Cheers to joy of life

Told and illustrated by Michael Striem ©

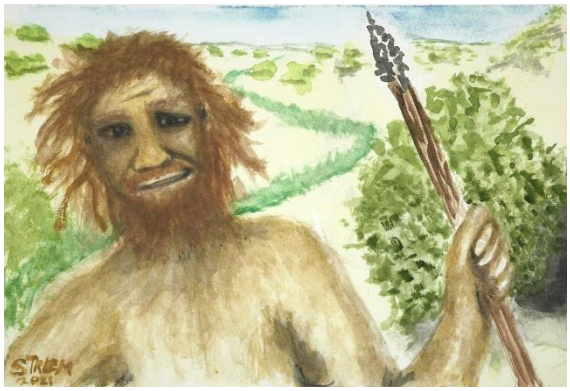
Preface

Humans as we know them today, evolved on earth as a very special creature. Humans developed culture based on skills of complex communication methods, starting with oral language and written language. Technology is still evolving based on these basic skills. The different species evolved in Africa and spread over the planet. They spread out to Europe, Asia, and Australia, later to America. Today Homo sapiens is the only species of humans. Throughout million or more years of evolution, the other humans who lived on Earth disappeared. The different kinds of humans lived next to each other, they met; those meetings shaped who we are today.

Here is an imaginary story about such coexisting of humans who lived along the east Mediterranean sea, Israel today. The story is trying to draw an optimistic lifestyle of lucky individuals which cherished life and peace. It is probably not the only way things had happened to humans.

"You are lucky when you have brains too" could be the punchline of this story.

Woosh is an adolescent Homo sapiens woman. Her charismatic, talented, brave, and optimistic character is bringing her to a life full of surprises, joy, and satisfaction. She is determined to make the best she can of every situation. She is friendly and helpful but would fight too. She makes quick decisions, is persisting and prevails.



Karr is an adolescent Homo neanderthal male, which lived at the area where Woosh is growing up. He is healthy and strong, who prefers to be alone. He has a very generous and loving nature, patient, open minded and trusts his instincts.

Karr's good life

Karr was sitting under the green mastic bush which was covering completely the opening of a small cave. The cave is facing north on the western foothills of Carmel Mountain range, not too far from the sea. His tribe has always lived here. Karr never went much further beyond this cave. He spent here most of his life. He knew the rocks and bushes around his cave, where he is placing traps and collecting his food. The birds, rabbits, rodents and many more animals came by his cave. Karr used to watch days go by, follow the sunrise and sunset, wind, and rain. He knew exactly where the bushes of raspberries are, where to find dom, sweet fruits, and figs, how to peel off the thorns of the prickly-pear sweet fruits, how to find bird eggs in their nests. He loved to collect the oak acorns. His life was calm, steady, and rewarding. From time to time, he trapped a bird or lizard and roasted them on a small fire he kept burning while in his cave. He was always busy preparing new traps, weaving nets and ropes. He used lime rock tools and flintstone hand axes to soften the leaf, to crush the seeds, to sharpen his sticks and spears.

Every day he would climb up at sunrise to his cave and return at sunset to his tribe's camp area, between the foothills and the seashore. His tribe members were living mostly of fishing and small

animal hunting, using traps and nets. It was a very slow pace and quite lifestyle. Using the cane and shrub branches to create small huts weaved from the canopy of canes and small shrub plants, over dents they dug in the sandy ground, bedded with dry grass leaves, furs from small cayote or cats they caught.

One day a surprising event changed his peaceful privacy. That moment changed his life. Nothing was the same again.

Woosh is growing up.

Woosh looked at Flint, the leader of her tribe, in admiration. He noticed it and sent back a smile to her. Woosh was hoping one day to have her own arrow like his, with a beautiful black, Sharp, and long flintstone arrowhead. It was attached to a beautiful light colored pine tree stick with a special glue they have made out of resin and wax. There were very few arrows like this, only the older and best hunter had them. The hunters told these storied how accurate these arrows are and how well they kill the prey. They praised and cherished daily.

Woosh loved to be out on the hills, searching and experimenting. She is called after the sounds she makes when sending an arrow at its target – *woosh*, always hitting “the bulls-eye”. Her arrows were the simple type of long sticks made from pomegranate branches, sharpened, and dried to become light in weight and accurate to hit the target.

She was running with her adolescent friends after Flint and the other hunters, to get the chance to make their first kill, maybe a rabbit, hyrax, craw, or pigeon. Woosh also liked to climb trees, cutting off the best straight brunched to make new arrows. She was also very good at wrestling with her friends, always stayed on top to win the fight. Woosh had that spark in her eyes looking for adventures, to experience something new. She loved to spend evening times, before returning to the tribe’s resting area, sitting on tall trees or on top of uprise rocks, and watch the evening fall.

The moon was turning almost full. Woosh was sitting on the beach of the small pond. The tribe often visits here when traveling through this region. Suddenly, a very strong pain in her abdomen hit her again, like she had before, when the moon was almost full. It was very embarrassing when blood suddenly dropped down along her legs. A bad smell. Strange irresistible anger filles her heart. She went into the cool pond’s water at a remote point, behind some canes and bushes. She remembered the comforting and understanding care she got from Nan, the tribe’s older women, last time. Now again. She prayed to survive this illness. She did not worry too much but still had the need to be left alone. The other kids were still playing in the water not so far from her, and she really wanted to join them but stayed hiding to clean up this embarrassing mess.

She has also noted that her breast is becoming bigger. It was more difficult now for her to cover with the old coyote skin. She prepared a few more ropes to tie around her waist so the animal skin will not interfere with the uphill sprint runs she is practicing.

The first kill.

Months passed. She was busy with the preparations for her solo hunting adventure. She added few strings and glue to her bow so she will be able to stretch it stronger to send-off the arrow faster. Woosh placed tightly the coyote’s skin over her shoulders. She tied it around her waist with a long rope which she braided of palm and cane leaf. She made sure that her flintstone knife is tied strongly to the stick which she carved. Now it is securely placed in the coyote’s skin pocket.

This time of the year, the leaves start turning red and orange, the grass is dry, no water running in the creaks, the nights become cooler and longer.

One late afternoon Woosh had this desire to make her first night hunt. She picked up her bow and arrows and was determined to come back with her first kill, to demonstrate her maturity to become

member of the hunt team. She went by the old women, Nan, and gave her a hug. She looked at Flint and saw him smiling at her.

The wind was to her face when she slowly walked uphill, towards the sun setting. She could still hear the kids play when she spotted a gazelle family in the distance. Woosh became very excited and confident. Walking behind bushes, on bare soil to keep as quite as possible and get close enough to the young gazelle. The gazelles did not notice her yet. They were grazing on the other side of the creak. Woosh walked slowly around the creak to avoid going through the thorny raspberry bushes at the dry creak's bottom. The gazelles went down the other side and she could not see them anymore. She ran as fast as she could to the top of the hill where they were a few minutes ago. She was glad to see that the gazelles are still in her view, downhill from where she stood. This was a perfect shooting position. The sun just went behind the horizon with the full moon rising opposite. The sun did not blind her too much. The wind was at her face so the animals could not notice the sound and her smell. Woosh put the arrow to the bow's string. Few more slow steps, she pulled the arrow back, aimed at the baby's neck, and – *woosh*… she released the grip. It was a hit. The gazelle family ran away in panic. It seemed to her that the baby's neck started bleeding from the wound where the arrow got stuck. She started running after it. She got very excited; she was thrilled with her good luck. But she stayed in focus. Although becoming very eager to lick the warm blood off her arrow, she still needed to get hold of her first solo kill. She could imagine how she will suck the running warm blood from the wound, as her leader, Flint, showed her how to do immediately when pulling down the kill.

It became sunset. The gazelles ran fast over the horizon again. It became darker, she could still follow the blood drops on the ground, but it was getting very hard to follow. She saw the older gazelles run downhill, away into the forest of small oak, dom and mastic trees. "Where is the young? It must have fallen somewhere". She could hardly continue to follow the blood drops on the dry grass.

When she almost gave up finding the young gazelle in the dark, she suddenly noticed on the other side of the creak a green mastic bush rattle. "Maybe the young fell under the bush?" She had to run again around the creak's dense raspberry bushes and approached the mastic bush slowly. Woosh was almost sure she can see the tip of the young gazelle's leg on the ground under the bush. She was thrilled.

