

THE LONG RUN HOME

*A physical and spiritual journey
At the heart of six local cultures and
Six sacred countries and trails.*

www.thelongrunhome.blog

1 Australian Outback

FORMAT

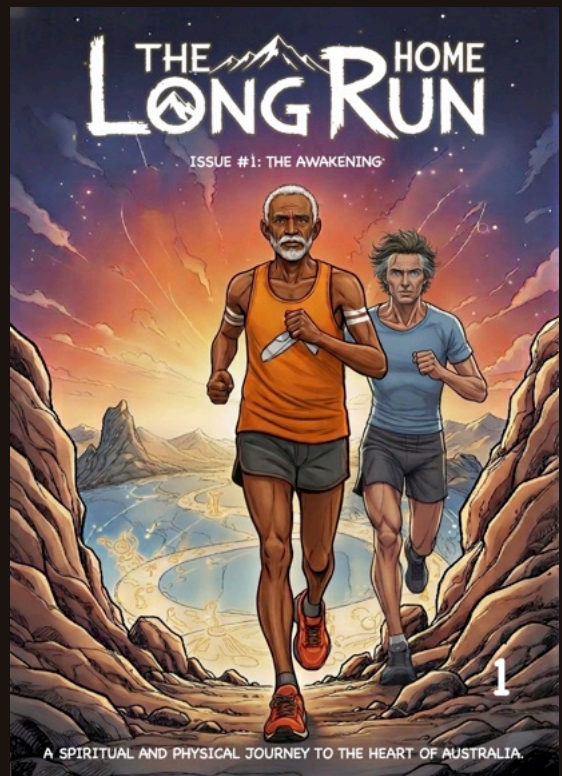
6 graphic novels · 48 pages A4 each

STYLE

Graphic novel for adults

MAIN PUBLIC

Active males · 30–80 years old



SCRIPT AND DRAWING FROM

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Content

- 1. Concept**
The hook, the genre, the target audience

- 2. Story**
Full synopsis of Album 1: The Awakening

- 3. Series in 6 albums**
Narrative architecture, overall arc of the 6 albums

- 4. Characters**
The Brotherhood of the “Long Run”

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« *Distance covered: irrelevant.
Distance travelled: infinite.
Country spoke. »*

– Roland, journal diary, Day 7

An inner quest told through the world's most mythical trails.

Album 1: «An ultra-trail runner in a midlife crisis sets off to run the "Songlines" of the Australian outback with an aboriginal man, only to realize that the race he was running was always an internal one. »

STYLE	FORMAT	SERIES	STATUS
Adult Franco-Belgium	A4 book 48 pages · Colour	Complete Series in 6 albums	Finished Album 1 (English/French)

THE STORY IN ONE PAGE

“Roland, 58, is an ultra-trail runner with an unusual background. After crossing the finish line of the Diagonale des Fous (180 km, 10,500 m of ascent, three days of racing) on Réunion island, he collapses not from exhaustion, but from emptiness. He no longer knows why he runs. Back in Sydney, he meets Jarli, an elder of the Arremte people, guardian of the Songlines. Jarli proposes a ten-day hike-run on the Larapinta Trail, 223 km through the Australian Red Centre.”

The Long Run Home is a journey of self-discovery blending ultra-trail running, spirituality, and a reconnection with nature.

Through a trek across the Australian desert and encounters with diverse cultures, Roland learns that running is neither an escape nor a test of personal worth. On the contrary, it becomes a way to be fully present in the world.

It is as much an adventure story as a philosophical reflection on what it truly means to be alive.

THEMES & POSITIONNING

Indigenous Wisdom

Each album is rooted in a sacred relationship to the earth and to movement, from the Australian Songline to the Japanese Kaihogyo.

Looking for life's purpose

Roland embodies a generation of active men who chased performance without ever asking why.

Beauty in the ordinary

The greatest lesson is the simplest: physical distance doesn't matter. Inner distance is infinite. Learn to connect with nature and enjoy the moment.

The story also explores universal themes :

- Fear of aging,
- Need for physical human connection,
- Internal healing,
- Life simple pleasures
- Sacred relationship with Nature.



Album 1 : The awakening

Australia · Red Centre · The mystic trail of Larapinta · 223 km in the middle of nowhere

ACT 1 – IN THE DARK

After finishing the legendary Diagonale des Fous on Réunion island, Roland, a 57-year-old Australian ultra-trail runner, feels an immense emptiness. He races one after another, but no longer knows why he runs. His encounter with Jarli, an elderly Australian Aboriginal man, transforms his perspective. Jarli tells him about “Songlines”, these spiritual paths where running becomes a connection to the land and to oneself. He invites Roland to join a group on the Larapinta Trail, in the heart of the Australian desert, to learn to run differently: no longer to escape his fear of aging and being forgotten, but to rediscover a profound purpose in his life.

