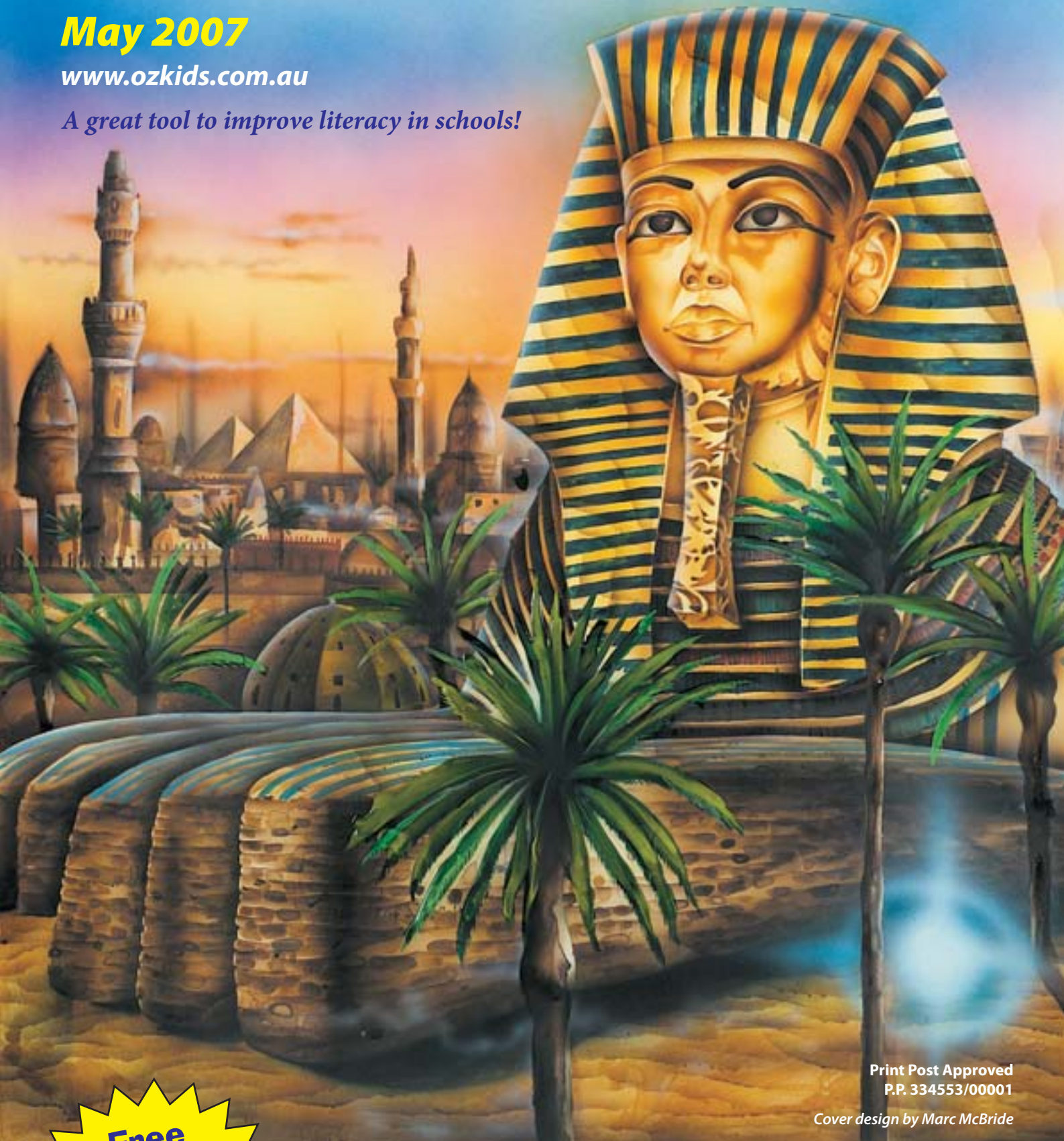


# Oz Kids in Print

**May 2007**

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# Oz Kids in Print

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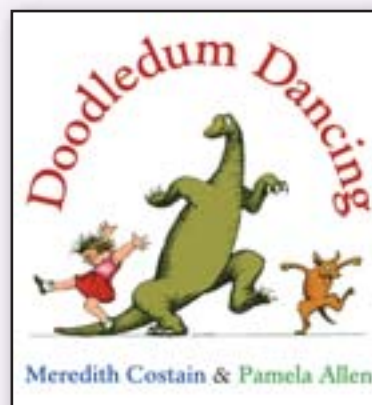
We have another great issue for you this month with some wonderful writer's tips from our wonderful authors that will be of great benefit to all the Young Writers out there.

We are pleased to have Elise Hurst, illustrator extraordinaire and author offer her creative hand for future editions. Look out for illustrations created by Elise in our future editions.

Visit [www.elisehurst.com](http://www.elisehurst.com) and see for yourself what a talented artist (and Author) Elise is.

**KEEP ON WRITING!**

*Carol Dick*  
Managing Editor



### A Special Announcement!

Meredith Costain and Pamela Allens co-created a picture book *Doodledum Dancing*. This book has been shortlisted in the Early Childhood section of the 2007 Children's Book Council *Book of the Year* Awards. The book is filled with funny poems for young readers to enjoy.

My six and eight year olds love it. Even to the point of being about to recite some of the poems back to me.

Well done Meredith and Pamela!

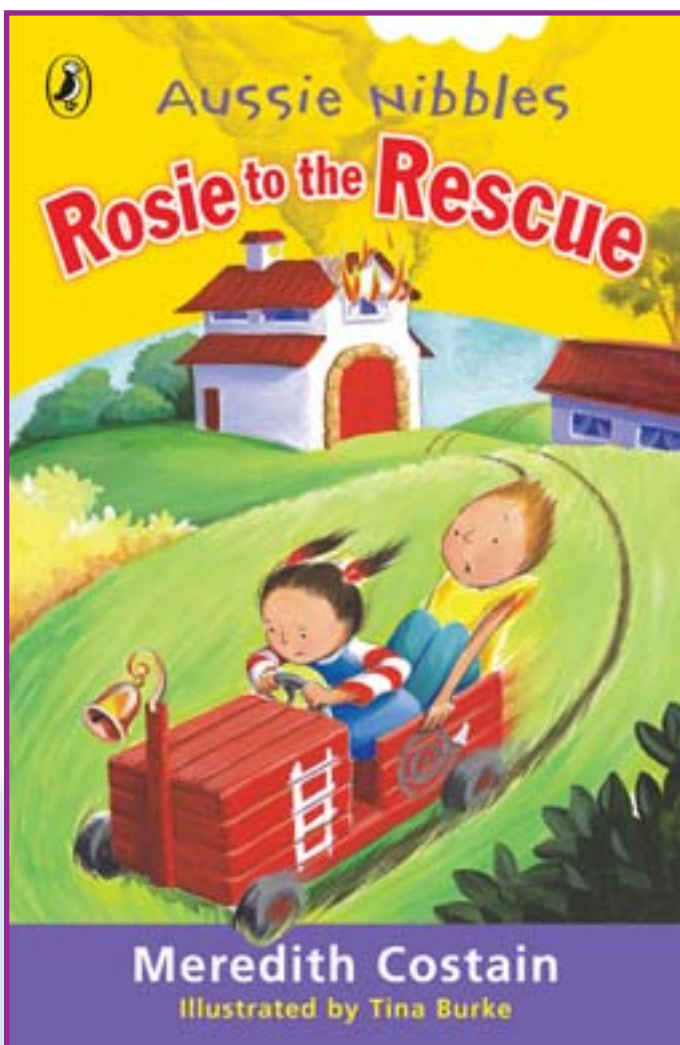
### Book Review

**ROSIE TO THE RESCUE – by Meredith Costain** (Puffin Aussie Nibbles)

Rosie loves things that are red – especially fire engines! Her home is next door to the Merrivale fire station, and every week she helps fire chief Hamish MacTavish polish the fire engine till it shines. Rosie's billycart is painted to look like a miniature fire engine, but she'd love a real one of her own.

One day, while Rosie and her friend Ned are playing in their treehouse, they discover a fire licking at the curtains of Hamish's house above the fire station. But everyone else is away at the annual picnic. Can Rosie save the town before it all goes up in smoke?

*Rosie to the Rescue* is the latest title in the wonderful Puffin **Aussie Nibbles** series. Watch out for the sequel next year: *Rosie and the Bunyip!*





## Trial of the Werewolf



The moon shines bright this night. The power of its pearly lustre seeping into me, transforming my blood, morphing my figure. I feel the power flowing through me. Tonight is the night. I have been feeling it coming for a while now, the test. Everyone's test is the same, but different. Everyone has to resist temptation, but temptation comes in different forms, everyone is different. If I pass the test, I will remain human, only changing on the night of a full moon, if I fail the test, I will be a werewolf forever, no longer able to wander among humans. I shiver at the thought.

I can not fail this test. I can not be forced into hiding, not me.

The transformation is complete. The moon is high in the sky. I can feel hunger gripping my stomach, the need to hunt washing over me. Before I realise what I'm doing, I bellow a mad cry to the moon and dash off towards the forest. I note my direction, and speed. I'm acting on instinct, I can't let instinct take over. I have to control it, else I will fail, anyone who lets instinct take over fails. This isn't fair! Why do I have to suffer? But I can't think about that now. I have to concentrate on my challenge.

I felt my body dart to the left, heading straight at a deer. NO! My head screams. I lunge to the side, and collide, head on

with a tree. But I didn't hit the deer, the poor thing has now vanished from sight. I have to stay focused, I can't let my mind stray to irrelevancies.

Controlling my instincts, I wander the forest, searching for a place to hide myself, a place in which to lock myself until morning. My body and mind are still not one, and I'm struggling to stay in control. My stomach is aching with hunger. What can I eat? I find a bush covered in juicy looking berries. My gut is telling me to eat the leaves, but my mind is telling me to eat the berries. I know I should listen to my gut. I pluck a berry from the bush, hang on, was my gut telling me to eat the berry? Or was it the leaves? My mind is whirring, I can't remember. I listen hard, trying to block out my head and listen to my gut, it has never failed me before. I've thought too much. I can't tell who's saying what. 'Eeni - meeni - minie - moe' I mutter and shove the berry in my mouth, having convinced myself that was what my gut had told me.

The berry tastes good, and nothing bad has happened. I eat a few more. As I'm shoving another pawful in my mouth, a mechanical laughter reaches my ears. My spirit floats out of my body, a human image of myself. 'FAILED!' it screeches. My blood runs cold, my fur stands up on end, a cold shiver reaches my spine. My spirit floats up into the sky. Up it goes, into the star-studded sky. I have failed. I lift my head to the sky, and howl long sorrow filled howls at the moon.

*By Ashlea Caldwell  
Age 14*

*Yarra Valley Grammar  
RINGWOOD NORTH - VIC.*

## Run Hare Run

ONCE upon a time in a magical forest lived a magnificent hare covered in a chocolate coloured coat. One day in winter, the hare was looking for food.

Suddenly an avalanche came straight down on the poor hare! The hare was stuck there for a while. Luckily a little girl was passing by. She was just going to leave when she saw an ear poking out. Then she dug him out and took him home to her father.

But her father was a cruel wizard and wished to eat it. That night while the girl was sobbing, a strange thing happened. A strange light appeared! At first the girl was scared but then she realised it was the snow princess!

The snow princess said, 'Don't worry, I will save your friend', and then she disappeared! That night the snow princess took the hare to her mother. First the hare was startled and began to run but soon it realised there was no danger and they lived happily ever after.

*By Jasmine Karimova  
Year 2*

*Manly West Primary School  
BALGOWLAH - NSW  
Teacher: Ms McKenzie*



## *The Dream Key*

**A**FTER reading Tim a bedtime story about pirates and treasure, Tim's mum tucked him into bed and kissed him goodnight. He was soon asleep and the next thing he found himself standing alone on a dark beach. It was freezing and he felt very scared.

Suddenly he saw someone walking towards him. He was the meanest and biggest pirate he had ever seen. Tim was shaking all over with fear and could not get his legs to run away. 'My name is Blue Beard and this key will open a treasure chest buried in your front yard. Take twenty steps forward then fifteen steps left and dig!!!'

The next thing Tim knew he was awake and remembering his dream he felt excited. He felt his pocket but there was no key. 'Oh, it was only a silly dream!' As he got out of bed something fell to the floor.



It was a shiny silver key. 'The dream key!' He yelled in excitement and headed for the front garden with his dog running behind him, struggling to keep up.

He grabbed a spade and took twenty steps forward and fifteen to the left and began to dig furiously. He dug and dug, but he couldn't find anything. His dog Jack joined in and they continued digging. Soon there was a mountain of dirt higher than Tim, and then his spade hit something! Trembling with excitement, he brushed the dirt away from what he hit, but all he found was an old dead tree root. 'That stupid pirate! Silly me for believing him!'

Just then Tim's mum came out and he told her about the dream and the key.

'Oh Tim! That must be my front door key that I lost a few days ago. Here's five dollars for digging a hole to plant my new tree in.'

Tim thought to himself 'Well at least I got SOMETHING for my troubles!'

*By Georgia Carey  
Grade 5  
Calvary Christian College  
AITKENVALE - QLD.  
Teacher: M. Crompton*

## *The Dove of Peace*

Name of Painting: *The Dove of Peace*

Artist: *Picasso*

**T**HE WHITE, puffy clouds floated across the clearing, revealing a lone flyer. Its slim, white feathers shine against the brilliant, white moon. Its beating wings are as elegant and as graceful as a ballerina. The dove glides swiftly in the clear night sky, and then lands graciously in a lush garden.

Aromas of the orange jasmine fill the moonlit air, creating a scent that is mixed with the frangipanis. The ripples of water in the fountain are the only thing heard in this magnificent place. The dove meandered to the fountain and swiftly ducks its head into the water.

It was peaceful and quiet and the snowy-white feathered dove was about to take off when something caught its eye. A creature. It was as

black as the night sky with a long midnight black tail which it waved stylishly back and forth. Its bright, fluorescent, yellow eyes gleamed against its black furry body and its dark surroundings.

Most birds would have chirped with fright and taken off; zooming in the cat's wake but the dove did not. The dove looked as though it was strolling as it surprisingly walked up to the cat. The cat got ready to pounce, and the dove prepared for flight but at that very moment, there was a blazing flash of light and there it was.....

A picture of the dove soaring skywards.

*By Catherine Zhao  
Year 5  
Manly West Primary School  
BALGOWLAH - NSW  
Teacher: Miss Wilson*





## The Emperor Penguins




Down the path the penguins wander,  
Standing up to cold and fright.  
They will go through many dangers,  
Struggling with all their might.  
Oh, kind lady, why do penguins  
Walk with such braveness, pride, and right?  
Oh, their braveness helps them on,  
And the thought of chicks on a cold winter's night.

THE END.

*By Meaghan Gaunt,  
Grade 3, Age 7  
Merri Creek Primary School  
NORTH FITZROY - VIC.*

## A Day in the Life of a \$5 Note



I'M LYING on the ground outside the general store. The wind had blown me out of somebody's greedy hands. Thank goodness too. They were slimy, sticky and the smell. Oh, I can't even describe the smell.

I can see people walking past. Some old, some young, some with dogs that are so deafening I can't hear myself think.

Then I see the one thing no \$5 note dreams of seeing. A cat! If I stay low enough hopefully he won't see me. AHHHHH! Oh no, I plopped down, right in front of the cat! I scream. But no one can hear me. The cat reaches out its gigantic paws and grabs me by Queen Elizabeth's head.

'Good kitty', I hear somebody say. 'Thank you.'

Good kitty! Exactly what part of this attack is good enough to say 'Good kitty'? You tell me! Okay now I'm babbling. I can't think straight. This cat has got me by my head after all. Okay, calm down. Wait! Someone's picking me up! It's the girl, the one who owns the cat.

The little ratbag is taking me into the general store. She's looking around the shop; she picks up a bag of lollies and runs to the counter.

'\$2.75', I hear someone say and the girl hands me over a big, black desk.

A man pushes on this screen and a drawer opens up. He puts me inside it. He hands the girl some shiny coins, then pushes the drawer into this tunnel. I hear a person. By the sounds of its sweet voice I think it's a woman. The same man opens up the drawer and hands me over to the woman. She is the

ugliest thing I have ever seen. She puts me into this pouch thing and walks out the door.

I have a bumpy ride, smashing against bigger notes. Tens, twenties even fifties. And then there's these little terrors, rolling all around, smashing into my Parliament House. My head has been bruised enough they don't have to destroy my home. We stop.

'Okay Jim, it's pay day. For your hard work you deserve a \$5 note'. She hands me over to the boy and in his hands is a pair of scissors.

'Whoopee! Another note to cut up!'


'Uh, Jim I don't think you should cut this one up. Save it for something you want.'

'Okay', he says unconvincingly.

The boy takes me into his room, shuts the door and lays me down on his desk. He picks up his scissors and whispers 'I'm going to turn you into a boat'. He cackles evilly to himself.

The boy folds me in places I never knew I had and finally, I'm a \$5 note boat. Jim takes me outside and puts me down in the gutter. I flow down the watery gutter. A hole in the ground warns me a drain is coming up. I fall through the grate, getting bashed while hitting the mossy sides of the pipe. I can hear the boy's screams above me.

I don't know where I'm flowing but can assume I'm going to have a great adventure.



*By Brittany Sanker  
Year 7, Norville State School  
BUNDABERG - QLD.*

## ***If Trees Could Talk***



**I**N a forest far from here lay a secret undiscovered from the rest of the world. It is a tree. This tree isn't just any old tree and this is where my story begins.

One fine sunny day an Olive tree was sitting in its usual spot thinking, 'I wonder if anything exciting will happen today', then suddenly he heard a rustle in the leaves. Fred the tree stood as still as possible then two children came out of the leaves. They were collecting twigs from dead trees. When they saw Fred they immediately started to climb the Olive tree and broke off his best twig. Fred roared in pain, the two children (Ben and Harry) jumped off the Olive tree and hid behind a bush.

After Fred calmed down he told them not to do that because it hurts like a broken bone. Ben and Harry looked very scared

but stayed to hear the Olive tree talk about one of the things that the world has never seen.

Many years had passed when Ben and Harry came back after school one day but Fred did not recognise them. Fred stood as still as he stood the day he met them. Ben and Harry thought he was sleeping for a moment until Harry had an idea. He climbed up Fred and found the smallest twig and broke it off, Fred opened his eyes and as usual Fred screamed in pain but not in as much pain as last time. Then they knew that Fred wasn't sleeping.

'Hey Fred, it's us, Ben and Harry'.

Fred said, 'You don't look like them'.

'That's because we are older Fred, Ben and I were only nine and eleven when we first met you. Now I am sixteen and Ben is eighteen', Harry told Fred.

Fred was quiet for a moment then said, 'Okay then, when was the first time Ben, Harry and I first met?'.

Ben replied, 'Monday 31st July 2006'. Fred slowly started to believe them.

Weeks and weeks had past and Fred got older. Then one bright sunny day Fred, Ben and Harry heard a loud rumbling sound coming from behind a bush, **SUDDENLY**, out of a bush came a big machine. Ben and Harry ran to Fred and stood around him. The driver yelled, 'GET LOST YOU TREE HUGGERS!'

Ben and Harry didn't move but yelled, 'IF YOU WANT TO TAKE THIS TREE DOWN YOU WILL HAVE TO TAKE US TOO'.

The driver had to think for a while then turned the big machine around and drove out of the forest.

