

YOUNG AUSTRALIAN WRITERS



2002



AWARD 2002

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First published 1999

PATRON Mr Don Burke

Selection Committee:

Editor: Noel Butterfield
Sub Editor: Carol Dick
Marketing: Graham Johnstone
Consultant: John Cooper
Publisher: Robin Leonard
Assistant Publisher: Leanne Johnstone

Finals Judge: Margot Hillel, Senior Lecturer
Australian Catholic University

Illustrations

by Laurie McMurray

Born in 1945, and raised in Western Victoria to a soldier settlement family, Laurie has been practising his art for all his life. His first state award was at 11 years of age, for his pen and ink study of a wedge tailed eagle for the Gould League Prize, while attending the Lake Bolac State School (Victoria).

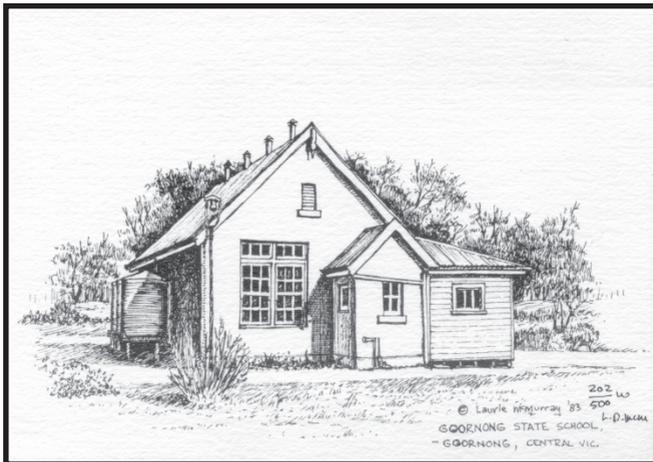
Since those early years, Laurie, after having completed Matriculation at Lake Bolac High School (and consequently studying at Bendigo Institute of Technology, R.M.I.T. and other institutions), has expanded his artistic repertoire to encompass most mediums and subject matters (from abstraction to traditional realism). He specializes in portraits, nudes and figurative works, in oils and pastels, as well as still accepting many commissions in pen and ink. He is also working on a large (2.3 x 1.5m) canvas of singer Colleen Hewett for submission in the next Archibald Prize Competition.

Artworks by Laurie, both original and reproduced print form, are now in every State of Australia and approximately 30 countries overseas.

He operates from McMurray Galleries and fine Art Studios in the View Street Arts Precinct of Bendigo, Victoria.

Proudly printed in Australia

Young Australian Writers



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the following sponsors for their vision and support of our young Australian writers for, without them, this book and these awards would not have been possible.

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A Word from the Sponsor

It is a fact of commercial life that companies involving themselves in sponsorship, like to be associated with activities which are popular, successful and have the potential for further improvement.

That the *Young Australian Writers Awards* fulfil all of those criteria (from Bic Australia's point of view) is clearly evident by our continued support.

We, as major sponsors, have been delighted with the consistently high standards of our young contributors.

The Bic Australia *Young Australian Writers Award* will attain an enviable reputation and become an honour to which young writers will aspire. A status due, in no small measure, to the tireless efforts of the selection committee of *Oz Kidz In Print*, and the astute decisions of the Finals Judge.

Bic Australia is proud to be a supporter of the *Young Australian Writers Award*, and *Oz Kidz In Print*.

Dennis Mahoney
Marketing Manager,
BIC AUSTRALIA

Note from the Selection Committee

Congratulations to all the very talented young writers whose work is published in this book. The *Young Australian Writers Award* evolved from a magazine called *Oz Kidz In Print*. This magazine was first produced with the sole purpose of promoting young Australian writers in a context in which they could be honoured and their achievements distributed nationally to schools and libraries.

Both teachers and students alike have welcomed *Oz Kidz In Print*, 'with open arms' as a long-awaited forum. This huge response has now demanded that these awards be presented in a delightfully compiled anthology.