ACT 2 – THE RED CENTRE

Roland joins an international group of runners led by Jarli on a journey through Uluru, Kata Tjuta, and the Larapinta Trail. Each member carries their own wounds and uses running as a path to healing. In the vastness of the Australian desert, Roland discovers Aboriginal traditions, bush wisdom, and a spiritual approach to movement. As the kilometres pass and conversations around the campfire unfold, he realises he has always run to prove his worth and combat his fear of aging. Gradually, the desert and the brotherhood of the group begin to reconnect him to the present moment, to nature, and to himself.

ACTE 3 – THE ENLIGHTENMENT

On the most dangerous sections of the Larapinta Trail, Roland reaches his physical and mental limits. Obsessed with his performance and GPS data, he falls and finds himself alone with his thoughts. In the crushing silence of the desert, he realises that he has been running for years to escape the fear of disappearing, of growing old, and of being forgotten. In an almost mystical experience, he takes off his watch and finally begins to run differently: present, free, and connected to the earth. Thanks to Jarli and the group, he understands that true wealth is neither performance nor achievement, but presence, health, love, and the simple fact of being alive.

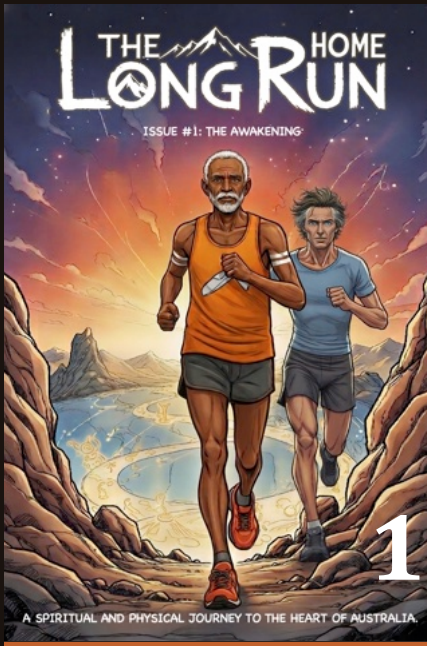
ÉPILOG – THE RETURN

After completing the 223 kilometres of the Larapinta Trail, Roland returned to Sydney transformed. He finally understood why he runs: not to escape or prove anything to himself, but to celebrate life and his connection to the world. Back on his familiar trails, he now observes nature with attentiveness and gratitude. Each step becomes a form of meditation and respect for the earth. Still connected to his fellow runners scattered across the globe, Roland envisions new adventures with a fresh perspective. At now 58, he no longer races against time, but runs fully with it.

MAIN LESSON OF ALBUM 1

Country & Presence: We are already at home, in the heart of Nature. The country knew it before we did.

Six albums. Six wisdoms.



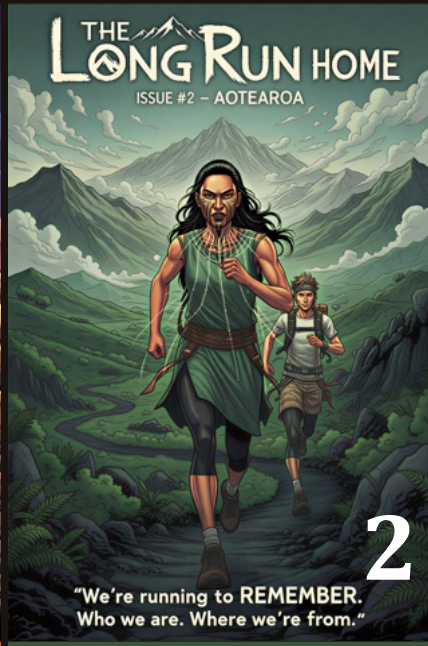
AVAILABLE

AUSTRALIA · The Red Centre

The awakening

The Songlines of the Arrernte people. Running to remember our connection with Nature.

