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August 2009

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**Incorporating
The Young
Australian
Writers'
Awards**

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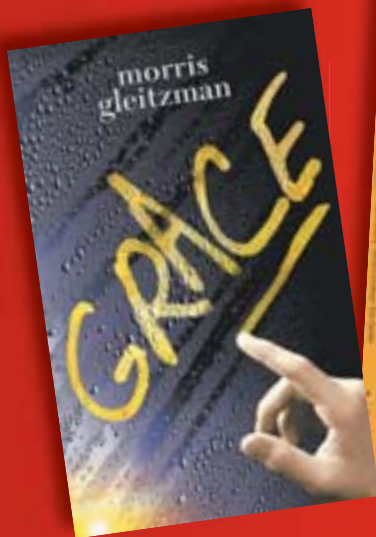
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Oz Kids in Print

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From the Editor's Desk

I cannot believe the year is nearly over, for publishing the magazine anyway, as we are working on the November Edition already. In order to select the Award Winners for 2009 we start on the last Edition three months before it is due. This way the students who have had their work published in the November Edition are also included in the Awards held in November.

The On-line Entry process started earlier in the year and it has had increased use since its inception. We encourage more students and schools to use this service. We also save on paper in the process.



Never give up if your work doesn't get published. Even professional writers have to try again when they didn't succeed.

Have a great festive season and stay safe so you can keep writing in 2010.

DON'T FORGET YOU CAN ENTER ON-LINE!

KEEP ON WRITING (TYPING)!

Carol Dick
Managing Editor

BLACK SATURDAY AND BEYOND

Since we are already working on the last edition for 2009 we reflect on what a year it has been. We have had the worst bushfires in Victoria and the devastating floods in Queensland and Western Australia.

I was lucky enough to have been able to help out at the Yarra Glen Community Fire Relief Centre. This Centre was started by a lovely lady from Curves Yarra Glen. They use the old IGA Supermarket building as their headquarters and have been given the premises rent free for the next twelve months. On Saturday 22nd August we were welcomed to a 'Thank You to Volunteers' afternoon. The amazing work these people are doing is humbling. It also shows that survivors are still needing our help. It has become a place for them to come and relax and chat with the volunteers and get the items they so desperately need. The Centre will continue to evolve as the needs of the communities change with the passage of time.

On Saturday they launched a new program called the 'Tool Library', where survivors can borrow the tools they need. The Centre also holds special pamper days for the survivors so if you can offer your talent, or need their service, please contact them. There is still a long way to go. While there were several Relief Centres opened initially, the Centres at Whittlesea and Healesville have had their opening hours reduced or closed completely.

Another important item is that survivors are coming in asking for pet food and stock feed. The Centre no longer gets

any supplies from the generous Companies and individuals who initially donated the goods in the first few months. The need is still there so if anyone can help please send a message on the YGCFR website.

One URGENT project that requires your help is:

ADOPT A CONTAINER

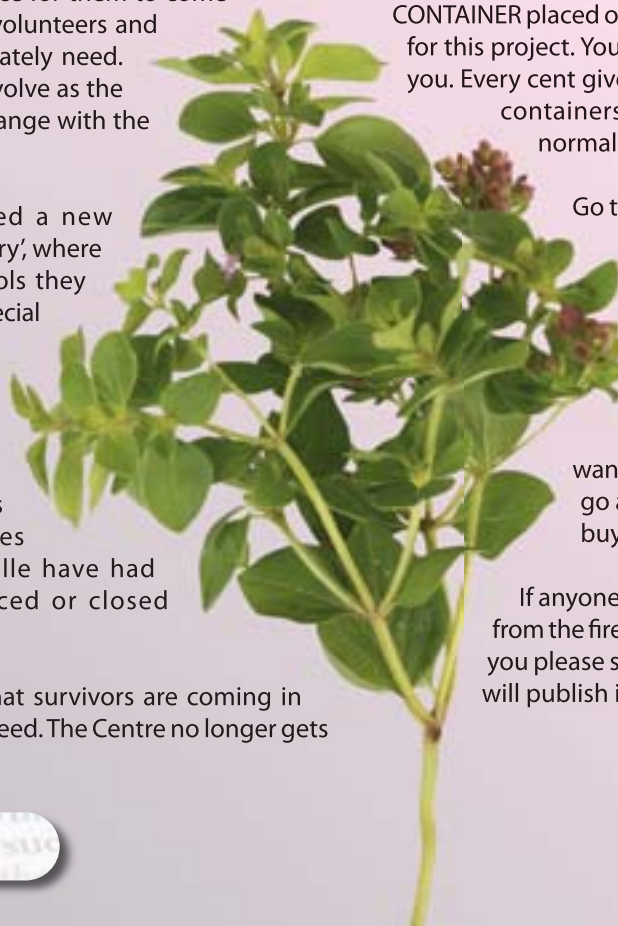
The long recovery process is just beginning for survivors. On a vacant block there is nowhere to store tools necessary for the rebuilding process. This is where you can really help. Yarra Glen Fire Relief intends to enable survivors to have a SHIPPING CONTAINER placed on their block. You can be a valued sponsor for this project. You can also encourage a few friends to join you. Every cent given will be put towards a container. These containers have been supplied at a third of the normal cost.