It was almost dark, and the full moon was rising behind her. It made everything become in shades of black and grey. She walked very solely and bent to reach out to pull the baby gazelle from under the bush.

A loud hiss and roar of a large cat hit her to freeze.

She had never been so close to a tiger. It scared her.

The fear of been eaten by a tiger made her drop herself to the ground and pee unwillingly.

The gazelle's leg got pull further under the bush and she could not see it anymore.

"The tiger must have gotten to it already", she thought.

Her dreams and hopes vanished in a blow.

This moment took forever.

Her instincts as a hunter made her rise back up on her knees (which were wet and very shaky by now) and put her second and last arrow on the bow, aiming it at the bush.

The fight for his life

The sun was not as hot anymore, the shadows were becoming long again. The grass was dry. Karr's view from under his green mastic bush was dull, no large animals came by lately, just a turtle and few grasshoppers. The moon was full. The sky was not too dark, he liked the pretty silhouette of the trees and grass with the light of full-moon sky. Karr was a little bit hungry today and thirsty too. This time of the year it is without say, water is hard to get. He was getting ready to start his way back to the tribe's living area. He put sand over the small fire he was keeping in the cave. He started climbing out under the green mastic bush which was covering the entire entrance to his cave when suddenly something fell next to the bush.

It is a young gazelle, with a stick through its neck.

Amazed and surprised by the generous gift he looked around and saw nobody.

Karr quickly pulled the baby gazelle under the bush. He quickly pulled out the stick. He licked the blood, noticing that it was a very special stick. He recognized immediately that this stick was not made by one of the hunters of his tribe. It was very sharp-ended and very smooth.

While licking the stick and the wound on the gazelle's neck he asked himself "What kind of hunter stabbed this gazelle? How did the hunter get so close to the gazelle? How did the gazelle run away from the hunter? where is the hunter now??"

As he was hungry and thirsty. The warm blood he licked was sweet and satisfying. He quickly cut open the young gazelle breast, and pulled out its small heart, as hunters do. It was still warm.

As he is holding the stick and the heart in his hands, it stroked him suddenly that the hunter must be very nearby, looking for the kill, and plan to do exactly what he is doing right now.

Karr got scared of been unprepared to this situation. He had to pool himself together.

It did not take long, and he did see the silhouette of a hunter running downhill towards him. This surprised him that the hunter was that far away. "How could he have stabbed the young gazelles from such a distance?" Karr thought, "maybe the gazelle ran away after it got stabbed?"

He sat with no motion hoping the hunter will not notice that he is gently pulling the gazelle more under the bush. But it seemed to be too late. The hunter has reached the bush and reached out for the leg.

Karr got really scared. He used to hunt and fight, but he had never encountered a strange hunter face-to-face. Now he is sitting an arm-length away from one. His whole life passed in his mind right now. "Maybe I could scare the hunter off pretending to be a tiger? as he once saw, the great cat protects their kill from the approaching hyaenas?

He started making loud hissing and roaring like he saw the tigers do.

It seemed to have worked….

The hunter fell to the ground.

Hey, wait….

Strong urine smell…

"Did I see the hunter is a girl who just peed on herself?"

"She must be very scared of the "tiger", he thought.

Then he saw how she gets back on her knees, lifting the bow and pointing an arrow, just like the one which killed the gazelle, aimed straight at him!

His hearth started beating fast now. He started sweating like hell.

“She is a real danger to me now. She is not giving up her kill. It belongs to her after all”, he thought. “I might end up with an arrow in my neck too…”

A shiver went through his body.

A bloody encounter

On her knees, wet from her pee, frozen with the arrow on the string, the moon from behind her was illuminating the bush, but she could not see the gazelle nor the tiger. She was ready to fight the tiger to save her life.

“Maybe it is not a big tiger, maybe just a smaller wild cat”, she thought?

“Maybe I could chase it away”.

She released her strongest and best wolf barking. She was barking and growling louder and louder.

Woosh did not expect what happened next.

For as long as eternity she was barking until suddenly the leaves of the bush slowly move. An open palm of a dark and hairy hand stretched out offering to her the arrow she shot at the gazelle with the gazelle's heart stuck on the arrow, still dropping blood.

She looked closer into the shades of the bush. She could barely see the arm of a young hairy male, sitting on his knees behind the open cut gazelle.

His large eyes were calm. His huge lips were covered with the gazelle’s blood.

Woosh was completely surprised and confused.

What a relief, but still a mystery.

She carefully puts down the bow and grabbed the offered arrow with the heart and started chewing it. It was still warm and soft. Usually this is the ultimate ending of a successful hunt, but now she was not sure how this situation will end. This hunt is not over yet.

Quickly done chewing and swallowing the heart, with the blood on her lips, dropping and running down her neck and hands, she wants to have the whole gazelle.

While on her knees she points the arrow as a spear at him.

His eyes narrowed, and his big nose started inhaling and sniffling.

Woosh quickly jumps up and towards the guy with her arrow as a spear aimed to his body.

Karr pushes away the spear with his arms and grabs her hands with his powerful hands, still wet with the gazelle’s blood.

With her knees now on his chest, she is wrestling him, trying to release her hands from his grip. She feels her legs and feet on the open cut gazelle lying in its blood puddle on the ground under the bush, making her legs sticky with sand and leaves.

Karr is used to hunt and fight strong animals with his spears and rocks.

He is very flexible. He manages to turn around and flip her over.

Now Karr is riding on her back from behind, still holding tight her fists in his hands.

She is completely locked by his strong muscular body.

Karr pulls her up and outside the bush.

Karr drops her to the ground and makes a few steps back, away from her.

Karr pushes with his leg the gazelle away from him towards her face while she is still on the ground.

Woosh realizes that she lost the fight but gets the gazelle. Defeated she slowly gets back on her feet. Keeping her eyes on the hairy guy, she picks up her bow and arrows, and pulls the gazelle by its legs and throws it over her shoulders. Carefully walking backwards, she started getting away from the bush. Slowly walking back, then faster and faster, running away from this bush and the hairy guy.

Karr relaxed. Taking a deep breath. “She is not going to kill me, she ran away”. He is saved. He watched her run away until she was out of his sight. He stayed sitting there for a long time, trying to relax and understand what just happened.

He can’t resist sniffing her urine mark on the ground. He does not recognize it. A new type of creature.

When returning to his tribe Karr was very confused. The girl and her gazelle entered his life and would not let go. The “fight for his life” which turned into a surrender of the gazelle, the eye and body contact with a girl were haunting him.

When he walked into the camp he found many worried friends, wondering where he was. The blood on his face and hands was noticed by his tribe members.

He always returns to camp at evening shortly after sunset…. Never returning so late with blood on him and a hearted look in his eyes.

Karr was walking around the camp that night very confused and restless. The young hunter girl did not leave his mind. He went for a night swim in the sea. He fell asleep on the warm sand.

Karr woke up on the beach in the middle of the night. Alone with the full moon right above him. He stood up and walked back to the camp, sat by the fire, and was letting his thoughts fly by.

“She is a skilled hunter, with an amazing smooth, sharp stick. She swallowed the heart like a beast. She jumps like a cat and fights like a lioness. Where did she come from? There may be more of her kind around… will she come back? Will she hunt me again some other day?” many thoughts bothered him, giving him “nightmares”.

Honored, but ….

Woosh ran uphill as fast as she could, with her first kill on her shoulders. She did not get far when she saw on the dark horizon with the full moon behind, the silhouette of Flint running towards her.

She ran towards him, dropped the gazelle, and hanged herself over his neck. She was shaking. Flint held her tight, tapping gently on her head to relax. He had followed her from a distance, to make sure she is safe. He was too far away, and it was too dark, for him to see the whole encounter…. It happened so fast… he could hear the cat’s hissing and growling, and he could hear the barking. He did not see the arrow with the heart stuck on it, offered by Karr… He saw the bush rattle. He saw her picking up the gazelle and running uphill.

It took her a few minutes to get her breath back.

She showed Flint the gazelle with joy. She made it!!

Flint smiled at her, put his arm over her shoulder. He was glad she is safe now. They walked together back to the camp.

When they reached the center fire at the camp, Woosh hugged Flint again for a long time.

Flint looked at Woosh and sees the blood on her lips, neck hands and legs, and on her arrow.

