

Lingala

Fifi, Patou & 14

mwana ya langi ya sanza
the moon-colored child



Céline Lavignette-Ammoun

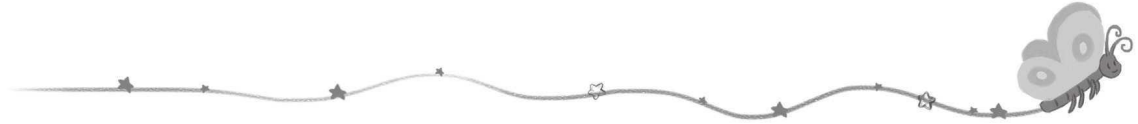
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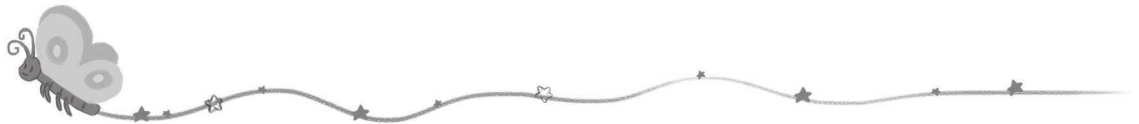
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Ce livre est dédié à une courageuse petite fille :

Gemima Mbenga Tshisundule



– Fifi, come and see, we've got a new neighbor !

Patou is all excited: a family has just moved into the house next door.

Curious, Patou peeks over the fence.

He sees a child playing with a ball, all alone.

- Fifi, yaka kotala, bato ya sika bakoti na lopango ya penepene na biso !

Patou akomi ko titila : Libota moko bakoti na ndako oyo ekangama na ya bango.

Nzunzu, Patou abwaki mwa liso po na kotala.

Amoni mwana moko azali kobeta bale ye moko.



Fifi, who has joined his brother, frowns :

- What a strange boy! Why is he wearing that big hat and long sleeves in the hot sun?

He must be dying of heat

But Patou, curious, asks no questions and joins the child.

Fifi aye pene na leki na ye ya mobali, afini elongi :

- Mwana mobali oyo azali ndenge ! Po na nini alati ekoti ya monene na elamba ya maboko milayi na moyi makasi boye?
Azali ko yoka molunge te ?

Kasi Patou ye, amituni-tuni te. Akeyi pembeni na mwana wana.



- I'm Patou, what's your name ?
- Maka!" replies the little neighbor. Shall we play ?

The ball is already rolling between the two boys' feet.

- Will you join us, Fifi? asks her brother.

- Kombo na ngai Patou, ebongo yo ?
- Maka ! mwana yango azongisi. Olingi kosakana na ngai ?

Esi babandi kobeta bale bango mibale.

- Fifi, yo pe olingi kobeta bale ? Atuni ye Patou.



But the little girl prefers to sit back and watch.

What a curious boy! He keeps missing the ball...

as if he couldn't see it! What an idea, too, to have such thick glasses !

As if he'd heard, Maka puts his dark glasses next to Fifi :

- Will you keep them for me?" asks Maka, smiling.