Go to their website and see how you can help or be helped.

<http://yarraglencommunityfirerelief.org.au>

Marysville and surrounding areas are trying to get back to business, so if you want to go for a drive with some cash to spend, go and visit and spend, spend, spend, or just buy lunch or some sweets.

If anyone has news regarding other affected areas, from the fires or floods, and what they are doing, could you please send the information to The Editor and we will publish it for you.



Terror Magic Monster World

IN Australia on the far side of Sydney, there was a house on a hill. In that house lived a mysterious family called The Hadgrades. Mr and Mrs Hadgrade had a son called Peter and a daughter called Emerald.

Mr Hadgrade was a ghoul and Mrs Hadgrade was a witch. They were sent to earth by Vorlot, the boss of an evil place called Monster World.

Our story begins on a dark night when a storm was brewing and a dark thing was lurking in the mist that hung about. Mrs Hardgrade was reading in bed and looked over at her clock. She muttered to herself, "It's time".

She hopped out of bed and strode towards her crystal ball. The horrible face of Vorlot appeared on the glass of her crystal ball. In a moaning voice, Vorlot began to speak, "I am sending the werewolf to do the horrors planned". Mrs Hardgrade smiled an icy smile and then cackled.

The noise made Peter sneak out from behind the door of his bedroom and peer around the corner. He could see Vorlot in the glass.

Then suddenly and unexpectedly Vorlot came out of the ball and made tons and tons of wolves appear. Peter gasped in shock as the evil Mrs Hardgrade laughed and then tied Peter up.

Five seconds later Emerald entered the room calmly. She was ready and said "Let the fight begin...".

In one minute, Mrs Hardgrade turned into a.... a.... pig. The wolves were terrified and ran off. Then a booming voice said "THIS ISN'T THE END..... MWAHAHAHAHAHA!".

Another voice sounded from somewhere and a huge wolf came bounding off Mrs Hardgrade's head. Peter and Emerald also heard the voice say that the exact same wolf would return to attack again later. "When the clock strikes midnight, the wolf will do his things and finally rule!" yelled the evil Vorlot.

Suddenly, lightning struck the wolf which made his evil spirit do some dark deeds for him. As this was happening, it gave Emerald time to grab Peter's sword, cut the rope and free him. "To the rescue", shouted Peter as he grabbed his sword from Emerald and stabbed the wolf. The wolf was dead.

"NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO", cried Vorlot.

Emerald and Peter had to escape. Their only chance was to go through Wolf Tunnel and enter Monster World. When Emerald and Peter entered Wolf Tunnel they jumped in a boat

and sailed through the waters of blood. Unexpectedly, they encountered Vorlot standing on a rock. "What is he doing here? He is petrified of blood", said Emerald. Peter and Emerald looked at each other realising they had the same idea.

They jumped out of the boat onto the rock. Peter and Emerald used all their strength to push Vorlot off the rock and into the blood filled river.

"We are free!", they shouted.

Suddenly an arm reached out and pulled them back into the boat. Was it the arm of Mr or Mrs Hardgrade? Or the arm of Vorlot's brother...



*By Blake Hurford, Age 7,
Trinity Grammar School
LEWISHAM - NSW*

Young Memories

When a shy, innocent child
Is playing in the sandbox
And going off into his own world,
It makes me smile.

When a lovable child
Sits at a small sturdy bench
Happily eating strawberry cake,
It makes me smile.

When a cute, adorable child
Giggles and laughs
As if for no reason,
It makes me smile.

When a cheerful, loving mother
Looks at her sleeping child
And gazes at it with happy dreamy eyes,
It makes me smile.



*By Le Nguyen
Year 10
Eynesbury Senior College
ADELAIDE - SA
Teacher:
Shelda Rathmann*



THE MEANING OF FREEDOM



WHAT is the true meaning of freedom? That is the question that is continually circling through my head as I sit in my damp, musty jail cell in the heart of Turkey. This is my story; my story of how I came to this place and my experiences along the journey...

