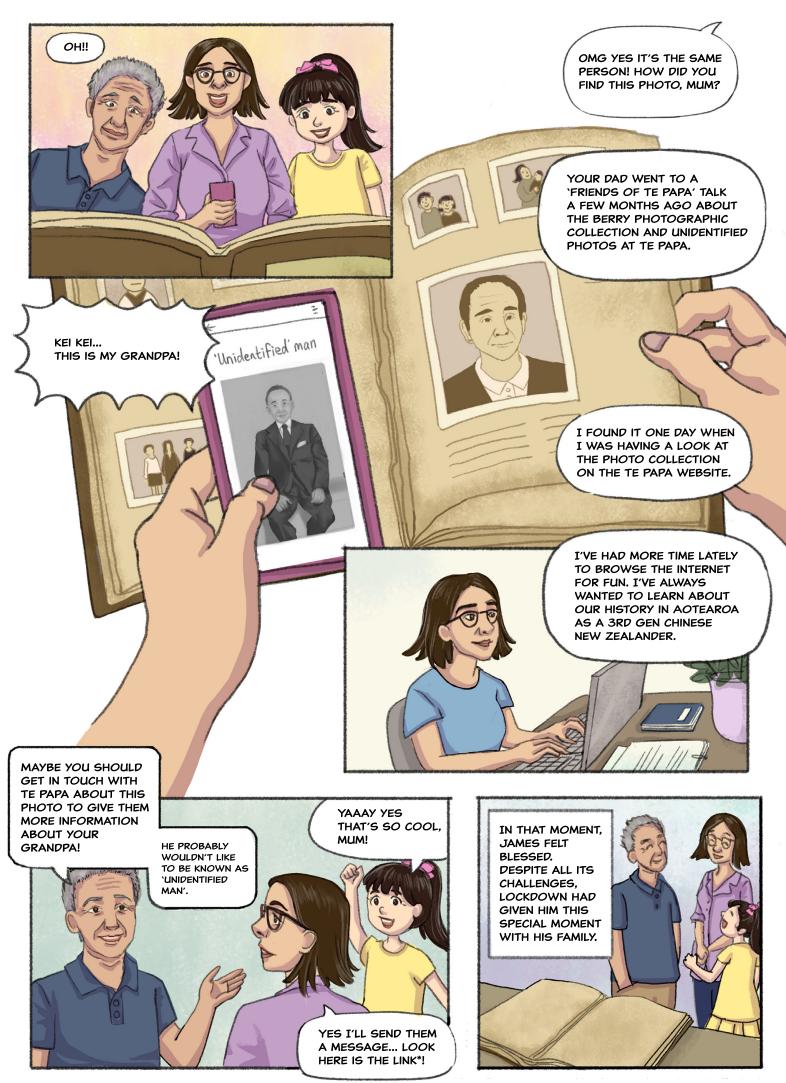






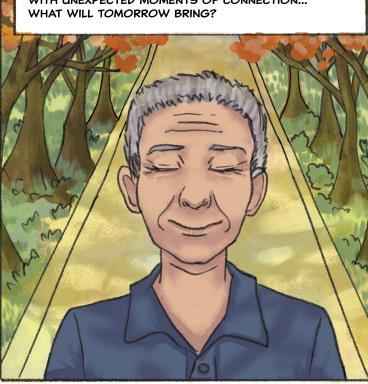






\* tepapa.nz/GeneralEnquiries

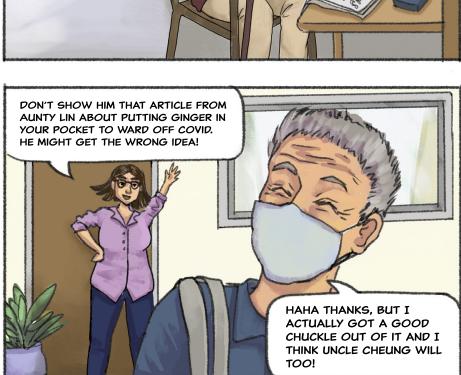




ON HIS WAY HOME, JAMES REFLECTS ON A DAY FILLED WITH UNEXPECTED MOMENTS OF CONNECTION... WHAT WILL TOMORROW BRING?



ALRIGHT, HOI TING AND





## MZ

'Return Home' / 'Awakened'

MZ is a diasporic Chinese artist who works with traditional media such as ink, gouache, brush pen, and watercolour. More recently, they have been experimenting with digital art. Their work has been featured in the We Are Beneficiaries project, Out Loud Aotearoa, New Sociology, Three Words comic book, and Mellow Yellow zines. They are a co-editor of the blog Te Tangi A Te Ruru (the Cry of the Ruru) with Kassie Hartendorp, which features voices of Indigenous writers and people of colour who are signalling warnings in a time of colonial capitalism and calling for otherworlds to be birthed.

**@fufighterarts** 

## **Chloe de la Lune**

'The Worlds I Live In' I 'The Food of the People'

Chloe is an illustrator and portrait artist based in Auckland. She loves to tell stories about people with a fantasy twist to intrigue and connect with the viewer. Her inspiration comes from nature, animals, and the art of the Pre-Raphaelites. Her art is created with traditional and digital media such as oils, Photoshop, and the Procreate app.

> @chloedelalune chloedelalune.com



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