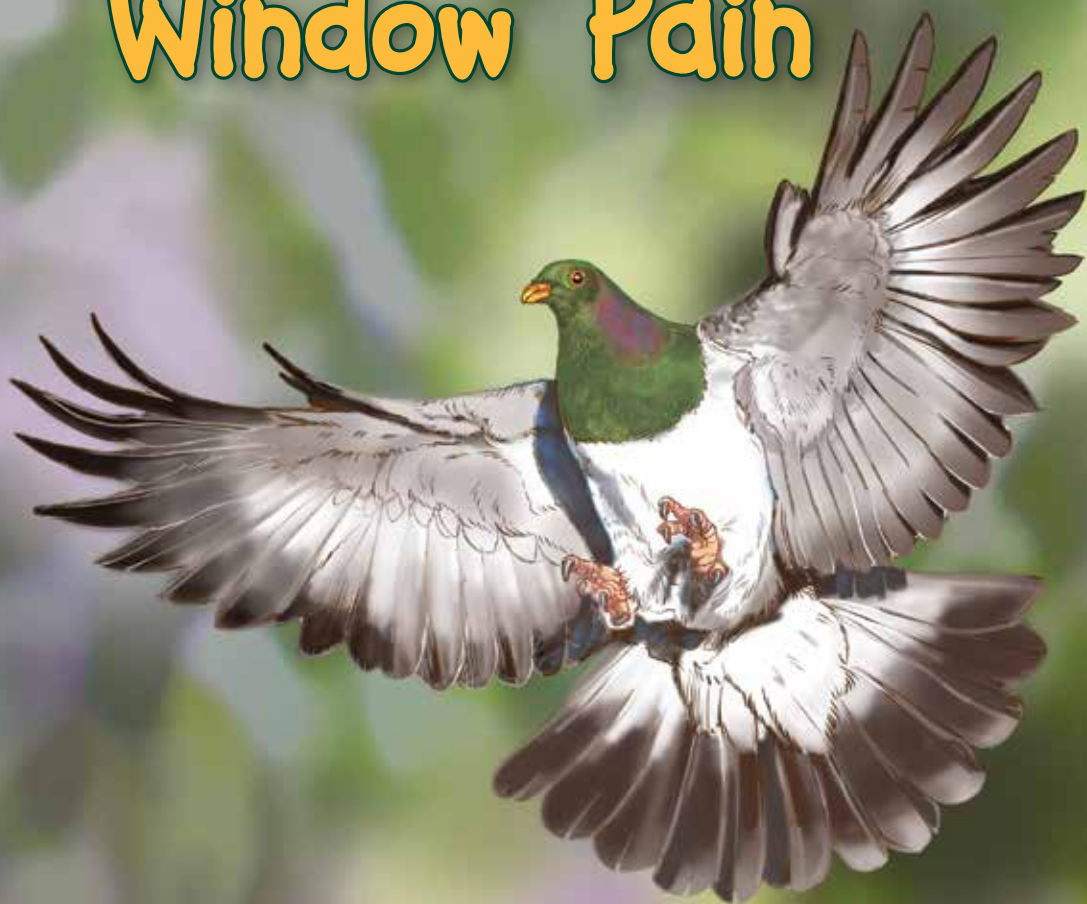


CD and the Window Pain



Story by John Carr
Illustrations by Michael Wilkin

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CD and the Window Pain



Chapter I

Tevita stared at the native bush beyond the school fence. Then he stared at the empty page in front of him.

“I can’t think of anything to write about,” he said.

Ms Piripi had heard this many times before from her class. She took a deep breath. But before she could give fabulous writing ideas, she was

interrupted by a thud as something hit the window.

“Duck!” screamed Ms Piripi.

Tevita ran to the window, opened it and looked out. Under a playground bench, he could see a flapping ball of green, white and brown feathers.

“No, Miss, it’s a pigeon,” he said, “not a duck.”



Tevita was right. It was a kererū, a native wood pigeon. The birds were in the bush behind the school and they often visited the school grounds. This was the first time Tevita had seen one try to fly through a closed window, like a comic book super hero.

Room 7 erupted. Children jumped to their feet and rushed to the windows. Some were shocked. Some were curious but most were worried about the kererū. She was hurt and shaking under the bench.



Ms Piripi tried to sound calm. She told the children to go back to their desks.

“Don’t worry,” she said. “I’m a teacher. I’m trained for emergencies.”

She rang the office and asked for Mr Crombie, who could fix anything.



Chapter 2

Mr Crombie, the caretaker, recognised the kererū straight away.

“This is CD,” he said. “She banged into a window in Room 10 two days ago. I call her CD because she can’t C D windows. She hit the window really hard this time. Look at the impact mark.”

From the other side of the window, Tevita could see the outline of a bird’s head and wings.

“She must be badly hurt,” he thought.

Mr Crombie used a towel to carefully pick up the dazed bird. He covered her eyes and gently held her wings so she wouldn’t hurt herself even more. He put her in a large cardboard box.

“I’ll take CD to the bird rescue centre,” he told Ms Piripi.