My time as an army officer has been eventful, as such. It is nothing like what I thought it would be, all the sadness seen on the battlefield, all the gruesome scenes of bullets penetrating human bodies, explosions tearing limbs from their sockets, all the sick, all the wounded, my friends, my comrades. The worst part is all the death that we are forced to witness. Why do nations need to wage war on each other? Is it for power, for freedom or for pure evil?

My next assignment is to invade the Turkish city of Gallipoli and eliminate the Turkish soldiers in the vicinity. My current encampment is somewhere in the south of France and tomorrow we will be setting off on our journey towards the Aegean coast, where we would then move out to Gallipoli. For now though, it is time to sleep...

"Soldiers, get your lazy arses out of bed, we're moving out!"

I clamber out of my hammock and slip into my uniform. I look down at the badge sewn onto the chest area. It reads "ANZAC" and then underneath in a smaller font, "Australia New Zealand Army Corps". After a short trek down to the docks, we board our boats and set sail. My cabin is small and damp, but I don't mind, I am used to it. I sling down my bag and lay down, the hammock rocks in motion with the waves, the motion is quite soothing really and it soon sends me to sleep. I wake up a few hours later, my stomach growling. I go to grab a bite to eat and then retreat back to my cabin. I stay here for most of the

journey, coming out for fresh air and for food. There isn't much to do on board ship, so I mostly write in my diary.

The journey is long but when it finally comes to an end, we are sent out to the coast of Gallipoli, to set up camp. Little did we know the fatal surprise that was awaiting us. We do not expect an attack on us; we are not on our guard!

We jump out of our boats, one by one, but before we could even set foot on the sand, the Turks are upon us. The men do not stand a chance. They are being picked off one by one by the Turkish machine guns. I see Lt. Kemal leading his Turkish force. It was my turn up next. I rush out into the waist deep water, it stings my body but I press forward. Unlike the others, I dive underwater for cover and it does me well enough to get to the sand. I look back and see the other men doing the same, their bodies a blur in the blood red water. I pull out my gun and let loose; I take down two Turkish gunners. Bullets are screaming past me as I rush forward. As the adrenaline kicks in, I leap and land in front of another Turk. I smash his face in with the back of my gun then move on. The bullets are still whizzing past. One of them catches my arm, I scream and fall to the ground. My head hits a rock and the last thing I see before blacking out is the red sunrise, illuminating the red colour left in the water. Illuminating the red colour of my comrade's blood.

Next thing I know, I wake up in a damp, musty old room and however we have not come to my question yet. As my vision returns to me, I see that I am in a jail cell, written on the walls were some words in Turkish that I can't read. I realise I have been captured by the Turkish during the Gallipoli battle; they must have kept me asleep somehow. A guard walked by at that moment and screamed something at me that I could not understand. Another guard approached my cell and unlocked

THE MEANING OF FREEDOM (CONT'D.)

it. I jump up, but he hits me with a metal pole and I slump to the floor, the last thing I remember before blacking out again was the guard putting something lumpy on the floor. When I wake, I realize that it is oats. I wolf it down, not caring for the taste, the hunger was everything at the moment. With my hunger satisfied, I lie on my bed and think about the things that have happened to me. The next day the routine was different; in the morning the guards allowed the prisoners out for exercise, as if we were a pack of dogs. I spit in the face of one of the guards when he laughs at my accent. I was determined to be defiant until the end, however spitting was not a good option as he hit me with his metal pole and I wince in pain. The afternoon is spent in the prison cell and after an evening meal I am taken by the guards to a secluded room. There is one table with two chairs in the centre and the room has a horrid stench in the air, which when I breathed in, tasted of old socks. A man comes in at that moment and throws me into one of the seats. Questions are fired at me left, right and centre. It appears this man can speak English. I tell them nothing. He screeches something in Turkish at the two guards and they take me to a room with a tub of brown water. The man who could speak English tells me it was sewer water. I vomit in my mouth. The man drags me over to it and shoves my head in the tub. When my breath begins to deplete, he pulls me out and asks me the same questions as before. I still do not answer. They take me back to my cell after at least an hour. My stomach is empty due to the excessive repetitive vomiting I endure throughout the torture, so I eagerly jump at my cold oats when they arrive. I make a mess of it but it satisfies me for now. This routine is repeated every day for the next weeks, or months, I've lost track of the days. Our exercise is cut short one morning as all prison guards are summoned to listen to Lt. Kemal address the nation. His speech was not very interesting to me, but one sentence caught my ear. "When we take this world, one country at a time, we will be free, that is the true meaning of freedom!" I go back to my cell thinking to myself, what is the true meaning of freedom?

