

I wake up early and get out of bed. It's a cold morning and I like to sleep KAAL, so I quickly put on a BUBU that I picked up on holiday in Mali and think about breakfast, I JARP a GOOG into the pan, then decide to have a BRIK with it and wash it all down with a sparkling CAVA; just one glass because I find it tends to MUZZ me and if I have too much I COWK: I'm no ALCO. There's some MAKI in the fridge but I leave it there because I can't face cold rice first thing in the morning. I finish up with an apple, leaving the CHOG of course, and a nice juicy YUZU.

After breakfast I go on the computer because I want to get in touch with one of my BRUS called Tairongo, a Maori I met in New Zealand. I don't like to spend too much time on the computer – it makes you seem such a SPOD – but it's nice to keep in touch with friends. He's currently working as an ACCA in Australia and has been to several conferences as a representative for the Maori federation. It's hard to think of him as a DELO wearing a COMM: he's such a big guy, built like some MOAI on Easter Island, though actually very gentle: I've seen him go out of his way not to step on a HUHU. Just don't make him HOHA, and whatever you do don't call him a HORI.

Tairongo invited me to stay in his KAIK when I was out there, and it was really interesting. He has a big extended family, almost a HAPU really, just like a Samoan AIGA. His mother is an important lady in his tribe, a KUIA, who taught me the Maori REOS and all I know about KAWA: how to MIHI guests to a marae, when to make a WERO and so on; she was a good teacher, though she would RARK me sternly if I made a mistake. She also cured me when I got a fever from the bite of a NAMU, with a herbal draught she made from the leaves of the PUHA and the PUKA. Tairongo's father is a real old craftsman, a KORO who makes beautiful KORU patterns; he told me the best wood to use is from the coniferous MIRO because it's soft and easily worked, though you can also use KARO wood. He carved me a beautiful model of a WHIO as a souvenir of my stay, a bit classier than your usual blue china duck over the mantelpiece, and he also made me a PATU to bring home, a sturdy thing about the size of a PAAL. It's for my protection back home, he says: he seems to think I'm in danger from some PERP every time I walk down a street. Tairongo's mother gave me a beautiful KETE woven from flax, to put my shopping in. Naturally I offered them a KOHA in return, but they wouldn't take it. 'We don't go in for KULA here', they said.

Unfortunately I've mislaid my friend's ADDY. What's the use of a computer that can MUNG data at heaven knows how many MIPS if you do things like that? Sometimes I am such a DORB, in fact one of the world's biggest WOFS. But by going to his ARPA I manage to read his BLOG, and find that he's been making a DOCO about Maori life and religious belief: it explains the idea of an ATUA, a sort of spirit that can be good or bad.

Tairongo seems to have been having quite an adventurous time. He had a dodgy experience surfing when a big NOAH tried to gnaw his NADS off, but he was able to CHIB it with his knife and it seems to have been the shark that came off worst. There's also an amusing account in his blog of an altercation he had with an Australian umpire when playing rugby. I don't know what started it, but the UMPY said he was a WARB, then called him a Jafa – if you want to know what a Jafa is here's a clue: YABA. This made Tairongo really angry, because he comes from nowhere near Auckland, but he tried to keep calm and WAWA peacefully, but then the umpire implied that Tairongo has KOAP with his sister, or would if she weren't so DRAC. Tairongo really flipped at this and chased him all round the pitch threatening to DACK him, WHUP him good, douse him in KERO and stuff his head down a KYBO. Of course, the other players were only too happy to SOOL him – you know what these ALFS are like. Fortunately for the

umpire he could run like a GNOW and got away by climbing a BOAB tree at the edge of the pitch.

While I'm on the computer I make a few corrections to a couple of APPS I'm writing, then log on to my instant message system, but all I've got is the usual lot of SPIM. Never mind, it's time anyway to pop down to the local DUKA for the morning paper and some odds and ends, and give the dogs a bit of a walk: I've got a Tibetan APSO and a BRAK that I got from my South African friend Hendrik. I leave a note to the home help to make sure that she DEGS the HOMA on the window-sill; it's in bud and I'm hoping I'll soon have two HOMES, or even end up with a whole GREX. There's also a rather delicate MIHA, with its fronds just unfolding, another souvenir of my trip to New Zealand.