That is how Ben and Harry saved the day!

*By Bridgette Clarke  
Grade 5,  
St. Laurence's Catholic School,  
FORBES – NSW  
Teacher: Mrs Turner*

*The fading yellow sun is setting,  
Reflecting on the still blue water of the ocean.  
The gentle waves crash against the bumpy rocks,  
And the sound of them takes away all the stress.  
I see a few kids enjoying a splash,  
As I would have done when I was a kid.  
I watch the yachts clashing with the mighty waves,  
As well as getting a refreshing spray.*

*Now I do not see anything at all,  
As if it's pitch black,  
Oh yes...  
The yellow sun has now faded away.*

*By Jiannis Tsaousis  
Carey Baptist Grammar School*

## **THE TEXTURE OF THE BEACH**



A dying world  
A trickling stream,  
Through a rainforest felt,  
A silent scream,  
A cry for help,  
Mountains rising,  
Above the clouds,  
Plastic bags prising,  
Litter in crowds,  
A beautiful scene,  
Of a lake and trees,  
Chainsaws too loud,  
Unheard pleas,  
Over the world,  
On Earth's solid ground,  
There is no escape,  
Pollution found.

*David Mahler*

*Year 8*

*Carey Baptist Grammar School*

*KEW – VIC.*

# A Dying World



## Cheating is a Crime!

**I**NTRODUCTION: Toby and his team couldn't win soccer because of Binky's team! Binky's team always cheats and blames Toby's team. He and his team also bullies Toby and his friends every time! And Toby can't tell his teacher because if he did, Binky's team would bully him more!

'It's not fair,' shouted Toby in anger. 'I don't see anything that makes Binky blame our team.'

'I know,' said James, 'if only that nut-headed Binky and his team would stop bullying, we could have told Mrs Marcus about it and the problem could have been solved!'. Suddenly the bell rang. 'It's time for soccer practice,' said James.



Soon everyone was out in the field in their numbered T-shirts and shorts. Toby was number one and Joe was number two, so we were in the middle. Rocky was standing in the right-hand side. He was one from Binky's team and James was standing on the left-hand side. Rocky was number three and James was number four. Kelly was the leader and Jack was goal keeper. Then Kelly put the ball in the middle and blew the whistle. As soon as she blew the whistle, we began. I tried to take the ball, but I failed because Joe was balancing the ball trying to win a goal.

Joe was a boy from Binky's team and was very tough. Suddenly one of my mates, Iza, took the ball out off Joe's side and was in the lead. She was going to kick a goal when suddenly the ball stopped, and the time was up! I looked at the darts scoreboard, Binky's team got one hundred points and we got ninety eight points. It was close. After soccer, I went over to where Rocky was standing. In the middle of the two trees, there was a centimetre of plastic foil! I was so mad that I went straight to Kelly and told her what happened.

The next day Binky and his team were in big trouble! Kelly and Mrs. Marcus asked him why he and his team did this. They explained that they always wanted to win. Later, when it was recess, Binky and I sat together to talk about the problem. I made him understand that other people can win too and you have to be a good sport. Later on, my team and Binky's team learned to get along and they never cheated again!

*By Fairooz Waqar*

*Age 9*

*KOGARAH – NSW*

## ***Tell the truth!***

### **Writing tips from author Anna Ciddor**

When I read the stories you send in, the ones that impress me most are the ones that create a vivid, realistic picture of a scene or emotion – ones where I feel you really must have lived the experience you are writing about. That doesn't mean you can only write about your ordinary, everyday lives. Not at all! In my own writing, I write books set hundreds of years in the past, and stories about magic and druids, but I always incorporate my own real experiences into the story...

My latest book, ***Night of the Fifth Moon***, is set in ancient Ireland, sixteen hundred years ago. From reading, I found out about interesting, mystical things like druids, and standing stones, and ancient burial mounds, but when I tried to write I couldn't picture or feel the world I was describing. In desperation, I packed my bags and set off across the world to do my research in Ireland!

Travelling around Ireland, I found an ancient burial mound, called a 'cairn', made from a heap of rocks, and I saw real standing stones (some fallen down a bit) all set up eerily in a ring. Unfortunately, the character in my story crawls inside a burial mound at night, so that's what I had to do! I also walked around touching the standing stones so I could describe how they felt. Here are some excerpts from the book, so you can read how I used my real experiences in the story.



#### **Quote from Chapter 8**

*The Cormac ancestors lay buried in a clearing in the forest. The tall stone pillars that circled their mound cast long shadows. As Ket stepped into the clearing, he saw that the flat slab of stone set in the side of the grass-covered mound had been pushed aside.*

*'Father!' he called in a loud whisper.*

*Ossian emerged, and waved. 'You've brought the offering, I see.'*

*Ket hesitated. 'Should I do it myself?'*

*'Time enough when you're older', said Ossian.*

*Ket nodded with relief. 'When I'm a druid, nothing will frighten me! And I'll know all sorts of spells to protect me.'*

*'But you must pay your respects to your ancestors out here', his father reminded him.*

*As Ossian crouched down to ease his way back through the low portal, Ket turned reluctantly to the white stones standing sentinel around the grave. Slowly, he began to move around, resting his hands on each pillar. The stones were cool and moist and it seemed to Ket as if the coldness and heaviness of death were seeping inside his own skin.*



#### **Quote from Chapter 10**

*The grey mound of the cairn loomed in front. He could see the crest, lit by the dancing flames. And below... He jerked to a halt. There was the entrance to the tomb.*

*He stood in his wet clothes, teeth chattering, and stared at the low opening, half-sunk in the ground. What would he find in there? The Shadow Ones, or skeletons with bare, grinning skulls? He started to reach for the red band at his wrist, then remembered it was gone. Sweat joined the rain running down his forehead.*

*'Go on', he growled at himself.*

*(Cont'd.)*

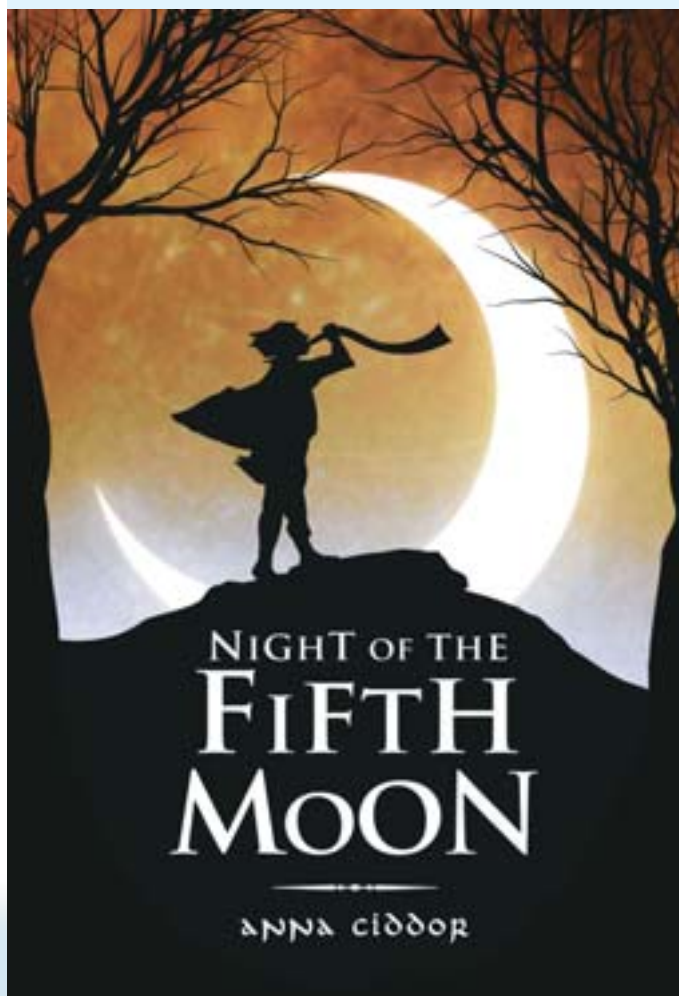


Step by unsteady step, he stumbled forward till he reached the cairn. Now he had to climb through that black hole into the earth. He took a shuddering breath, and lowered one foot. The next moment he was slipping and sliding on wet mud, and clutching at the massive stone doorposts. Then he was out of the rain, cowering inside a tunnel, with dry walls of stone curved around him.

★ ★ ★

Of course, not everyone has the chance to go to another country to do research for a story! But even in our normal lives we experience strong emotions and exciting events we can use for stories. Have you ever been lost? Can you remember looking around and not seeing anything or anyone you knew – that feeling of dreadful panic, and then the wave of relief as someone came rushing over to find you? Getting lost, feeling scared, moving to a new place, being unfairly treated, noticing the delicate beauty of a butterfly... these are all feelings and memories that can be built into a story. So even if you want to write historical fiction, or a ghost story or a book about being a dog, include some real-life experiences to bring scenes in your story to life.

If you would like to find out more about my writing and research for **Night of the Fifth Moon**, you can visit [www.fifth-moon.com](http://www.fifth-moon.com). Good luck with your own writing!



## An Anzac Ballad

Eager young men set out for battle,  
Not knowing what lay ahead.  
To them an adventure had dawned,  
Not knowing that history would be made  
Because of them fighting in a war.

When the first Anzacs set foot on Turkish soil,  
It rained with bullets.  
The air was full of shouts and screams and gun shots.

Still the soldiers clambered on,  
Not knowing what their future held.  
The men thought of their home land  
and the ones they held ever so dear.

They doubted if they would meet their loved  
ones back home or if they would see the  
wide brown land they called their own.

Many young men did not return  
to walk on Australian soil.  
Though the men that did return  
gazed out with old man's eyes.  
They had minds full of horror,  
For they knew what war meant now.  
Their lives had been ruined  
by what they had seen.  
Horrific scenes filled their minds,  
The sort you can't forget.

Every year we remember how Simpson died  
And became a legend in Shrapnel Gully.  
The slouch hat each soldier bore ever so proudly.  
The brave light horse men who lost their lives at the Nek,  
The Jackaroos from Walgett who discovered  
hell on earth at Lone Pine.  
All in the name of a small channel called the Dardenelles.

Each soldier paid the ultimate sacrifice  
Whether it was on Turkish soil or back in  
Australia having sleepless nights for years.  
We remember every 25th of April the  
soldiers that died in order to keep us alive.

*By Amelia Judson  
Year 6  
St. Laurence's Catholic School  
FORBES – NSW*





## *The Fairies*

ONCE upon a time there lived two fairies. Their names were Bella and Ella. They lived in a hollow, rotten tree trunk. They had a downstairs and an upstairs. Downstairs consisted of a kitchen, a dining room, a lounge room and a bathroom. Upstairs however had another bathroom and their bedrooms.

Bella's room had pink glittery walls, she had a pink bed spread and a closet which had her pyjamas, her day outfit which was a pink glitter tutu, her swimming outfit which was a pink bikini and her formal gown (which she rarely wore), but it was a baby pink floor length gown, she had baby pink with diamond strap shoes and diamond earrings and a necklace. Bella was tall, skinny and had tanned skin. She had blue eyes and pale pink lips, a splash of freckles over her nose and cheeks. Ella's bedroom consisted of purple glittery walls and a purple bed spread. Her closet had her pyjamas, her day outfit which was a purple glitter tutu, her swimming outfit which was a purple bikini and her formal outfit (which she too did not wear often), but it was a purple glitter gown which was three quarter length and she had purple ballet shoes with long string she tied up her leg, it had purple sapphires on the strings and she had purple sapphire earrings and a purple sapphire necklace. She was short and rather chubby but had brown eyes and pale lips; she too had a splash of freckles over her nose and cheeks.

They went to bed at nine o'clock sharp and got up at seven o'clock sharp, they had bagels for breakfast except for weekends which is when they had bacon, eggs and bagels, for lunch they had sandwiches and a piece of fruit and a glass of orange juice, at dinner they had whatever their hearts wished for (and their stomachs too).

One morning about six o'clock they heard a noise in their kitchen. They both walked out of their rooms and met at the top of the stairs and at the same time they said, 'What's down there!?!'. They walked down the steps slowly both holding each other very closely and shivering because it was so cold. When they got to the kitchen they saw a wizard. He was sitting at their table eating one of their bagels.

He said, 'The Great Wizard III sent me down here to give you three wishes and one huge wish between you!'

'Are you really there?' Bella said rubbing her eyes.

'Well you could touch me', said the wizard. So Bella walked over and touched the man's beard.

She cried, 'He is real, he is real!'

They both thought very hard about their three wishes. After five minutes had gone by they both started answering.

Bella went first, 'I wish that Ella and I will be best friends forever. OK, second one I wish for everlasting money and all the prettiest dresses and bikinis and jewellery in the world'.

'OK', said the wizard. With his magical wand which appeared just then. Anyway he waved it around and said, 'Pretty Bella in pink wants these three wishes. Give them to her now'. Then *poof* she had a closet standing in front of her and in it had all the prettiest dresses in the world, and a handbag sitting on top that had a card which lets you have as much money as you want. As you could imagine it was rather a large wardrobe.

'I will go now, I wish for a... um, Chrysler Crossfire, um a... trip to the 'Fairy Land Shopping Centre', with one of those everlasting money card thingamajigs, that is all'.

'Okay', so he used his magical wand and these magical words, 'here we go, Pretty Ella in purple wants those three things, give them to her now!'

Then *poof* her car was in the driveway and the hand bag with the card in it was on the table.

'Well', said the wizard, 'you both get one wish between you'.

'Um... what do we want Ella?'

'I don't know', answered Ella.

Then Bella yelled her fantastic idea to Ella, 'Let's get a n-n-new house!!'.

Then Ella said, 'No, let's get a mansion!'

'OKAY!' they both said!

The wizard said, 'Okay, Bella and Ella are best friends forever and want to share it in a new house, give it to them now!'. Suddenly they were standing outside a HUGE, GIGANTIC mansion!

Bella stuttered, 'I-I-I-Is tha-tha-that ours!'

'Yup!' said the wizard!

So now they live in a huge mansion on Gold and Silver Rd. They were best friends forever and lived happily ever after in their new mansion.

*By Domonique Pinalli  
Grade 7  
Calvary Christian College  
AITKENVALE - QLD.  
Teacher - M. Compton*







## Mrs Silver

It was a warm Friday afternoon, the last day of Year 6. The last day I had to go to primary school. I felt the cool wind whirl through my thick, light brown hair like the waves crashing against the shore. I felt like I could fly across the city waving to everyone that passed by.

'Annabel pay attention,' yelled my teacher Mrs Grolman. 'Now answer the next sum on the board before the bell rings.'

At the end of the day my twin brother, Josh, and I rode our bikes home from school. We do this every day and we end up talking about the strangest things. Josh always starts off every conversation with his opinion, 'I heard from Mum that we were getting a new neighbour. I hope it's someone who is really cool'.

Then I add my thoughts, 'Well I hope it's someone who will make us cookies and milkshakes every day after a long hard day of school'.

'Well I bet it's going to be an alien,' said Josh.

'Of course it's not going to be an alien you silly person. It's going to be a beautiful model that will change my hair into what hers looks like,' I said hopefully.

'Stop daydreaming and hurry up. I want to meet our new neighbour,' yelled Josh speeding into the distance like a race car driver.

When we arrived at our house there was a moving truck outside our neighbours' old house. My family and I never liked our old neighbours very much. They were loud, obnoxious and very rude. I hoped so much that our new friend would be kind and caring, like a third parent.

Days passed and not a word from our new neighbour until Mum yelled one morning, 'Kids come down for breakfast. I need you to do me a favour. Would you mind dropping over this pie to our new neighbours. I want them to feel welcome in our community'.

'Sure Mum,' we both yelled at the same time.

As we walked through the gate we saw that all the garden's plants had died. Only dirt was left. Magpies as black as midnight, were gliding rapidly across the bright blue sky. For some reason it felt like it was darker where this house stood. As we walked up to the front door, we saw a demon shaped knocker with spiders slowly creeping up the side of it like an ant moving across the ground.

Josh reached to bang on the knocker. It just opened like that. We both jumped about three feet in the air. An old, shrivelled up lady met us at the door. She had crazy, wild bushy hair that stuck up in all directions. A long black cloth covered her shoulders and her back. The rest of her wrinkled body was covered by a thick, long, black dress. Josh then began to speak like a cat near water, 'Welcome to Hopetoun Ave. May I ask what your name is and how your stay has been so far?'

She stared at both of us with such force. When I looked into her eyes I saw a gravestone with my name on it. Then she began to speak slowly and coldly, 'Such a lot of questions for such a small boy. My name is Mrs Silver and my stay has been just fine thank you very much'.

Then she signalled us to follow her inside. We didn't really have much choice. As we walked into the house we saw that the blinds were sealed shut and the room

looked like it had never been cleaned. The floors shrieked and shivers were sent down my spine. I had no choice. I had to escape. I couldn't stand the scariness. 'I'm very sorry but Josh and I just remembered we have a lot of housework and it's better to complete it now than at the last minute. So Josh can we go?'

Josh sighed, thought for what felt like forever and then said, 'Fine I'm very sorry but we have to leave'.

Josh was a little annoyed that we had to leave early but I was so relieved. Every day Josh would go over to Mrs Silver's house of horrors and he always returned a little differently. I decided to go with him and face my fears to find out what was happening in that house.

The strange change happened just like during the visit the last time. The blinds were still shut and spiders spinning webs were creeping up the walls. The floors squeaked and shivers ran down my spine. The words, 'Do this for Josh,' repeated over and over again inside my head. I was so scared. I started to slow down a bit and let Josh and Mrs Silver go on ahead of me. Then I turned the corner into the room they had walked into and saw Mrs Silver pouring black liquid onto Josh and it was disappearing into his skin. I suddenly yelled, 'Get off my brother.' I then pushed her aside, grabbed Josh and ran out of there as fast as my shaking legs would carry me. I ran home and told Mum everything I had seen and of course she didn't believe me. Who would? Still my Mum sent Josh to a psychologist until all of Mrs Silver's liquid had left his head.

Mrs Silver moved house and new neighbours moved in. A girl my age named Emily with a brother a little older so we became family friends. I never told Josh what happened, but Emily believed every word I said.

*By Becky Maxton  
Year 6, Age 12  
Reddam House  
WOOLLAHRA - NSW  
Teacher: Mrs Sharon Shapiro*

# Author FAQs ..... **By Hazel Edwards**

## **School Projects:**

If you are doing a project on an author:

1. Read at least three of the author's books.
2. Google to see if the author has a website or others have written reviews or features about that writer.
3. Online or in the library check easy details like which books, dates and bio details. Often publishers have these on their websites.
4. After you've done some sleuthing (research), write or e-mail specific, unanswered questions via the publisher or the author's website. (Publisher's details are inside the book.)

These FAQs are a selection of those recently asked of author Hazel Edwards ([www.hazeledwards.com](http://www.hazeledwards.com)) either in web chats, interviews, fan mail or in person while she visited schools and libraries.

## **Author Workstyle**

### **1. Where do you get your ideas from?**

Observation. I keep an ideas notebook. I eavesdrop and stickybeak, both of which are called research if you are a writer. I ask 'what if?'. Increasingly I am inspired by settings like Antarctica or the Northern Territory in *Outback Ferals*. A story needs a character with a dilemma, a place and a problem. Motives interest me first. Often it's the conflict of an individual who thinks differently which starts a story. Could be an animal character too!