Should this increase continue as we expect, it will necessitate the expansion of both the selection committee and the judging panel. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the judge and the selection committee for their commitment and personal interest in the *Young Australian Writers Awards*. The task facing the committee becomes more challenging each year, but we are continually rewarded by the outstanding quality of work produced by the young writers. The generous sponsorship of Bic Australia and our other sponsors is essential for our success. We appreciate their interest and look forward to their continued support.

Rob Leonard
Chairperson,
The Selection Committee

FOREWORD

Writing is its own reward. Its devotees experience the loneliness and solitude that go with writing. Sometimes it is important to start with realistic expectations, for, in the words of Alfred Whitehead, 'A man really writes for an audience of about ten persons. Of course if others like it, that is clear gain. But if those ten are satisfied, he is content'.

Many ignorant folk may dismiss writing summarily as a dog's life. If writing is a dog's life, it is the only life worth living.

Yes, writing is a solitary occupation – one in which even family, friends and society are the natural enemies of the writer. 'He must be alone, uninterrupted and slightly savage if he is to sustain and complete an under-taking' (L Powell).

Our young writers in this album are to be commended; for it is they who have demonstrated the fortitude to bare their soul as would a sensitive person plunging naked into tropical waters where sharks abound. Yet it is they who achieve the euphoric satisfaction when the creations are complete.

Few people will experience the sense of satisfaction that engulfs our young writers for, in the words of Ann Lindberg, 'What release to write so that one forgets oneself, forgets one's companion, forgets where one is or what one is going to do next – to be drenched in work as one is drenched in sleep or in the sea...'

Our many contributors have exhibited these qualities to varying degrees, they have pressed on undaunted and unrelenting in pursuit of their craft, forging their own individualistic style. In the words of C.J.Dennis 'I dips me lid to you'.

Never ever become blasé about your gift and continue to exercise your talent to further enhance the natural skills with which you have been blessed.

Noel Butterfield
Editor

ABOUT THE JUDGE

Dr. Margot Hillel

Margot Hillel is a Senior Lecturer in English in the School of Arts and Sciences, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne. She is a Past President of the Children's Book Council of Australia and was Convenor of the Second C.B.C. National Conference held in Melbourne in 1994. She has been President of the Victorian branch of the C.B.C., Judge of the Crichton Award for New Illustrators and Judge of the CBCA Book of the Year Awards. She writes and reviews for *Magpies*, *Reading Time*, *Classroom* and *Australian Book Review*. She has co-edited three short story collections (*Dream Time*, *Into the Future* and *Goodbye and Hello*, the latter being a collection of Australian and Irish stories, jointly published in Australia and the U.K.). She has co-written several books on using literature with children, including *Choosing and Using Literature* and *Unlocking Ideas* on using picture books to teach philosophy. With Anne Hanzl, she compiled *Celebrate!*, a retrospective anthology published to celebrate fifty years of the CBCA Children's Book of the Year Awards. She is a regular contributor to radio on children's books.

Margot speaks regularly at Conferences on children's literature, both in Australia and overseas and gives frequent 'in-services' to teachers on the use of children's literature. She has been exchange scholar in children's literature at The University of Waikato, New Zealand and, in 1966, undertook a three-week lecture tour of South Africa. She is Secretary of the newly-formed Australian Children's Literature Association for Research (ACLAR) and a member of the International Research Society for Children's Literature (IRSCL). She is currently convenor of the judging panel for the Young Adult award in the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards.

We are delighted to have such a celebrated expert in Children's Literature as our Chief Judge for the Australian Children's Literary Board.



**THE BIC AUSTRALIA 2002
YOUNG WRITER OF THE YEAR AWARD**

— WINNER —

Deborah Anstee

Burpengary State School, Burpengary, Queensland

Deborah Anstee is this year's winner of the 'Bic Young Australian Writer' of the year award. Deborah is a year seven student at Burpengary State School, which she has been attending since year five.

This year she was lucky enough to be elected School Captain; this has given Deborah a lot of opportunities to speak publicly. She was also chosen to be one of the student Councilors for her class, and she is also involved in many fundraising activities for her school.

Deborah enjoys reading fiction novels and writing short stories. Her favorite subject at school is English and she also enjoys Art and Sport. Deborah is part of the Senior Concert band and she plays the alto saxophone. Being a member of the bands means that she gets to participate in many competitions.