So, I put on my ZOOT suit – I'm really into retro dressing – and off I go. I don't bother with any of my CAGS because it doesn't look like rain. The local shop, which is about a KLIK away, is run by an Indian friend of mine called Deepak, who sells DESI Indian food. 'Hello, YAAR', he says, 'I hope you are TEEK. What can I do for you today?'. I tell him I'm after some spices for my IKAN fish dishes. While he's serving me his teenage son comes in, smoking a BIDI. 'Hey, GORA, no GORI today?' he says, referring to my blonde girl-friend. 'You be polite to my customers' says his father, 'or you'll be out on your JAXY. Go and do something useful like digging the BAGH.' The lad just IGGS his father and goes out, dropping his DIMP on the floor. His father sighs. 'He's a problem', he says. 'Got no respect: calls me, his own father, a BUDA and his mother a BUDI, refers to his uncle as a KUTA and his aunt as a KUTI, and says his sister is a MOTI. And you should see how he dresses, either like a western CHAV or in CAMO gear, and all he wants to do is MICH from school and lie about all day listening to GOTH and talking on his MOBY. Do you know, the other day he came in and blew out the candles when we were having an ARTI. I asked him what he plans to do for a living, and do you know what he said? I'm going to be a JEDI, he says. How do they fill their heads with such KAKS? More likely he'll end up as a DERO or a MEFF.' 'Well, perhaps a BOHO', I said, 'I hear he's quite artistic'. 'He did draw a funny animal on his bedroom wall with a BIRO', admitted his father. 'I asked him what it was, because it looked a bit like a camel and a bit like a llama, and told him he needed to make the DIFF a bit clearer. 'I don't care about DIFS', he says, 'it's a CAMA'.

'Not that my daughter's much better', Deepak goes on. 'All she thinks about is getting a BOYF. At least she's not one of those BOIS. I try to get her to stay in and do her schoolwork, but she wants to be like her friend who goes out and JOLS every evening. She says why can't she MOSH too and have a JIVY time listening to EMOS. She says her friend's parents are really KEWL and her friend is allowed to bring boys home and entertain them in her own room, but I'm not having an ODAH in my house'. Poor Deepak, he does try to JAGA his daughter against the evils of the world, and it's so difficult these days. I know he really hoped his children would become MEDS. He fingers his MALA as if in prayer; I hear him BRUX and GROK what he's feeling.

I give Deepak a FLIM in payment for my purchases; he gives me my change. I look at this carefully because the shop's in a very cosmopolitan area and there have been some funny coins in it before now. I've found a KUNA, or actually several KUNE, from Croatia, there was a DENI, a couple of BHAT from Thailand, several SUMY from Uzbekistan, some LATU from Latvia, a LUMA from Armenia, there was a LIPA – no, I tell a lie, two LIPE – from Croatia, there was a TYIN from Kyrgyzstan, together with a few SOMS or SOMY; there was even an old Scottish MECK.

'By the way, try one of these' says Deepak just as I'm going. 'It's a new line in fruit I'm thinking of selling, it's called an ACAI.' He gives me a berry. 'It's not from the NONI tree, is it?' I say. 'No, no, he says, 'that grows in Asia, these come from Brazil'.