### **2. Do you ever put people you know in stories?**

Characters in fiction are composites, but they might be inspired by an incident or an unusual dilemma. Occasionally I've written a private story for a real child such as *Where Did My Birthday Leap To?* for Liam who was born on Leap Day or *The Lachieberg* about the iceberg for Lachie. I write a story for my grandson each birthday. Sometimes these stories are later published because they appeal to others in similar situations

### **3. Where do you write?**

I work in my home study on a computer. I use a 'message stick' to carry files, and occasionally a digital camera for background shots. I can 'web-chat' with literary conferences or I use Skype with my interstate co-authors.

### **4. When did you first appear in print? What was the first book you wrote?**

A story in the newspaper's kids' section when I was about eight. The first hippo picture book was my third published book, 28 years ago. My first novel was *General Store* which was then published in Finnish, which was my first translation. Very exciting to see your words in another language on the bookcover.

### **5. Do your children help with stories?**

My children are adult now but recently I co-wrote *Cycling Solo; Ireland to Istanbul* with my son Trevelyan. They used to give my stories the 'yawn test' by placing face down the page where they lost interest. Then I'd re-write.

### **6. How do you choose names for characters?**

Either the names are symbolic, like Crystal or popular with the age group, like Jack. Popular Kyle from *Outback Ferals* is short and I needed to be able to call him Big K so he needed a K name.

### **7. How long does it take to write a book?**

There's thinking time and writing time. And re-writing time. I'm a full time author so a novel such as *Outback Ferals* would take me about six months to write 30,000 words, but only after about a year of researching and plotting. I do about five-ten drafts. In between I'd be working on the five book-length projects I average a year. Often it takes a year for the book to be published from the time I've finished the last manuscript version. Picture books take the longest to rewrite. Every word counts.

### **8. Which is your favourite character and why?**

Others love the cake-eating hippo from *There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake*. My current w.i.p. (work in progress) favourite is Platypus 13, the part-time plumber who has a tool kit for fixing pipes and people's problems. He carries smile spray.

### **9. How many drafts do you do?**

About ten.

### **10. If you get stuck on a story what do you do?**

I always have several projects running and change from fiction to non fiction, do some administivia like answering letters, go for a swim or try to interview my character. Or I may 'talk' possible endings onto tape.

### **11. Can you offer any advice to aspiring illustrators?**

I write an art brief which is like a letter to the artist.

Think about why the reader/viewer will be looking at this page. To be entertained? To be provoked into thinking differently? To view their world differently? To learn something?

Then use visual clues like colour, shape and design to make that happen.

### **12. As a student, how can I get my work published?**

Try your school magazine or *Oz Kids* magazine <http://www.ozkids.com.au/> Offer to review books for radio stations like Radio RPH Children's Hour. Enter all competitions. Consider writing scripts and performing your work too.





# Quirky Questions

These are examples of more quirky questions, and authors prefer the unusual.

**Q.1 If you were to host a dinner party for three of your characters, which ones would you invite and why?**

The Big Hippo because he's been my friend for 28 years, the new Hand Me Down Hippo because she's a new female friend and maybe my expeditioner Kyle from *Outback Ferals* and *Antarctica's Frozen Chosen* because I've enjoyed writing from the viewpoint of being a bloke in those novels.

**Q.2 How would you describe yourself in 3 ways?**

Quirky thinker. Observer of people's motives. Impatient but persistent.

**Q.3 Do you have any rituals when writing?**

Belly dancing for exercise in between long stints at the computer. It loosens my muscles and my imagination. Using the 'cappuccino approach' of working in a café with my co-author for a change of scene. Writing on location, as participant observer e.g. when stuck in the polar ice of Antarctica during an expedition or in the Northern Territory for *Outback Ferals*.

**Q.4 Have you ever had the original title for one of your books changed prior to publication?**

Nearly always. One hippo book *Hey Hippopotamus do Babies Eat Cake?* had 39 temporary titles. By mistake *Antarctica's Frozen Chosen* was almost called 'Frozen Chosen' which sounds like an icy pole. *Antarctic Dad* was originally 'My Dad's Gone to Antarctica'.

**Q.5 As an author do you have a most memorable moment?**

Several. Retrieving 'hippo' from the airport carousel, trying to clean him in my shower after being over-loved by children at festivals (and re-stuffing polystyrene filling) and being televised (from behind) by Channel 7, walking in hippo PJs in the Federation Parade beside the float of the top ten favourite books of the century.

Breaking through the ice-edge into Antarctica proper. Stunning beautiful, like meringue.

Being asked to autograph a book which wasn't mine. It was a Bible.

**Q.6 What is your favourite children's book?**

The one not yet written.

**Q.7 What did you want to be when you were a child?**

An author of children's books. A Spy or espionage agent.

**Q.8 Hazel, your first published book was *General Store*, in 1977. Had you written much before that?**

*General Store* (Hodder) which was also translated into Finnish as 'Kauppiaan Josie'; was my first Young Adult novel-length book at 30,000 words. Before that I'd published humorous short stories for adults and children and satirical newspaper features. Short satire appealed to me mainly because I was short of time and had a quirky view of everyday events. This child-like, off-beat viewpoint has been an asset in writing for children and has prevented me from being bored as an adult. 'What if?' is always a good anti-boredom technique when faced with routine circumstances or predictable people. Luckily an imagination is portable and not taxable.

**Q.9 Do you have a dream project?**

I would like more of my stories to be adapted and performed on stage, television or film. I'm also interested in animation for pre-schoolers. Interviewing people from worlds very different to mine as the basis of non fiction also appeals.

**Q.10 What advice would you give aspiring writers?**

Read. Write. Read. Keep trying. Recycle ideas into other formats.

Check out [www.hazeledwards.com](http://www.hazeledwards.com) which has links to literary sites which have information about writing and many other Australian authors including Krista Bell, Margaret Clark, Susanne Gervay and Goldie Alexander.

## Oak Tree! Old Tree



Look at that old tree,  
Waving its arms at passers-by,  
A skyscraper standing strong and tall.

Its teeth fall out in Autumn,  
Then grow back in Spring,  
A grandfather telling tales of back then.

A three-storey apartment block,  
Home to all those birds,  
And let's not forget the squirrels!

A best friend to dogs,  
And to those cats,  
Watch out pussy, don't get stuck!

The king of the land  
Respected by all,  
What a life for such a tree!

By Dilini Himasha Tilakaratna

Age 12

CRAIGIEBURN - VIC.



## Creating Characters by Meredith Costain

Who is your favourite book character? Harry Potter? Old Tom? Captain Underpants? Often, readers remember the character from a book long after they've forgotten the setting or the storyline.

When writing your own stories, try to make your

characters just as memorable. One way to do this is to give them what's called a 'tag'. This might be an idiosyncratic thing that your character does or says: something that sets them apart from others. For example, they might start to twitch when they're telling a lie, or perhaps they fiddle with their hair when they're nervous. They might be a habitual hat-wearer or never leave the house without an umbrella or a raincoat, in case of rain. Maybe they count the fence posts as they walk along the street, or refuse to step on cracks in the pavement in case it brings them bad luck.

### Getting to Know Your Character

Before you begin writing your story, do some 'research' on your main character. Make up lists of their favourite things, or their strengths and weaknesses. Sometimes just doing this will give you an idea for the story itself. The original title for my latest book, *Rosie to the Rescue*, was 'Rosie Loves Red'. I dreamed up a character who loves red things: red gumboots, apples and cherries, bright red lipstick, the story of *Little Red*

*Riding Hood*. But most of all she loves shiny red fire engines. And suddenly – zap! – I had the idea for the plot.

Here are some more questions you can ask your character before you begin writing:

- What sorts of clothes do they like to wear?
- Who is their best friend?
- Who is their sworn enemy?
- Are they ambitious or lazy? Sour or sweet? Emotional or serious?
- What do they look like? Who would they rather look like?
- Who are their heroes? Villains?
- What would they do if they won a million dollars?
- Do they have any annoying habits?
- Where is their favourite place to hang out?

You mightn't end up using all – or even any – of the answers in your story, but your characters will be more likely to sound believable if you've spent some time thinking about them. I often carry a character around in my head for months, getting to know them before I begin writing. And then, if I know them well enough, sometimes they'll even write the story for me.

Creating characters is fun. Good luck with your own!

You can find out more about Meredith and her books by visiting [www.meredithcostain.com](http://www.meredithcostain.com).

## Catastrophic Determination

THE DISASTER hadn't worn away from the unfortunate passengers' minds. Death refused to end. Some still had hope, hope that they would survive. Some still had courage, courage to find assistance. Some had lost their minds. Three dim-witted, courageous men went to find help but knew that soon it would end. They would all die of starvation.

The men had discovered the other part of the wide-winged plane with some passengers still sitting there, obviously dead, with seatbelts on. The men had tried to climb back to the living part of the plane but found this extremely difficult. They hadn't survived. I knew they wouldn't. I had a burning desire to see what it would be like when we returned home and what people would think. Would they never go on a plane again? Or would they not pay attention to us and just live normally? I wondered many things and missed my family greatly... Or what was left of it... I couldn't believe I was stupid enough to go on a plane after what happened to my three sisters, my father, my grandma. Both sides of our family were muddled up.

Although there were many people on the plane, so many people had certainly lost their minds and three more people went to

find help, six more, nine more and twelve more. It would never end. The feeling of knowing this was happening to you was so terrifying that some people killed themselves just to rid themselves of the feeling of having to survive a plane-crash. The *really* stupid ones that is. I knew I was going to survive. It was the sheer determination of finding help, seeing my family.

This feeling in the back of my head was so amazing, an extraordinary feeling, and the tingling sensation of return





## Catastrophic Determination (Cont'd)

overwhelmed my mind. Sometimes I felt so *cold* my head was going to explode and ignite on its way to the snow. Then when I thought of my family and survival one big bucket of water came and splashed the fire off me. If only I could teleport.

Three more people went to find help and this time, the people were not dim-witted, because I was in that group. We all climbed the mountains and found some grass after such an extended time. We then found water from a dam. Happiness wrapped me up in its grasp and wouldn't let me go. The terror that had been etched in our faces had evaporated. We felt that we had to persist and find more help. We were enjoying this. We could not express what we were feeling. Pleasure and joy and glee were the only things on our minds. We couldn't surrender now because we were so carried away with the joy imprisoned in us.

We thought we had gone so far with this epic adventure but we had just started it. We soldiered on with the frostbite. Everything was painful. Hour after hour we didn't see any civilisation. We still

had quite a lot of hope, but there had to ALWAYS be that feeling in you which was the worst feeling that you can ever imagine. We were losing optimism. Just when we were starting to relinquish hope to survive, an outstanding thought of success and pleasure wiped us out. Civilization was in our vision and we thought the end was near, so many ups and downs to this experience of a lifetime, but this was surely the end. The airport! The pilot had crashed just before we reached the airport. We said nothing. We sprinted over the gravel to the amazing landing field.

We went straight to the police and told them of the lost passengers! We could now go home to our families, to our friends, to the playground outside my house. But most of all, we could return to a normal life. Would that be possible?

*By Michael Whiting*

*Age 12, Grade 5-6*

*Reddam House, WOOLLAHRA - NSW*

*Teacher: Mrs Sharon Shapiro*



### Chapter 1: Vacuuming

'Oh, my house is so messy,' said Owl, and he vacuumed it. He said, 'It's too loud!' so he turned the vacuum cleaner off again.

'Oh no, now my house won't be clean!' so he turned it on again.

'Oh no, now my house will be noisy!' so he turned it off again.

'Oh no, now my house won't be tidy!' so he turned it on again.

'Oh no, now it's too loud!' so he turned it off again.

'Oh, it's time to go to bed,' said Owl.

### Chapter 2: Explorer's danger

Owl was reading a book. These people are very brave, he said to himself. So he put on his space cap, and went to a space rocket, and got in the space rocket, and went to the moon. He saw aliens.

He said, 'I wonder if those aliens will come home and have tea with me?' So he asked a four legged alien with two arms and three eyes and a pink body, 'Would you like to have tea with me?'

'Yes,' said the alien. 'Where's your house?'

'Um, hop in the space rocket,' said Owl.

He hopped in the space rocket, and said, 'Is this your house?'

'No,' said Owl. 'My house is at home.' He went to home, and then he said, 'It's time for dinner and bed'.

So they ate dinner and went to bed.

### Chapter 3: Owl's holiday

Owl was very lonely at home. His house was just one room with seven steps leading upstairs, and had an upstairs little room. He was very lonely, so he got his tent. He camped on top of the tallest mountain in the world, and then he discovered in his tent that it was his own house, and he was just dreaming, while he was asleep!

### Chapter 4: Chess

Owl was playing chess with the computer.

'Oh no, the computer keeps on winning,' he complained, so he did his King out to the computer's Queen. The Queen took his King. Owl was black, and the computer was white.

'Oh!' he said. 'It's time for dinner and bed.' So he ate dinner and went to bed.

### Chapter 5: Block towers

Owl tried to make a new building for him to live in, out of blocks. He made a very tall building like the Rialto, and it just fell down, because it was those wooden blocks. So Owl made another building. It was as tall as the Rialto, but it fell down. He made another one, it fell down. He made another one, it fell down. He made another one and it fell down.

'Oh no, it's time for dinner and bed,' said Owl.

*By Will Gaunt, Age 4*

*FITZROY - VIC.*

## *The Search for the Dwarf's Treasure*

ONE day, Hodgy the dwarf and Doofy the dwarf woke up and saw a note on their dining table. They read it with excitement, but halfway through the letter they knew what they were in for – an adventure to find their ancestors' treasure. They both realised that many dwarves had died on this expedition, including their beloved father.

After breakfast they went on a shopping spree for the supplies they needed to go on this trip. They wandered seemingly forever until they found themselves walking into a sorcerer's shop. They ended up buying magical potions that can heal any damage to the body. They also bought food from the general store and walked to the forest to start their adventure.

Night fell. The sky became misty and the wind built up, while the air became thicker and the hollow trees were threatening to poke them with their branches. After a while they descended into a deep sleep and dreamt about going home victoriously.

They woke up the next morning and opened up their backpacks, but to their surprise the bag was empty. Whoever had been there had left the crumbs behind. They followed the crumbs like pigeons and saw two dark unicorns with red glowing eyes suddenly charge at them with their horn face down. Hodgy was stabbed in the arm. His clothes were drenched in blood. Doofy gave him a dose of the potion that was given to him by the sorcerer. Hodgy drank it with disgust, but he knew it would help him survive.

The next day, Hodgy woke up with a knife-stabbing headache, yet he had to carry on the mission. The sun was blazing like molten rock and its heat was so strong that its rays could pierce through any object. Hodgy and Doofy went out looking for food and water, but in this scorching weather it was impossible to carry on, so they took a nap under a tree.

When they woke up it was late in the afternoon so the sun's heat had been depleted so they continued their journey during the remaining hours of light. After a while they came across an apple tree. With enthusiasm they picked as many apples as they could and by nightfall they had a full sack. This night was different. The air was smoky, the birds and animals were running away and the air was so thick that they could hardly breathe. They saw a fire up on the mountains which was letting out huge, black and oily clouds that could be seen from miles away. 'Tonight is going to be a long night,' said Doofy, and so it was. They were waking up throughout the night due to the horrible stench of smoke.

After that awful night they decided to climb the mountain to see the trail of destruction left behind by the fire. Doofy saw an injured bird lying on the floor. He took the bird and gave it some healing potion. He let the bird free and watched its graceful movements in the sky and listened to its song that would be sure to cheer up a place struck by misery.

They saw an old battered sign lying on the floor. It said: 'Beware of trolls in the caves ahead'. The two dwarves carried on walking until they saw skulls neatly placed in rows across the cave walls and then they sensed a rotten smell emerging from the people that had perished while trying to fight off this horrible beast. A sudden screeching cry coming from outside the cave jolted the dwarves and as they both looked out the small opening in the cave, they noticed a troll about to kill a dark unicorn. The dwarves ran as fast as they could out of the cave. Unfortunately the troll spotted them because of their loud footsteps. The troll sprinted after them, swaying his club at the same time. They took shelter in a bush and watched the troll run past.

The dwarves walked back to the caves shaken by their experience. They wondered what the troll was trying to protect. From the corner of their eyes they saw the trapdoor that led to the room full of treasure, but this would be a difficult job, because not only did they have to avoid a man-eating giant, but they also had to search the whole mountain for the one key.

The pair climbed the mountains until they saw one reflection of light shining out of the ground. They had found the only object which had not been devoured by the fire; the golden key.

Now the dwarves were facing a new problem. The troll had come back to slumber on top of the trapdoor. The dwarves thought of a way to distract the troll.

The two dwarves took some of the meat left behind by the troll and put it over a fire. The troll reacted quickly. He immediately followed the smell of cooked meat. The trapdoor was then free to open. Doofy took the key out of his backpack and he anxiously placed the key in the lock and slowly turned it. They were victorious. They climbed down the ladder with caution and opened the door to see a chest full of gold coins. The dwarves couldn't help drooling. The chest was as heavy as an elephant but they managed carrying it out of the room.

A loud thump was then heard on the trapdoor. They knew the troll had returned after the meal to sleep. The dwarves carefully lifted the chest and found another passage under the ground. They walked for hours on end and finally they reached their destination: Home sweet Home.

They were greeted by an enormous crowd as everyone was cheering. They could even hear the spirit of their father calling from the sky. They were awarded medals by the mayor and the treasure was securely stored in a safe.

*By Alan Coutinho  
Year 6  
Reddam House  
WOOLLAHRA – NSW  
Teacher: Mrs Sharon Shapiro*





THERE once lived an extremely arrogant fox who loved himself so much that he refused to be seen by any other being. What made the fox so special was the fact that he possessed a magic mirror. The fox sat on the rich green hills every day and stared at himself in the mirror exploring and admiring his slick, smooth fur, his glassy green eyes, and his perfect attentive ears.

Each night the fox asked the mirror for his dinner and the mirror would leave the exact same portion of food for the fox. Then after the fox would sleep undisturbed accompanied by the magic mirror in the deep dark forest.

One day the fox woke to the gleaming shafts of light coming through the forest's canopy and saw that the magic mirror was no longer leaning on the tree beside him. The fox suddenly jumped to his feet. In panic he sniffed the air and pounded through the forest searching frantically.

After travelling for a while the fox came to a house. It was more like a hut, made obviously from branches. The hut had a thatched roof and stood in a small clearing.

Leaping onto the hut's small veranda the fox scratched at the door and it came flying open. An old man appeared at the door and signalled for the fox to come in.

The fox wandered curiously through the hut examining its small furniture, rough walls and a familiar shape covered by a dull, grey blanket leaning on the wall. The fox then sat down on its hind legs by the door, frisky and prepared to pounce at any moment.



Turning around, the old man sat on a large wooden chair by the corner sipping at a steaming cup of black tea.

After a few moments the fox grew more and more curious about what lay beneath the blanket. The temptation to reveal what lay beneath became unbearable for the fox's senses so when the old man turned to retrieve his now lukewarm tea the fox scampered up to the covered shape. Clawing at the protecting blanket the fox finally pulled it away only to reveal the magic mirror.

Immediately the fox grabbed the mirror and bounded out the door. Suddenly the fox came to a halt as the forest ended. Looking out onto the rich and lush green hills the fox saw the sun slowly disappearing, leaving to light the lands beyond.

Clutching the mirror he looked at himself, so beautiful and handsome but suddenly the mirror began to vibrate. Strings of gold stars flew around the fox, spinning around and around. The fox then grew scared and his eyes opened in wide fear.