“Now, back to my writing ideas,” said Ms Piripi. Tevita was still staring at the mark on the window.

“I’ve already got one,” he said to Ms Piripi.



Chapter 3

At the bird rescue centre, CD was treated for a broken collar bone. Then she was moved to a special aviary, just for kererū. That was where the children in Room 7 came to visit her. They came with a bag of freshly picked karaka and kawakawa berries. They had lots of questions for Mrs Mack, who was in charge.

“The wing to body bandage is there to help heal the collar bone,” she said. “It will be coming off in a few days. In a couple of weeks, CD should be ready to go back into the bush.”

The children were shocked to find that eight of the 11 kererū at the aviary had flown into windows. They asked more questions.

Mrs Mack explained that kererū patients stay at the centre while they recover from their injuries. Then they spend some time building up their strength again in large aviaries before being released back into the wild.



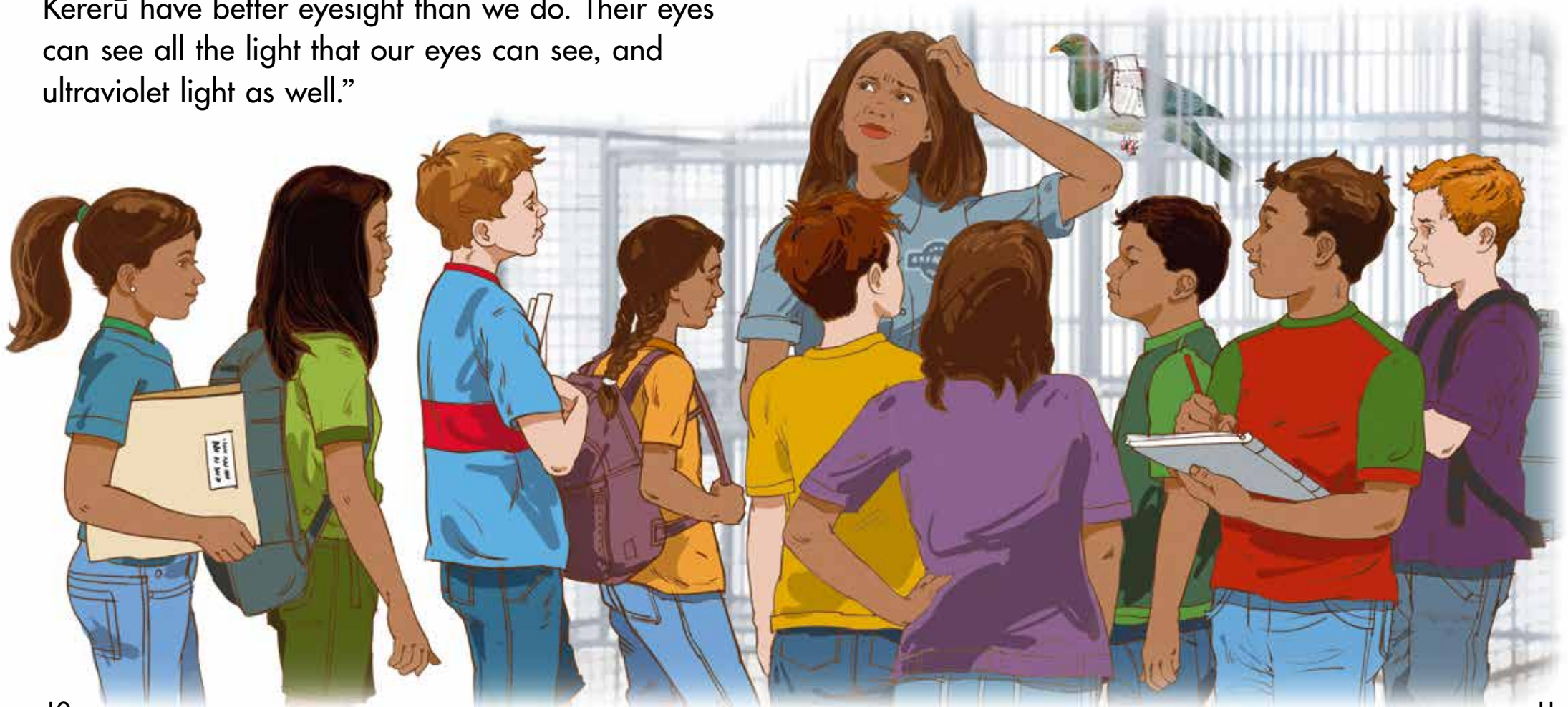
Mrs Mack also told them that, like CD, most of the injured kererū were young and still learning to fly properly.

“They fly into windows close to bush because they see reflections of trees in the windows,” she said. “They see trees with the berries they like to eat. It’s got nothing to do with their eyesight. Kererū have better eyesight than we do. Their eyes can see all the light that our eyes can see, and ultraviolet light as well.”

Tevita was busy taking notes. His interest in kererū window collisions was growing day by day.

“What is ultraviolet light? How come kererū can see it and we can’t?” he asked.

Mrs Mack scratched her head. “Those are excellent questions. Maybe you could save them for the internet when you get back to school.”