He examined the gazelle, he saw the open cut, he looked for the heart…

Flint gave Woosh a great smile of pride when realized the heart is gone, and hugged Woosh again.

Then he sniffed the gazelle again, and got the scent of pee, strange sweat, some smoke, and sand from the cave. He did not completely understand how these came to be on the young gazelle. He will investigate it tomorrow.

By now the whole tribe was gathering around them in a circle.

Flint pooled out his arrow with the black, sharp flintstone point.

He marks it with a drop of blood he took from the gazelle and hands it over to Woosh.

Woosh blushed with joy. She was proud and happy as never before. Her dream came true, with hard work and persistence. But deep in her hearth she knew it is not perfect as she imagined it to be.

The young gazelle she has killed was cut and roasted to everyone.

Woosh was honored to receive its skin and its small antlers.

It took Woosh a long time to really relax from the defeat. The unexpected encounter with the hairy guy under the bush was haunting her. This is not how she imagined to herself the killing adventure will unfold.

“Who is he? What was he doing there? Where did he come from? Why did he surrender the gazelle to me?” So many questions with no answers.

Woosh felt the kill is not completely done by herself. “The hairy guy had cut open the gazelle and pulled its heart out, offering it to me on the stick. What does it mean?”

Next morning – new adventures

Next morning, Karr decides to continue his usual daily life at the cave.

He is not going to worry about the hunter-girl returning after him.

Maybe keeping his routine will help him overcome the change he could feel is happening to him.

He prepared some dry straw for starting a fire.

He prepared some traps to catch birds and rabbits.

He walked east uphill the creak to his domain.

At the cave he left the traps and went out to look for food, some ripe raspberries could be great for breakfast. He walked around the cave, climbed up some rocks, walked down the dry creak to the raspberries. He picked few and returned to his cave. It was a cool morning with almost no wind.

The air was still. It felt strange to him. He walked back out.

The gazelle’s blood on the ground under the bush was still sticky.

He couldn’t resist the need to sniff again the spot of her pee. And again, inhaling deeply. And Third time. Karr was intrigued with her smell, getting her into his blood, saved to his collection of scents and events.

He sat on the rocks in front of the cave. He was looking around, kind of watching if someone comes close. He had a good view to the creak leading up from his cave, but he never went there yet. Now, knowing the hunter-girl ran that way, he became very curious what he may see from the top of the hill, where the sun was now rising behind the horizon.

Very slowly and with a lot of caution he made step by step his first time ever walk up the creak. His instincts told him to try and keep an eye contact back towards his cave and area around it. He left the bottom of the creak and went up to the hilltop.

All his senses were in full alert. He was watching each step, listening to the birds and light wind. Breathing deep trough his large nose to smell the unfamiliar territory. He could feel the sand and rock become sharper and rougher. The grass and brush were much of the same.

He sat down on a rock at the top and was watching the amazing large view he could see now. He looked back; the cave was now hardly visible behind the green mastic bush. He also noticed that the sea is not visible from here. There is another range of hills in the way.

Karr took the time and stayed sitting relaxed and absorbing the new view for a long while. By watching the length and direction of the shadow he knew that it is now almost noon. He became thirsty and went down a few steps where he noticed a pomegranate tree with nice red fruit. He picked one and enjoyed the sweet juice.

As he was sitting under the tree's shade, he could hear some noise coming from over the east side of the creak's hilltop. He stood up under the tree and was looking at that direction. He was expecting a herd of gazelles or bores run away from a predator. It did not take long, and he saw a single gazelle running over the hilltop toward him. As it was coming closer the gazelle noticed Karr and made a sharp turn downhill. It was running with no stop. That is strange. Usually, the gazelle will run a short distance, and stop for a quick view around, and then continue the run. By now he noticed, by the size and shape of its antlers, it is an adult male gazelle. When watching closer he saw an arrow stuck to its back. It was <u>not</u> bleeding. It must have hit his bones rather go into the muscle, he assumed. "This is the reason it ran with no stop". He could see how the gazelle ran straight into the raspberry bushes, getting stuck there and falling to the ground under the bushes, in the tall dry grass at the creaks bottom. "Smart animal", he thought. "It is completely invisible now".

He immediately knew a hunter will follow. And of course, he saw two persons coming running from behind the hill. He sat down very slowly in the tree's shade, watching. As they reached the top, they stopped running, looking for the gazelle. They did not see it. They started walking around the creak on its other side, closer to his cave. He noticed that they are pointing towards his cave.

"Is this the girl-hunter from yesterday?" he wondered, "who else could it be?"

He became scared. His heart started beating fast. "She is after me now, and brought some help with her this time…"

Karr did not move. He could hardly breath. He was afraid his sweat will expose his presence. He lowered his position, almost lying on the ground, watching them.

Woosh is getting more practice

Woosh woke up at her camp earlier than usual. The sun was not up yet over the horizon. She was determined to make a complete kill, without any help. Now she got the new flintstone-arrow, and she needs to practice with it, to master it.

She quickly tied the new, and still wet, gazelle skin on her shoulders, and placed the old coyote's skin around her waist. She picked up her bow and arrows and her knife. She headed uphill from the camp on the pond. When she reached halfway to the top of the hill she looked back and saw Flint behind her. She waited for him to catchup.

She Was very happy to be coached by Flint personally. She was very proud with her new arrow and immediately started practice many times aiming and shooting the new arrow at trees and bushes. Flint helped her calibrate her hold of the bow and the new arrow, which was longer and heavier than those she used before.

It was almost noon when they walked towards the creaks hilltop where they noticed a gazelle, an adult male, on the creak's halfway to the top. There was no wind. The gazelle noticed them too and was looking at them with alert. Woosh looked at Flint. He looked at her and nodded 'yes'. She slowly put her new arrow on the bow's string. She pulled it back as much as she could. She aimed at the gazelle which was still standing there watching them. And '*woosh',* she released the arrow and watched it hit the gazelle on its back. It did get stuck on the gazelle's back which ran away in panic. The gazelle ran fast over the horizon and disappeared. Woosh and Flint ran after it but could not trace it. They didn't find the arrow either.

They kept walking, hoping to find the blood trail. All in vain. Woosh lost her new arrow on her first day using it. She was so disappointed. Yesterday she lost the fight with the hairy guy, today she loses the new arrow… She began crying. Flint comforted her and encouraged her to keep up and go on.

They went on walking on the hills looking for some prey. They picked a few raspberries and went on with their search.

At some point she recognizes the place. It was the creak where she encountered yesterday the hairy guy under the green mastic bush. Flint has noticed it too. They both pointed out the place where the young gazelle fell under the bush. They lowered their height and walked on their knees to get closer to the place where the guy was sitting yesterday.

They went behind a low bush and sat there under its shade for a while. They did not notice any activity. They started walking slowly down the hill towards the bush. Very cautiously they reached the bush.

Woosh shows Flint the spot where she found the gazelle last night. Flint could smell urine, sweat and noticed some smoke smell as well.

Woosh started crawling forwards the bush at the exact point where she fell to the ground of fear last night. She crawled carefully under the green canopy.

She let her eyes get used to the darkness of the shade.

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The hairy guy was not sitting there. However, she noticed that there is a cave behind the bush. She went further into the cave. Flint followed her with caution. They were amazed to see on the cave's sandy floor a place for a fire, traps, and leftovers of consumed food.

It was obvious that it is a place someone is using regularly. Woosh and Flint looked at each other.

As they turned to get out from the cave behind the bush, they heard something fell to the ground outside.

They pulled out their bows and put arrows on the strings to be ready for a fight.

They slowly went a bit further out and could see the rocks and sand outside the bush.

The male gazelle with the arrow stuck on its back laid there. It was still alive, trying to free itself because its legs were tied together.

What a shock.

They further went out from under the bush. Someone must be here. They searched the place. At some point they saw way up over cliff a hairy head watching them. He was lying on the rock with his head between the grass.

Woosh and Flint assumed the guy has caught the gazelle which she had hit with her new arrow and followed them. They examine the way the gazelle's legs were tied; with a very strong braded rope they have not recognized yet.

They notice that he dropped the gazelle exactly to the place where the young gazelle fell yesterday. "It might be the same hairy guy from yesterday", Woosh thought, "it might be his cave here…"

It seemed the guy is peaceful and not looking for a fight. On the contrary, he delivered them their gazelle.

