

## One Land...Two People

### 28 of January 1788

It seems like yesterday I was caught stealing a purse. I was imprisoned immediately ripped away from my family and in my court case found guilty. After 2 months I was told instead of rotting away in a dark, damp cell in short notice all convicts would be transported too somewhere else. The ship took a while to pack but as soon as the it was finished all the convicts were bundled on.

We spend 252 days on the ship. The way we were treated was appalling. We were stored under the ship in the lower deck. The food was horrible as there was cockroaches and rats everywhere, even in the food. There were drop toilets and buckets that were dumped into the sea. Adults were chained. But as I was one of the youngest, we were free to run around. If there was anywhere to run.

Lots of people got sick from the conditions we were in and the rats and cockroaches carried diseases all over the ship. Seventeen people died coming to Australia of diseases and physical injury. Captain Arthur Phillip led the ship to Australia taking a stop at Canary Islands to stop for fresh fruit, meat and vegetables.

The trip seemed never ending until I heard a man shout 'land ahoy'. When we arrived, the convicts were shoved out from below the deck to come and see their new home. I was one of the last and as I walked down the steps Captain Arthur Phillip nudged me to hurry up. As he did, I stumbled and fell right into the wet sand and water. I hesitated to get up as the sand was rough and my whole body was aching. But I quickly stood up and joined the other as they were now putting the flag into the ground.

What was this place? This place wasn't like England it wasn't green and lush, but dry and dusty. I could hear something in the distance chirping. This wasn't like the sound of carriages or arguing. This was the sound of something very beautiful. I decided that I would like living here for 8 years if it was this peaceful.

*Now we are settling in this new country. But as a young white girl I don't know what to do.*

### 28 of January 1788

It was only two days ago when my people got a massive shock. Some strange, white creatures parked their boats on the edge of our land. They had brown, black, blonde, white and all different coloured hair. Their clothes were tearing and ragged and they were all different ages and heights. A man stood at the front of the boat as another shouted some strange words I didn't understand. I ran back to my humpy, exhausted and out of breath.

My parents sat there looking worried with my little sister sitting in the dirt dressed in possum and kangaroo skin. I caught my breath and told my people the news. The leaders looked around. What could we do? They told mothers with young children to take them in a somewhere safe while the rest would go and see who these people were. I followed.

When we got to a safe hiding spot, I looked through a tree branch and saw a young girl around my age being pushed out of the ship. She tripped over the last step and went crashing into the mud.

When she got up her clothes were drenched in wet sand and water. I looked around there was hundreds of them. Just then the man who was standing at the front of the boat shouted to his men. They quickly obeyed the order as 2 minutes later they came out the ship carry a flag. Then they quickly placed it in the ground and started searching the area.

*Now there are new settlers. But as a young Aboriginal girl, I don't know what to do.*

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I walked around looking for a place to rest. I couldn't stand the way we were treated. I didn't want to stay. Not with these people. I decided to run away somewhere they wouldn't find me. I started running passing bushes and trees. When I was far enough away from the camp, I stopped for breath leaning against a tree branch. When I had caught my breath, I started walking through the bush. Suddenly I froze. What I saw in front of me I had never seen before. A young black girl around my age. Her hair was black and glimmering in the sunlight, her eyes were dark brown and she was wearing something furry and thin. She was staring at me frightened. I was frightened too. I could have run. But there was something in the black girl's eyes that made me feel welcomed. That something changed my life forever.

*I am just a white girl. But I now have a black family.*

I sat down. The others had left tired of watching the white people. But not me. I want to stay and watch them set up. I was just looking at the ground when I froze. A white girl around my age - the same one who had fallen off the last step of the ship - had walked off and was now was next to me. Dark brown hair covered her big blue eyes and her slops were a murky grey. I stared at her frightened and she stared back at me. Surprisingly she did not move but smiled at me. I knew she could be trusted. I took her hand - it was rough and cold. I took her back to the camp. My leaders welcomed her. She soon learnt our language and we learnt some of hers.

*I am just a black girl. But now I have a white sister.*