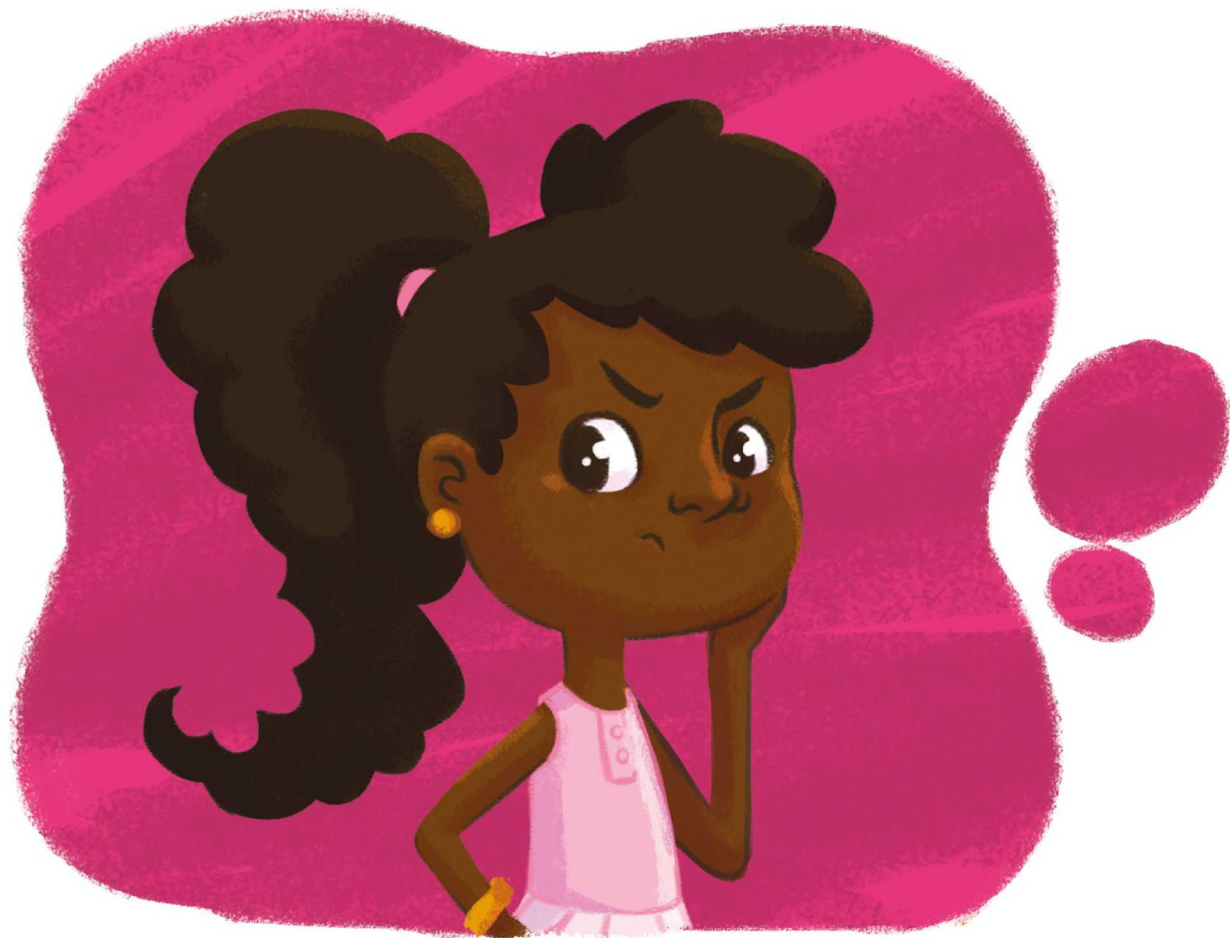
Kasi Fifi atikali kaka ya kofanda pe azotala.

Oyo mwana mobali ya ndenge nini ? Azali koka kozwa bale te...

Okanisa azali komona yango te ! Likanisi nini wana ya ko lata maneti ya minene boye !

Lokola nde ayokaki ye. Maka aye kotika maneti na ye ya mwindu pembeni ya Fifi:

- Okoki ko talela ngai yango ? atuni ye na koseka.



But Fifi doesn't see her new neighbor's smile.

She can only see his snow-white face and gray-blue eyes, shaken by strange little movements.

Under his hat, she can make out hair as white as an old man's.

How strange this boy is! Really, it's not normal...

Kasi Fifi azali komona koseka ya mopene na bango ya sika te. Azali komona kaka elongi na ye ya pembe na miso na ye ya kongen-ga, ezali koningana moke-moke.

Na se ya ekoti, amoni suki na ye ezali pembe lokola ya mobange.

Mwana mobali oyo azali ndenge ! Makambo oyo ezali polele te...