With Flints advise, Woosh pulls out her new arrow from the lying gazelle's back. She puts it back on her bow, aimed at the gazelle's neck and released. The new wound made the gazelle bleed faster and shortened its pains of dying.

Now flint and Woosh put down their bows and arrows on the ground. They picked up the gazelle and carried it up the creak towards the place the guy was hiding.

At some distance, with great caution, and no fast motions, Flint and Woosh laid the gazelle on the bare rock and looked at Karr. He was still hiding behind the rock, watching them. Woosh took out her knife and cut open the gazelle's breast, she pushed her hand inside and pulled out the warm heart. She separated it from the rest of the body. She held it on her hand and walked slowly toward Karr.

Karr raised himself to his knees and put down his long spear.

When she was an arm-length away from him she offered him the heart.

Karr looked into her eyes and accepted the heart. He picked it up from her hand, chewed it and swallowed it slowly.

They all looked at each other's eyes and smiled.

Karr made a quite cat's hissing and growling sound.

Woosh replied with a quite barking.

They all laughed.

Karr untied the legs and wrapped his rope around his waist.

They cut the gazelle. Half was left for Karr.

The rest Woosh put on her shoulders, and they started their way back uphill.

Flint was glad to have followed Woosh last night and to have coached her today. He was now confident that Woosh is doing fine. Her instincts and actions are good. She is skilled and fit to hunt and fight. He was not quite sure yet as regards with the hairy guy. What is he? He seems to be friendly and cooperative. But what will be next? Does he have a group or tribe? Are they as calm and peaceful as Karr?

Woosh was thankful and appreciated Flint for his sincere concern and care of her.

Leaving Karr behind seemed like an unfinished encounter to her. She will have to follow up on him. Yesterday she hit a young Gazelle and the hairy guy delivered it to her. Today she hits a bigger gazelle, and again, he delivers it to her. At least this time she gets to give him the heart, like he did yesterday. It made her feel more even with him, although she admitted he is much stronger and better wrestler than she is.

Karr was still uncertain about the change happening to his life. He is suddenly forced to deal with new situations. He is tempted to enlarge his activity beyond the cave and its near rock. He finds interest in new trees not too far from where he used to spend all his time. He also widens his horizon of the hills around and east to his cave.

Most of all Karr is intrigued and overwhelmed with this girl, a brave and skilled hunter, and beautiful too. He was curious of her and her friend's origin. Karr was very impressed with her fighting and hunting skills and hunting tools. The arrows, they hit from very far away. This was amazing to him.

Karr returned to the camp very early today. Again, his friends raised their large eyebrows in surprise. Karr shared the half of this male gazelle with his tribe, He gets to describe the amazing new encounters with tall hunters, with smooth dark skin, narrow nose, and small lips. A new kind. They do, however, have very interesting bows and arrows, which helps them kill from a distance, but then they also tend to "lose the game…" Everyone laughs.

New dawn

Next morning Karr went back to his cave's area, as usual. He was though very cautious, maybe the hunter-girl will come to hunt him again.

Woosh needed to solve the issue with this hairy guy. She decides to go back to that place once again. Whatever will be.

Both, Karr and Woosh have reached the rock above the cave at about the same time. As if they have made that appointment in advance.

For Karr it was just another morning at his cave, although he knew now that there is a hunter out there which knows about this place.

For Woosh – it was like a quest; For a very strange reason Woosh needed to complete her understanding and knowing of this person, whatever he may be.

With smiles on their faces, they saw each other coming and climbing up the rock from opposite sides. They have put to the ground slowly their weapons, bow, arrow, spear, and sticks.

The sun rises over the creak's hilltops. They sat down on the cool rock, watching each other, examining their bodies and impressions.

Karr has noticed the gazelle's skin over her shoulders and the antlers on her neck. He was very interested in her bow. She handed it over to him. She also showed him the new arrow, with the black flintstone point, tied and glued to the long pinewood smooth stick. Karr is rubbing and sniffing the pine wood; it is the first time for him to hold this type of wood. "Flint picked this pine wood stick further up in the mountains, where the hills are higher and the air in much cooler and dry", Woosh explains what

she has heard the hunters tell along the traveling journey south, on their way to the desert. “During the rainy season the dry creaks there get filled with rushing water”.

Woosh demonstrates the bow and arrow technique. A sparrow on the tree in front of them was very lucky to hide behind some branches which protected him from her fast and sharp arrow. Not so lucky was that craw which was sitting on the top twig of the oak tree.

Karr jumped off the rock and quickly picked up the injured craw and broke the bird’s neck.

Karr pulled a few long, black feathers from the craw’s wing, weaved them with a long root he pulled. He braded all together and handed to Woosh a ribbon of black craw feathers. She was watching with admiration his skilled thick fingers create a delicate item. She gladly tied it on her neck, next to the small gazelle antlers from before yesterday, smiling with some shy look at Karr.

They entered the cave. Karr started a small fire in the cave.

They sat in the cave and enjoyed the roasted craw.

With the fire’s light flickering she looked around. The cave’s walls had interesting patterns she has not seen before. Carved lines and handprints in red and black with the white background of the limestone.

Meanwhile it started to become windy. Clouds darkened the morning sky. It started to feel like rain is coming. First came a strong wind which howled and shook the green mastic bush at the entrance. Then came the lightning with the thunder rumbling and echo in the creak. The large drops came shooting down on the dry ground and rocks. The smell of wet soil once again filled the air.

Woosh loved the rain. The first rain has always large drops, and it is still warmer. So, she untied her animals’ skin from her shoulders, dropping it to the cave’s floor, and went outside to get rinsed and cleaned by the rain. She was jumping and dancing with joy, as she would do with her friends at the tribe. She rinsed thoroughly her black hair, making sure all dust and pieces of dry leaf and twigs are washed away. She sat down on the warm rocks, rubbing her bare feet.

Karr came right after her, using some muddy lime sand to rub off old and dry dirt from his body.

Karr was still embarrassed and confused with the intrusion to his privacy. He was not used to have guests at his cave. He was though glad and proud to share his fire and roasting skills.

It did not last long. The clouds have moved on and the afternoon sun came out again with a clear blue sky. Fresh air filled their lounges.

Woosh was wondering what her tribe is up to right now. At this time of the year, they start packing their tools and move further south. There is this place south from here with a river of calm water, where they can catch fish, frogs, and large birds. She was looking forward to travel again.

She picked up her fur, tied it back to her shoulder. She picked up her bow and arrows. She turned to Karr. He was looking at her, not smiling. He reached out his hand to her. They went outside the cave and climbed up to the large rock above the cave. They sat in the sun, drying their hair. The ground was wet. The rocks slippery.

Woosh felt a sadness in the air.

She looked into his eyes.

He held her small hand with his huge palm.

She put her other hand on his hairy arm. It felt very different from the time she wrestled him under the bush.

“What am I doing? Woosh thought, “I am losing it, losing control, I feel like been pulled by a strong wind”.

She had to be back at the tribe, otherwise her friends will get worried and start looking for her.

Woosh dramatically stood up and made a few steps away from Karr.

Karr stood up as well. He looked into her eyes. His lips started a hesitated smile, but it didn't last. He did not know what to do.

Woosh turned away and climbed uphill. Then she turned back. She stood there watching Karr walk downhill, along the creak's bottom. She wondered where it leads too. Karr disappeared behind the trees.

Karr has reached the camp early again today, with a long face. No one could help him. Not even a dip in the sea, which felt very cold now. Karr did not know if he wants to go back to his cave anymore. "Is she going to bother me, my quite time alone in my cave every day?" "But I am proud of my cave and the little creak, with the rocks and bushes".

"This is my life, and it should stay like that" he decided.

Woosh calmly walked back to the pond. She knew the way by now, up along the raspberries, by the oak trees, around the next creak and down to the pond. It was not late yet. The sun was right over the top of the hills shining from her back. It gave her a good view of the route. She noticed a pomegranate tree on the other side of the creak. She walked there and picked couple of large red ripe fruits and broke off a nice long straight branch she would turn into an arrow. She had a strange feeling, as if she could smell Karr here. She looked back to the setting sun over the horizon. She realized that the green mastic bush covering the cave is visible from here, and the large bare lime rock in front and above the cave as well. It gave her some good feeling of getting to know the place.

