

Rocky Night on the Farm

On Sunday night I stayed at my friend Leilita's house. She lives on a farm at Koromiko. After tea Leilita and I had a wash and climbed into the big double bed together. We chatted for ages and finally fell asleep.

I woke up and thought I heard some really strong wind, because we were sleeping in an old farmhouse that was two storied. Leilita woke up too and she also thought it was wind, because the windows were rattling.

After a few minutes, Leilita's mum called out, "You girls get out of bed and come down stairs'. Erika, Leilita's older sister, was also upstairs sleeping in another room by herself, so we collected her and ran downstairs, because Connie, Leilita's mum, sounded a bit worried.

When we were altogether, Connie told us there had been an earthquake and she told me and Lei to go and get the radio from the kitchen, which was right by the lounge. Me and Lei were too scared to go and get it by ourselves, so Erika came with us.

We turned on the radio and all we heard was static. It was no good at all! Lei and I told Connie about Geonet. We had learned about Geonet at school. Geonet is a site that tells you how big earthquakes are. Connie went and got her computer and tried to go onto Geonet to see how big the earthquake was. We were surprised to have had an earthquake just after learning about it at school.

We found out that the Internet was not working and we wanted to know if there was also a tsunami warning, because we learned that there often is a tsunami after an earthquake. Picton is a town by the sea.

I started to get worried about my family in Picton, so we rang them up to see if they were okay and they were all safe. Only a couple of cups had fallen down and the fly spray can had fallen off the shelf. Mum told me that my little sister was running around screaming and crying. I felt upset about that.

We kept getting heaps of phone calls from family and friends to see if we were okay. The cottage next door got a big crack above the door and the neighbour was

really worried. She thought she might come over but the ground was muddy and soft.

Connie told us that if there were any more earthquakes we needed to drop, cover and hold and crawl over to the big cupboard, which was the walk in pantry. There were heaps of little aftershocks, so we stayed in the cupboard. Leilita's little brother Mason was terrified and stayed under the coffee table. He didn't want to move.

Leilita, Connie and I got really brave and we went to the downstairs bedroom and brought back some mattresses for everyone. One was a double bed and one was a single bed. We cuddled up together and tried to get back to sleep. Connie reminded us again to drop, cover and hold and to make our way back to the cupboard safely if we felt an aftershock.

While we were in bed there were heaps more aftershocks and Lei and I cuddled each other tight. We finally got off to sleep and in the morning we all were really tired, because we had to get up early to milk the cows.

We found out later that Leilita's neighbour's dog was barking five minutes before the earthquake struck our place. In Leilita's house the fireplace rattled before the earthquake hit, so we would know to get under.

When we got up we had breakfast at the table, but Mason stayed in the cupboard because he was really scared still.

We had to go and fetch the cows in for milking and we saw that there was no damage to the farm, but the power had cut off so the fences that kept the animals in were no longer electric. Once we got the cows to the milking shed Connie told us that if there is another earthquake we must duck under the side of the pit. There were only small aftershocks, so we got all the cows milked and went back to the house. We had a wash and helped to make a lovely healthy sandwich.

My mum arrived around three o'clock in the afternoon. I was so happy to see her and gave her a big hug. I was so glad to be back safely with my own family again.

By Rheana