What was happening? He looked into the mirror seeing only his reflection but now it was ugly, disastrous, foggy and irregular, then suddenly the mirror shattered into a million pieces and the fox disappeared. The only thing different was that the fox's reflection still lay on the mirror's shiny surface.

Moments later the old man came tumbling through the forest and when he came upon the shattered mirror he stopped and gathered up all of the pieces and took them back to the hut.

The old man tried so hard to put all the pieces back together over the years but eventually he gave up. He left the pieces all together on a small wooden board and called it 'The Fox'.

## Australia

Australia, the land of sweeping plains,  
The country, so dry for it barely rains.  
And when the rain has come and gone,  
The beautiful sun will shine at dawn.

The amazing stars that shine so bright,  
Will be on show almost every night.  
The air that is so crisp and clear,  
Will wash away all our fear.

Australia's the home to the mighty gum,  
Where the kangaroos come to feed their young.  
The grass that grows so wild and free,  
Can grow beneath a big old tree.

A delicious pile of cooked food,  
'The best in the world,' we said as we chewed.  
Australia's the best place to be,  
Well it sure is the best place for me.

By Clare Tidsley  
Year 6

St. Laurence's Catholic School  
FORBES - NSW  
Teacher: Mrs Turner

By Ivana Taylor  
Year 6

Manly West Primary School  
BALGOWLAH - NSW  
Teacher: Mrs Street

### Silver

IN THE city of Brianne, Alva the son of a blacksmith sat inaudibly in the sullen glow of the crackling fire of the forge staring intently at his father making another object of power for the king. Alva's father was a well-known blacksmith who had the power to make objects that contained some magic. His face was pale, similar to most of the people nowadays, because of the growing malevolence of the frosty fingers of the Lord of Shadows.

The land of Brin was once a place where citizens laughed at the sheer joy of life. It was said that Brin was protected by a veil of magic, protecting itself against even a small diminutive sentiment of despair or evil. But in this time it was not so. Evil lurked in every corner of the land. Nameless fears nestled in the shadows. Shadowfiends, creations of The Lord of Shadow, were spreading across the land in so great a number that many citizens of Brianne were calling this period, *The Shadow Age*. Many relinquished hope and sulked in their houses, blacking out their windows. Others had either surrendered themselves to The Lord of Shadows hoping to be protected by the Shadowfiends or lived on, breathing the air dank with evil.

Alva was at the age of fifteen. At this moment he was still watching his father make something that could save the land. When his father first thought of the object, Alva was overjoyed with the idea. Then he realised that nothing could stop the wrath of The Lord of Shadows. Not one thing alive had prevailed. 'Father', Alva started, 'What are you making?'

'I have already told you, son. I am creating a glove of silver plates such as one drawn in the old book I found. There was once a glove that connected the owner of the glove of Brin's ancient dragon as it said in the book. I plan to make the object and give it to the King as the dragon only comes to those that are pure of heart. I am sure the King is pure of heart', replied Alva's father, 'Oh, Alva, can you go and tell the King of this?'

'Yes, father', replied Alva and he swept out.

Alva stood in front of the King's grand hall and asked one of the guards, 'Could I please see the King? I am Alva of the town blacksmith. I wish to talk about some important matters.'

'Of course', replied the guard and he opened the gates to let Alva in.

Alva was surprised that the guard had let him in so quickly. Nowadays, no one could be trusted as spies for the Lord of Shadows roamed Brin in great numbers. As Alva stepped into the hall he was overwhelmed with a feeling of marvel. The ceiling was decorated with elaborate pictures of the past, and the marble floor was gleaming white. Statues of marble stood in front of small windows that created a silhouette that resembled a halo about their heads. Great pillars rose from the floor gleaming in the feeble morning light. At the back of the hall sat the King of Brin.

'Your highness I am the son of the blacksmith of this town. I was sent by my father to tell about his request. He is making something that may save the land of Brin. He is building a replica of a silver plated glove told of in a book he found. He would like the King to bear the glove while he wakes the silver dragon of Brin and together with the dragon strive to drive away the hordes of The Lord of Shadows', said Alva kneeling in front of the King.

The King was silent for a few moments then he replied, 'Alva, I regret to say that I am too old to go on such quests. But I appoint you, Alva to go on the quest in my stead'.

Alva was speechless. All he managed to say was, 'Yes Sir', as he turned his eyes away from the King who was wearing a coat of fur and who was now obviously old and feeble. Alva only realised then the change in the King's grand appearance.

As Alva stepped out of the palace into the small garden that surrounded the palace, he suddenly tripped while walking through a bush. He spun around and saw in the bush an oddly shaped triangular rock. The rock was slanting at an angle to the centre of the palace as if it had been purposely made. But that was not what interested Alva. In the cavity Alva had made when he fell, there was a small piece of parchment that had yellowed from age. Alva quickly dug it out and brushed the soil off it. It was a poem:

*Eight stones hold direction to the heart,  
Largest of them all leads north to the part.  
When the object is found and recovered,  
Peace will hold in Brin.*



Alva could not make head or tail of it. Then a thought came to his mind. *Eight stones hold direction to the heart*. He looked at the stone he had tripped on. He ran towards the place where the triangle was pointing.

When Alva reached the exact place the arrow was pointing, he saw a strange mark engraved on a brick. The sign was a hand. He shot out, grabbed his knife and started chipping away the cement around it. By then everyone in the place



## Silver (Cont'd)

had surrounded him and guards were shouting 'What are you doing!' or 'Stop!'. But Alva kept on chipping. When finally he took out the brick behind it was hollow. But something caught his attention. A silver glove fell out of the engraved brick. Alva put the glove on. He had expected this. Alva started pulling away bricks and when there was a finally a small hole he climbed into the cave.

Alva walked on to the end of the cave and there he found a small silver rock. It was glowing as if calling him. He picked it

up with the silver glove and there was a burst of bright light. The light engulfed the land warding every bit of shadow away. The Shadowfiends screeched and were no more. Brin was finally as it should be. Light.

*By Junao Ito*

*Year 6*

*Reddam House*

*WOOLLAHRA - NSW*

*Teacher: Mrs Sharon Shapiro*

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# Spooky Garden

Nature is everywhere, you know,  
Birds are singing high and low.  
But mysterious sounds come from the trees,  
My Mum always says it's just the bees.  
We think they're monsters furry and big,  
That could make a dozen wigs.  
The sounds always make us jump from fright,  
Especially when we're out at night.

There's also a well,  
With a big brassy bell.  
It's engraved and says that I better leave,  
But my Dad always says that I shouldn't believe.

There's a tree with vines wrapped around,  
To us it seems it floats off the ground.  
My sister says I'm seeing things,  
But I bet to her, she's seeing wings.

There is a pond way out the back,  
That has a big scary crack.  
My brother says it's just a story,  
But he just wants all the glory.

Maybe this is all just a dream,  
Maybe it's really not what it seems.

*By Brittany Allison  
Year 4  
Great Southern Grammar  
LOWER KALGAN – WA  
Teacher: Mr Emberson*

## *Puss and the Curse of the City*

THE SKY was grey, so were the cars, the giant building and bins. I was in a black and white horror movie – the city. I really missed Jamie, I did. He was an owner, safe in our cosy cottage with me out there in that devious death trap. I shouldn't have run away – all because he said another kitten at Earl's Pet Store was cute. As cute as his cute little ginger cat.

Well I should tell you how I got back home. It was another day in that colourless, dangerous world when I smelt something better than car exhaust and pollution. It was coming from a pitch-black alleyway. I nervously veered closer and my eyes suddenly lit up.

It was chocolate! I love chocolate. But suddenly out of the blue (or black), a huge black dog almost hit me and he lunged forward. I ran. He ran faster. I couldn't outrun him, so I had to double back. He suddenly skidded around and tumbled over. Then was my chance. I ran along the footpath, then dived into the drain.

Splash!!! It was wet and dark in the drain, and I didn't like it.

I hated water and I was afraid of the dark, and even worse I had no idea what went into the water, but it smelt worse than pollution. The water was shallow, only just enough for me to reach the side. When I got out it was a lot worse.





## *Puss and the Curse of the City (Cont'd)*

'Grrrr!!!' the dog growled angrily. He seemed angrier than I was at Jamie when he saw the other kitten. I couldn't see him. He was darker than the alley and the sewer put together! I ran, this time it would be harder, the path was too thin, and I wasn't going back in the water. I had no advantage.

Then I remembered. He wouldn't be able to see in the dark! And would you believe my luck, there was a ladder in the distance. It suddenly got closer; I was faster than I thought. I silently leapt up and grabbed on. His small eyes led him on, and he just kept running. I decided to see where the ladder led to. I climbed and climbed, then climbed some more. Then after what seemed like days of just climbing I spotted some light. Not just any light, daylight.

I was as happy as a child opening a present for his birthday. Colour. Green grass. Blue sky. All I could smell was fresh trees and grass. But there was black. Coming out of the pothole. 'Grrrr!' he growled at the top of his voice. The dog, my curse. I dived behind a bin. There was nothing I could do; nowhere I could go to get away.

'Shooo!' shouted a familiar voice. 'You awful dog!' It was Jamie. He lifted me up and held me in his arms, kicking the dog as it ran for its life. My curse was lifted.

*By Theo Murray  
Year 5, Manly West Primary School  
BALGOWLAH - NSW  
Teacher: Mr Coombs*

## *The Day I Grew Wings*

ONE Sunday morning I woke up stretched my arms out as far as I could and yawned. Then I heard a fluttering sound. I felt around, I felt something soft. It felt like... soft feathers on a bird's wing. 'Huh', I said. This was not right. I had wings. I was amazed and surprised. 'They were the most beautiful wings I ever saw', I said to myself as I looked in the mirror. They were a wonderful white colour. Then I heard footsteps and Nash saying 'Lily'.

Oh no! I quickly jumped into bed, grabbed my book that I was reading last night and read some more of the book. Then my Mum, Dad, sister and my brother came into the bedroom. Do you know what I saw?

My Mum, Dad, sister and my brother had wonderful white wings fluttering about! I looked out of my window and the whole street had wings! I listened to the radio and it said, 'Everyone in the world had wings!'. Was I dreaming? I woke up. I was dreaming.

But I still had wings. I looked around. I wanted to keep it a secret but how? Then on top of my fairy lamp I saw a letter for me. I read it. Yes for me. It said, 'Dear Lily, I know you are probably shocked, surprised and amazed and wondering how you got wings. I will now tell you how you got wings. It all happened when we got trapped by the Fire Witch and I was the only one out so I started thinking. Then suddenly I thought of something. I would go search for the right person to help save us. Then I did. I found you. Will you save us before I get trapped too? With my love Queen of Fairyland - Queen Rose. Then I looked down. I had a necklace in my hand. It has a chain and connected to it a locket shaped as a heart. The necklace was golden. I opened it. I closed my eyes.

When I opened my eyes again I found myself in a dark spooky forest. I saw a red castle ahead with a picture of orange and yellow fire on it. I flew, opened the door, and went straight

inside the painting. There was fire everywhere. I flew over the hot burning fire and saw the fairies trapped inside small silver cages looking horrified. But the Fire Witch was in my way. She looked mean, horrible, fierce, mad and nasty. Her name was Jennifer. Jennifer walked away. Now was my chance. I did see the keys which were silver but they were surrounded by a ring of fire! Now what should I do? The fairies saw me. They knew it was time.

They quickly threw some colourful dust over the ring of fire and it disappeared. She flew to the keys, opened the cages and they escaped. Jennifer was so mad when she came back and found out we escaped. The fairies were having a party to celebrate. I flew home and had fish and chips for supper.

*By Lily Thomas, Grade 2  
Pearcedale Primary School  
PEARCEDALE - VIC.*



## *Saving the Valley*

'Goodbye son', Fred's father moaned. 'Believe in yourself and bring back the magic to kill the atrocious Atam.'

'Father I'll try my best', Fred whispered nervously. 'I will defeat Atam but what if I fail?'

'Son, you won't fail. Here are one hundred barcas. Use it well. I can't give you a horse so you'll have to buy one. Harry hasn't recovered. His leg is still bad'.

Fred was the one chosen to venture, by himself, to find the enchanted magic of Facia. He would have to venture far from the valley of Naldino, which was something he'd never thought could be done, but he had to save the whole land from the magical sorcerer, Atam.

After a day of journeying in the whistling wind, Fred saw a market and looked to see what he could buy. In an insignificant booth, a man was selling horses. There were two, a nine year black old female and a two year old brown male. The man wanted twenty barcas which was an extraordinary amount of money, for the wonderful two year old stallion. Fred haggled and soon bought the animal for fifteen barcas. Fred called the horse Roberto. Fred also bought a saddle for four barcas and some food and drink for six barcas. He discovered a ring on the floor and picked it up. It contained diamonds and rubies.

Three days later they were on the outskirts of Baldana, the fortress of Evil. Fred heard a soft voice saying, 'Fred'. Fred looked around and saw no one. It was late at night and it was only Fred and his Roberto. The stars shone like crystals in the sky.

'It's me Roberto. I have magical powers and I can talk'.

Fred stared in bewilderment. He knew this wasn't a dream but it was past imagination.

Fred woke the next morning to find he had painful arms and a rope tied around his arms and legs. He appeared to be in a cave. Where was he? Where was Roberto? What was happening? He heard two men talking outside the cave.

'Hey Paul, d'man heis vokan opp I dink', said the one man.

'He beah nod koom out. I havant dought of vat me going to sey to heem'. Paul said.

Both men laughed like hyenas. Fred knew he had no chance of escape but he had to try. It was for his valley. It was his mission to escape, but how?

He discovered that there was a small fire in the cave. He hopped there and placed his hands over the fire.

Later when the rope was burnt, he managed to untie his legs with his hands. Now he had to find a way to escape. As he ran, he discovered a handgun. He carefully picked it up and found out that it was loaded. He walked vivaciously out of the cave. The men saw him.

'Hoo sayd that vu kood kum out?' Paul said furiously.

'Who said you could capture me?' Fred said in reply.

'Ve dedint kidnap vu. Ve hev been sent by Facia to tell vu sem dirukshuns to him. Ve can't take vu da! Ve gev ve shelta', the other man said.

'Thank you', Fred muttered.

'Vour horse is in zat cave', Paul whispered, pointing to a grotto next to them.

'Thank you for your assistance. Why did you tie me up?' Fred asked the men but there was no reply. They simply ignored him.



## *Saving the Valley (Cont'd)*

Many days passed and Fred met many people, most of whom said Facia was a powerless man. Some welcomed Fred and Roberto and gave them food and shelter.

One week after Facia's assistants came to help, Roberto was shot in the leg. He dropped instantaneously. Someone was lurking in the mysterious bushes. Roberto was weak and doubted that he could use his magical powers to protect them against the attacker.

A man with a long black shirt and a rifle in his hand jumped out of the bushes. Against the rule of the city of Golof in Baldana, Roberto used his magic powers. This was punishable by death. The spurt of magic hit the raider and he instantly dropped down dead.

Many days later near a small building, Roberto said that he could magically feel that Facia was in there waiting to be found. Roberto turned into a lizard and crawled into Fred's pocket. Fred was flabbergasted.

Fred hesitated but then he walked in. There were shattered plates on the floor and the ground was coated in leftover food. There were four howling dogs outside. Fred walked up the stairs at a snail's pace. He saw a man with a bottle of liquor in one hand lying on a million dollar bed.

He had a greasy, matted, grey afro under which shone dark diamond-like blue eyes. Emerging from his face was a massive, hooked nose. There was a humongous scar on his left cheek and claw markings on his right cheek.

Suddenly he discovered Fred and said sourly, 'What are you doing here? Who are you?'

Fred replied, 'I'm Fred Ronelda. Are you Facia?'

'Yes I am.'

'I have come to ask you to hand over to me the magic to defeat the evil sorcerer, Atam, so our village can be saved.'

'What will you give me in return? Anything more valuable than money will do.'

He checked his pockets and there he found a ring. He took it out of his pocket and saw it was beautiful, with different coloured diamonds.

'How about this ring?' Fred replied nervously.

'I don't believe my eyes. This ring needs just one minuscule touch of magic and you'll have the power to defeat Atam.'

'How?'

'It is very simple. Focus on your goal, whisper my name and your goal will be achieved.'

'Thank you.'

Fred journeyed back home and defeated Atam. Roberto continued living in the village and was known as 'That Magical One'. Fred was a hero for all eternity.

*By Jared Katzeff  
Reddam House  
WOOLLAHRA - NSW  
Teacher: Mrs Sharon Shapiro*

## *Captured Dreams*

**I**T WAS horrible! Every night it runs through my mind like leaves on a windy day. The day I was captured everything went still as I was heaved onto the truck on my way to the circus.

When I arrived I thought it was like heaven. Getting fed every ten minutes and looking as beautiful as ever. After a while I started doing performances with my kind, caring trainer. It was so exciting, the crowd screaming, smiling faces and the smell of the circus.

Soon things started to change as I was lifted onto a truck once again and taken to France. That night I slept restlessly on a stack of hay inside my small cage.

In the morning I woke to the sound of yelling and noisy cars. 'Get up starlet', said a rowdy voice. As I stood up slowly I saw

my trainer staring at me with eyes as fierce as fire. 'Come on, get up!' he shouted pointing a finger at me.

As I was eating my delicious breakfast James kept on pulling on my reins quite harshly. Once I finished I knew there was a long day ahead. James yelling out cruel things like 'hurry up you hopeless animal', him whipping me and people walking past pulling my long, rough tail.

That night it just got worse because with a harness I would be dropped into a huge tank filled with water while the crowd would laugh and cheer. James would also make me run around in circles while whipping me.

While I was asleep in my cage a gang of teenage boys came up to me and started shaking the cage and throwing dirt on

*Cont'd...*

## *Captured Dreams (Cont'd)*

me while laughing. James came up to them and threatened to call the police if they didn't go away so they dropped everything and walked off with scowls on their faces.

The next day I didn't need to wake up really early so when I did it was so bright I couldn't see things properly. By the time my eyes adapted to the fierce sunlight I could see everyone walking around with fairy floss and could hear excited children's squeals.

Since there was no rush to get up I fell asleep for a little while longer but when I awoke there was a small boy with beaming eyes staring up at me. He had a large, purple balloon in one hand and a dripping ice-cream in the other. He looked so cute and with a sweet, subtle voice he said 'I'll save you', before running off after his mum.

That night I had another performance. There weren't nearly as many people but there was a news reporter for the daily times. He wanted to take a photo of James, Arabella the tight rope walker, Harris the clown and I. It took a while before he finally took the picture because he couldn't figure out where to put everyone but when I saw the photo on the wall the next day all the time paid off because it looked great.

Thankfully it was our last night in France and we had a fair for everyone to come to. I was so glad because from what was once my dream, the circus had become a horrible and cruel place for me.

While my tail was being gently plaited by James I saw the same boy as the night before and he was holding an older girl's hand. When the girl left to buy some tickets for him, he

walked up to me. While taking a small, gold key out of his pocket he grabbed the lock of the cage. I closed my eyes and when I opened them the steel door of the cage was wide open and the young boy had gone.

I looked but he was nowhere to be seen. With the whole crowd staring at me I made a run for it, galloping through the circus gates. I took one last look behind me where I saw the small boy give me a wink before the long journey home to my old life, the paddocks.

*By Sarah Shaw*

*Year 6*

*Manly West Primary School*

*BALGOWLAH - NSW*

*Teacher: Miss Lees*



## *Run Hare Run #2*

**O**NCE in a small village in the middle of London, a hare bolted through a crowd of legs as greyhounds snapped at his heels.