Not reassured, Fifi takes her little brother by the hand :

- Patou, let's go home !
- We were having so much fun! Why don't we stay and play with Maka ?

Fifi lowers her voice :

- Didn't you see the skin on that boy ?

He's all white... He looks like a ghost! Maybe he's a sorcerer working magic... Or worse, an alien from the moon !

Na kobanga, Fifi azui liboko ya leki na ye ya mobali :

- Patou, yaka, tozonga !
- Tozalaki kosakana malamuna ! Po na nini tokoki kotikala kosakana na Maka te ?

Fifi akitisi mongongo :

- Ozali komona poso na ye te ?

Azali pembe makasi, lokola mutu akufa azonga! Tango mosusu azali ndoki, asalaka soloka... To pe, somo lisusu koleka! mutu ya mokili na biso te awuti na sanza !



Patou bursts out laughing :

- Nonsense! He's super nice Maka !

Fifi doesn't answer. Deep down, she says to herself that everything on earth has a color: the sky, the grass, the sea... This child has no color. Perhaps he has a contagious disease, or has been touched by an evil spell.

Patou abukani na koseka :

- Bilobela ! Maka azali penza malamu !

Fifi ayanoli te. Na se ya motema na ye amilobeli, nyonso oyo ezalaka awa na mabele, ezalaka na langi : likolo, matiti, ebale... Mwana oyo, ye, azanga langi. Tango mosusu azali na bokono epesamaka, to ba buakelaye libabe.



The next day, at school, the teacher is accompanied by a new pupil :

— Meet Maka. He's just moved to our town.

Murmurs run through the ranks. Next to the teacher is an all-white child. His hair is frizzy, like Patou's, but so light it looks transparent.

Lobi na yango, na eteyelo, mama-molakisi aye elongo na moyekoli
ya sika :

- Botala awa Maka. Aye kofanda na engumba na biso.

Nungu-nungu ekoti na milongo. Na mopanzi ya mama-molakisi,
mwana moko ya pembe nzoto mobimba. Suki na ye elingama lokola
ya Patou kasi ezali kongela makasi lokola nde ezali komonana te.



$$9 \times 2 = 28$$

$$9 \times 3 = 37$$

$$9 \times 4 = 46$$

$$9 \times 5 = 55$$

$$9 \times 6 = 64$$

$$9 \times 7$$

$$9$$

$$30$$

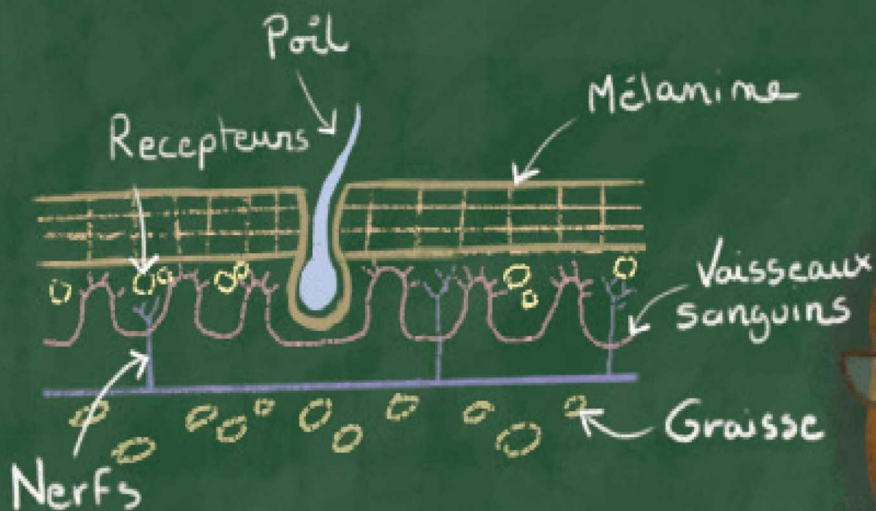


- Maka is albino," explains the teacher. His body doesn't properly produce the pigment that colors the skin. He was born this way.