Country & Presence



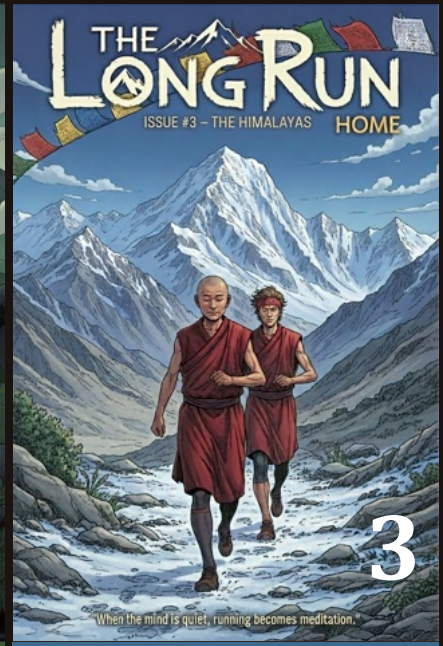
WORK IN PROGRESS

AOTEAROA · New Zealand

Whakapapa

The Te Ararua trail with Hina. Genealogy, relation to the earth, Maori resilience.

Whakapapa : Knowing your roots



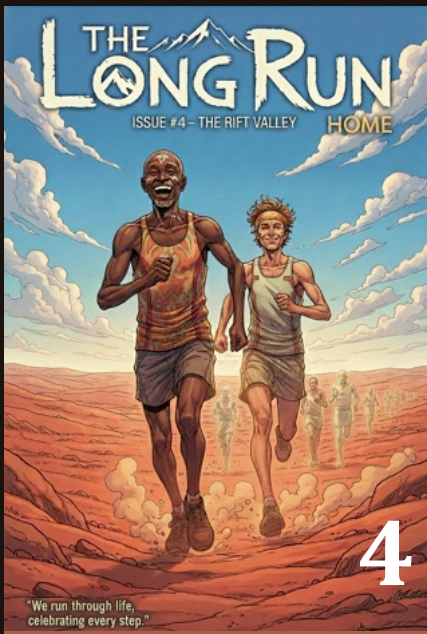
WORK IN PROGRESS

TIBET · Himalaya

The World rooftop

Circumambulation of Mount Kailash with Tenzin. Lung-gom-pa running and meditating monks.

Sunyata : Devoid and interconnection



WORK IN PROGRESS

KENYA · The Rift Valley

The Birthplace

Training with Kenyan runners. Running as joy, survival, and community.

Ubuntu : I am because we are



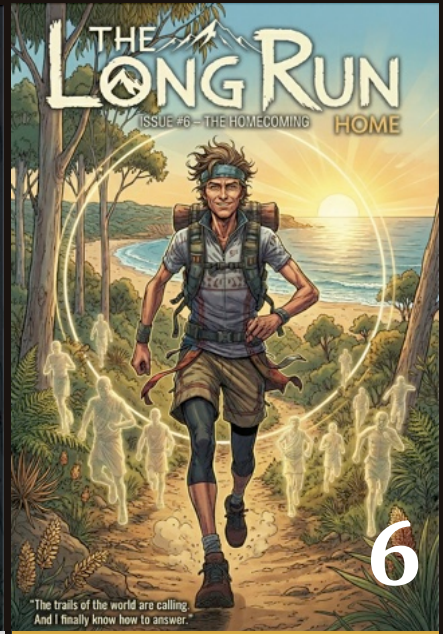
WORK IN PROGRESS

JAPON · Kaihogyo

Sacred Mountains

The Tendai monks and the Kaihogyo, 100 days of mountain hiking with Yuki.

Ichigo Ichie : One moment, one encounter



WORK IN PROGRESS

AUSTRALIA → FRANCE

The Long Way Home

The return. Jarli guides Roland on an ancient Songline to Chamonix.

Everything is linked: The circle is complete

The Brotherhood of The Long Run

Six runners in search of purpose, six cultures, one question.



THE GUARDIAN

AUSTRALIA • Arrernte People

Jarli

An elder of the Arrernte people, guardian of the Songlines. Seventy years old, a runner like his ancestors. Never in a hurry. Knows every rock in his land by its sacred name. Guides Roland, explaining that understanding comes with walking.



THE WARRIOR

AOTEAROA • Māori People

Hina

Māori turned trail runner. She returned to her region to reconnect with her Whakapapa. Courageous, direct, driven by an unresolved grief. Her mission: to reconcile with her genealogy, her family, and the land of her ancestors.



THE CONTEMPLATIVE

TIBET • Drepung Monastery

Tenzin

Lung-gom-pa monk, practitioner of Tibetan meditative running. 38 years old, silent, with superhuman endurance. Trains his mind before his legs. For him, distance doesn't exist, only intention matters.