He scrambled up and over large wooded crates until he was finally able to leap up into a dirty gutter and rush away from the dogs, splashing dirty drain water and old leaves everywhere.

Back in the square the Hunter's dogs were still sniffing madly for signs of the hare, while the Hunter merely stood there almost transfixed.

Meanwhile the hare stopped running and was happily munching twigs of grass.

Alas, the dogs found a trail of dirty drain water and old leaves leading to the hare!

Hearing the dogs starting to bark the Hunter raced alongside them to the hare! WHAM, down went the net and the hare was caught.

He was taken back to the Hunter's house but the Hunter was not a hunter, he was an Artist!

So the rough fur of the hare got painted and is forever trapped in that same frame.

*By Matilda Gould*

*Year 3*

*Manly West Primary School*

*BALGOWLAH - NSW*

*Teacher: Miss Barnard*



## Five Friendly Rabbits



**D**OWN in the woods there lived five friendly rabbits. The rabbits lived in a hole beneath the ground in the middle of the woods. It was a big house with a bathroom, bedroom, lounge room and a kitchen. Outside they had a garden with very tall trees.

In their family there was a Dad, whose name was Bob, a Mum, whose name was Peta, a daughter, whose name was Becky, another daughter named Ashley and a son whose name was Jake. Becky and Ashley were twins and they were seven. Jack was ten. Ashley and Becky were white but Jack was brown and white. Dad was black and Mum was white and black. Dad liked working, Mum liked gardening, Ashley liked sleeping, and Becky loved playing, while Jack likes sport and eating.

It snowed in the woods. It was winter and it was very cold. Snow flakes were falling everywhere. The woods were turning white. The twins loved playing in the snow.

It was nearly the twins' birthday. The twins love birthdays but Becky and Ashley didn't know that it was their birthday the next day. They had forgotten about it because they were excited about the snow. Jack wanted to tell his little sisters about the birthday party for them tomorrow, but Mum said, 'You must not tell them until the morning'. Mum was cooking for the party, Jack was writing invitations for the twins' birthday party and Dad was wrapping the presents up for Becky and Ashley.

The day arrived. It was the twins' birthday. They got a toy bear each and some toys to play in the bath with. Becky and Ashley had turned eight and Jack was able to tell his sisters about the party the family had made for them.

Everyone came to the party. Once everyone was there they started to play the games that Mum, Dad and Jack had made for them. One game was to make a snow man and then Mum or Dad would say which one was the best. They all went in four groups. They had a snow fight. Mum was one group and Dad was with the other group. After the games they ate some food that Mum had cooked for them. It was delicious, and there was everything on the table a rabbit could wish for. There were carrot pie, carrot soup, fresh lettuce, apple stew, and best of all was the birthday cake which was a carrot cake shaped like a large carrot.

The rabbits had to get home before the fox got there but it was too late, the fox was already at their house. All of the rabbits went inside the twin's house. The fox could smell the rabbits, but he could not see them. A hunter came along and scared away the fox. The hunter was hunting for rabbits for his dinner that night, but he could not see any. He heard something, and he turned to see the rabbits running as fast as they could towards their homes.

'Boom!' went the gun, but the rabbits were too quick for the man. The rabbits hurried all the way home to their burrows where they were all safe for another day.

*By Monica Andreotti*

*Year 4*

*Great Southern Grammar*

*LOWER KALGAN - WA*

*Teacher: Mr Craig Emberson*

## the Convict



I was a convict from England,  
For stealing a loaf of bread.  
I was put on a ship,  
And told to go to bed.

When I woke up,  
We had reached land.  
Then we had to work,  
Oh! the ache in my hand.

One day I escaped,  
and ran into the bush.  
All the trees swayed in the breeze,  
They made a scary sound that went whoosh.

I needed money,  
really fast.  
So I robbed the rich,  
As time passed.

What a wonderful time I had,  
The best in my life.  
But it all ended when I was caught,  
I was in strife!

At the break of dawn,  
I was told I'd be hung.  
The journey to death,  
Had finally begun.

*By Elise Ponchard*  
*Age 11, St. John's Primary School*  
*FRANKSTON - VIC.*

*Graphic by Daniel Thompson*

## *Canberra*

In the green House of Representatives,  
In the blazing red Senate,  
An Australian landmark,  
Canberra.

The whispering fountain where secrets are told,  
The Australian War Memorial where grief unfolds,  
An Australian landmark,  
Canberra.

Pictures in the Art Gallery,  
Money in the mint,  
An Australian landmark,  
Canberra.

The lush gardens of Canberra,  
The carefully carved statues,  
An Australian landmark,  
Canberra.

The beautiful evening sunset,  
Shines like glistening gold,  
An Australian landmark,  
Canberra.

*By Catherine Zhao  
Age 11, Manly West Primary School  
BALGOWLAH – NSW  
Teacher: Becky Wilson*



## *The Bush*

The bush is groaning with different birds  
Some are bright, some dull, some absurd.  
The bush is swarming with millions of insects  
That fly around with amazing instinct.

The bush is teeming with noisy possums  
Which come out at night to enjoy lush blossoms.  
The bush is brimming with Eucalypt trees  
That swish and sway and dance in the breeze.

The bush is full of kangaroos  
Which watch me while I look at the views.  
The bush is green and brown and grey  
It helps me relax in every way.

The bush is littered with sticks and stones  
That make a path for me to get home.  
The bush is here now, for us to enjoy  
But will it be here in a decade or more?

*By Hannah Nugent  
Year 5, Age 10  
Fairholme College  
HARLAXTON – QLD.*



# Your School is invited to run a **Bright Clothes Day**

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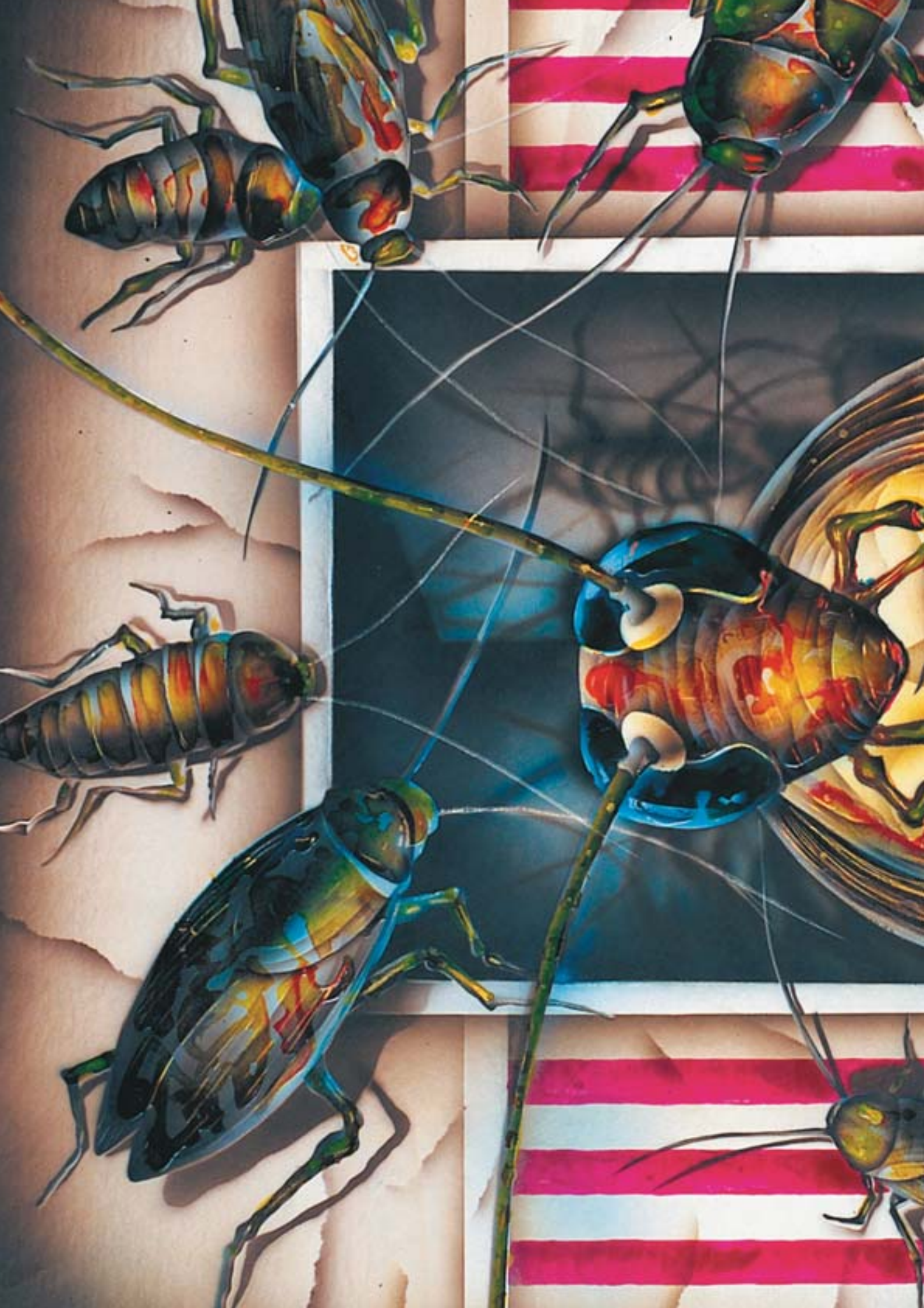






Illustration by Marc McBride

*Oz Kids in Print*



## Ambassadors



☛ **Krista Bell** is an award-winning author of twenty-one books for young readers. Krista has been professionally involved in children's literature for over thirty years, as well as being the mother of three sons, all of whom are good readers and writers! Krista's middle son, Damien, is the illustrator of her junior novels. Having grown up in Sydney, Krista had her own bookshop, was a publicist for a publishing company, then a book reviewer on ABC Radio for fifteen years, and during that time moved to Melbourne with her family.

It was in Melbourne that her first book, *JEZZA*, a picture book illustrated by Kym Lardner, was published in 1991. Krista calls the way she writes *FIBTION*, because she takes real life experiences, embroiders them with fibs and turns them into stories.

Krista lives with her sons and transport planner husband next to a railway line so she can quickly catch a train to the MCG to watch a football match, or go to the theatre, a concert or the National Gallery in town, or visit South Bank or Federation Square where she can be a professional "stickybeak", collecting story ideas. Visit [www.kristabell.com](http://www.kristabell.com).

**Paul Collins** was born in England, raised in New Zealand and moved to Australia in 1972. In 1975 he launched *Void*, the first professional science fiction magazine Australia had seen since the demise of the joint Australian and British production *Vision of Tomorrow*. His first fantasy novel for younger readers was *The Wizard's Torment*. Paul then edited the young adult anthology *Dream Weavers*, Australia's first heroic fantasy anthology ever. This was followed by *Fantastic Worlds*, and *Tales from the Wasteland*. Paul's recent works include the highly successful fantasy series (co-edited with Michael Pryor), *The Quentaris Chronicles*, to which Paul also contributes titles (*Swords of Quentaris*, *Slaves of Quentaris*, *Princess of Shadows* and *Dragonlords of Quentaris*); *The Jelindel Chronicles*, in which *Dragonlinks* was the first title, and *The Earthborn Wars* trilogy, of which *The Earthborn* was the first title. Visit [www.paulcollins.com.au](http://www.paulcollins.com.au) for more. ☛



☛ **Hazel Edwards** is the author of 150 books including the classic *There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake* (Penguin 2005); *Hand Me Down Hippo* (Penguin – April 2005); *Antarctica's Frozen Chosen*; *Fake ID*; *Duty Free*; *Stalker* (plus audio from Bolinda Audio); *Muscles*; *The Giant Traffic Jam*; *Astrid the Mind Reading Chook* and many more great titles. Visit [www.hazeledwards.com](http://www.hazeledwards.com) for details of her Antarctic books.



**Anna Ciddor** has always been fascinated by the question, 'What if I lived in another time or place?'. She changed career from maths teacher to author so she'd have the excuse to spend lots of time doing research. She has written and illustrated over fifty books, including the highly popular and exciting Viking Magic trilogy: *Runestone*, *Wolfspell* and *Stormriders*. Bravery, friendship, and a dash of magic are the keys to these adventure stories, which are based on real Viking history. *Runestone* was chosen as a Children's Book Council Notable Book in 2003 and has been shortlisted for many awards. You can find out more about Anna and her books at [www.viking-magic.com](http://www.viking-magic.com).

Anna keeps in touch with her readers through school visits and her website, but she is also keen to encourage the writing efforts of budding young authors through the Young Australian Writers' Awards. ☛



☛ **Lorraine Wilson** writes extensively both reference material for teachers and books for children. She has now written over two hundred books including: *Write me a Sign*; *Write me a Poem*; *Bubblegum*; *My Mum has False Teeth*; *Footy Kids*, *The Lift-Off Kids*, *I Have Two Dads*, and *I Speak Two Languages*.

**Libby Hathorn** is an award-winning Australian author of more than forty books for children. Her work has been translated into several languages and adapted for stage and screen. She was awarded a Centenary Medal in 2001 for her work in children's literature. More recently, her CDROM *Weirdstop* won the AIMIA Award (Australian Interactive Media Industry Awards) as Best Children's Product of 2003; her picture storybook *The River* won the Society of Women Writers' Bi-annual Award for Younger Readers; and *Over the Moon* was a Children's Book Council Notable Book in the same year. See extensive booklist and awards at [www.libbyhathorn.com](http://www.libbyhathorn.com). ☛



☛ **Meredith Costain** lives in Melbourne with her partner, fellow children's author Paul Collins, three chooks, a cat, a kelpie and a red heeler. Her work ranges from picture books through to popular fiction and non-fiction for older readers, and she is the editor of national children's magazine, *Comet*. Meredith's books include *Freeing Billy*, *The Sandpit War*, *Rock Raps* and *Musical Harriet*, which was adapted for television by the ABC. She regularly presents writing workshops for kids and adults in libraries and schools. Visit her at: [www.plasticine.com/mcostain](http://www.plasticine.com/mcostain)

For some ideas on how to get ideas for your own stories, visit this link: [www.pearsoned.com.au/schools/magazines/yawaTips.asp](http://www.pearsoned.com.au/schools/magazines/yawaTips.asp)



## Loss and Shame

Once upon a time there lived a very grand, prosperous and wealthy man called Timothy. He lives in a gargantuan, luxurious house towering down over the tranquil valley. He lived a very superior life, with servants running around in his echoing house feeding him and cleaning the property. He had always adored his lifestyle.

But, every night he would look out of his clean polished window and study the smeared misty, painted sky. The stars were sprinkled delicately on top of the fog. He sat there staring; thinking about what he regretted most in his life. Every night he thought of the only connection he once had with his family and how it was gone. His daughter had run away when they first moved into the house. A tear shed from his eye each time he even thought about his beloved, lost daughter.

One luminous sunlit day, an angry looking man turned up at the neatly engraved porch. He looked like an uptight, stressed and slightly livid middle-aged man. His clothes were old and tattered and he had skew, mouldy braces sticking out of his mouth. He was welcomed into the house and sat down on an impeccable and spotless velvet chair.

'Now,' said the miserable and moody man. 'I have just figured out that all of your belongings really belong to me. You were bequeathed your whole house from your great uncle, right?' Timothy nodded apprehensively. He wasn't sure of what was going to come next.

'Well, you are mistaken, it turns out that you are my long lost cousin and that your great uncle wrote in his will that I should take all his possessions.'

Timothy carefully leaned over in the stranger's direction to glance at the will. But, the dreadful thing was, that it was actually true. He could clearly recognise his ancestor's handwriting. From that point on, everything changed.

The stranger started to order Timothy's staff to move out of the mansion. There was suddenly a big hullabaloo where the stranger started to order the servants and cleaners to clear out the household. It all happened so quickly, and soon enough, the stranger dominated the mansion and Timothy was out on the street searching weakly and feebly for accommodation. He began to look thoroughly for at least a miniature, empty cabin to sleep in.

Finally, poor Timothy came across a dismal shanty. It was gloomy, mysterious and ominous. This was very depressing for Timothy, leaving his stunning overthrown home and now facing a dim and dull shed, the size of his old cleaning closet.

The change from one situation to another was overwhelming and he sat down in his decaying claustrophobic cabin, disheartened and discouraged.

Day after day, Timothy grew old, frail, weak and fragile. His flesh started to become wrinkly forming bangles of skin. He lived an abandoned and deserted life. Each day he thought about how discontented and melancholic his upsetting life had become.

'For how long will this sorrowful and despondent life continue?' he asked dejectedly.

*By Nadia Shnier  
Year 6, Age 12  
Reddam House  
WOOLLAHRA - NSW  
Teacher: Mrs Sharon Shapiro*

## *An Unexpected Tale*

He had been waiting for ages. Everything was muted, which was particularly bizarre as Shelly's apartment was never quiet. The colourfully cluttered rooms were always either overflowing with piercing alternative music, the echo of something shattering to pieces, or Shelly's roaring voice scattin' while she slaved away on her latest masterpiece. He looked at his surroundings. Paint pervaded the floor. He hopped over it, avoiding the thick, scarlet blood. He ducked; the paintings hanging from the ceiling were still there. He peered into the kitchen. She wasn't there. He shook his head as he gazed at the piled-up dishes. He was sure they would collapse any minute. It was in the pipeline.

He found his way up the stairs, kicking all the clothes out the way as he floated past. He saw her face staring at him. Only, her face was on a canvas labelled 'Masterpiece'. He had never seen the painting before so it must've been new. Her curly black hair hypnotised him as it shone from the flowing, azure background. Her emerald, vivacious eyes felt warm and enjoyable. He could see her heart pouring through them. She had a charming button nose and an amiable, pleasant mouth. She was wearing her signature chopsticks in her hair and her overalls over her dress. He could almost hear her voice, shaking with that operatic shrill. He missed her. But where was she?

He anxiously picked up her phone, roofed by dry clay. He dialled her number. Zero for the amount of times she regretted anything, three hundred and sixty five for the total amount of days she painted in a year, and twelve, fifteen, twenty two and five, spelling 'love' in numbers. Her mobile rang. *Mexican Hat* – her favourite. He grinned from disappointment and her predictability. 'It is pointless', he said to himself, 'I am on a wild goose chase!'

As he was about to leave, he spotted a note. He opened it nervously and stood there in shock. The words on the note danced in anger in his brain. It didn't make sense. 'Shelly wouldn't do that! How could she?' He analysed the note in his head. He couldn't help but think there was something fishy about the self-portrait but he couldn't put his finger on it.

He went back to the painting. He gasped in horror and excitement. Shelly's face had changed; he was sure of it. Her brow was positioned in fear and her scarlet lips were tense with agitation. Her emerald eyes locked into his and he felt the screams of a thousand years piercing his soul.

He waved at the painting with utter perplexity. Her eyes spoke again, this time with relief and gratefulness. The letters eight, five, twelve and sixteen seeped through the now chartreuse background. The word of help weaved into his bewildered, battled brain. In his mind's eye, it suddenly clicked.

Obviously it can't be a coincidence; that would be too impossible. She must be in the painting. Of all the events in his life, this was the one that had him quivering with ideas. 'I need to fish her out the cherry river of mystification, but how can I possibly do that?'

He felt his hand tremble, almost magnetically forced towards her painting tools. A beam of light shot through his body as soon as he made contact with the paintbrush. This one was named Level. Shelly had a strange obsession of naming her magic markers after palindromes. 'I guess we connected on a certain level!', he chortled, finding himself absolutely hilarious.