He has poor eyesight and has to protect himself from the sun. Maka, sit there, in front, so you can see the blackboard !

- Maka azali ndundu, Mama-molakisi alimboleli bango. Nzoto na ye ezalaka na mwa pasi ya kosala oyo epesa langi na poso. Abotama bongo.

Amonaka malamumu te pe esengeli asala keba na moyi. Maka, fanda awa, na liboso po omonaka malamumu na etando !



It's school playtime.

Instead of going out into the courtyard in the bright sunshine, Maka prefers to stay in the shelter of the playground.

From his pocket, he pulls out a tube of sun cream and starts smearing it all over his face.

Tango ya ko pema moke ekomi.

Na esika akende kosakana na se ya moyi, Maka atikali na ye na se ya ekimelo-moyi.

Na libenga na ye, abendi molangi ya mafuta ebateli-moyi. Abandi kopakola yango na elongi.



- Hey, look at Grandpa!" teases a boy. You're a real show-off! Are you as flirtatious as a lady or what ?

Patou, furious at seeing his new friend so unwelcome, comes to his defense :

- Shut up!" he shouts to the group laughing at Maka.

But Maka shrugs his shoulders :

- Leave Patou alone... I'm used to it.

Fifi says nothing. But on Maka's cheek, she sees a small tear gently trickling down.

- Hé, botala mobange oyo ! mwana moko abandi koseka ye. Ozali na kisa-kata ee ! Nini yango ? Ozali kosala bipale lokola mwana mwasi ?

Patou asiliki ndenge bayambi moninga na ye ya sika malamute :

- Bokanga minoko na bino ! agangeli bana oyo bazali koseka Maka.

Kasi Maka atomboli kaka mapeka :

- Tika na yo Patou... Namesana.

Fifi alobi eloko te. Kasi amoni mwa mayi ya miso ezali kotanga na litama ya Maka.



The sun sets.

After school, Fifi climbed the mango tree where she likes to take refuge and dream. Tonight, she thinks back to Maka. He looked so sad when the children made fun of him.

Suddenly, Fifi hears an airy voice, as soft as a bird's, as light as a caress.

Moyi ekiti.

Na sima ya kelasi, Fifi abuti na nzete ya manga epayi asepelaka kobendana pe kotika mabanzo na ye ewaya-wayaya. Na butu ya lelo, azali lisusu kokanisa Maka. Azalaki penza na mawa tango bana wana basekaki ye.

Na mbala moko, Fifi ayoki likolo na mapata, mongongo ya sem-be-sembe lokola oyo ya ndeke, pepele lokola linyomi.



It's Maka !

Maka, who thinks he's alone under the big tree, singing. He has taken off his cap. His hair shines in the moonlight and his skin is as white as ivory.

Fifi closes her eyes and listens to Maka's song.

Ezali Maka!

Maka akanisaki nde azalaki ye moko na se ya nzete-monene pe azalaki koyemba. Alongolaki ekoti na ye. Suki na ye ezalaki kongenga na mwinda ya sanza pe pembe ya loposo na ye ebimi kitoko lokola maseke ya nzoko.

Fifi akangi miso pe azali koyoka loyembo ya Maka.



Suddenly, Fifi's foot hits a mango.

With a thud, the fruit almost knocks Maka unconscious. The child stops suddenly and looks up.

- Keep singing!" exclaims Fifi. You sing so well !

It seemed to Fifi that Maka blushed. Pink on such white skin doesn't go unnoticed.

Fifi came down to sit with Maka under the tree.

Na mbala moko, lokolo ya Fifi etuti manga.

Na mwa makelele moke, manga elingi ekweyela Maka. Mwana atiki koyemba pe atomboli miso.

- Kotika ko yemba te ! Fifi ayebisi ye. Ozali koyemba kitoko penza !

Fifi amoni neti Maka ateli na soni. Langi ya motane na loposo na ye ya pembe, ekoki kobombana te.

Fifi akiti pe aye kofanda na mopanzi ya Maka, na se ya nzete.