Chapter 4

The next day, Ms Piripi asked for volunteers for a STEAM project. The task was to find a way to stop kererū flying into windows. Each volunteer had one of the windows in the classroom.

“Remember that the window still has to let light in. The deadline for the task is the day CD is sent back to the bush.”

Tevita was the first to put up his hand and volunteer.



On deadline day, everyone was excited. Mrs Teulilo, the principal, couldn't believe the colourful windows she saw when she came into Room 7. Most had patterns taped to the windows. They let light into the room, but kererū could see a surface. It wouldn't be something they would fly into.



Melissa, Daniel and Cooper had made patterns that were see-through. They had melted wax crayon shavings between pieces of baking paper.

Sam and Pepper had cut holes in card and glued coloured tissue paper over them.

Sanjay had brown cellophane on the window. The kererū would think it was a brick wall.

“A see-through brick wall!” said Mrs Teulilo.
“I like it.”

She also liked Max’s idea, though it got tangled in her hair.

Max had made a mobile. He used a coat hanger, string and some of his mother’s bright earrings. He hung it in front of the window. The moving mobile would stop birds from flying into it.

“Your mother is kind to let you use her earrings,” said Mrs Teulilo.

“She doesn’t know yet,” said Max.

Denise and Arna had covered their windows in cat shapes.

“We used marker pens and a stencil,” said Arna proudly. “We did it because we love cats. Kererū don’t!”



Mrs Teulilo was very excited.

“These kererū crash stoppers are beautiful!” she said. “You have used so many colours!”

Then she moved on to Tevita’s window, which used no colours at all.

Ms Piripi looked puzzled.

“What have you been doing, Tevita?” she asked.

“Research,” said Tevita. “Mrs Mack talked about how kererū see so I’ve been researching ultraviolet light. You might not be able to see much on my window, but kererū can.”

Mrs Teulilo was interested.

“Can you explain,” she asked.

“We can’t see ultraviolet light, but birds can,” said Tevita. “Anything that reflects ultraviolet light looks bright and shiny to a kererū. So I’ve used something that is good at reflecting the ultraviolet light that hits this window.”



Chapter 5

Mrs Teulilo took a closer look. She could see some large letters on the window. They looked like they had been cut out of thin film.

“It’s a type of film I found out about on the internet,” said Tevita. “It reflects almost all of the ultraviolet light that hits it. It looks clear to us. To a kererū, it looks like a neon sign.”

“The words don’t make sense,” said Mrs Teulilo. “Just imagine you are seeing the words from outside, like a kererū,” said Tevita.

Mrs Teulilo read the words, “No Fly Zone. Very clever, Tevita, but kererū can’t read.”



Tevita laughed.

“We don’t know that for sure. Those words will be bright enough to stop kererū from flying into them, even if they struggle with reading.”

“Where did you get the film?” asked Ms Piripi.

“Abernathy Windscreens. They put film on windscreens to stop people in cars getting

sunburnt,” he said. “When I told Mr Abernathy about the project, he gave me a roll for free.”

Ms Piripi smiled. “That’s brilliant, Tevita! Great thinking! Now you’ve got us thinking as well.”

“If your idea works, Tevita, I’m going to get Mr Crombie to put film on every window in the school,” Mrs Teulilo said.



Chapter 6

Before lunchtime, Room 7 headed to the native bush for the release. They were quiet so they didn't scare CD. Mrs Mack carefully opened the door of the bird box. With a flutter of wings, CD flew into a cluster of totara trees and disappeared.

After lunch, as Tevita headed towards Room 7, he heard a heavy thud. It was a sound he had heard before. As he ran into the classroom, he saw a muddy mark on one of the windows – his window.

He ran outside. Under the window, on the playground, he saw something white and brown.

“Oh no, Tevita!” Ms Piripi called through the window. “Is it CD?”

“No,” said Tevita. He picked up a muddy rugby ball and looked at it. “I think its name is Punter.”

Ms Piripi laughed. “There's nothing your window could have done to stop that, Tevita. Rugby balls can't read or see ultraviolet light.”



Land Bird Facts and Tips

Help protect precious wild birds by sharing these facts and tips with all your friends, family, classmates and teachers.

- Get involved with the Great Kererū Count. This fun citizen science project was set up to help gather information about kererū numbers and their distribution across Aotearoa New Zealand. Find out more about this great project at: www.greatkererucount.nz
- Birds often strike windows because they see a reflection of clouds, sky or trees which makes them think that they can fly straight on ahead! Young birds learning to fly are especially vulnerable. Kererū, pīwakawaka, tūī, ruru, tarāpuka and kāhu are common victims. If you have blinds, you can reduce reflection by turning them so they are slightly closed.
- One of the most effective ways to prevent birds flying into your windows is the use of "Window Alert" decals. These are stickers that deter birds by reflecting UV light. The stickers make parts of the window opaque to birds, but are barely visible to humans.
- Hanging sun ornaments, crystals or other objects in your window will help birds know they can't fly through.

Visit kids.spcaeducation.org.nz to learn more about caring for wildlife.