While walking slowly downhill towards her camp, she was pondering about this first day alone away from the tribe, which turned to be a rainy day. It was fun getting a nice shower, great craw hunt and roast, she was putting her fingers to feel the black feathers on her neck. "He is kind to me" she thought, "and I feel comfortable with him, although I barely know him at all". It bothered her and surprised her to notice that he is very different from everyone else she knows. He is much shorter, very wide body and muscular, hairy all over, light-colored skin, big mouth, and lips. Large nose, wide eyes, huge eyebrows. "His head in general seems to be bigger than mine", she thought. His hair is brown and thick and, kind of straight but very…. how would she describe it, "not well maintained, sticky and dirty"?

"What am I feeling in my heart right now?" "I am not afraid of him. I like him", she thought, "but it is different form liking all other boys of the tribe".

She was glad to meet everyone at the camp. The story of the young gazelle and the older male gazelle she hit impressed everyone. Now she has these craw feather on her neck, weaved and braided on strings made of roots? How interesting.

Flint looked deeply into her eyes. He seemed concerned. She had the feeling it has to do with meeting Karr all day today. They sat down and talked about the 'hairy-guy' creature. Very different and yet similar as well. Very handy with doing things, creative. Sensitive and kind. Cooperative.

Flint has slowly put his hand on Woosh's lower abdomen, while looking at her reaction. She was surprised. She was not quite sure what this is all about. Then Flint pointed at some toddlers running around, looking at Woosh from the corner of his eyes. "Did she, or did she not get the issue?". Flint decided to let the older women of the tribe for help and advice.

Flint started making preparation for departure south in the next few days before the rainy days make travel less comfortable. The days are much shorter now, and the winds start to blow off the leaf of trees.

Women's talk

Next morning Woosh was asked by Nan, the older woman, to help with collecting oak acorns. She went up the hill and brought back a full skin of acorns. Then they peeled them, grinded them with rocks, and let the powder dry in the sun. They mixed the powder with some dates, figs, and fruit juice and rolled the mixture into small balls. Then rapped each ball in large grape leaves which they picked from the vines by the pond. Each stuffed leaf was placed on a long stick and roasted lightly over the small fire.

Everything was put together for the departure.

Some of the women were playing with babies and toddlers.

This reminded her the short question Flit had last night, which she did not understand. She looked around. It seemed to her that it had to do with this situation of women taking care of the children while the men hunt and gather wood and fruit from further away. Then she also noticed a woman breastfeeding a very young baby. These observations were not new to her, but now they kind of had some new meaning. There is more than playing and wrestling, running, and jumping. Even hunting is not just a play. She knows that now for sure remembering how scared she was in front of the bush, hearing that loud hissing and roaring of the “tiger”, later been defeated wrestling. She also remembered how she cried when she “lost” her new arrow….

She sat down to prepare a new arrow from the pomegranate branch she picked. Her thoughts were running through her mind.

She thought of Karr. “Why am I thinking of him? Am I going to meet him again, ever? Do I **want** to meet him again?”

A young woman of the tribe, called Libby, saw her pondering. They both started walking around the camp, and eventually they went up the hill. It was noon, they picked some more acorns. This dry fruit can be stored and consumed later.

When they reached the top of the hill, they walked towards the pomegranate tree. Woosh has noticed grey and white craw feather woven and braided with strings hanging on the pomegranate tree. She took them and put on her neck. She knew how they got there and by whom…

She looked down towards the green mastic bush. She saw Karr there, sitting on the bare rock.

Her heart started beating fast. Her breath became fast too.

Libby noticed her excitement and looked down to see the hairy guy.

Libby gave Woosh a push and directed her to Karr. Libby took the acorns from Woosh and set Woosh to go.

Woosh hesitated. She was not sure what is the purpose of this, but she really wanted to get together with Karr again. There was this inner thrill pumping up her blood stream and throwing her out of balance.

As Libby turned back, Woosh ran downhill the other direction, towards Karr.

Woosh ran so fast it felt as if she is flying.

A different play

Karr has noticed her approaching. Probably the birds, brush and the small rocks rolling under her feet made enough noise. He turned towards her and jumped off the rock.

She saw him jump off the rock. She did not know in which direction will he turn. Will he go down to his camp?

No, he came running towards her, with his arms open and a huge smile.

Thrilled she jumped on him as she used to do when wrestling the boys of her tribe.

Her legs and knees hit his wide body. He let himself fall slowly back on the soft sand in front of his cave.

Karr softly grabbed her hands. He let her arms slip along his hands to reach the ground behind his head. Karr could again feel her strength and already admired her brave jump and experience with fighting and wrestling.

Woosh could again feel how strong and muscular he is. She also noted his calm look with kind of a smile on his huge lips.

Karr noticed the grey-white feathers on her neck and smiled. He started sniffing her hands, her arms, her neck, while still holding her arms softly.

She let him sniff. She could too, smell his strange scents, like nothing she smelled before. Smoke, salt, dust, sweat, other herbs and resins?

Woosh was now completely over the hairy guy. Both her hands held in his hands, she could hardly move them, he was so strong. It was clear he is not fighting her, on the contrary, he was peacefully giving in.

He was sniffing her hands. He could smell pomegranate sticks, and acorns, and sweet dates. He could smell her breath by now, warm, and sweet. He felt her smooth dark skin. The spark in her eyes ignited him. He was calmly leaning back, letting her get closer. He did not really know how to wrestle a girl. He was wrestling his friends with force, turning their arms, hitting their arms and chest. He never fought or wrestled a girl before, accept when defeating her under the push. He started sweating again, his breath and heart beats changed as if he is working hard on something.

By now she was sitting on his lap. Her hands and legs on the ground on his sides. His strong muscular hands around her back.

A strange feeling of relaxation took over her.

Did she win this fight? Or maybe this is a different play?

The skin of her thighs was rubbing on his hairy lap.

Suddenly it became wet and warm with a squirt she accidently released on him.

His manhood hardened. His arms tightened behind her back.

A sharp pain of her torn virginity made her release a quite cry with her lips tightening.

She looked into his eyes. They were as shocked as herself.

She opened her mouth as if grasping for air.

Her lower body became tight.

He could not move.

She could not move either.

She started feeling a warmth spreading inside her.

They laid down on their side, connected tightly.

Her arms and legs now behind his back.

His hairy, muscular legs between her legs.

She slowly tried to relax, to slow down her heartbeat.

They both laid there for a while, next to each other, overwhelmed with the post climax sensation.

The sun was just going down over the hilltop.

They were lying in the soft sand in front of the cave.

He sat up and turned to her. He reached his hand to her. She grabbed it. Warm and strong.

She sat next to him.

The sky turned pink on the west and dark blue on the east.

She looked at him, into his large eyes.

He looked at her, sniffing her black curly hair.

She quietly barked. He quietly hissed back to her, with a large smile.

They both started laughing till tears ran down their cheeks.

Woosh knew now that she has matured. She had her first solo kill. She also confronted great danger and prevailed. She now understood Flint's question. Woosh was happy. She wanted to share her happiness with Flint.

Karr helped her carefully rub off the blood drops from her vaginal smooth skin.

They both stood up, somewhat embarrassed. He lifted the bow and arrows which were next to him. He slowly moved his finger along the softened wood and gave her the bow and arrows with admiration.

Woosh straightened on her shoulders the gazelle skin she killed a few days ago.

She walked uphill.

She turned back and looked at Karr. He was sitting next to the bush with a shy smile.

After a few steps she turned around again.

Karr was not there anymore.

She went on to her tribe. Her heart was full of joy. The way back took not as long as she thought it would take. It was just behind two creaks when she got to the pond.

Flint was getting ready to the next day's departure. He saw her approaching, coming down the hill. He could clearly notice her joyful spirit.

They sat down. Woosh took Flints hand and put it calmly on her lower abdomen – with a large smile. She looked into his eyes. They were serious at first and turned happy when he felt the confidence and persistence of this young woman. He knew he can trust her. He knew her instincts and her wisdom.

Woosh sat down at the pond, rinsing off her body with the cool water. It did not remove her internal emotions, which she not really recognized at all. It was a mixture of happiness with confusion.

Her thoughts did not let go. She went over the events of last days and nights over and over again.

She was very proud of herself to have completed the hunt.

The defeat under the bush seemed to her as a dream. A nightmare.