'Oh, right – Shelly'. The magnetic force pressed him towards the

painting. His mind was buzzing and his whole body was drenched in numbness. Using all the creative and imaginative juices running through him madly, he collected himself and drew a... door? A door! *Of course. The one thing that leads a person from dimension to... err... room-to-room.*

He had drawn a majestic castle door with a diamond handle and golden knocking knob. He wanted her to come out of the painting with style. The cobbled stone began to shake rapidly with a thud. He stood back, stunned. *Wow, what a day, all leading to this!* The painting's background had changed to a dazzling and brilliant gold. Shelly was home.

The diamond doorknob turned and Shelly's pitch-black curly hair tumbled out first. Next, two very excited eyeballs rolled out, then her blood-scarlet lips. Finally, after all of Shelly had poured through the gleaming door, a gust of artistic mess swept up in a cyclonic fashion. There she was. Her bright, luminous eyes greeted him with a wink.

'Edward, Darling! How sweet of you to come and rescue me'. Her mellifluous voice lifted his heart; he was also home.

'You know, I was fine by myself. I didn't need rescuing and you have come to know I hate being the damsel in distress. Oh right, the letter I wrote you was just a joke. I didn't really flee the country. I hope it didn't make you worry.'

'Thank Gosh! You really had me worried. It is splendid to have you back, Shelly. You and all your tricks'. They both chuckled.

'So', Shelly replied, 'How did you fish me out of that swamp?'

'You won't believe me, it was a truly unexpected tale.'

*By Victoria Zerbst  
Grade 6, Reddam House  
WOOLLAHRA – NSW  
Teacher: Mrs Sharon Shapiro*





## Once Was the War

She twirled around, her hair glistening in the sun. Her new dress was a beautiful one. She loved it more than anything else in the world. It was a vivid shade of blue with puffy sleeves. She twirled again, wishing she had a mirror. She looked almost pretty. Her dress really brought out the colour in her eyes, a magnificent pale green. The dress made her forget everything. All her sad thoughts had vanished into thin air. She stood there. She stood wondering who she would show. There were only animals. Animals, her mother and the woods. As she stood there, thinking, the memories stopped fading and began to get clearer and, once again, it all came back to her. Once again she was unhappy.

If only she knew where her father was. If only there was peace in the world. If only. She knew there wasn't a way. At least not until the war and conflict was over. It would all end and the happy thoughts would come back to her once her father was here. If he was here, her world would be complete and happy again. But it wasn't. Her father had gone to war and may have even died.

Once, her father was here. Once, they were a family. Once, they were happy. But now, it was all gone.

By Samira Hoque  
MAROOBRAH - NSW



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## *Crunchy Crocodile*

### *Crunchy Crocodile's Teeth*

ONE morning on a hot summer's day, Crunchy Crocodile was just getting up from his nap. 'Yawn!!', yawned Crunchy Crocodile. 'Snap, snap, I'm hungry, I'm going to get some fresh fish from the lake', said Crunchy Crocodile. Crunchy Crocodile was stomping his way to Lake Cupcu to look for some fish, he was stomping so loud, that the fish woke up, and the fish in Lake Cupcu have very deep sleeps.

'What was that noise?' cried the fish, Crunchy Crocodile was getting closer and snapping very loudly.

'Oh NO!' screamed the monkeys from the trees, the baby chimps were shivering like it was freezing because Crunchy Crocodile was that scary.

'Those poor fish, Crunchy Crocodile has eaten enough of them', said Mother Chimp, the chimps huddled up and thought of a plan to stop Crunchy Crocodile. Crunchy Crocodile was almost at Lake Cupca, suddenly, the chimps jumped out of the trees and wrapped Crunchy Crocodile's jaw with some vines, making his jaws shut tight, while Johnny Chimp was at the surface to warn the fish. 'Crunchy Crocodile is coming to eat you so be very careful', warned Johnny Chimp.

'Oh, thank you', said Father Trout. Johnny Chimp winked at the fish, the fish winked back, then fled into Lake Capcu. The chimps let Crunchy Crocodile go.

'Snap, Snap, chimps always like to play games', snapped Crunchy Crocodile and tip toed to the lake's surface, completely silent.

Crunchy Crocodile leaped into Lake Cupcu, but instead of biting the fish, he bit a very thick rock, **BANG!!** Crunchy Crocodile's teeth were broken and fell out of his mouth. 'Ouch', screamed Crunchy Crocodile, 'my teeth, my beautiful teeth, they're gonnnee!!'. Crunchy Crocodile started crying, the chimps were watching him from the trees.

'Mum maybe we should help him', said Annie Chimp.

'NO! he got what he deserved', said Mother Chimp.

Annie Chimp frowned at Mother Chimp and jumped out of the trees and ran to the crying crocodile. 'Hey Crunchy Crocodile, it'll be okay, I'll...'

'Okay!! Okay!! It will not be okay, my teeth have fallen out of my mouth and broken', screamed Crunchy Crocodile, Annie Chimp gave a sad look as if she was going to cry.

'Gulp, look I'm sorry', Crunchy Crocodile apologised.

'That's okay, oh I just forgot I've got an idea, the idea is... The idea is to go and see Magical Frog, he is great at stuff like this', said Annie Chimp.

'YES!!! I'll get my teeth back YES!' Crunchy Crocodile shouted jumping up and down, Annie Chimp smiled happily. (Some of you kids at home probably know that if you knock out all your teeth you would speak very strangely and be hard to understand.)



## Crunchy Crocodile Crunchy Crocodile's Teeth (Cont'd.)

Crunchy Crocodile had his eyes wide for Magical Frog because Magical Frog zooms around all the time and is hard to see. Suddenly Annie Chimp and Crunchy Crocodile heard a noise from the forest bushes. 'We know you're there come out before I eat you,' Crunchy Crocodile ordered.

'Please... you don't have to eat me, I-I'm innocent, I didn't steal Sheriff Raccoon's raspberries,' explained the voice.

'Come out here so we can see you,' said Crunchy Crocodile.

'Hmmm, arrr... Okay,' said the voice and out of the bushes came Grandpa Tortoise.

'Oh, Grandpa Tortoise, we're not going to eat you, we were just looking for Magical Frog,' said Annie Chimp.

'Oh, I saw him, he was at Redman's Cliff,' said Grandpa Tortoise.

'Thanks Gramps,' said Crunchy Crocodile and headed on to Redman's Cliff. Crunchy Crocodile and Annie Chimp walked up to the edge of Redman's Cliff, then, Edmund Eagle flew past, 'Hey, Crunchy Crocodile, how ya going man,' said Edmund Eagle.

'Hey, Edmund going good,' said Crunchy Crocodile, 'Oh, have you seen Magical Frog?' Crunchy Crocodile asked.

'He just left, he went down to Dun Kern River,' said Edmund Eagle.

'Thanks Ed,' said Crunchy Crocodile and off they went to Dun Kern River.

'**WHIZZ!!!**' went Magical Frog as he zoomed through the jungle and passed Crunchy Crocodile and Annie Chimp.

'C'mon, there he is, hurry catch him before he gets away again,' said Annie Chimp, Crunchy Crocodile grinned and ran after Magical Frog. Suddenly the chimps, the apes, the birds and the raccoons jumped out of the trees and stopped Magical Frog in his tracks. 'SWOSH!!!' went Magical Frog as he stopped zooming at a very high speed.

'Magical Frog, Magical Frog,' said Crunchy Crocodile.

'Who said my name?' said Magical Frog.

'Me Magical Frog, me Crunchy Crocodile, look I need your help, I was having my breakfast this morning when I bit a very thick rock in Lake Cupcu and my teeth shattered and fell out of my mouth, can you

help me grow them back please?' asked Crunchy Crocodile.

'Hmmmm, why should I help you?' said Magical Frog.

'Because I will do anything,' said Crunchy Crocodile.

'Hmmm, hmmm, arrr, Okay, BUT only if you do not eat any of us and scare the predators away. Prove yourself right and don't eat any fish in Lake Cupca,' said Magical Frog. 'Have we got a deal?' said Magical Frog.

'Sure do,' said Crunchy Crocodile.

'Okay then,' said Magical Frog, then he covered Crunchy Crocodile's jaws with a violet cloth.

'I summon the power of the Lord to bring forth Crunchy Crocodile's teeth. Bring them together and replace them with magic, **OBLIZARATE!!!!**' said Magical Frog and cast the spell **WIZZ!!!!**, streams of colourful light shot out of Magical Frog's palms and surrounded Crunchy Crocodile then, **CARZAR!!!**, went the spell as it hit Crunchy Crocodile. Magical Frog took the violet cloth off Crunchy Crocodile's jaws and Crunchy Crocodile's teeth had grown back. '**WHARHOH!!!**', Crunchy Crocodile shouted, jumping up and down.

'Okay, but just remember if you break your promise you're out of here,' said Sheriff Raccoon.

And from now on Crunchy Crocodile did not eat any more animals from the forest and chased the predators away.

*By Riley Thompson*

*Year 6*

*Moranbah East State School*

*MORANBAH - QLD.*

*Teacher: Miss Slean*



### *Iceheart*

ONCE upon a time, in a kingdom called Apokolips lived a King and Queen who ruled the country. Everyone loved them but they were still sad for they had not had any children since they were married. Then one day, a son was born and he was named James. During the day of his birth the King and Queen held a ball to show their happiness. The four winds were invited as special guests at the ball. After the people danced they presented their gifts to the young prince. People who honoured the King and Queen so much gave their precious treasure to the boy. Others, who were greedy, gave him their worst thing in their house, the King and Queen did not mind because they were so kind hearted. Last of all came the four winds. The South Wind gave him a butterfly in a jar. 'Turn south and set this butterfly free to call me', said the South Wind kindly. Next came the East Wind struggling to give the prince his present. 'Open this music box when you're turning east', said the East Wind, 'I'll be there for you.'

'I'm next', said the West Wind eagerly. 'Those winds are very curious to give our child their presents that one of them will trip soon', laughed the Queen. And she was right. After the West Wind gave the child his whistle, the North Wind rushed to the prince to give him his present, which was a glass dove, he tripped and he sneezed. It was a cold wind that the North Wind sneezed and it landed on the baby boy. The North Wind gave his gift and left because he knew that the baby's heart was frozen and he can't do anything because he was too young. He'll have to wait for a couple more years to overcome that problem. The other winds knew what had happened and told the King and Queen. They didn't curse the North Wind because they knew it was an accident, they just cancelled the ball and left.

Twenty-two years later, the King and Queen got more worried because their son did not know how to feel. He did not know how to love, cry and laugh. He did not know how to be

happy, angry, worried, hungry, thirsty, hot, cold, sick, cross, cranky, grumpy, stressed or sad. From now on the young and handsome Prince James was called Iceheart because he did not know how to feel and the sneeze of the cold North Wind made it happen. So the King and Queen invited the princesses from around the world and held an engagement party for whoever can make the prince feel again gets to marry him. The engagement party will start in four more days. The King and Queen had also invited the whole Kingdom to join because there might be some chances that they will melt the ice from his heart. There was a poor widow who was invited. That poor widow had a daughter named Evangeline. She looked pretty for a widow. She had long black hair with hazel eyes. Her skin was tanned and she had deep red lips. 'Please give me the four winds' presents', begged Evangeline who wanted to help the prince but did not know that an engagement party was on for the next four days. 'No, we will not accept that happening', answered the King.

'Please' and Evangeline put on her cutest face.

'OK, but you must give it back in the next four days' warned the King.

'Thank you so much' Evangeline said while wiping her eyes. After wiping her eyes she went out of the palace. Leena, Princess of Krypto overheard this conversation and planned to stop Evangeline and steal the presents to get to the four winds before her so that she can marry the prince. Evangeline was very wise because she headed straight to the library to find a book called 'The Four Winds'. It was a very difficult situation to find the book because the royal library was so enormous.

At last she found the book and she brought it with her so that she can gather more information. Then she set off on her journey. She read the book to find out where the South Wind's lair was. It said: 'To find the South Wind you must cross the Lake of the Healing Waters'.

'Now that's easy', said Evangeline. She rented a two-tonne ship and set sail. Leena, who was following her, got some toxic waste and went back to the beach where Evangeline was sailing. She poured them on the Lake of Waters, then the water became very littered and began to die, worst of all the acid on the toxic waste was so strong that the ship started to melt down. Luckily Evangeline found a compass on board the ship and she turned south. She let the butterfly go and suddenly the place where she was started to change. It turned into the most beautiful beach she had ever seen. 'This must be South Wind's lair' Evangeline whispered. Evangeline was interrupted by a voice that seemed to say, 'It is!'. Evangeline turned around; she saw the South Wind approaching her. The South Wind was a wind but she sort of changed herself into a human life form. She had an orchid on her lovely brown hair, peach skin, pink lips and a floral gown. 'Why have you called me?' asked the South Wind.

'I wanted to ask you if you could melt the prince's heart so that he could feel again', said Evangeline.

'I'm sorry child', replied the South Wind. 'Only the North Wind can do that. Hey tell you what, why don't you go to the West

*(Cont'd.)*





## *Iceheart (Cont'd.)*

Wind. He's a close friend to him. I'm sure he'll help you. Here's a hint that I'll give you – whenever you go to one of the four winds, do not activate his or her gift because they won't come. Only activate them when you are in trouble like you did to my gift. OK?

'Got it', shouted Evangeline.

During her journey she had to go to many mysterious places to succeed to the next wind. When she went to the West Wind she had to cross the floor of the billion leaves, of course Leena was there to steal the gifts from Evangeline but she failed every time she tried. While Evangeline was crossing the Floor of the Billion Leaves, Leena set fire on a tree and the fire spread all over the forest so all the trees lost their leaves and all the leaves fell on the ground to block Evangeline's path, but Evangeline just looked at her compass, turned west and blew the whistle. When Evangeline went to the East Wind she had to cross the Cliffs of the Falcons. Leena beat her but she only climbed up halfway. Evangeline was at the top after Leena sprinkled breadcrumbs on the cliffs and every bird attacked Evangeline to try and get to the breadcrumbs. Evangeline activated the gift and disappeared into the East Wind's lair. 'Don't activate the gift the North Wind has given when you are in trouble, just wait on top of the Mountains of the Swirling Blizzards', warned the East Wind. So Evangeline did what the East Wind asked her. Leena did not come with her because she was afraid of blizzards. When Evangeline came to the top of the mountains she waited. In about two minutes the North Wind came to her. He said to Evangeline that he finally figured out what to do.

'Give my present to the prince and let him touch it. When he touches it his heart will melt and he will be able to feel again.'

'Thank you so much!' cried Evangeline with joy. She went back to the Kingdom of Apokolips and made the prince touch it. He was able to feel again and the King and Queen were very happy. Prince James asked Evangeline to marry him. 'But why would I marry a prince when I'm a poor widow?', asked Evangeline.

'You were supposed to marry him because of the engagement party of who can make him feel again' said the Queen.

'I'll marry him then', answered Evangeline, and they all lived happily ever after in a newly built kingdom called the Kingdom of Metropolis and as for Leena, she got to marry a prince – a prince that does not know his manners.

*By Nicole Batayola  
Grade 4, Calvary Christian College  
AITKENVALE – QLD.  
Teacher: M. Compton*



## *Untitled*

On the ground or  
In the sky  
You make me laugh  
You make me cry  
You're always there  
To help me out  
Whether I'm with you or without  
My friends you are so special to me  
You make me feel like I am free  
I'm honoured to have you all as friends  
Our friendship will never end  
Because our bond is so close  
I would like to propose a toast  
Just to say I love every one of you the most  
I want to make it very clear  
When I say this I'm very sincere  
My friends I have forever now  
There are no others better than I have found  
I hope I have left you in no doubt  
That all my friends I love you  
And of that I am proud



*By Amy Boswell  
Age 12  
ARCADIA VALE – NSW*

## *The Roman Mosaic*

ONCE there was a soft fluffy kitten named Hannah. She lived with her owner Miss Ann White. Miss Ann White was a nice old lady and she loved stroking Hannah's smooth fur.

One day Miss Ann White got ill. The little kitten tried everything to help her owner, but nothing worked. The next day two removalists came and started moving all of the old lady's possessions. Then one of the removalists moved a very old side table. Unfortunately he didn't see a beautiful old picture of the old lady. As it fell to the ground the glass shattered and the picture ripped. When Hannah saw this her heart broke. It was her and the old lady's favourite painting. Then a doctor came in and listened to her chest. 'We will have to take her to hospital', said the doctor. Then another man came in with a stretcher. They carefully put her onto the stretcher and took her down the steps and into the truck. 'Oh, will my mistress ever come back', Hannah said through muffled tears.

Suddenly one of the men picked her up. 'And what shall we do with this fur ball?'

'Well, we can't do much about it', said the other one, and they dumped the kitten on Miss Ann White's doorstep.

Hannah sat there crying until she couldn't any more. She couldn't sleep. She tried but her ex mistress' face kept on looming into her mind like a badly taped video. Finally she fell into an uneasy sleep.

'Help! A monster's got me! Stop!'

'Hey you over there, settle down. I'm not a monster.'

'But. But...'

'I might be a dog but I hate the taste of cat. Trust me.'

'I'm still not sure about this', said Hannah.

'Come on. Have a bone. They're nice really.'

From then on the pair became friends – fast!

Hannah soon learnt pretty much about her new best friend.

'It must be a hard life seeing the person you loved die. But now we've got other things to deal with', said the dog.

'But you haven't told me about why you are here', said Hannah.



'Well, believe it or not I really don't know why'. And he set off explaining with tears in his eyes.

'It must be hard being kicked out because you didn't fetch the newspaper because you didn't hear!' said Hannah in a surprised voice. 'Imagine if that happened to me. Never!'

'Your old mistress seemed nice.'

Firstly the dog showed Hannah how to beg. Right then he did it in front of the butcher's and he received a free chicken's leg which he ate gratefully.

'See, it's easy', said the dog with a full mouth and he received another one as quick as a TV signal.

Many people, especially children, patted Hannah as they walked by, but none of them stayed for long. It felt nice to have someone stroking her, but it just wasn't the same. Soon Hannah knew how to do things in their new life.

Crossing the street was hard because she couldn't reach the stop button and she was so small she wasn't seen. Usually she would walk with the people, but it was hard keeping up with them.

One day Hannah almost crossed the street but she was left behind with her leg stuck in the gutter.

'Help!'

A car was coming and she was almost squashed. Something jet black pushed her onto the path. She looked behind her.

'Oh, no!'

It was the dog. He was shattered like broken glass. Quickly she tried to put him together, even though she knew it wouldn't work. Instead of fixing him she had made a mosaic. And that's how that mosaic was made.

The people in the story were thankful that the dog saved the kitten's life, and they looked more safely and with caution when crossing roads.

**Beware of the dog** was a Roman mosaic. It was made in the 1st century AD.

**Miss Anne White's Kitten**, was drawn by George Stubbs in 1790, was also included.

*By Sara Gashi, Year 4  
Manly West Primary School, BALGOWLAH – NSW  
Teacher: Mrs McNaughton*



## Gone Away

It was a hot and sunburnt day,  
The time they took us kids away.  
Our hearts were broken, lives were shattered,  
My once big world was now in tatters.

Kicking and screaming they took us three back,  
Only because our skin was part black.  
Into the train, we knew where we were headed,  
Moor River Station, the place we'd all dreaded.

As she watched the tears rolling down my dirty face,  
My mother begged and begged the guards to let her take our place.  
'You cannot take my babies, they're my children', she did cry,  
But from the guard man's strong tough grip we waved my mum goodbye.