In Deborah's spare time she enjoys playing netball for the local team – The Jets, going to the beach, hanging out with her friends, shopping and cooking chocolate biscuits.

When Deborah leaves school, she would like to be a horticulturist. She would also like to get into the representative side of netball.

SPECIAL AWARDS

The Special Awards listed below are from community aware Companies who are supporting our *Young Australian Writers Awards* (along with the Major Sponsor **Bic Australia**). Without this support, these awards would not be possible.

The QUIT – VicHealth Literary Award

This Award is presented to a student attending a Primary School from within Australia and whose work has been judged the best piece of **Poetic Writing**.

The Thrifty Car Rentals Literary Award

This Award is presented to a student attending a Primary School from within Australia and whose work has been judged the best piece of writing for a **Short Story**.

The Glaxo Smith Kline Literary Award

This Award is presented to a student attending a Secondary School from within Australia and whose work has been judged the best piece of **Poetic Writing**.

The Qantas Flight Catering Literary Award

This Award is presented to a student attending a Secondary School from within Australia and whose work has been judged the best piece of writing for a **Short Story**.

The Don Burke Achievement Award

This award is presented to a student whose work has been judged by Mr Don Burke himself as outstanding.

The City of Whitehorse Literary Awards

These awards are presented to students from within the City of Whitehorse that have been judged as the best literary work from both primary and secondary schools.



**THE CITY OF
WHITEHORSE
LITERARY AWARD**

Primary School Award

— WINNER —

Jai Hardwick

**Nunawading
Primary School
Nunawading, Victoria**

KILLER GANG VERSUS THE CRABBY GANG

One day deep under the sea, there lived a mean shark named Mad Max. He always bullied other fish. He had two friends named Angry Adam and Fierce Frank. Their gang was called the 'Killer Shark Gang'.

They had gang wars against other gangs for no particular reason. The Killer Shark Gang had never been defeated. One day the Killer Shark Gang hurt some members of the Crabby Gang and then swam away. Some of the crabs didn't get hurt because they hid behind rocks and in their shells. When the sharks had left, a crab rang the hospital and they sent a 'sea ambulance' and took the injured crabs to hospital.

The next day the Crabby Gang hid behind rocks until the Killer Shark Gang swam out of the door of their favorite bar where they had been drinking malted mullet shakes. Then BANG! The Crabby Gang blew the Killer Shark Gang out of the water, and Mad Max went straight into the roof of a house near the beach. 'Ouch!' said Max. It took the RSPCA two days to get him out. From that time on Mad Max never went near the Crabby Gang again.

By Jai Hardwick

Grade 3

Nunawading Primary School

NUNAWADING – VIC.





**THE CITY OF
WHITEHORSE
LITERARY AWARD**

Secondary School Award

— WINNER —

Sophie Smith

**Koonung
Secondary College
Box Hill, Victoria**

THE WHITE LACE

Choking, suffocating. The fresh air was being squeezed from my lungs and replaced with a foul, musty breeze. There were no lights, only shadows that distorted everything around me. Fear crept up my neck as an enormous cockroach crawled over my hand. I moved my arms around, trying to find something to grab onto.

Nothing.

Suddenly my knees collapsed and the cold, hard surface pushed itself onto my face. I rolled over groaning and saw a gleam of red out of the corner of my eye. My heart jumped with excitement.

‘Found it!’ I screamed.

I wiggled over and pulled it out of the darkness. Streams of beautiful light extinguished the dark shadows, and fresh air was restored.

‘Found it!’ I screamed again, my heart pounding.

Gathering all my strength, I pulled myself out of the darkness and into the light. Gasping for breath, I sat on my bed and proudly laced up my red runner. Mum walked into my room.



‘I told you it was somewhere in this mess,’ she exclaimed. ‘Where exactly did you find it?’

‘Under my bed,’ I retorted, a sour note in my voice as I remembered the ordeal of going under the ‘bed’. The foul smells, the darkness and the bugs all reminded me of how Mr. Mop had described the trenches of World War I in History class.