The encounter with this hairy guy was a puzzle to her. It did feel to her as a "win" of the fight. She did get her gazelle; she had eaten its heart… but emotionally she was trapped. She felt as if this "fight" which turned into a "laughter" must be continued. She did not know in what direction this adventure will develop, but she knew it will flourish. "There is an element of safety and security been

next to such a strong, kind, and experienced male. But there is also an element of uncertainty. Loosing freedom and less independence".

Later that night she was wondering around restless. She could hardly sleep.

She started missing Karr.

East wind

When she woke up everyone were getting ready to leave the pond.

She was torn inside her, with a strong swirl of feelings overwhelming her. Is she going with the tribe south, to the river of calm water, or is she going to Karr? This really scared her.

All day she helped Nan and Libby get their stuff ready, rapped in animal skin and tied with ropes and strings.

The hunters came back early and cut open few rabbits and Rock hyraxes. The last roast on the fire was short and sad.

It was windy. A warm and dry wind from east is the sign to move. The large schools of storks and pelican were flying in circles, heading south to warmer places.

The tribe started the walk south, following the sun in the south.

At some point in the afternoon, when most of the tribe has left, she started walking the other way, uphill, with her new arrow, covered with the gazelle's fur, and with the antlers and craw feathers hanging on strings from her neck. Halfway up she turned around and came back. She hugged Libby and Nan for a long and strong hug. Tears came down her cheeks.

She saw Flint looking at her. He was serious but happy. Relaxed. Flint knew he cannot hold Woosh from joining Karr. He sadly knew it may be a while till they will meet again, if at all. At least he met the hairy guy once, and it was a peaceful and happy event. It is now in Woosh's hands to make this flourish.

With more enthusiasm and positive energy, she walked uphill with confidence. Woosh was determined to make this commitment she made right now, a joyful journey.

Loaded with oak acorns mixed with dates rapped in grapevine leaf, pomegranate branches, and pomegranate fruits, she continued to walk.

Walking down the creak she saw the green mastic bush. She could smell the smoke getting stronger. She approached carefully. The sun was getting low over the hilltops. She crawled under the bush. A strange sensation of tremble went through her body, remembering the first time she was approaching this bush, at about the same time, fighting for her life.

When she came into the cave it was empty. Karr was not there. He had already returned for the night back to his tribe. She could feel the fireplace still warm. "He was here till recently" she thought.

She laid down on the warm sand, alone. Afraid. Uncertain. Wondering what she should do next. Her thoughts were with her tribe. The community she was used to, the hunters, the boys, the women. Tears ran down her cheek. She fell asleep.

Life together

Next morning Woosh woke up very cold alone in the cave. The sun did not come over the creak yet. She climbed up to the bare lime rock which felt nice and warm. She took off all her animals' skins and put them on the rock to dry and warm. She laid down on the rock above the cave to get worm.

She laid in the sun for a while, listening to the wind and birds. Her dark skin was nice and clean now, after having the rain shower yesterday. Her dark black curly hair was fluffy. Strangely she enjoyed very much the loneliness on the rock this early morning. She picked some fresh yellow flowers and made a crown around her forehead.

Taking a deep breath, with lots of confusion she looked around and wondered: “what now?”

It seemed as if there is a whole land spread around her, and she does not know the direction to go. Her instincts as a hunter helped her get some food, but she needed the company. She realized now that she does not like to be alone. Her tribe used to travel together all the time. They are probably further south now, following the warmth, away from the freezing winters.

“And what about Karr? Where is he now?”

“I am thinking about Karr now because he is now my stronghold” she thought. “I only met him for few days, we fought, laughed, wrestled and ate together, we roasted the craw, we barked and hissed at each other. We laughed. What is it that I am thinking of him?”

Here she realized that there is some type of connection between them. They had some understanding and did things together, even though they were complete strangers.

It did not take long till she noticed the birds stop singing, flying away.

“It is probably a cat or rabbit”, she thought to herself.

She could hear now grass and branches been stepped on.

There are even a few rocks rolling downhill. Her instincts as a hunter told her that someone is climbing up.

She laid carefully on the rock in front of the cave, watching.

There was just a light wind coming from the west, and she thought she picked up a smell of sweat.

“Maybe it is Karr? Or maybe it is someone else?”

She decided to stay hidden on the rock above that cave and watch.

It was not clear what made the bush move. Someone entered the cave from below, and she could not see who it was. It was very quiet. The birds did not sing. She remembered that she left some things in the cave. The pomegranate peel, some raspberries, and some sticks she was planning to make arrows from.

Karr did not expect it, but he thought he could smell the girl.

When he came close to the cave, he saw her footprints all over the place, and the stuff she left. What a mess… He knew exactly who made these changes to his cave, and strangely it made him very happy. But where is she now?

He sat down under the bush and waited.

She was lying on the rock, watching, and waiting.

Hunters and gatherers must have patience to catch their prey. So, both were waiting.

At some point she was burning hot from lying in the sun on the bare rock. She slowly crawls back down the rock, putting on her fur. She looked for some shade under a small shrub next to the rock in front of the cave.

She smells the sweat.

She picks up a small rock and throws it to the bush.

Karr smells her scent and is now very amused with this ‘hide-and-seek’ play. He crawls down from where he entered the cave.

Woosh is not noticing his departure from the bush and throws a second rock, a bigger one now.

Nothing.

Karr, which knew very well the terrain around his cave, is making a large round, sneaking to her from her back.

Now he sees her, lying next to the large rock under the shrub. He can see her bare feet, at the end of long and dark legs. Her smooth skin is shining in the sun.

Karr is making a quite cat’s hissing sound.

This surprises Woosh, which was still focused on the bush.

She slowly turns around.

Her black curly and fluffy hair now emerging from behind the shrub.

She sees Karr sitting on the rock behind her, smiling.

In a split second she jumps up and climbs the rock to hug Karr.

She barks, He hisses, they smile.

They both walk together to pick some fruits and collect some weeds and roots to eat.

Karr is still very impressed with her new arrow she got, with the black flintstone head.

Karr is asking to practice the bow and arrows.

She demonstrates again the ‘woosh’ of an arrow hitting the lizard which emerged on the rock on the other side. Karr is very impressed.

“Do it again, please” he asks.

She takes the second arrow and almost hits a sparrow on a branch on the Mastic bush.

They collect the arrows, and he tries the trick.

She is helping him hold properly the bow and the arrow on the string.

He feels her soft skin on his hairy arms.

They laugh.

Karr shows Woosh how to set the traps he built.

Woosh is preparing new arrows.

In the evening they turn off the small fire in the cave and walk together downhill.

Embarking on new territory.

Woosh is following Karr to his tribe. His strong and muscular body, his calm eyes and wide smile give her a good feeling that she is in “good hands”. She has no expectations. She is ready to be surprised. Woosh likes surprises. Hunting is dealing with surprise situations all the time. She knows it is going to be fine.

Just when they walk down around the curve of the creak an amazing view becomes available to her, like nothing she has ever seen before – the sea.

The sun is just coming down as a big orange circle, reflected by wavey sea. Her breath is taken away. She sits down to fully absorb this amazing view of very far horizon. The warm east wind is on their back, and it flattens the sea to have almost no waves.

Karr points out to her a small cloud of smoke coming up from the camp down there. They can almost see the fire.

They watch the sun go behind the horizon and disappear. She has never seen such a spectacular view. It is almost completely dark when they reach the camp.

A crowd of hairy short people, with big eyes, big nose and great smiles is welcoming them. Kids get close to her and softly touch her smooth dark skin. She smiles with some embarrassment.

The mothers show her to the new nest they have prepared for her and Karr.

A great circle of happy people is following them to the beach. She enters the wavey water with hesitation. It is cold, very salty, undrinkable, and the current is strong. A few more steps into the sea and she is fully floating. Amazing. Woosh is completely and absolutely overwhelmed. She feels like entering a dream while still awake. She could never ever expect anything like this. it is beyond her ability to grasp.

Karr and woosh laugh and play in the sea for a long time. Hugging and wrestling in the water, with their bodies fully engaged. They gently let their hands go through each other's wet hair, down the hairy and smooth skin of their arms, reaching higher levels of excitement, climax, and satisfaction.

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Beyond expectations

Karr shows Woosh to their new “nest”.

A wide shallow hole in the soft sand under a canopy of brush and canes.

She leaves her stuff hanging from the branches.