I walk on and who should I meet but Hendrik. 'Hey, JONG, how's it going with WENA?' he says. 'KIFF', I say, 'and you?' 'Not so good', he says. 'SJOE!' I say, because Hendrik's usually pretty cheerful. 'No', he says, 'in fact, things are pretty VROT. My OUMA died a fortnight ago and then my OUMA last week; they both had MYCS. EISH!' he SADS. 'And my pet rabbit's got MYXO, and bit me on the finger this morning. EINA! And my sister-in-law – poor VROU – has given birth to a PREM. Bad luck, eh?' 'YEBO', I say. When Hendrik gets excited he tends to lapse into his TAAL or native Afrikaans, and it can get a bit hard to understand, especially because he tends to BREI a lot. 'And then some MOER, some POEP, runs into my car' he goes on, starting to BREY even more '– you know, my beautiful SAXE Skoda – and then tries to claim it's my fault, the MOFO. And he says my car is UPTA anyway. SIES! Listen, BOET, I say to him, do you think I'm some kind of JAAP, ISIT? I KLAP him a good one and just for good measure punch him in his fat BOEP and now he's suing me for assault. PTUI!' And I hear him GOSS. Poor Hendrik, he gets a bit GUNG ho, and then regrets it: he's all over the OCCY today.

I say goodbye to Hendrik and a little further on run into another friend of mine, Aaron, wearing a KUFU. He teaches the Torah in a synagogue, and is on his way to buy a couple of new YADS. 'I know what I've been meaning to ask you', I say, 'this ERUV, this area within which you are allowed to do certain things not normally permitted on the Sabbath – what is it that you actually do do inside it?'. He smiles mysteriously. 'Let's just say we know how to enjoy our Sabbath EREV', he says. I don't want him to think I'm a YUTZ, so I don't pursue the matter. I ask him what the difference is between an AVEL and an OVEL and he says there isn't any: they both mean a mourner during the first seven days after a death. I'm quite interested in comparative religion and ask him whether there's any equivalent in Judaism of Islamic WUDU, the ritual washing before the daily prayer, and we discuss different attitudes to usury, which Judaism allows but the Koran strictly forbids as RIBA.

I have more shops to visit. First I take some NEGS of my holiday into the photographer, then I stop off at a rock shop to buy my girl-friend something for her birthday. She's really into geology - did her PhD on the LIAS – but there aren't many jobs in geology so she's now become a WAAC, which at least gives her a chance to pursue her other great interest, climbing. That keeps her really slim – she's never going to need a LIPO. The rock shop has some flashy looking YAGS, but she doesn't like synthetic stuff, so I buy her a really nice piece of serpentine – VERD antique, the dealer says - and also a rather fine picture of a TOMO in limestone country. Then I pop into the climbing shop across the road to pick up some FIFI hooks for her. Don't know whether you've ever seen a FIFI hook, but it looks a bit like a KYPE on the lower jaw of a mature male salmon. While I'm there I can't resist getting her a TOPO showing all of the routes up K2. I shouldn't encourage her really – I don't like to think how many GRAV a body gets up to falling from the top of K2. The other thing she likes is antique music – she's in this ensemble that play authentic instruments without any sound equipment or even MICS. They're never going to win an EMMY, but one has to encourage one's DOYS, and going past the window of a music shop I notice a fine LYRA viol for sale and order that for her too.

All this expense reminds me that I'm due for a SESH with my financial adviser, so I pop in to see him. He's an American, used to be a noted athlete in JUCO before he got injured

and they EXED him from the team. He's very keen that I should diversify my portfolio into the international markets: keeps on about these KYES, that seem to be some sort of Korean-American banking club, and also wants me to get involved, via some MEZZ process that I don't understand at all, with a Caribbean SUSU, but I'm a bit doubtful. Still, he's a canny fellow: I notice him putting a SPIF on an envelope, and he says he has all the firm's stamps perforated like that with the firm's initials to stop employees nicking them. And he keeps a DEBE on his desk to put any pennies in that he SAMS in the street, and is careful to EMPT it each night before he goes home.

I have lunch at a Japanese restaurant. The décor's a bit too inclined to POMO for my taste, but it's restful watching the KOIS in the fish-tank, and each afternoon they have a SADO: I find the graceful movements very soothing and enjoy the scent of the tea. It's a good place to come if you're a VEGO, because they do wonderful UDON. But today I have another kind of noodles, SOBA, the big buckwheat ones that I actually prefer to Malaysian MEES, and with it I have a good dollop of soy sauce made from KOJI. I notice that dish of the day is CRAY with GARI, but I don't much like shellfish, which contain too many APOS for me, nor the taste of ginger. They don't do only Japanese cuisine, you can also get a good dish of PUPU, and various kinds of KUEH. I talk with the waitress about her time at her JUKU; she says there's a lot of pressure on Japanese students and she's glad her time at school is over now.