‘Ahh!’ Mum sighed, as she told me to hurry up for school, before closing the door.

Fifth period was History with Mr. Mop. He was telling the class more about the trenches and how horrifying they would have been. The mouldy air, the darkness and the bugs – millions of skin crawling bugs. It was an overcast day outside, the sleeting rain and the wind battered against the trees that were trying hard to stay still. I stared out the window, Mr. Mop's words becoming fainter and fainter. I tried to imagine what sitting in one of the dark, damp trenches on a day like this one would be like.

A cold breeze snuck through the door and I sniffed as my nose started to run. A mouldy, musty smell once again entered my nostrils and as it did I pictured the dark shadows from under my bed that had haunted me that morning. I looked around but couldn't seem to tell where I was. Panicking, I asked the person sitting next to me, 'What are we doing?'

He looked at me queerly as if I had spoken another language. Fear again made its way up my neck as a cold, metal object rolled over my hand. The darkness, distorted faces and people crouching around me looked like little devils with thin curving lips. An enormous bang ruptured through the earth and the boy beside me screamed.

'Autz Van DANZ Martshc!'

I stood up and a deep pain knocked me straight back down again, my eyes rolling around my head. My back was cold, and as I lifted my hands away from my stomach I discovered they were slippery and had a peculiar red tinge. The sky lit up with orange and red flares, and a giant green object rolled past me. The 'Autz Van...' boy fell next to me a look of despair and hopelessness in his eyes.

'Help...' he murmured as he shook violently. My mind lapsed. Again I remembered being under my bed and a shiny red thing saving me. I looked around but nothing was going to get me out of this nightmare.

My teachers had always said not to drag on in a story and not to bore; it was then that I decided that whoever wrote this one sucked. I pinched myself and slowly opened my eyes. Nothing. I decided the only way I could get out of the nightmare was to fight. I stretched out my arm and picked up a HGTE 43860 Pistol. I had no idea what a HGTE 43860 Pistol was, but I was determined to use it.

I stood up slowly when the rupturing noises stopped, and were suddenly replaced with shrills of laughter from my audience. I was back in the classroom. The sun was peeking through the clouds and my red runner was in my hand, my finger loosely pulled around the white lace.

'HUT, HUT, HUT!' someone sarcastically sneered as I jumped off the desk. The bell sounded and Mr. Mop thanked me for my lovely demonstration of my interpretation of trench warfare. I pulled my sneaker back onto my foot, my face as red as the shoe. I vowed never to go under my bed again because the bad air had affected my brain.



By **Sophie Smith**
Year 10
Koonung Secondary College
BLACKBURN – VIC.



**THE QUIT – VicHealth
LITERARY AWARD**

**Best Poetry
From a Primary School**

— WINNER —

Rebecca Atherton

**Tecoma
Primary School
Tecoma, Victoria**

CHILD OF THE MOUNTAIN

I am a child of the mountains,
With the mighty forests high.
I am the tangled vines,
That creep around the trees.
I walk with the ferns,
That peep through the mist.
I am the small rivers,
Rushing to the ocean.
I am the spirit of the bush,
I watch the spiky echidnas dig their burrows.
I am the fallen logs,
I am the hills.

By Rebecca Atherton
Grade 5
Tecoma Primary School
TECOMA – VIC



**THE THRIFTY CAR
RENTALS
LITERARY AWARD**

**Best Short Story
from a
Secondary School**

— WINNER —

Kanin Lwin

**Sydney Grammar School
Paddington, NSW**

PRISONER OF THE FOREST

Cautiously, like a snake, he approached the sleeper. The forest was quiet now and the trees towered above, blocking the sky from view. Small shades of light burst in from the tree-tops and fell, like leaves, on the sleeper. He drew his breath as the light glistened on the sleeper's pale skin. He could see him more clearly now. It was a man with deadly white skin and brown hair that covered his forehead untidily. He touched him and withdrew. Somewhere far off a horn sounded, a low, rich sound but as sweet as the song the birds sang early in the morning dew. Before his eyes, the sleeper awoke. His skin remained pale but with each breath he drew he became more real, more lifelike.