Not knowing of the day that I would see my mum again,  
My feelings and my hate towards the guards I had made plain.  
My pain and all my heartache was not felt just by me,  
They took my sister and my cousin so together that made three.

Then one day at the station, the perfect escape came,  
We would leave just as the sun did rise, for with it came the rain.  
No footstep would be traceable, and find us they would not,  
We left early for by day's break the desert would be hot.

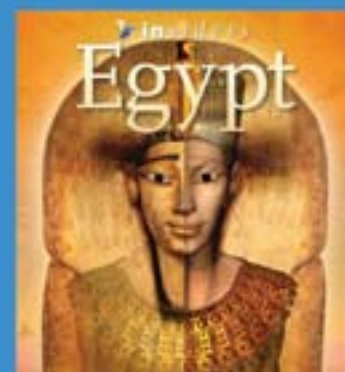
This journey went for many weeks,  
The girls were getting slim.  
Our hopes of getting back to mum,  
Were looking much more grim.

Then out there in the distance,  
We saw some poles commence.  
And now with joy we would find our way home,  
Along the Rabbit Proof Fence.

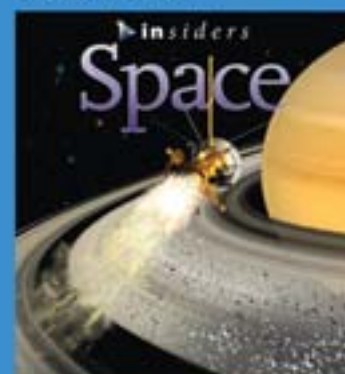
*By Penny Compton  
Grade 11  
Calvary Christian College  
AITKENVALE - QLD.  
Teacher: M. Compton*



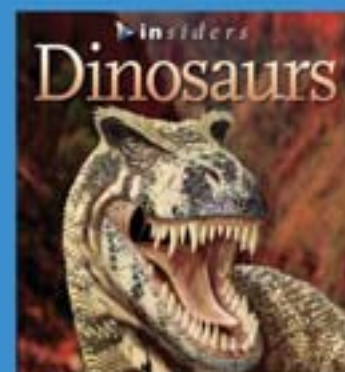
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## *Carrot Boy*

Yep, I knew it, today is carrot night, that meant tonight for dinner we are eating carrots, just like every other Monday, Wednesday and Friday. I absolutely hate carrots. Maybe I could ask if we could have meat night, bread night or even potato night, as long as it isn't carrot night. 'Muumum, I'm full, now can I have chocolate', I begged. 'Jerry, you haven't even picked up the fork, can you at least eat half of that big, orange, crunchy, healthy, juicy, scrumptious, priceless...'

'Enough, enough, enough, ENOUGH!!!!' I replied.

I got up and ran straight to my room and slammed the door behind me. Don't you just get so annoyed when your parents give you false information about things. I threw myself onto



my bed and fell right to sleep. Beep, beep, beep, I hopped out of bed and ran to the alarm clock in my Mum and Dad's bedroom and turned it off. 'Wake up, gotta get ready for work Dad, and Mum you've got to take me to school', I shout.

'But it's the school holidays chap, you don't have school', my Dad replies.

I smile as Dad gets up with his work clothes already on. Dad gives my Mum and I a kiss and runs out the door. I ran to my room and jumped on my bed. Because it's not Monday, Wednesday or Friday we don't have to have carrots for dinner. Well, I shouldn't be worrying about having carrots, at least it isn't spinach. Spinach is the worst, and to believe that our parents say that it's supposed to make us strong. 'Jerry, come over here', my Mum called.

'All right Mum', I replied.

'Seeing that you don't like carrots we are now going to have it on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, and, oh my gosh, I can't wait to see the smile on your face, we are going to be having spinach night', Mum said excitedly.

My face crumpled up as I froze in shock. From that moment my life had turned upside down. I fell to the ground and started crying. 'My boy is crying of happiness and he is finally growing up.'

*By Kasey Barker  
Age 10  
St. Columba's School  
EMBLETON - WA*

## *The Diver and the Whale*

There was a diver called Tom, he took his boat out to sea. He went into the deep sea and got on his suit, goggles and flippers too, and jumped into the sea to see what he could find. He heard a sound so he swam closer to the sound.

Then he saw a huge whale groaning and splashing in the water. When Tom got closer he could see the whale was trapped in a huge fishing net. Tom got a knife and cut the fishing net from around the whale and set him free. Then the whale and Tom became friends, then the whale gave Tom a ride to his boat.

The next day Tom went diving, a shark was about to attack Tom and then the whale, Tom's friend, came and scared the shark away and saved Tom from the shark.

Tom and the whale met each other at the same spot every

day. They played and splashed together every day. One day Tom went down to the sea and the whale wasn't there and Tom was really upset. Tom went down to the sea every day for months and months. Still the whale wasn't there. Then six months later he saw the whale, she'd come back to the same spot. Tom saw something different next to it. It was a baby whale. That's why the whale wasn't there at the spot because it went away to have a baby whale. Tom was very happy to have his friend back.

One day after Tom went to visit the whale and its baby, he noticed a shark was coming close to them. The shark started circling around the baby. Tom was very scared but as the shark got close the big whale smacked the shark with its huge tail and it swam away. Tom laughed and was very happy the whales were safe.

*Ryan Nuttall  
Age 7, Year 2, Atwell Primary School  
ATWELL - WA*







Name of Painting: 'Lady with a Squirrel and a Starling'.

Name of Artist: Hans Holbein

In pain and in utter agony I managed to break free from the fierce ferocious lion, scarcely able to look into those cold yellow eyes again.

I ran, not noticing that the lion had already gone out of sight, but I didn't care, the further away from that lion, the better.

The forest was lush yet cold and damp. I found a small hole in an old barky willow tree. It was cosy and warm but a little damp. The sun died down only leaving a small speck of sun shining through canopies.

Darkness set and the small creatures emerged from their burrows, spiders spun their magnificent webs. The dark trees came to life under the moonlight.

Dawn came and the morning sun beamed through the crowded canopies. Leaving my hole in the old willow I set off for my seed and nut hunt. One section of my daily routine. I prepare myself for the long journey awaiting me.

I follow the dim light ahead, dodging many trees obstructing my path. I've come to the edge of the dark forest, with nothing but juicy, green grass surrounding me. Then something caught my eye.

A small glimpse of home loomed ahead. I ran in excitement and joy. Every two seconds I was a metre closer to home.

A thick smoke filled my nostrils. I began to worry. Flames flickered over my home. The devastation hit me like a bullet in the heart. My home, burning into ashes. Trees collapsed, animals scared and frightened.

Salty tears trickled down my furry cheeks. I had no way out of my misery. I felt my heart was nothing but an empty space.

I walked away as I watched my home burn to crumpled ashes.

There, just ahead of me, lay a small village. I drew closer. I could see better now. Huts spread out on the lush green pastures, people danced around a large raging fire, singing cheerfully together.

A young woman with a soft face stepped out of one of the many huts.

I could tell she loved animals, as she was holding a feathery black bird in her hand.

## The Troubling World

She came closer to me. I attempted to run but I gave it a chance. She picked me up in her soft hands and placed the black bird on a blossom tree. The bird was kind and friendly and spoke in a cute voice. The woman gave me a nut to nibble on.

This is my sanctuary, away from danger and close to happiness.

By Tristan Bartik  
Year 6, Manly West Primary School  
BALGOWLAH - NSW  
Teacher: Miss Lees

## Birds

Birds are all nice and fine,  
I just love watching them perfectly shine.

Birds come in all the shapes I like,  
There are even birds with little spikes.  
They come in red, yellow, green and blue,  
All of their colours are truly true.

They have their own bird bath and all,  
Birds come in big and they come in small.  
I like their tiny little eyes,  
I also like it when they fly.

They can live in a cage and they can live in a tree,  
They can live in the forest and they can live near the sea.

They have a beak and they have a nose,  
They have two eyes and claws but they have no toes.

They like to sing and they love to talk,  
They like to dance and they like to walk.

They like to climb and they like to fly,  
They can fly so high that they can touch the sky.

Birds really love to eat and eat,  
They also like it when you give them a treat.

They love to drink water the most,  
There are probably even some birds who like to eat toast.  
They can travel by themselves and they can travel in herds,  
But just remember they're only birds.

Birds are wonderful from their head to their feet,  
And just keep in mind they're the nicest creatures you would ever want to meet.

By Alana Jenkins, Age 11, SCHOFIELDS - NSW



## *The Antique Lamp*

It was Mum's birthday soon and I still hadn't got her anything. 'So,' said Dad on the way home from soccer training, 'have you got Mum anything yet?' he asked.

'Well not yet,' I answered.

'How about I take you to Mrs Mack's Antique Store? That ought to give you some ideas,' he offered.

'Thanks Dad. That would be great,' I replied.

The next day Dad and I set off in Dad's red Holden Ute. As I was sitting there I wound down the window and let the wind tangle my hair. I watched the cars and trees zoom past like fast forwarding a video tape, until we stopped in front of an old rickety shed. On the front above a window was MRS MACK'S ANTIQUE STORE.

When I walked inside it was dark and the only light was coming from the windows. There were spider webs in every corner. There were rows and rows of shelves and on every shelf were old treasures. That's when I found the lamp.

'Dad, look at this one. Mum will love it,' I said, pointing to the lamp.

As Dad paid for the lamp I pressed my nose up against a glass cabinet that had many little glass and porcelain statues in it.

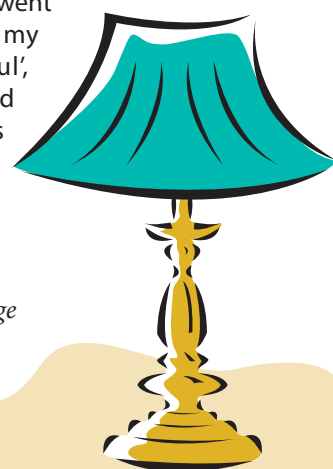
'Come on Ellie. Let's go now,' called Dad. I went and jumped in the Ute. I balanced the lamp wrapped up in brown paper all the way home.

It took Dad and I two days and one afternoon to finish making the lamp look pretty for Mum's birthday. We had polished it and we had removed the stains on the glass and we put a new light bit in it so it would work. 'It looks great Dad,' I said once we had finished.

'Yes I guess it does,' Dad agreed.

The next day was Mum's birthday. Dad had given her a pair of pink diamond earrings and a box of chocolates. After she finished opening them I went and fetched the lamp from my room. 'Oh Ellie its wonderful', she exclaimed when she had unwrapped it, and I think that's the best present I have ever given Mum.

*By Samara Sulton-Baker,  
Grade 5, Calvary Christian College  
AITKENVALE – QLD.  
Teacher: M. Compton*



## *NIGHT SKY*

The night sky is dark and sweet  
The wind blows and crickets cheep  
The moon and stars shine bright as the children sleep  
The owls, bats and possums play together in the trees  
The moths fly into the lights  
Cats' eyes glow in the moonlight  
Shadows dancing on the wall  
Night time is so beautiful

*By Tara Sanderson  
Year 3, Age 8  
St Gregory's Primary School  
QUEANBEYAN – NSW*



## My Multicultural Friends!

I have a friend from China,  
but our differences are minor.  
She might have different eyes,  
but they shine like stars in the skies.

I have a friend from Hong Kong,  
who sings a beautiful song.  
She sings of stars and flowers,  
it's like she had magical powers.

I have a friend from Chad,  
who makes me feel glad.  
When I feel extremely upset,  
I am really glad we met.

I have a friend from Denmark,  
our friendship is like a hot spark.  
We always get along really well,  
she's a friend for life, I can tell.

I have a friend from Spain,  
who came here on a plane.  
She's always cheerful and kind,  
and frequently on my mind.

I have a friend from Italy,  
who converses very wittily.  
She always makes me smirk,  
when I'm supposed to be doing homework.



I have a friend from Wales,  
who, just like me, loves emails.  
We email to stay in touch,  
and share our thoughts very much.

I have a friend from France,  
who is teaching me a special dance.  
We pirouette, twirl and glide,  
a polished floor helps us slide.

I have a friend from Sweden,  
who is a fabulous comedian.  
She says funny things all the time,  
I'm really glad she's a friend of mine.

Friends are like silver and gold,  
friendship should never be sold.  
I like my different friends.  
I hope our friendship never ends!

*By Emma Backhouse  
Year 6, Age 11  
Corowa South Primary School  
COROWA - NSW  
Teacher: Lorna Read*

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# The Pigeon Lady

In the morning, I looked around and saw the staircase, without a beginning and without an end. I trudged upwards, not knowing where I was going. Time passed as I continued climbing, but how much time, I had no way of knowing, as there were no more windows.

Eventually I reached a door without a handle. Without thinking, I pushed the door, and surprisingly it swung open. To my surprise, all I could see was a bird in its nest. I sat down to rest and must have fallen asleep once more.

I woke up with the bird looking down at me murmuring my name. I was dumbstruck. How could a bird talk? Then it started talking again... 'Good, you are awake. You are the one I am looking for'.

'Huh?' I said (or something to that effect).

'I said, good, you are awake and you are the one I am looking for'.

'Oh', I mumbled, recovering from the shock of meeting a talking bird.

'My name is Pigeon, and yours is Lilly', said the bird.

'Hi Pigeon', I responded, 'How do you know my name?'.

'You are the chosen one. Now I will reveal to you something that I haven't revealed to anyone else'.

As he said this, he grew bigger, and as he grew bigger, his beak became more and more crooked, until it resembled a lightening bolt. His wings grew into a hand-like shape, with ten feathered fingers on each. He said, 'Jump on!'.

I did as I was told. I mean would you risk making a ten foot tall bird mad? As I hopped onto the super sized 'pigeon', he stared to fly. I suddenly remembered the giant flying bird that I had seen through the tower window in the flash of lightning, and realised that the lightning had actually come out of his mouth. With a start, I asked him, 'Do you make storms, thunder and lightning?'.

'No', he said, 'I only make thunder and lightning'.

Before I knew it, I looked down and noticed (I had not been at my most observant, being in a state of abject terror), that we were no longer flying over our earth, but were now over another planet. Almost in answer to my thoughts, the bird said, 'Aviopia, home to all birds, including pigeons. Our eggs

*Cont'd...*

On a park bench in the city, an old lady sat. She had a long varnished cane with three carved vines that curled to the top, forming a beak. She wore glasses so smudged that you couldn't see her eyes. She sat next to a bag of bread which she jostled innumerable times.

Her hand dug in the bag, then swept across the sky like a rainbow behind a rain of crumbs. The ancient woman muttered under her breath and croaked, 'Here my pretties, come to old Lilly'.

The ragged, old madam was tucked in a woollen shawl and had a hook-like nose. Her wrinkles were so deep that they were like lines on a topographical map. She reached slowly for her cane and mumbled, 'That's all for today', as she shuffled off keeping one piece of bread for herself.

This happened day after day, week after week until I built up the courage and asked her, 'Why do you feed the pigeons?'.

'It's a long story', she muttered, 'and it took place a long time ago, when I was thirteen. You see that tree over there?' I watched her hand point straight as an arrow towards an old willow tree. 'There used to be a tower over there... A tower as tall as the tower of Babel. No-one knew why it was there or where it had come from. All they knew was not to go inside the tower'.

Every day I came to this park; I became more and more curious until one day I finally decided to go inside. All that I saw was a staircase, so I climbed it stair by stair, hour by hour, until I walked past a window. It was then pitch black outside, except for the brief flashes of lightning. As it flashed, I thought I saw the outline of a giant bird, but I reasoned that I must be just tired. I sat down to rest on the step below the window, and must have fallen asleep.



## *The Pigeon Lady (Cont'd.)*

were stolen, and now our babies have to continuously flap their wings to keep Ava alive. I later learnt that Ava is an evil man-bird exiled from both worlds, bent on taking over both worlds.

'I need you to merge with me so that we can become Pag', (apparently the term for a pigeon-human combo). 'If you agree to do this, then we will be able to kill Ava. Then we can unmerge again. You will be mostly in control'.

'Uh, Okay', I stammered and the words had hardly left my mouth before a big ball of light hit me, and I was out like a light.

When I awoke, I had wings coming out of my arms, but with normal hands at the end. I had a crooked back, like a pigeon, and I was seriously petrified.

The bird's voice sounded in the back of my mind, 'Calm down', he said. From then on, he must have taken over. I assume this, because all I can remember are brief flashes of flying, letting the pigeons free and then unmerging.

Then I woke up in a tree.

Sometimes I wonder if it was all a dream.

I looked at Lilly, really shocked. She must be crazy, and it must have been a dream.

Mustn't it?

*By Ryan Hirsch*

*Year 6, Age 12*

*Reddam House, WOOLLAHRA – NSW*

*Teacher: Mrs Sharon Shapiro*

## *The Dragon of Peace*

One day in the kingdom of peace there was a ceremony for a knight to get his sword. When you get the sword, shield and the armour you are granted as a real knight. One of the king's workers went out on his horse to go to the cave in the mountain. When he got there he hopped off his horse and saw a glowing light, he walked to the light and stopped. He

saw it hatching, it hatched and there was a baby dragon in it which had a scar on its head. Three years later the dragon is nearly an adult in dragon years.

One day the boy went to the shop to buy something he wanted, an old warrior shield. The shop was called battle shop. It had swords, shields, armour and all that stuff. When he got there he saw the ancient sword of peace and he got it and went home to the castle. It was dark when he got back so he went to bed. The next morning the boy woke up by his nightmare. It was terrible, in it he got killed by a shadow knight – that's what the evil knights are called. Then the king came running at the door and said 'Do you have the ancient sword of peace?'

The boy said, 'Yes I do. Why do you want it, Sir?'

Then the earth shook and the evil force was attacking the kingdom of peace. The dragon had already killed a lot of shadow knights but then the dragon fell from the sky and died because the shadow knights had stabbed it. The shadow knights were entering the kingdom of peace but the good knights were stopping the shadow knights from going in. The war was nearly over and the good knights were winning the war and a moment later they won the war for now. The boy wasn't happy because the dragon died and he was sad because he loved that dragon. A year later he was a knight of defence and a knight for the rest of his life.

THE END.

*By Ethan Harris*

*Age 8*

*Lockleys North Primary School*

*LOCKLEYS NORTH – SA*





### Chapter 1

Fisher of the Water Tribe woke up at the crack of dawn finding his father kneeling beside him murmuring, 'Time to get up! The hunt is about to begin!'

Today was the day when the entire tribe went out to hunt for animals. Fisher stood up and grabbed his spear. The air outside was very cold and he saw that the entire tribe had already left without him. 'Great', he said sarcastically. Fisher walked onto the side of the pond and began washing his face. A shining Silver Fish swam through the reeds. 'What luck!' he said, 'if I can just catch the fish with my spear, I can just walk back home before everyone else'. With excitement, Fisher threw his spear into the pond. It sliced through the fish right in the middle of its body. Blood oozed out of the body and it made the water gleaming red. Suddenly, his mind began to ache as though his head was on fire. The pain began to grow stronger and stronger. Suddenly Fisher dropped onto the ground and he was swallowed into a hole of darkness.

'Where am I?' Fisher thought. Fisher glanced at his hands and feet. It appeared he was in another person's body. He was standing at the edge of a black lake. Also, there was another being next to him who was very hairy. 'Are you ready, Weret?'

'Who's Weret?' thought Fisher.

'You will never escape us, Weret and Azabel!' whispered an icy voice under the water.

'What are those terrible voices in my head?' said Weret.