It is dark. The children are asleep, except for some babies.

They join the circle by the central fire.

She could feel everyone’s eyes on her. She blushes.

She stands up and distributes with a smile the stuffed grape leaves to those around the circle. A sweet desert for a lifechanging day. Everyone likes it and they all start howling like coyote, singing, humming, and clapping hands. What a happy clan.

She is overwhelmed with all the new experiences she had today: Waking up alone and cold in the cave is in complete opposite of this amazing sensation of welcoming by a strange group. Their calmness is addicting. The togetherness is drifting her like a strong current. She looks around and they all look the same to her. Hairy people, smiley short and muscular. A happy bunch.

Karr is a bit embarrassed with her friendly gesture distributing the dish she prepared and brought with her. He is following her around the circle and smiles to his friends. He is very proud to have managed to bring her with him. He is not quite sure in which direction his life with a wife will evolve.

Taking a day off

Woosh wakes up in the nest next to Karr. She is completely “lost”. She has no idea where she is and what she should do next. She feels like there is no wind blowing in her. She just sits there in their nest and watches. She can hear the sea in the distance. The salty smell of the sand and mist is new to her. It is windy all the time.

Woosh becomes thirsty, she wonders where the creak is with running water to drink from. Karr takes her to the creak, which runs right through the center of the camp. Everyone is sitting along the running water with their feet in the water. This seems to her much nicer than the muddy pond she was used to. Small fish swim up the current.

She walks around after Karr. Karr makes his preparations to go up to his cave, as usual. Should he ask her to come along? Or should she stay at the camp?

Kids start hanging around her, sitting on her, touching, and feeling her smooth dark skin and fluffy curly hair. She is very amused by this now, more than last night. She plays with the kids, running, grabbing, rolling in the sand. Women come by and offer food and drink. She sits there and plays with the children in the sand. She had never had such a relaxed time to play with children. She was always practicing, fighting, running, climbing, and preparing bows and arrows.

Her bow and arrows are still hanging on the bush over their nest. With the children following her she picks the bow and arrows, and she demonstrates. First, she caught a pigeon which was flying over them. Everyone cheering. Then she hits a rabbit jumping by the brush. The women around her are amazed with her skills.

Woosh picks up her kills and joins the women in the center, by the fire.

She watches them work, prepare food. So very different from how she is used to. Many clam shells and fish over the fire. The salty taste to everything is new to her.

Older boys are interested in her bow and arrows. They walk with her to the beach. She manages, to their great surprise, to catch a large fish without a net. Just by shooting an arrow at it directly. She had done this before at the calm river, where her tribe may be camping right now. The word is spreading. Other male hunters on the beach come and watch her catch fish with her arrows.

They all head back to the camp with many fish to roast.

Karr returns from his cave. Woosh is glad to get together with him again. She is proud with the fish she caught today.

Everyone is very happy today.

In the evening they join the tribe at the center fire. The leader of the tribe, called Jam, is looking at her very seriously. He is interested in her bow and arrows. He would like her to help him have a bow and arrows for himself. He is offering her a long spear with a sharp flintstone tip to it. She gladly accepts with a shy smile.

Expedition

Next morning, they walk together to the cave.

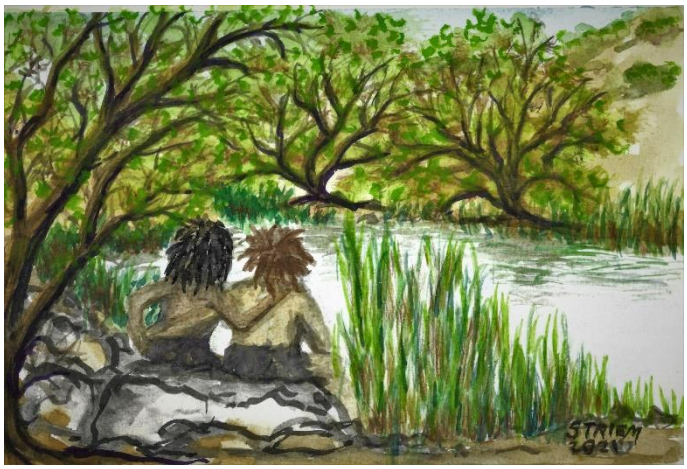
She will be looking for material to make new bows and arrows for the leader, Jam. They leave the cave's area. They continue beyond the cave to pick branches from the pomegranate tree. She is also looking for oak tree branches or pine tree stems, to build new bows. She will be missing good strings for the bows, and the tar and wax to glue the string to the bow.

Woosh is leading Karr to continue their walk towards to pond.

Karr has never been that far from the sea. He is amazed with the dense forest of trees and brush by the water. Huge fig trees cover the sky. Vines are climbing on the trees, and thorny raspberry bushes interfere with the view of the complete pond, hidden in high cliffs of limestone.

Woosh is sad to see the pond, a place she used to live, so quite with no one of her tribe there. The water is very low now, almost dry. She sits on the rock under the bush she used to sleep. Her heart is missing her tribe now. She finds on the ground a piece of flintstone, an unfinished arrowhead. It reminds her of Flint.

Karr is amazed with the cold sweet water of the pond. He did not know that there is a pond so close to his cave. He finds here many birds to catch, eggs to collect, plants to eat. Woosh picks a few grape leaves still hanging, and some raisin grapes.



Karr sits on a rock with his legs in the muddy water, watching the trees and birds.

Woosh climbs up a huge fig tree and picks a few figs for him.

Woosh sits down next to him, very close to each other.

It is awfully quiet. It makes Woosh put her head on Karr's shoulder. He is putting his arm around her. Sitting there of a while.

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They picked up all the materials they have collected and continue uphill, searching for pine trees. Woosh hardly remembers their exact location. It is usually while traveling when the tribe would pass through the pine tree forest on the top of the highest hill.

They continue their journey together further north. Both are excited, yet very cautious, at this remote and unfamiliar area.

Finally, they find the pine trees. It is very difficult for her to cut off a suitable thick stem for the bow. Karr helps her with his flintstone knife. The pine tree's resin is making everything very sticky. She picks up also some dry, old branches of a dead tree. Those would be great for a bow as well.

With great effort they manage to get the desired pieces of pine wood.

The afternoon sun is showing them the way west, downhill. They are very far away from the camp and must keep up the pace. At some point they recognize the sea in the distance, which makes them confident with the direction. On their way they find more locations with springs, running sweet water. They also pick more fruits for the tribe.

They both are not familiar with this place. When on the last hill before the seashore they need to turn south on the mountain range to find the camp. However, Woosh is used to look for directions and finds a few hilltops and mountain range familiar to her, which give her a sense of location and direction.

A smoke in the distance helps them identify the location of the camp.

Reaching the camp, they unload their harvest of fruit and branches.

Karr is very impressed with their long travel they have done today. It is way beyond he could imagine walking in one day. His feet are in pain, exhausted. He sits down at the running water and lets his feet rest and cool.

Woosh brings him a roasted fish from the fire and a fig as desert. They sit together on the rock, with their feet in the water, very happy together, having completed an expedition together, with mutual effort and collaboration. Both look at each other's eyes, smile with satisfaction. The bond of working together is evolving and giving them much Joy.

Woosh does miss her tribe and would have liked Flint to know how well she is doing so far.

Rainy days

The cold wind was blowing through the brush and cane. The grey sky turned darker. It started to rain. There is no place to go. They put their animal's skins over their heads, eventually they get wet. Everyone gets wet. Completely wet. Sitting together in their nest, Woosh and Karr hug each other, they help each other to clean dust and leaves from their hair. They rub their body with the white sand.

When the clouds pass, the sun come out and warms up the sand and rock. Air and water stay very cold. It is much more difficult to keep the fire going. Everyone hangs the skins on the brush to dry in the wind.

Flowers starts grow. New types of dishes are made. The dry nuts are now substituted with fresh leaves and root. Even some flowers are very tasty.

On these rainy days Karr and Woosh try to spend time at the cave. There they can keep dry and the fire going. They watch seeds from flowers germinate and grow fast. They dig some tracks to let the runoff water stay outside the cave. The creak became green and flowery. All the way to the pond is covered with green fresh grass. The pond gained a lot of water. It floods the rocks and the place she used to sleep is covered with shallow water now. The place looks very different in the winter than before, when the tribe used to stay here. The huge fig trees shed all their leaves. So did the pomegranate tree. The raspberry is spreading.