Suddenly, the sleeper turned to him, not angrily but in a friendly tone. Softly, he croaked, 'Thank you, you have broken the long spell and in return I shall tell you my story.' He need not an answer so he drew a deep breath, wept and began.

'My name,' he said, 'is Sir Valiant de Pomfort, son of Sir Gregory of France and true heir to the throne. I was only two when my father died but I held firm and became a knight at twelve. Most of my subjects wanted me to be king but my Uncle did not. He lured me to this very forest and tried to kill me but he failed and I killed him. In revenge, his heir and my cousin united forces with the English and captured my strongholds by sea. I managed to escape to this forest and stayed as a hermit here until luck renewed itself on me. It came, or as I thought, after several years when I met an enchantress in the heart of the forest. She gave me gifts of gold, a castle built in this very same spot and the pleasures of immortality. In return, I pledged an oath that I would remain loyal to her by staying in the forest forever. In the years that followed I would regret it.

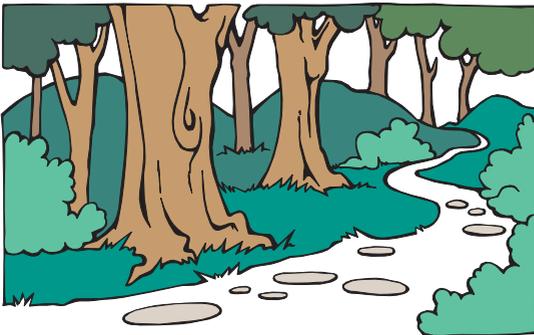
The years passed and my heart hungered for my world, the world beyond the forest. So, one night, I slipped away and escaped the forest. In a spurt of light, the enchantress appeared before my eyes. She was weeping and her eyes were fiery red. With each tragic sob, she became more hag-like until she became a hag herself.

Large, black, leathery wings burst from her back, her hands became claws and a tail, the size of eight men put together, ripped from her bottom. Suddenly, a realisation

gripped me: I had incurred the wrath of the enchantress. I fled but she held me there and then. Howling, screaming and screeching, she ate my soul, the essence of life, and with deep shock I lay down to die. She growled and disappeared in a puff of smoke to feast upon another hapless victim. Alas! I could not live or die for a man needs a soul to do such things. Instead I fell into deep sleep with no dreams in it. Now, though, the sleep has been broken thanks to you. Listen, the heavens are calling me and thus my story ends. So I must bid you good bye. Farewell!' He smiled and dropped dead onto the ground, still smiling.

The specks of light that had glistened on his skin faded away and soon he was like he was before, dark, pale and lifeless.

Somewhere up in the heavens the horn sounded again, a tragic sound this time, and with it a golden leaf floated onto his dark body. As it touched the sleeper's bony arms, his body became illuminated and a gap emerged from the tree tops, bright clear music accompanying it. The man stared up into the gap. He gasped and pinched himself to make sure he wasn't dreaming. In the sky, standing on the silver lining of the clouds, dressed in pure white and singing, were hundreds, thousands, gazillions of... angels. Slowly, in rhythmical beat with the music, a light descended down from the gap and touched the sleeper's body, spun it slowly around and broke it into hundreds of tiny particles. Then there was silence. The gap closed all too quickly. The music stopped and the forest's mysterious tone invaded the forest once more. Still dazed by what he saw, the man, who had been listening to the knight's fearful tale, backed away and ran for dear life. Why he ran, he never knew. He just kept running and running and the forest grew bigger and bigger. The enchantress had found herself another victim.



By **Kanin Lwin**
Class 6L
Sydney Grammar School
Edgecliff Preparatory
EDGECLIFF – NSW
Teacher: Mrs S. Lamont



**QANTAS FLIGHT
CATERING
LITERARY AWARD**

**Best Short Story
from a
Secondary School**

— WINNER —

Chloe Stapleton

**Rosebud
Secondary College
Rosebud, Victoria**

SAVAGE LITTLE BEAST

PROLOGUE

Grazed knees, matted hair, torn clothes. The savage little girl clambered up the tree like a possum; blood ran down her legs, a continuous flow of red, a waterfall. To the top of the tree she must climb to gain the golden leaf of Serya, imagine the glory, the reward...