How long has it been? Weeks? Months? Years? The Battle for Gallipoli is probably over by now, all my comrades dead. Still the question fills my thoughts, my mind, and my entire essence. Until I find the answer to what I seek, I will not give up, I will not let anybody down in the process and I will not DIE!!

The torture does not happen today, nor the next day or the day after that. The man who can speak English comes into my cell after exercise time and gives me some extremely grave news. "Your execution is tomorrow? Any last requests?" Then it hits me, the answer to my question, the only way for me to be truly free! I realise the stage of my execution is the perfect place to make this happen. Maybe, if I was truly free, the true meaning of freedom would come to me. "My last request, sir, is to meet Lt. Kemal." And that night I begin to plan.

The next day, the guards lead me down the hall for the final time. This time they take me out of the prison walls, where the gallows are set up. A crowd is already there and I can see Lt. Kemal standing up front. He begins to move up the wooden steps and towards me. Wait for it, wait for it. I said to the guards holding me, "May I please have the honour of shaking this great

leader's hand"; after all my time living in this prison, I have picked up some Turkish words and although poorly spoken, the guards understand. They let me go and I stretch out my hand. The man, Lt. Kemal, stretches out his own hand and the moment I can grasp him... I pull him close to me, reach to the holster at the side of his pants and grab the gun. I yank it out and point it towards Lt. Kemal's head... The gunshot could be heard from a mile away.

I look down at my blood-soaked jersey and my stained beard, then I look up at the rifle-man who has his barrel pointed directly at my chest. "Freedom..." is the last word that ever comes out of my mouth.

My question was answered that day. Freedom does not have a true meaning. Freedom does not even exist, no matter what we do, no matter what we say, someone will always be there to put us back into place, which means none of us will ever be truly free. So I say to you, whoever may be reading the story of the 18 year old army officer, Richard Parker, that freedom does not exist in this world, and as long as there are people who have more power than others, it will never exist. Until the day humanity finally learns from its mistakes that is...

*By Richard Parker
Year 9, Wheelers Hill Secondary College
WHEELERS HILL - VIC.*





A MYSTERIOUS box was sitting on the doorstep. I started to panic because I didn't know what was in the box. "Who could have left it there?" Suddenly it started to move around and it scared me so much that I almost screamed. I was in my room freaking out waiting for my mum to get home. I wanted to see her so bad so I waited and waited but she still didn't come home. After a while I got out of bed and decided to look at the box again and it was still moving around.

Then I started to think what could possibly be in the box and so I decided to go out the back door for a walk to the park to clear my mind. When I reached the park I went on the swing and I swung so high that I could almost touch the sky. After a while I was bored and so I went to the slippery slide. It was the biggest slide in the neighbourhood. I wanted to go on it so much but I had never had the courage to climb to the top before.

I made a deal with myself that if I could climb the stairs to the top and slide down to the bottom I would run back home and open the box. When I got half way I was exhausted. I didn't think

I could climb any more but I remembered my deal and kept on going until I made it. I was so happy now I just had to go down the slide. So I crawled up to the slide and I looked down. It was so far down that I felt dizzy because I was afraid of heights. I didn't want to do it any more and I was terrified.

"The deal. The deal. Remember the deal", I said to myself. I closed my eyes and took a deep breath. Five seconds later I looked up and screamed "I did it!". Now I had to run back home before mum got home and wondered where I was. *Ding dong ding dong* as my mobile rang; I knew it was too late. Mum was already home and worrying about where I was.

On my walk home I bumped into Fred, a school friend and told him that I finally went down the slide. I also told Fred about the box waiting for me on the doorstep. Fred offered to walk home with me and solve the mystery about what was in the box.

As we turned the corner of my street I could see that there was no box on the doorstep but instead there was a small patchy puppy running on the lawn.

"Mum, someone has lost their puppy!"

"No, Dan, it's your birthday present."

"Really! Does he have a name?"

"No, I thought you might like to name him."

"I have the perfect name for him. Come here Boxer. We are going to be really good friends."

*By Gabrielle Young
Year 6
St. Gabriel's School
ENFIELD - SA*

The Space Tour to Two Planets

HI THERE, would you like to know how this sort of freaky story goes? YES!!!! Well okay then here we go.

There was a guy in space who really liked diamonds so he turned himself into a diamond by using a machine he had stolen from a science lab. When he was stealing it he almost got caught by the police but only just escaped.