On the way back home I meet my friend Paddy, a small bright-eyed man, chirpy as a SPUG. He's a TAIG and it being St Patrick's Day is drunk and burbling on about seeing SIDH in his garden. 'Been at the bottle again, Paddy?' I say. 'You should stick to the mineral WAIS'. He URPS and FAAS. 'Thash the shixth time I've FAAN', he says. 'What a shilly FEEN I am'. 'Come on', I say to Paddy, 'you've had ENUF. Let's get you home before someone VAGS you or the TECS get after you for stealing that PLUE they were asking me about yesterday'. 'It's not for YOUS to tell me to go home' he says in an ARSY sort of way. 'I'll jusht have a STIM more whiskey' and with that he falls flat on his face and lies in the road like a LYCH. I ponder the business of being an ALKO: getting drunk has always seemed pretty RENK to me, and I wonder why society thinks it's more acceptable for people like Paddy to get in that state than to SKYF a few ZOLS.

This reminds me that it's the local elections today, and I suppose I'd better vote, not that I've got much faith in the political process. OMOV is all very well, but the fact remains that if you're OOFY you've got clout and if you haven't you're just a FEEB, of no more account than a KUTU or a PUBE. If I had more energy I'd BORK a few of our politicians in the media.

My way home has taken me through a rather disreputable bit of the BURB; they've tried to improve it by building a PLEX there, one of those modern FABS with a FLIR in each room to cut down the risk of fire, but it's just turned out to be a target for graffiti vandals. I don't understand these people who want to BORM public buildings; the same sort of people, I suppose, who just don't care about ECOS. Someone, obviously a Zorro fan, has drawn a lot of ZZZS on one wall, while on another someone of a mathematical bent has drawn a geometrical figure based on a SECH.

As I'm going along Deepak's son comes past me hanging on to the back of a friend's bike; the friend's a West Indian lad with one of those FROS where each curl looks like a FRIB stuck on to the scalp. To my mind trying to CROG in heavy traffic is a sure way to the CREM, but it's not my business, so I resist the temptation to YORP after him. Just as

he gets to the corner I see him fall off – actually I’m having to SKEN because the sun’s in my eyes so I seem to see two HIMS fall off – but he picks himself with no harm done.

My last encounter of the day is with my Scots friend Hamish. ‘Have ye had ONIE news of oor Kenneth’, he asks, naming a mutual acquaintance. ‘I’ve had NANE myself for HAUF a year noo. Yesterday his wife CAAS me on her MOBE asking if I know where he is because he said he was coming DOON to see me.’ ‘WHAE?’, says I. ‘Kenneth’, she says, ‘are you DEIF or something? I think he’s left me to BYDE wi’ some Sassenach floozie’. And she gives a GERT sob. ‘Nae way, he LOUS you too much for that’, says I. ‘Dinna be in such of a hurry to FAUT the man, he never GANS FAUR, he ISNA the type, I’m sure ye’ve NISH to worry about’. ‘If he has left me’, she says, ‘I shall LOWP off the Forth Bridge’. ‘Och, calm DOUN and dinna talk sae SAFT’ says I, ‘I can see why thou BIST a little upset now, but even if he has gone you’ll find there’s plenty more seals in the sea to come to your AGLU’.

At last I get home, and it’s time to YARK my evening meal. There are some ZEPS in the fridge and a few SAVS, but I feel like fish again: there are some fillets of HAKU and HOKA in the freezer, together with the remains of yesterday’s ONOS and AHIS, that will go well served with a sprig or two of HIOI, and there’s a couple of PAVS for dessert. By the time I’ve cooked and eaten it’s after ten o’clock – how the EVOS fly – so I DOUK myself in a SITZ bath, which is very relaxing though there’s not much room to SKET about. And so to bed.