

A borrowed murder.

The biggest punishment was that I didn't get to say goodbye.

I told John he shouldn't. that it wasn't worth it

He never listened to me.

Like me he had a strong mind, the only difference was I knew what was worth fighting for.

I stood behind a fence that never existed when I lived on this land.

I guess nothing was the same as it was.

I recalled the fight Uncle had with that man, the one John worked for, Pollard.

I remember John telling me what his master said.

"You will never belong here."

Tears of rage flying off his face as he ran back to that strange hut of a place.

Then what the people had said when they didn't think I was listening, what Auntie had said when she thought I was asleep.

"We don't belong here anymore."

I thought of the sharp instrument covered in blood that he showed me. The thing his master used to carve the trees he cleared off our home.

What branches would the doornart perch on, what trees would the yougka rest under now?

Everyone was glad he was gone.

Except me.

I guess I was only whoever loved him.

"John Gavin, first man to be executed in new holland."

Funny how they forgot how many of us they had slaughtered before him.

I had heard the scream of that pollard woman as she saw the ripped body lying in the sheets, how she had wept, no one wept over the death of all the trees they had killed for their crops.

Except me.

John said I would be safe when it was over that he would meet me at the river that no one would know.

He kissed me before he left.

It would be our last.

his last.

That night I ate with a clear conscience.

The one a murderer like me didn't deserve.

I fell asleep with a smile on my face, knowing that the death of our land had been avenged.

It was a shame it had cost John's life.