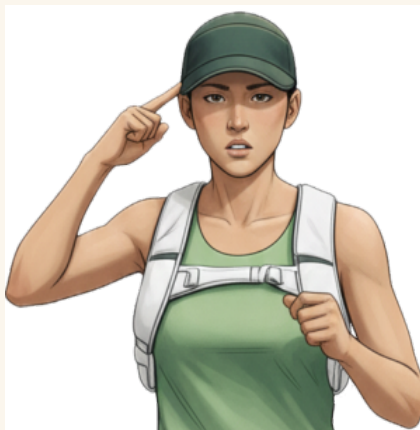


THE JOY

KENYA • Eldoret

Kofi

Born in the Rift Valley, he's been running since birth for pure joy. His light-heartedness contrasts with the solemnity of others. He reminds everyone that running is a gift, not a conquest and forces Roland to confront his luck and his blind privilege.



THE FUGITIVE

JAPAN • Enryakuji Monastery

Yuki

A former executive in Tokyo, she gave it all up at 35 to retreat to a Buddhist mountain monastery. There, she practices Kaihōgyō and teaches Roland that impermanence is not a tragedy. Each encounter is unique and all-encompassing.



THE PROTAGONIST

AUSTRALIA → FRANCE

Roland

A 58-year-old ultra-trail runner. After discovering running at 50, he realized he had been running away from everything. Analytical, perfectionist, unable to stop. His mission: to learn that running can be an act of love rather than escape.

Why this story? Why now?

Where did this story come from?

The Long Run Home was born from a personal contradiction: after quite a few years of running ultra-trails while searching for something I couldn't name, I had the opportunity to encounter indigenous cultures that maintain a relationship with running and the land that our civilization has lost. This project is my attempt to tell that story in a graphic novel format.

Why graphic novel format?

Graphic novels are the only medium where the moving body, sacred landscapes, and inner thoughts coexist on the same page. The silence between two panels can contain an hour's walk. The graphic line can convey the heat of the red Australian soil like no photograph ever can. I chose graphic novels because it's the natural language of this story.

On cultural authenticity

Each album is developed through extensive consultation with representatives of the cultures involved. For Album 1, I worked with representatives of the Arrernte people on the representation of the Songlines. The aim is not to "tell the story" of Indigenous peoples, but to allow their wisdom to engage in a dialogue with our time.

An untapped market

Adult comics are seeking their male readership aged 40+. Trail running is experiencing explosive growth: 200,000 participants in Australia, an educated, literate audience, searching for meaning and close to nature. The convergence of trail running, spirituality, and travel is a solid niche and untapped. This is the space that The Long Run Home aims to fill.

Roland as a mirror

Roland is not a hero. He's a man who has confused ambition with life. His questioning (why am I doing this?) resonates far beyond the world of sports. It's the questioning of an entire digitally connected generation confronted with performance as a religion, the comparison with others and the emptiness it leaves behind.

The global arc

Six albums, six continents, six wisdoms, but a single thread: learning to return. To oneself, to others, to the earth.

The Long Run Home is an outward journey that tells the story of an inner journey. Its title is not metaphorical: in the end, Roland truly is running home. And home is everywhere for him.

*"I am not trying to teach.
I am trying to bear witness.
This story is an invitation to run
differently, to learn from cultures
and enjoy Nature."*

Renald Gallis, author



Excerpts and Art Direction

A few pages from the finished album 1, representative of the series' art direction.



An untapped market segment, a fundamental trend

200 000+

trail runners in Australia (and growing)

35–55 years old

majority age group of Australian trail runners

72 %

of trail runners are executives or professionals.

MAIN TARGET

- Active males 30-80 years old
- Trail runners / Hikers
- Interest in mindfulness and spirituality
- Avid traveller, culturally curious
- Personal development reader
- Higher income

EDITORIAL CONVERGENCES

Franco-Belgian comics for adults are experiencing a revival (in Europe). Documentary graphic novels and films (travel, nature, cultures) have seen steady growth since COVID.

Readers are seeking meaning, otherness, and inner escapism, exactly what “The Long Run Home” offers.

RELATED REFERENCES

Jonathan (Cosey)

Aventurer in Tibet

Arzach (Moebius)

Travel and Graphic silence

The Photograph (Guibert)

Documentary field report

Barefoot to Everest (video)

Ultra-trail, in search of purpose

Whakapapa (Māori concept)

Direct thematic reference,

mapping the descent of all living things, people, land, and the cosmos back to spiritual origins.



WHY NOW

Post-COVID, the search for purpose has accelerated. Trail running has exploded. World spiritualities are generating unprecedented interest. The representation of Indigenous cultures in the arts has become an editorial priority. The Long Run Home is situated precisely at this intersection. The time is now.

THE LONG RUN HOME

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GRAPHIC NOVEL #1 COMPLETED AND AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH (pdf format)

On request

Availability :

Album 1 ready to be published.

Albums 2 is a work in progress, available by September 2026.

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