‘Mendra!’ The distant call of her name brought Mendra out of her subconscious. Time to go home. It wasn’t pretty when Nurse became angry and ignoring her call would make that a certainty. Realising that, Mendra leapt out of the tree and ran back to the orphanage. A red trail indicated a path to the tree where she had been dreaming.

CHAPTER 1 – CONFUSION EFFECT

Mendra wasn’t unhappy at the orphanage; Nurse was a kindly old lady who cared immensely for her. Yet she wasn’t happy either. Mendra had this hurt tucked deep down inside her; she had hidden it away in the darkest corner where no one could see it but, every second of the day, she could feel it gnawing away at her heart. Her parents had given her to the orphanage when she was only a few weeks old. They had been superstitious and believed that it was good luck to have a boy as the first child. When Mendra had been born they thought her a curse to the family and wanted to be rid of her before she brought any ill fortune upon them.

At a younger age, she been angry with them and questioned ‘How could they have done that? Were their hearts made of stone?’ but, as she had grown older, a sad regret and a will to know them had replaced anger. Yet did she really want to see them after they had given her away? She didn’t know. She was so confused. All this confusion started to take effect on Mendra, if they wanted a boy well they could have a boy! And gradually her appearance changed.

She traded her long flowing jet-black hair for a bob cut and her dresses for shirts and shorts and, instead of her usually clean lily-white legs, they were caked with blood and dirt. But there was something that even Mendra could hardly understand herself, a hidden reason for her change in appearance. Right, right in the back of her mind there was a desire to have her parents come to the orphanage and see her like she was, a tomboy, and a wish for them to take her home to see her as their son.

CHAPTER 2 – SUFFICIENT PUNISHMENT

Mendra was angry. Nurse had sent her to her room without dinner and her stomach was rumbling in complaint. ‘I’m sick of you spending your day up a tree like a bird!’ Nurse had yelled. ‘Look at this, just look at this!’ Nurse waved her torn shorts around angrily. ‘I’ve enough trouble looking after the other children without putting up with this! Tomorrow you will stay home and play with your dolls and, if you have and trouble with that, you can help me clean the orphanage.’ Now Mendra learnt a valuable lesson, never stick your tongue out at someone standing in front of a mirror. ‘And for that you can go without dinner!’

Sitting on her bed thinking how hard done by she was, Mendra’s eyes fell upon the open window and a devilish thought came upon her. Mind racing, she climbed out of the window. Nurse would be worried if she suddenly disappeared, but that was the whole point, Mendra was in a vindictive mood.

Everything might have gone to plan if Mendra hadn’t slipped. But she had and now she was in hospital with a broken leg. She had received a tongue-lashing from Nurse, but it was toned down quite a bit by her concern.

A broken leg seemed sufficient enough punishment for Mendra because Nurse noticed the old Mendra starting to show. To Nurse it was like the first daisy of spring poking up out of the snow.

CHAPTER 3 – FLAME RE-LIT

Substituted by make-up and jewellery. When Mendra finished school and started working full time she left the orphanage. She visited Nurse regularly and enjoyed the conversations they had over steaming cups of hot chocolate. One fine morning when they were sitting in the sunroom the topic changed to Mendra's parents. Mendra had bristled at first; she didn't like talking about her parents: they were something of the past, which she had put behind her a long time ago. But although she didn't really want to talk about her parents she found herself asking Nurse questions. 'What did they look like? What did her father do for a job?'

For a while Nurse was a well of information but Nurse hadn't known Mendra's parents very long and that well was beginning to dry up. But all this talk had sparked a new flame of curiosity in Mendra that she had gladly extinguished years ago. She knew what she must do, something she had been putting off for her entire life, she would find her parents... somehow.

