

Finding home

I was playing basketball when he came, a new boy standing right in front of the gate, his feet resting on the cracked pavement as hundreds of eyes turned his way. His cheeks slowly turned red as he buried his face in his hands. I couldn't help but notice him frozen in the same spot. I'd had enough, I put down the ball and made my way down to him "sup I'm kai, what's your name?" I asked. "Fano" he whispered shyly, and just like that I became his very first friend.

It was class time. I sat with my usual friends anticipating the writing lesson ahead when I was interrupted by a tapping on my shoulder. It was Fano. He stood there right in front of me voiceless but pleading. He needed help. I patted an empty seat beside me, he quickly took it. An hour of writing had passed and still an empty page stared back at him. I wanted to help him, if only I knew how. Not a word escaped his mouth. Not to the teacher, not to me, not even to himself. "Are you okay?" I asked, he nodded. I had to help him. And so I did. I explained to him the different sentences and how to use them. And soon enough he had learnt how to write a full paragraph.

Fano began to strengthen his English, making new friends along the way. He found himself to have confidence, more than ever before. Fano transformed into a completely different person, he went from shy to bold as he evolved. He fit in just by being himself. And he loved every second of it.

It was time for polyfunk. 11-12 year olds joined their lines, ready to dance. The polyfunk instructors knew the Samoan background Fano had and announced "our leader for this year's performance is. FANO!!!" his face lit up like a lightbulb. He looked so happy and excited, as if he was ripping open a christmas present. He was finally getting a chance to do something that reminded him of his home. And he took it gladly.

After thousands of hours put into practicing the day had finally come. The empty seats soon filled by the families of many, anxiously awaiting their children's arrival. The stadium grew quieter and quieter until there was a complete silence, this was their cue. The stage blackens as the kids make their way to the stage. And with the beat of a drum and a flick of a light the show was on. The vibrant colors of the costumes bounced gracefully as they danced the night away. Fano screamed his calls loud enough to be heard from a mile away, The widest smile crossed his face. Soon enough the curtains were pulled closed ending the show. He had finally found himself to be known.

We are all the same, just different. Embrace our differences.

By Zakkai Masoe Postgate School Year 8