'Don't you remember', replied Azabel, 'You are the Weret who is the only one who can hear the voices of the Elaxes, the ghosts in the lake.'

Suddenly, Azabel began running into the lake moaning, 'Do not listen to their poisonous song!'. He was drowned to death.

Fisher woke up with a start. 'NO!' exclaimed Fisher. He reached out into the air. 'Fisher! You've woken up!' cried his little sister Heron, 'you were making these awfully funny faces and you were saying these unusual words'.

'Ooh, my brain hurts!' muttered Fisher.

'You had better come inside. Dad is having trouble finding water in the ponds', shouted Heron as he began walking inside the hut.

'That's weird', thought Fisher, 'These ponds never run out of water'.

### Chapter 2

Fisher walked inside the hut. It was a small room with three grass mats for sleeping on, a small fire, some bowls and appliances and a small stove. Fisher's dad, Wetling, walked into the small room. 'Ah, Fisher! You finally gotten up!' said Wetling.

Fisher tried to explain what had happened to his family but Heron just said, 'Daydreaming again are we Fisher?' Fisher walked over to his grass mat trying to make himself believe that he just fell asleep and began dreaming, but his mind kept telling him it was something other than a dream. As Fisher's dad began cooking some fish from the hunt, he announced, 'Fisher, Heron. Tomorrow, I'm going upstream to find out what is causing this terrible drought'.

'But who's going to look after us?' replied Heron.

'I'm sure Fisher can do a good job', said Wetling.

'What?' exclaimed Heron giving Fisher an angry stare.

'Dad, let me come upstream with you!' pleaded Fisher.

'It's too dangerous! You could get hurt', replied Fisher's dad.

'Please dad! I'm sure Heron can look after herself!' said Fisher pointing at Heron.

'No way!' cried Heron, 'if Fisher gets to go, I get to go too!'

Wetling sighed and rubbed his forehead. 'Fine, but I'm warning you, it's going to be a long trip!' said Fisher's dad.

'No sweat', said Fisher. The family began packing the essential items they would need on their trip. When they had finished packing, they all hopped into their grass beds. 'We have to wake up early tomorrow so we can be back from our journey before evening', said Wetling. The whole family began to sleep for the journey ahead.

### Chapter 3

The sky was black and mist clouded the damp, muddy area. 'Oh no. I'm in one of these dreams again', thought Fisher. An army of Elaxes was racing towards Fisher who now assumed he was Weret. 'Let's go Weret!' cried Azabel. The two companions began running for their lives across the misty fields. 'These are not dreams, they're memories', thought Fisher.

'Weret! Duck!' cried Azabel. But it was too late. A net from the Elaxes had now captured him. Weret struggled to get free. The magical net made by the Elaxes had paralysed his entire body. He closed his eyes focusing his strength to his arms. An optical wave pushed the Elaxes' army away and the net got cut free.



## The Drying (Cont'd)

'How did you do that?' asked Azabel with amazement.

Fisher woke up finding that Heron was shaking him. 'Hurry up!' she ordered, 'we're about to leave!'

This time as Fisher got up; he explained his dream that was actually his memories to his family.

'This is quite interesting,' thought his father.

'What!' asked Heron curiously.

'Fisher,' said Fisher's dad, 'I would like you to see the wise old man who lives on the bank before we leave. I'm sure he can explain what is happening to you better than I can.'

In no time, Fisher had walked in and explained his memories to Wiseowl, the wise man. 'I know what is happening,' he said.

'What?' asked Fisher curiously.

'Do the names Azabel, Weret and Elaxes seem familiar to you?' Wiseowl asked.

'Yes. They're the ones in my memories,' replied Fisher.

'The Weret has returned,' whispered the old man.

'If I may ask, what is the Weret?' asked Fisher.

'Well it appears to me you are the Weret, so it is best you should know. The Weret is a being who brings peace to all tribes. The Water Tribe, the Fire Tribe, the Earth Tribe and the Metal Tribe. Before these tribes were even formed, there were witches who ruled the land. The Water Witches, the Earth Witches and the Sky Witches. Now two out of the three groups of witches lived happily and they all lived in harmony. However, there was one group who brought havoc and destruction and they began taking all the water. Soon the Weret was created by the Sky and Earth Witches to bring peace once and for all. The Water Witches who began calling themselves Elaxes, soon were trapped in a curse to never have the chance to ever rest. It looks as though they have risen again and began making havoc again. It is the responsibility of the Weret to keep peace. Therefore you must confront the witches and defeat them and bring back the water,' explained Wiseowl.

'How can I?' asked Fisher, 'I don't even know how to use my powers, actually, do I have powers?'

'You will in time,' replied Wiseowl.

'At least tell me my powers,' pleaded Fisher.

'Very well,' said the wise man, 'you have the protection over all enemies that come in your way. Also you can read beyond the mind and you can also use your powers to defend yourself but not to commit death to other people unless you must destroy your enemy such as the Water Witches. That is all I can tell you.'

'Thanks,' said Fisher, 'at least you've helped me.'

## Chapter 4

The family hopped into their boat and the entire Water Tribe gathered to say farewell. They rowed upstream for a very long time taking as less stops as possible. Finally, they found what they were looking for. Wetling, Heron and Fisher gazed up at the enormous dam.

'There's no way we can knock down that!' said Fisher.

'C'mon!' said Wetling.

'What are we doing?' asked Heron, 'we can't do anything about that dam!'

'We're not!' said Heron's dad, 'we're climbing it.'

They climbed up slowly until they reached the top. Once they reached the top, they slid down the other side. The other side was full of water. They hopped onto the edge of the river. The water was sickly green with streaks of black in the water. Suddenly, a high pitched scream began to ring in the air. It looked as though only Wetling and Fisher could hear it. Wetling ran into the water and he sunk slowly down the bottom.

Cont'd...



### The Drying (Cont'd)

'How come I'm not affected and I'm not running into the water like dad?' thought Fisher, 'the scream must have been a trap leading people into the water to drown themselves. Of course! I have the shield to protect me and Heron. I wasn't close enough to protect dad'.

Heron stood up as though nothing had happened. 'Did dad go down to see what was on the bottom?' asked Heron.

Suddenly, a blood covered corpse floated to the surface of the water.

'I don't think so Heron,' replied Fisher.

Fisher and Heron began to walk into a dark forest that was next to the river hoping to find some help. An old woman was plucking berries from the trees. She wore a tattered dress, a brown shirt and she also carried a walking stick. She also had grey hair and she had a slanted back. Fisher and Heron walked up to her and Fisher said, 'Um, excuse me'. The old woman looked around and gasped.

She said, 'The Weret has returned'. She bowed down deeply and then she got up.

'How did you know I was the Weret?' asked Fisher.

'Well, I am one of the last witches from the ancient days. Only the Earth and Sky Witches could tell who the Weret was because we could see a layer of light around you,' replied the witch.

Fisher looked at his skin.

'By the way, I am Aries and I am a Sky Witch,' said Aries, 'come to my hut. You got to eat and drink and we have lots to talk about'.

Fisher and Heron followed the old woman deeper into the forest.

'Do you think this is a trick?' asked Heron.

'I don't think so, remember, I can read beyond the mind. It's one of my powers,' replied Fisher. They continued walking until they reached an enormous house in the tree nearly as high as the sky.

#### Chapter 5

Fisher and Heron began climbing up the vast, tall tree. Aries exclaimed, 'Hurry up! Even my dead ancestors can climb faster than you!'

'She's fit!' Heron whispered to Fisher with a giggle. Heron and Fisher finally reached the house. It was a small house, smaller than Fisher's and Heron's own house.



'Right,' said Aries, 'let's get down to business. I am sure you've heard about what the Elaxes are doing?'

'Yes!' replied Fisher.

'What! So you're saying all this stuff about Elaxes, you being a Weret, true?' asked Heron.

'Yes it is my dear,' replied Aries.

'Okay! Now I believe it! It's just unnatural!' answered Heron.

'You're job as the Weret is obviously destroying the Elaxes

because they are stealing all the water, right?' asked Aries.

'So you mean I need to kill a thing that I can't see but hear?' snapped Fisher.

'Well yes, and even though you can hear them doesn't mean you can't see them. When you get underwater, they'll try to kill you with their poisonous song that will make you drown yourself. But with some help from all four tribes and you leading them into battle, you will succeed!' exclaimed Aries.

'I can't do that! I'm just a kid, they won't listen to me. Anyway, how am I supposed to gather all the tribes into one place at the same time?' questioned Fisher.

'Well of course the Stone Wall,' said Aries, 'now, you must go on your way with a long journey, I will contact all tribes to go to the Stone Wall. Be there tomorrow night!' exclaimed Aries and she disappeared.

'WAIT!' screamed Fisher but it was too late.

Later, Fisher cooked some dinner while Heron laid their mats.

'I'm sure Aries won't mind if we used her house for the night,' said Heron.

'I'm not sure, but it's the only place we got for a home,' replied Fisher.

Soon it was time to eat so they sat on the floor and began eating fish and small plants and animals. That night, Fisher and Heron went to bed as Fisher said, 'We have to wake up early tomorrow because we have a big journey to the Stone Wall'. Without a sound, they went to bed.

#### Chapter 6

Fisher and Heron woke up to the sound of flapping wings. 'What's that noise?' asked Heron as she rubbed her eyes.

'I don't know. I'll go take a look,' replied Fisher. Fisher went to the window and gazed at the thing that stood outside.

*Cont'd...*



## The Drying (Cont'd)

'Um, Heron, I think you should come here for a sec,' said Fisher.

Heron walked to the window and gazed at the thing outside too. Standing before them was a huge hawk.

'Let's climb down,' suggested Fisher. Fisher and Heron began making their way down the tall tree that supported the house.

'Hello Weret,' said a voice in his mind, 'my name is Freefall the Great Hawk. I have heard about your journey and I have come to escort you to the Stone Wall,' Fisher nodded.

'What did he say?' asked Heron.

'His name is Freefall and he will take us to the Stone Wall,' replied Fisher.

'Hop on younglings for it is the time to go,' said the hawk.

Fisher climbed onto the bird first and then helped Heron climb on too. The bird lifted itself into the air with its great wings beating against the cold air.

'Wait!' shouted Fisher, 'we forgot our stuff!'

'The place you're going to, that stuff is useless unless you have food for the birds,' replied Freefall. The bird flew in the air with great speed and it tried to make the ride as smooth as possible. They flew gently for hours with the two children resting on the back of the hawk.

'Are we there yet?' cried Heron as her face pressed against the wind.

'Nope, it's just over that mountain!' replied Freefall. The group crossed the mountain and they were overwhelmed by the view. It looked as though the Stone Wall was in the middle of the forest with a thin river that looked like a snake that slithered through. In the centre, was the Stone Wall. There was a circle made out of stone with a burning fire in the centre. Behind the small fire was a huge wall that rose from the ground. Vines snaked up the wall trying to grab the tip.

'Wow,' whispered Heron.

'It's magnificent!' said Fisher. The hawk lowered them into the campsite.

'Goodbye my friends and good luck to your quest Weret, the whole land relies on you to bring back the water,' said Freefall and with that, he lifted himself and flew away. Fisher and Heron waved until the hawk was out of sight. They both turned around finding that all the tribes had already arrived. Fisher walked through the tribes looking for the Water Tribe.

'Hello Fisher,' said a man, 'everyone in the Water Tribe knows you now and they also know about the Weret within you. We have also announced to everyone about you too.'

'What did they say?' asked Fisher.

'You'll find out tonight when we plan the battle of all battles.'

### Chapter 7

It was 7.00 p.m. and the meeting was about to begin. Fisher stepped onto the rock called the Sacred Stone and shouted, 'We're about to begin!'

Everyone settled down slowly with a few murmurs that floated around in the air.

'I am the Weret and as you know the Elaxes have once again taken our water,' began Fisher, 'they...'

'We know all of this!' interrupted a man from the Fire Tribe.

'Yeah!' agreed the Metal Tribe, 'if you are really the Weret, why don't you bring the water or make it rain with your powers?'

'What I am trying to tell all of you,' shouted Fisher over the other tribes, 'the Elaxes have taken all of our water! We must fight back and take back what is rightfully ours! Divided, we are weak, but together, we are strong. Each tribe is special and can give to help. Together, we will march to battle and fight to death!'

A strong and tense silence fell between all tribes. The wise man from the Water Tribe said, 'Well said, young one.' He began to clap. Soon all the tribes were cheering and clapping with hope. Soon a chant began saying, 'FIGHT TO DEATH! FIGHT TO DEATH! FIGHT TO DEATH!'. Fisher smiled as he saw all the tribes together, willing to fight for each other. Fisher shouted over the chants, 'WE FIGHT TOMORROW AT THE CRACK OF DAWN!'

From that time on, Fisher began to think whether the tribes would cooperate to win the battle. He walked slowly back to the Water Tribe campsite. As he walked he thought about the future.

'Where is my life going?,' murmured Fisher. 'My dad said that life should never fall into a battle but that is where my life is going!' With that, Fisher was silent and he didn't say one word. He was lost.

*By Stephen Yuen, Year 6,  
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## *A Single Moment*

Krystal stood staring out at the soft, blue sky and the calm ocean beneath it. She let the breeze caress her smooth skin and carry her tears down her slender face. Her mind drifted back to that night ten months ago, for the millionth time. She'd had it all going for her: a nice home, nice family, nice education, and nice boyfriend; and now... she was all alone. How could one lousy decision, made in the heat of the moment, change her entire life – her entire future? The tears fell hard and fast against the cold, concrete floor as she, once again, relived that night second by second.

The door bell rang.

'I'll be right there!' Krystal yelled towards the front door.

She looked at herself in the mirror for what must have been the hundredth time that night. Her dark, wavy locks fell softly about her face and she smiled at her attractive reflection before pulling herself away down the hall. She picked up her purse and opened the door.

Her eyes took in the perfect form standing before her, which was Brandon Carter.

'You ready?' Brandon asked, smiling his 'make any girl faint' smile.

Krystal giggled.

'Sure', she replied.

He took her hand in his and pulled her into a kiss before pulling her further outside towards his car. Krystal couldn't help but wonder how she'd managed to score herself practically THE best boyfriend on the face of the planet. He was popular, charming, handsome, wealthy, funny AND caring; could she really have done any better?

'M'Lady', Brandon spoke in his deep, rich voice as he opened the car door for Krystal.

'Good Sir', she replied with a flirtatious smile before lowering herself, gracefully, into the plush leather front seat.

The sleek vehicle pulled up in front of a large mansion, from which loud music was already pumping. Brandon escorted Krystal up the front path and into the irresistible atmosphere of the party of the century. People swarmed through the house making it nearly impossible to move in one's own

direction. The pungent smell of beer and marijuana wafted through every room in the downstairs section of the house but Krystal was too caught up in the atmosphere to notice. She danced the night away as with Brandon and even had a few drinks herself; maybe a few too many for she soon found herself heading upstairs, in tow of her boyfriend.

Krystal's head was spinning. She could just make out the walls of a bedroom and she noticed the smell was less intoxicating where ever she was. She sat slowly, wincing as a sharp pain shot through her head. Where in the world was Brandon? What was she doing lying in this bed? She knew she felt different and suddenly the ice cold reality of the night before sunk in. She remembered the passion of a few hours earlier. She remembered how it had seemed so right. She remembered letting Brandon have every inch of her; giving him the key to her very soul. She'd had a choice to make, and in the heat of the moment, in one split second, she had thrown her purity away.

Krystal looked down at the small sleeping form in her arms. Her tears fell now upon her little baby's clothes and she gently wiped them away. Brandon was long gone. Where was he when she really needed him? The few hundred dollars he sent every month was not nearly enough to survive on. Barely seventeen years old and she'd mothered a child. Her education was history. She relied on her parents for just about everything. They'd been so good to her ever since they'd found out she was pregnant. She'd betrayed their trust but they never once turned their backs on her. They gave her food, shelter and clothed both Krystal and the baby. She could not comprehend their love for her, at least not of this depth.

Her baby stirred and began to whimper.

'Shh', Krystal calmed him with a soothing voice, 'it's going to be ok; everything's going to be just fine'.

As the baby drifted back to sleep, Krystal looked up at the sky, as if searching for an answer, and finished in a whisper, 'I hope'.

*By Sharon Ayres  
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# FLAME & Flesh

**I**T ALL starts in a dark cave. A cave in which every step you take feels like something is watching you. With every step you take, shivers will roll up your back and then stab into your shoulders like daggers. Then you will see it. The monster and its blood stained teeth. Then a flame will shoot at you like a rocket and then it's all over. Everything ends in flame and flesh for the dragon.

Best of all was the prize any man can win by slaying the dragon – GOLD. Gold that is shining like stars in the night sky. Many have tried to slay this dragon but all have fallen to their deaths. Most men have not even made it to the dragon's lair. They have died trying to climb the mountain itself.

The dragon fed on town men and women and also their cows and sheep, till finally the town got their strongest men and women together to slay the dragon. There were nine people going up the mountain. There was Alec, the town's butcher, Tom, the town's hunter, Dan, the town's hairdresser, Josh, the town's gardener, Nick, the town's artist, Stuart, the town's wood chopper, Jack, the town's herdsman, Jane, the town's teacher and the town's carpenter.

They all started their journey up the blood stained mountain. They walked and walked, and trudged and trudged till they came to a pond that they could not walk around. They swam through water that was as clear as diamonds. After a while all nine volunteers set up camp. Their ankles were smothered in dark red blood from walking all day. None stopped.

In the morning they all started walking again till they came to a giant on a rock. He was sitting right next to a cliff. In his hands was a giant axe. The giant smelt like a million rotting corpses and his teeth were as brown as a dead tree.

The giant bellowed, 'Wash my feet. Pay my toll. Feed my pet or your head will roll'.

So Dan stepped up to the giant and grabbed one of the giant's heavy feet. As soon as Dan started to wash his feet the giant gave a mighty kick and sent Dan flying like a torpedo over the edge of the cliff to his death.

In that split second, Tom, the town's hunter shot an arrow into the giant's forehead. Blood dripped from his head. Then he lost balance and fell off the edge of the cliff to join Dan.

All the survivors kept walking, feeling sorry for Dan till they came to a sheer cliff. They decided that they had to abseil down so they all chose a partner and started off. As Nick and Jane were climbing down a spider bit Jane on her finger. She slipped and fell down the cliff pulling Nick after her. Others watched as they fell into the mist. They felt guilty because they could not do anything.

As they all reached the bottom of the cliff they saw the cold, dead body of Jane but Nick was still alive. However, he could not walk so Stewart, the strongest of them all, carried Nick back to the town. That night they buried Jane next to a little river.

The five people who were left – Jack, Tom, Anna, Josh and Alec went to sleep in tears. In the morning they started walking in the jungle. They saw a boy huddled up next to a tree. The boy told them that his name was William and his father had been killed by a bear. All the boy was armed with was a small sword so they took him with them.

After a while they came to the dragon's lair. It smelt like someone had put stink bombs in it. Josh went in first. Then there was a scream and a flame shot out the entrance of the cave. Suddenly there was a thump like the sound of a body falling to the floor.

William went in next. He saw the crumpled body of Josh but then he saw something worse. Two red eyes glowing like a flame in a fire. Then fire shot him. He quickly pressed himself against the wall. Then he plunged his sword into the dragon's neck. Blood dribbled from the dragon's mouth and nose staining its golden scales.

William called for Anna and Tom to come in. They filled their packs with all the gold and hastened back to the town. They used the money to build a new house.

As for William he was adopted by Tom and so it all ended in FLAME AND FLESH!

*By Simon Lambert  
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