- I like it at night, because I don't have to hide from the sun," explains Maka. Besides, I like to close my eyes and listen to everything... Even the things no one ever hears.

- But what are you listening to? Everything is silent.

- No, it's not! I listen to the crunch of footsteps on dry sand, the beating of the hummingbird's wings, the rustle of the wind in the branches... And from all that I make songs !

- Nalingaka butu po moyi ezalaka te. Tina nabombama eza te, Maka alobi na Fifi . Nalingaka pe kokanga miso pe koyoka makambo nyonso... Ata makambo oyo moto moko te akoki koyoka.

- Ozali koyoka nini ? Bipayi nyonso ezali nyee !

- Ah te ! Nayokaka ndenge matambe ezali kotambola na zelo, kopepa ya mapapu ya ndeke-nzinzi, makelele ya mopepe likolo ya bitapi... Na nyonso wana na salaka banzembo.



Fifi smiles :

- So you really do have magical powers after all! Come on, I'll show you my hiding place !

Fifi helps Maka up to the highest branch of the mango tree.

- Can you sing for me?" asks Fifi. When you sing, I feel like I'm somewhere else...

Fifi aseki :

- Ozali penza na bokasi ya soloka ! Yaka, nalakisa yo esika nabomba-maka.

Fifi asungi Maka po na kobuta na etapi ya likolo koleka ya nzete ya manga.

- Okoki koyembela ngai ? Fifi asengi. Tango ozali koyemba, nazo-miyoka neti nazali esika mosusu...



Maka begins to sing. Her voice is clear and pure.

Maka, the Moon-colored child, sings and Fifi, the Earth-colored child, listens.

And off they go, both of them, to a land where difference has no color.

- Finally, I know what color you are, Maka... murmurs Fifi. It's music !

Maka akomi koyemba. Mongongo na ye ezali polele pe ya petwa.

Maka, mwana na langi ya sanza, azali koyemba. Fifi, mwana na langi ya mabelé azali koyoka.

Bango wana mibale bakei na mboka oyo bokeseni ezalaka na langi te.

- Sikoyo nayebi langi na yo, Maka... Fifi anungi na mongongo na se. Ezali langi ya mindule !





MAKA'S EXPLANATIONS

1. What is albinism ?

We're called "albinos", which means "white".

Men and women can have darker or lighter skin. This color is due to the melanin in the skin. Melanin is a pigment that gives skin, hair and eyes their color.

Albino people all have very light skin and hair, and some are almost white because their bodies don't produce "melanin" properly, and their eyes are usually blue or grey.

Melanin protects against the sun's rays. We albinos have no melanin in our skin, and the sun's rays burn it if we don't protect ourselves. That's why we don't like to go out in the sun.

The vision

Our eyes are constantly moving, but we can't help it and we don't even realize it. They move because our eyes haven't developed normally due to a lack of melanin. This eye movement is called "nystagmus".

What's more, light hurts our eyes and damages them if we don't protect them. This is called "photophobia".

This is why we often wear sunglasses. We can't see very well at a distance, and up close we have to bring things closer to our eyes to see details properly.



Beliefs

Albinism is passed on to us by our parents. Some people say I'm a water or earth genie, but they've never seen a genie and don't even know what they look like.

I don't see why a djinn or other genie would give his child to humans to mistreat. My hair, my nails, my clothes, the things I have at my disposal have no power. Quacks and politicians take advantage of certain beliefs to hurt us.

In reality, I don't bring bad luck or good fortune to anyone. I'm a child like everyone else, with my qualities, my faults, my joys and my sorrows...

Genetics

Albinism is all about genes.

Our bodies are made up of tiny cells, like little bags, invisible to the naked eye. There are cells for every part of our body skin, muscles and bones, for example.

In every cell, there are genes that enable the cell to function. For example, we have genes whose purpose is to produce melanin.

Genes are passed on to us by our parents. Each parent passes on to his or her child a copy of each of his or her genes.