CHAPTER 4 – REALITY REALISATION

Mendra's heart was racing, her hands were clammy, her breath staggered. She had been standing at the door for ten minutes so far hoping to summon up enough courage to knock on the door. She was sure she could stand there all day and still not have a tenth of the courage needed. 'Okay' taking a deep breath Mendra raised her hand to the door and knocked loudly, once, twice, three times. The door opened and Mendra found herself staring at the face of her mother for the first time. 'Yes?' her mother asked enquiringly. Mendra smiled warmly. 'Mother' she started, ready to receive a warm hug. Instead her mother backed away from her, crossing herself. Her father had come to see what the commotion was and now was yelling at Mendra 'Get away from us you cursed beast, get away!'

Warm and safe in Nurse's arms Mendra had cried herself dry. Her face was all blotchy and her eyes red. It took a while before Nurse had the full story; every now and then Mendra would burst into fits of sobbing. When Mendra had finished her woeful tale Nurse had pulled her closer and whispered words of comfort.

'Oh Nurse' Mendra sighed, 'If only I could have seen that I didn't need to find my parents; I had someone who cared about me right here. They may be my biological parents but you're the one who's clothed me and fed me all these years, you're my real parent'. And then Mendra felt something she had never really understood before, something she had never expressed, love. 'I love you Nurse' whispered Mendra and the warm safe feeling that comes over you when you're near your mother washed over her as she heard the words 'I love you too' whispered back.



By **Chloe Stapleton**

Age 12

Rosebud Secondary College

ROSEBUD – VIC.



**THE
GLAXO SMITH KLINE
LITERARY AWARD**

**Best Poetry
from a
Secondary School**

— WINNER —

Joel Pringle

**Gympie
State High School
Gympie, Queensland**

THE MIRACLE

It was to be the best of days,
I guess it was, in many ways.
A boy? A girl? There were no clues,
Here comes Dad – is there any news?

Not breathing, not even a cry!
They all said Eleanor might die.
Monitors checking how she fares,
Time to ask for help, from upstairs!

I prayed that day, and all that night,
Oh let God hear our awful plight.
The staff pretending hope was there,
Oh Eleanor, it's just not fair!

Waah! Sweet symphony of living.
Cry Baby, with all your being.
In just four days, oh see the change,
Sweet suckling, isn't it strange?

So sick a child so great a prayer,
I thank you God, for being there.
Our baby's growing day by day
A miracle, in every way!



*Dedicated to
Eleanor Rachel Carr*

By **Joel Pringle** – Year 8
Distance Education – Rockhampton base
GYMPIE – QLD.



**THE
DON BURKE
LITERARY AWARD**

— WINNER —

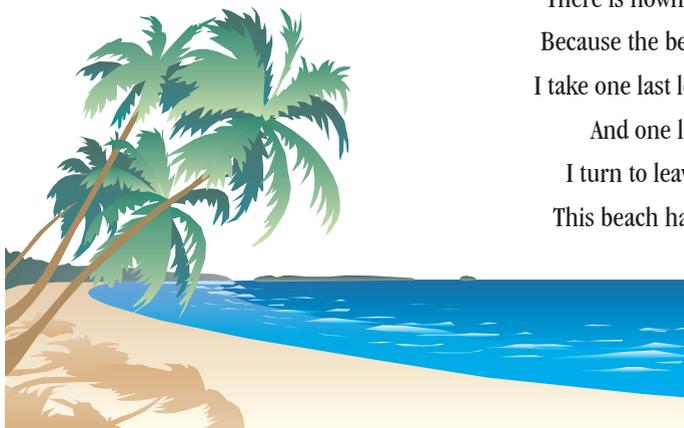
Andrea Ali

**Loreto College
Marryatville, South Australia**

MY FAVOURITE PLACE

My favourite place in the whole wide world
 Would be somewhere near the sea,
 Lying on the sand, the breeze on my face
 Is my favourite place to be.
 I love the cool ocean breezes
 That comb my hair with their fingers,
 And when the breezes fade away
 The strong salty smell still lingers.
 I love the clear sparkling water
 That changes from blue to green,
 The little fish that hide down below
 And vanish whenever they're seen.
 I love digging my toes in the sand
 That is warm like a recently used toaster,
 Swimming out in the sea, away from the shore
 And riding a roller coaster.
 I love exploring the rock pools