Woosh does not miss her tribe as much now. Her life is full and satisfying. She and Karr get along happily. He is treating her gently and she helps him hunt when needed. Both are busy together building traps, bows and making arrows. The tribe hunters are very happy with the new hunting tools and are looking up to woosh with admiration. She still guides and coaches them occasionally. Woosh and Karr went on another expedition to collect more wood and become familiar with the territory close to the tribe's foothill camp. They located more caves which now are occupied by other tribe members for the winter. The meetings at the center fire became less frequent. Instead, a large cave is used for gathering. The hunters still go down and catch fish in the sea. Woosh likes jumping over the high waves and fight the currents very much.

When spending the rainy days at the cave Woosh has noticed that the walks uphill and downhill, to the pond and to the sea and back, are becoming a bit difficult for her. She has noticed that she did not get those abdomen pains with blood every time the moon is almost full. Her abdomen grew, along with her breast. Some days she feels sick and stays at the cave or sits in the warm sand next to it. She got the advice from the tribe's women to keep careful and slow. They told her she will have a baby in the summer. This news did not surprise her.

Spring has come and gone

The days are getting longer, the sun is much higher in the sky, and most flowers and grass turn yellow. Many tribe members came down to the camp and renew their nests. The canes and brush canopy are getting green, and the shade is welcome. The new growth is bent and braided together to shape the huts over the shallow dents used for sleeping at night. Woosh and Karr has also decided to stay at the camp. It was becoming too difficult for Woosh to climb up and down to the cave. Her Belly is so big now and she feels the baby turning and kicking inside her. She spends most of her days making arrows from pomegranate branches which Karr is bringing her. She helps with softening skins from animals hunted. She also pulls out the strings needed to build new bows.

One sunny warm morning Woosh went with some girls down to the beach. She was sitting in the shallow water enjoying the push and pull of the waves coming up and returning. Suddenly she had very strong pain and her belly felt contractions. She screamed and called for help. The other women around her came and helped her relax. After a few contractions and pushes she delivered her baby in the sea water. She was exhausted. The women helped her return to camp and put her with her baby to their nest. She was grateful to have such kind women with her, and it reminded her of Nan and Libby. She wanted so much to share this moment with them and Flint.

When Karr came back from the cave, she already felt much better, she smiled at him and proudly handed the baby to him. Karr went down on his knees, blushed. He holds the baby close to his face. He started sniffing the baby and smiled.

Weeks passed. The long summer days were hot and humid. It felt better with a light wind at the cave or in the shade of the fig trees at the pond. Woosh was happy with her baby. She was getting ready to climb again and use the bow and arrow for hunting small animals at the cave. She spent time sitting with the baby on the rock or on the soft sand. She prepared a special large and soft animal's skin pocket in which she could carry the baby, on her back or on her chest. She walked up and down the hills, collecting oak acorns, raspberries, figs, and pomegranate fruits, with her baby on her, in the pocket. It was perfect. She was happy. Karr was always around in case she needs any help. He was happy to keep the fire in the cave and roast the rock hyraxes and rabbits Woosh would hunt.

Woosh was very much adapted now to the slow pace of life with Karr. She did however, expanded Karr's hunting zone and territory of roaming all the way to the pond. Karr liked it very much. The fresh water was attracting many large animals like bore and gazelle. Karr also became master of using the bow and arrows like Woosh. This provided him a much better hunting success.

Woosh was worried what will happen when her tribe will be back and wish to camp again at the pond, as they usually do. It might interfere with Karr's hunting. "What could I suggest for solving the conflict without the need to fight?" she was wondering.

The deal

The other day Karr was sitting in the cave taking the skin off some rabbits he caught, preparing them for roasting. Woosh was sitting with her baby on the rock by the cave. Woosh had that strange feeling of been watched by someone. She picked up the baby and put it in the pocket on her breast. She stood up and looked around.

She slowly walked around the rock, towards the creak's hilltop. She could see no one. The birds were singing as usual. "Maybe I am just missing Flint too much" she thought. She turned around to go back downhill.

While slowly making her way down she could hear "Tuk-Tuk-Tuk" like a woodpecker would sound. And again: "Tuk-Tuk-Tuk". This was very strange to her. She did not hear a woodpecker in these hills ever before. She was wondering on what tree is this woodpecker sitting. She sat down and listened. "Tuk-Tuk-Tuk" – "it came from the east". She walked towards that direction. When she reached to hilltop, she saw in the distance a person sitting on a rock. She stopped. She lowered herself behind a bush. "Tuk-Tuk-Tuk" she heard it coming form that direction where the guy was sitting. There was no tree there, and no woodpecker.

She took a small rock and knocked on her bow she was carrying. It produces a similar sound: "Tuk-Tuk" and "Tuk-Tuk" she replied.

"Tuk-Tuk-Tuk" the person knocked again, and she replied with "Tuk-Tuk, Tuk-Tuk".

The person stood up. And turned toward her. "Is it Flint?" she wondered.

She waited a little bit.

He started walking towards her. It seemed to her she could recognize his walk, but he was too far away.

She stood up.

He opened his arms.

"Yes, this is Flint!" She got excited.

She ran towards him and hugged him carefully with her baby on her breast in the pocket.

Flint looked at her and smiled with joy. He could not imagine meeting Woosh again, and now with a baby. He was very happy.

Woosh dragged Flint to come with her down to the cave. Karr was there just finished roasting the rabbits. They sat there on the rock and celebrated.

Flint offered Karr his new bow and arrow with a black flintstone top.

Karr accepted with joy. Karr offered Flint his long spear with a flintstone point.

Flint accepted with joy.

While Woosh was breastfeeding the baby, Karr showed Flint some of his new traps to catch porcupine. He also showed Flint a braded bracelet he made with porcupine needles.

Flint suggested they all go down to the pond, to meet the rest of the tribe which has arrived there today.

They all walked up the creak and down to the pond. When coming down Woosh saw Nam and Libby running towards them. She ran downhill and the hugged them, jumped with tears of joy in their eyes. They all sat down at the pond, laughing, playing, and enjoying the baby.

Karr was accepted with honor by the hunters.

Karr suggested to provide the tribe with fish for exchange for gazelle and bore.

The deal was sealed. Flint and Karr hugged and exchanged fist-knocking, hitting each other's fist with a smile.

Karr and Woosh walked back to their cave, with their baby, very happy.

Woosh was thrilled. It could not have turned out better.

New era

From that day on Karr was arranging shipments of fish from his tribe to the tribe at the pond. He received gazelle and bore and carried them down to the tribe on the beach. Woosh was happily playing with her baby on both sides: on the beach and at the pond.

Woosh and Karr grew up at very different tribes.

Woosh is a Homo sapience. Her tribe is traveling the country to find the best places to stay at every season. They have developed more sophisticated tools for hunting and cooking their food. They are curious, experimenting, and intelligent people. They look for making progress and advance their situation continuously.

Karr is a Homo neanderthal. His tribe is based at a comfortable place between the foothills and the seashore. They find all their needs right there. They keep a slow-paced lifestyle, with very low expectations. They are strong, skilled hunters and creative individuals, managing their tribe with great passion to keep their community healthy and flourishing. They have mastered the domain they live in year-round. They improve and adopt cultural habits, art, tools, medicine, and dishes.

It takes two lucky individuals to meet and create a bridge of peace between the two species. They need to have love and joy as their priority rather than pride and superiority desires.

Woosh and Karr met at a hunting zone in a hunting event. They were both fighting for their life. But they did not end up hunting each other. On the contrary. Despite their differences, in culture, shape and size, they respected, and understood each other on the most basic and intuitive manner:
love of life.

They managed to cooperate and perform basic life activities together. Both were open minded, willing to learn, willing to teach and share. The common good of both sides flourished. It should not be taken for granted. These situations could have turned very differently if handled otherwise.

To be at the right place at the right time is not just due to luck. It takes some proactive actions and decisions to get to the that point.

To be at the wrong place at the wrong time is also not pure bad luck. It could be due to lack of action, only reaction, to a situation, which leads to less opportunities and slower progress, if at all.

Woosh and Karr still live among us today. Their genes are 3-5% of our DNA.

Is their luck inheritable?

If we have luck, we have the brains to make best use of any situation.

Cheers to the joy of life.

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