Melanin genes

In each of our cells, we have two genes
which are used to produce melanin.

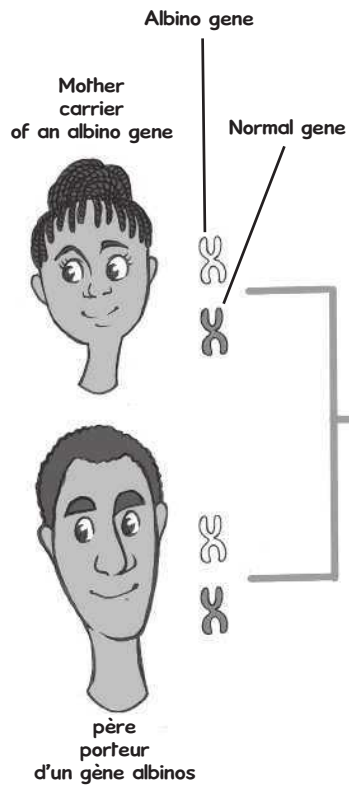
One comes from our father, the other from our mother.

Some genes may not function properly.

If you have one melanin gene that doesn't work properly,
but the other gene is functioning normally,
then your body is making melanin.

The father and mother may not be albino, but may have a
deficient melanin gene. For them, this is of no consequence.
because the other functions normally.

But if the father and mother pass on to their child
their non-functioning melanin gene, the child will
be albino.



Pigmented child
non-carrier



Pigmented child
carrier



Pigmented child
carrier



Albino child

2. Protection

Our skin suffers in bright sunshine because it's not protected by the melanin that normally acts as a barrier to the sun's ultraviolet rays.

These "U.V." rays penetrate our skin and can cause very serious wounds known as "carcinomas". That's why it's essential to protect ourselves in a variety of ways.

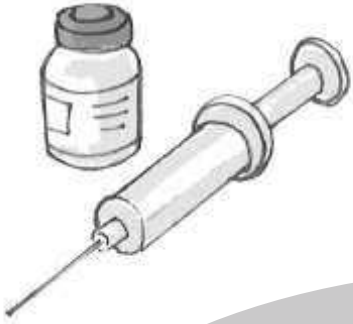
I don't go out when my shadow is shorter than or the same length as my body. The sun is then at its zenith, when its rays are most dangerous. I can go for a walk when my shadow becomes longer than my body.

In Africa, when a mother carries her albino baby on her back, the sun falls directly on his head and risks burning him. It's essential to cover the head so that the sun doesn't burn it, and to avoid going out when it's at its zenith.

Clothing and sun cream

I protect myself by wearing opaque, well-woven clothing, with long sleeves, a wide-brimmed hat and tinted glasses to protect my eyes. I also use sun protection creams, which I apply to all parts of my body not covered by my clothes: face, neck, hands, feet, etc.

3. Living with albinism



Albinism cannot be cured

At present, there is no treatment or medication
treatment or medication to cure albinism. We
can't change our skin color or improve our
vision.
So we have to learn to live with it.

Improving eyesight

I wear glasses, but it doesn't make any difference
my distance vision. In class, I can't see what's written
on the blackboard, even with glasses.

They just help to improve my near vision, so that I can
read more easily what's written in books or write.
or to write. A small pocket
can also help me to improve my
my close-up vision.



Living in society

Because of my poor eyesight, I can't always see obstacles.
on my way, and in the playground, when I'm playing, I can get on the
wrong team, or bump into someone and get really hurt!

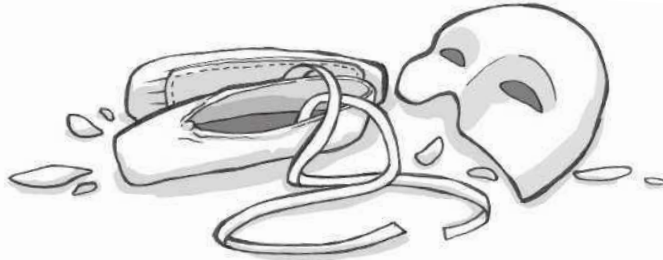
In class, I can't see at the blackboard, and the teacher doesn't always
notice or believe me.
also think that I'm "acting up" when I'm protecting myself from the sun.

