

Granddad, Grandma and Great Auntie Janet walked over the grass, across the highway, along the path and down, down, down the steps.

Granddad, Grandma and Great Auntie Janet stepped carefully across the soft sand, sliding a little down the slope until they reached the hard, wet sand by the water's edge.

Granddad pointed out the Caspian Terns resting on the rocks and the Sooty Oyster catchers with their orange beaks and legs hunting for fish in the rock pools.

Great Auntie Janet spotted a tall blue White Faced Heron reflected in the still water.

Grandma found some pieces of green and brown glass to add to her collection and looked along the edge of the cliff to see if she could find another piece of petrified tree.

Granddad's legs were much longer than G & GAJ so he got much further along the beach when he suddenly stopped. He beckoned the others to hurry up.

The rope was very fat and very, very long. It was covered with barnacles so had obviously been in the water for quite a while.

"Wouldn't that look good on the patio?" he asked. "It would match the drift wood I have collected and that coconut you found the other week."

"If you can carry it home, you can have it," replied Grandma. Great Auntie Janet was speechless.

Granddad saw that the big fat rope had a smaller piece of rope tied around it pretty much in the middle so he started towing the big rope along the beach.

Grandma and Great Auntie Janet began to laugh. It was not every day that you see an old man towing a fat, fat rope up the beach.

Granddad left a long line of footsteps in the sand and the ends of the rope left two long tracks in the sand as they trailed along behind Granddad.

When they got to the soft dry sand they again stepped very carefully until they reached the steps.

"I will need your help," Granddad said. "Can you each take hold of one of the ends and help me up the steps?" So Grandma and Great Auntie Janet each took hold of an end and they began to climb up the steps.

They flopped gratefully on to the seat that was half way up, panting, puffing and laughing at the sight they must be. Three old folk, dragging a rope up the steps!

Then it was up, up, up some more and eventually they reached to top. Back along the path and a careful crossing of the highway. Back along the road towards the house.

A black car traveling along the highway slowed. Then the driver did a u-turn and came back to stop right next to Granddad.

Grandma and Great Auntie Janet watched astonished as a very large, very tall policeman got out of the black car. He was wearing a bright yellow safety vest with reflecting tape on it and had a pair of handcuffs on one hip and a gun on the other.

“What have you got there, Sir?” he asked Granddad.

“It’s a rope, Officer. I found it on the beach and I am towing it back to my house. You can see the tracks in the sand if you want to check - about 1 kilometre along the beach.”

Grandma and Great Auntie Janet had to hold each other up because they were laughing so much.

The police officer also laughed, got back into his car and drove away.

Granddad, Grandma and Great Auntie Janet finished the trip home and after Granddad arranged the rope on the patio with the drift wood he had collected and the coconut Grandma had found on the beach they all had a cup of tea.