That are safe when the tide is low,
 The sun's bright rays hit the water
 The colour reflects like a tiny rainbow.
 You see people surfing and swimming
 Little children rolling and tumbling,
 On the shore, people trying to build sandcastles,
 working quickly before the sand starts crumbling.
 Gradually the bright sun starts to set
 And people get packed up to go,
 I hang around because I want to see
 The horizon when the sun gets low.
 Before long the horizon has changed
 The colours are beautiful to see.
 The soft pinks and purples stream over the beach
 Engulfing everything in sight, even me.
 And as I watch this amazing sight
 A smile spreads over my face,
 There is nowhere else that I'd rather be
 Because the beach is my favourite place.
 I take one last look at the pink setting sun
 And one last splash in the sea,
 I turn to leave and I think to myself
 This beach hasn't seen the last of me!



By **Andrea Ali**
 Year 10 – Age 14
 Loreto College
 MARRYATVILLE – SA



**The 2002
BIC AUSTRALIA
Young Australian
Writer of the Year
Award**

— WINNER —

Deborah Anstee

**Burpengary
State School
Burpengary, Queensland**

DESTINY

I peered intently over the calm water, wondering what challenges awaited me. No challenge too big, no challenge too small – that was my motto. I was Wonderful William, the greatest superhero ever to walk the planet. My soul purpose in life was to save damsels in distress. This week I had already faced many grave dangers, including giant squids, with tentacles as thick as tree trunks, and ten tonne killer whales. Today however, things were very slow. The sun was high overhead and I was having trouble concentrating. The shade of a nearby tree was beckoning me. Not able to withstand the temptation any longer, I climbed down from my perch.

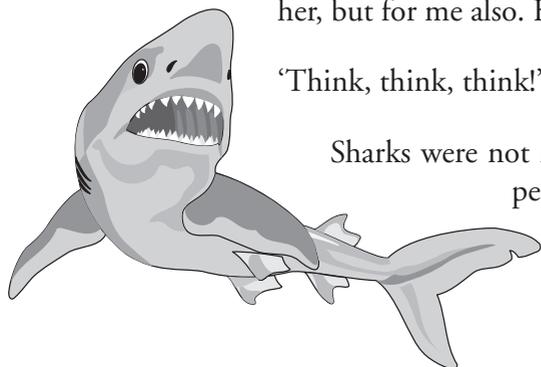
After my rest, I found it easier to focus. I scanned the water, like an eagle hunting its prey. From where I was sitting, I could see the whole pool. Noticing a commotion towards one end, I scrambled down from my vantage point. As I hurried over, my brother pointed at me and rolled his eyes. I decided to ignore him.

‘What is the problem?’ I queried.

He didn’t answer, but then I saw the dilemma. A small girl was swimming near a razor-toothed shark!

‘Stay calm!’ I yelled, which was not only good advice for her, but for me also. How was I going to save her?

‘Think, think, think!’ I commanded myself.



Sharks were not my favourite animals, in fact I was petrified of them, but I had to rescue the oblivious child. Because I could not think of a logical way to save her, I plunged into the water, ready to tackle the shark.

The shark came closer. I waited for it to make the first move.

Suprisingly, the shark did nothing, so I decided to make the most of the unusual situation. I lunged at the beast, clawing at it with all my strength. Unexpectedly, it seemed to shrink in my arms. I looked down suspiciously and realised that it was deflating!

‘Mum! William ruined another one of my inflatable toys!’ wailed my sister Kylie, gesturing towards a shrivelled giant squid and killer whale, lying useless beside the pool. I grinned sheepishly. From the murderous look on my mother’s face, I could tell she didn’t think I was much of a superhero.

Later that evening, my mother was still raving on about my little stunt.

‘You’ve been watching too much television William. How many time do I have to tell you? Don’t wear underpants over those ridiculous tights!’ she hollered, glaring at my bright green pants.

I sighed. A strong gust of wind rustled the living room curtains. I caught a glimpse of a soccer ball, lying forgotten, in the backyard and started to wonder. Perhaps, I wasn’t destined to be a superhero: William the world champion soccer player... now that had a much more attractive ring to it!



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