I don't want my friends to get angry or make fun of me
when I don't manage to take part in certain games (ball, hide-and-seek, chase
or margouillats).

The color of my hair and skin
makes them laugh too! But I know that a color
never proved a person's worth.

4. Becoming an adult

When I grow up, I know I'll be able to earn a living like everyone else, by studying and learning a trade. I'll just choose a job that won't expose me to the sun, to protect my skin and eyes.



Being albino doesn't mean you can't enjoy life!
If I meet parents who have a child with albinism,
I'll explain to them that it's a human being, with qualities,
and intelligence, and that he needs to be well protected, while living
as well as possible with children his own age.
He must be able to go to school, play, do sports, and enjoy leisure
activities according to his tastes (dance, theater, swimming, etc.).

5. Having an albino child

As I said earlier, albinism is all about genes. When a child of two dark-skinned parents is born albino, it's because the father and mother unknowingly carry a gene that doesn't function normally, and have passed it on to their child. Sometimes people accuse the mothers of albino children of cheating on their husbands with a white man, but this is not true. Besides, there are albinos among all the peoples of the world.

A child like any other

An albino child must be raised like any other child, with lots of love, because he's a human being in his own right. He must go to school because he is as intelligent as any other child, he just needs help when he can't see properly. He'll be able to learn a trade and do great things in his life.

Look at Salif Keita, a world-famous Malian singer, all over the world. Yet he suffers from albinism, but that hasn't stopped him from pursuing his passion, from living his dream.

6. Did you know ?

Red eyes

Contrary to what some people think,

albinos don't have red eyes.

As there is no melanin inside our eyes, light enters easily and we see the color of the back of the eye of the eye, where there are blood vessels. Everyone has this part of the eye that's red, but in a pigmented eye, the melanin makes the pupil black and prevents us from seeing the back of the eye.

So we don't have red eyes,
it's just an impression
caused by light.

Driver's license

Most albinos can't drive,

because their eyesight is too poor.

It happens that some of us can see a little better
and manage to pass the driving test,
but this is rare.



The animals

Animals can also be born albino.

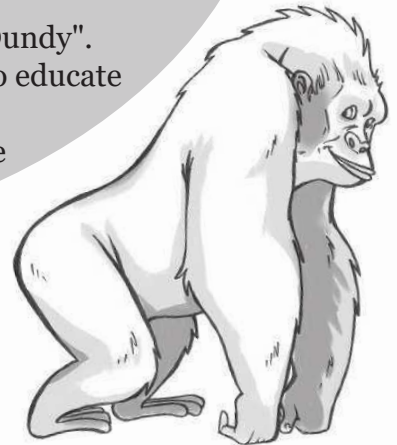
Lions, zebras, crocodiles, birds, etc. I've noticed that they're often very beautiful, and it seems to me that we understand each other so well that I dream of finding a friend among them!

One of the most famous albino animals was a gorilla that lived at Barcelona Zoo. His name was "Snowflake" and he lived to be a very old man. He had twenty-one children and grandchildren, and none of them are albinos.

In Paris, the Tropical Aquarium at Porte Dorée has been home to two female albino alligators since 2014,

two female albino alligators, named "Laury" and "Dundy". Thanks to these two alligators, the aquarium is able to educate visitors

to albinism and allows them to discover these these extremely rare specimens.



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Help for people with disabilities



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English | US



Maka is a child like any other, almost.
His skin and hair are all white, and his grey-blue eyes
are always moving in all directions.
He's just moved into a new house,
right next door to Fifi and Patou's.
Our two heroes will do everything they can
to help Maka find his place at school and make friends.
But it's not all plain sailing when you're different.



m o i i
Protection
peau noire & mélanisme

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