All right then let's get back to the story. So he put all the diamonds into the machine and turned himself into a diamond. But how did the machine turn him into a diamond? Well all the diamonds created a laser beam and shot out into his backbone and voila you're a diamond. Okay yeah whatever.

All right then as I was saying one day the guy in space decided to visit Earth. So that's what he did, he went down to Earth. But for some reason everyone was screaming. Looking up the guy saw massive water waves tunnelling through everything in their path. The guy from space didn't know what to do but it sure looked like Earth was not going to be a safe place to stay so he left Earth and flew to Jupiter instead.

When he set foot on Jupiter WHOOPS he forgot his space gear so the aliens on Jupiter carried him back to his ship. The only problem was that his keys were in the pocket of his space gear. So the aliens gave him some of their space gear and helped him make a spare key to open his ship. The key worked and he drove away out into the middle of space.

After that the space guy decided he'd just stay on his ship for a long time.

*By Stefan Bennet
Year 2
Caulfield Grammar School -
Malvern Campus
GLEN IRIS - VIC.*



The Stationery Thief



IN THE town of Small Creek, it was evening. Few people were on the streets. Most shops had closed for the day. This seemed just like any other evening.

Just outside the newsagency, a dark figure crouched in a narrow alley. The owner of the newsagency was talking loudly to a customer. The figure crept quietly and nimbly into the store. It edged cautiously towards the stationery section and hurriedly grabbed several items. Then it shoved them into a brown potato sack and slipped to the door. But, alas! The door wouldn't open! The figure pulled and pushed at the door but it just wouldn't budge.

By now, the customer had left and the owner, Jones, was preparing to finish up for the day. Jones was heading towards the front of the shop when he heard shoving and pushing sounds. As he walked closer to the front door the noises increased and became more frantic. Jones stood at the front door and gasped at the sight of the dark figure with the potato sack.

"Ah! So this is our little thief", announced Jones, not unkindly.

The figure turned and looked at Jones. Its eyes were like those of a hunted rabbit. The figure took off its dark cloak and revealed a young girl of no more than fourteen years of age.

"What are you doing in my shop? And why are you trying to get away?" questioned Jones.

The girl hesitated but stammered, "Sir, I didn't mean to steal. I... well... my family's poor... and I... uh... needed these things..."

At this point the girl broke down, crying.

Jones studied the girl carefully. She was thin yet had a beautiful face. She had a slight limp because one leg was shorter than the other. An interesting girl, thought Jones.

"Very well, but why didn't you take food? I only find stationery and newspapers missing every now and then", stated Jones.

"Pens and paper are more important to me than food", sobbed the girl.

"I see, but I must take you to the police anyway. Stealing IS a crime, you know", explained Jones, gravely.

The girl nodded and followed Jones to the local police station. Jones summarised to the officer the events of the past two weeks. He explained that once or twice a week, he would find some stationery

and newspapers missing from the shop. After many incidents, he noticed that the thefts usually happened an hour before the shop closed. Jones decided to set the door to lock itself an hour earlier. That was how he found the girl.

The girl also had her side of the story. She said her name was Laura. She had come from a family that was as poor as church mice. Once you turned five, you were expected to work. Laura had a disability, where one foot was shorter than the other, which prevented her from working. Thus, her family despised her.

Laura also had a passion for writing. She taught herself to read and write by borrowing books from the neighbour's children. She would write on anything she could find. Her writing became more expressive, dramatic and developed. By doing washing for neighbours, Laura earned enough money to get herself a dictionary. Yet, she had nothing to write on. That was when she began stealing. She also stole newspapers to practice her reading and see how others wrote.

After hearing this story, the officer was sympathetic as well as astonished. Over the course of many subsequent weeks, Jones helped Laura begin publishing her stories. She gave half of what she earned from the sales to repay her debts to Jones.

No longer despised by her family, Laura was able to contribute to the family's income despite her disability. Laura was respected for her determination to learn and to make things right.

*By Esther Tseng
Year 7*

*St. Margaret's School
BERWICK – VIC.*



unique, something that no one else would be doing.

As Amelia sat on the couch thinking, Fuzzy, meowing loudly for her food, jumped onto the radio. As she settled to crouch, her paw got stuck in the hole where the button was at the top of the radio, and in doing this, the CD tray opened. Fuzzy yelped in surprise and jumped to the floor.

"That's it!" said Amelia as she clicked her fingers and sat up. "I've got it!"

★ FUZZY'S DIET ★

"Yeowww!" yelped Fuzzy the cat as she sailed through the air. Amelia covered her eyes because she knew what was going to happen next.

SPLAT!

Amelia winced as she heard Fuzzy her rather fat cat land on the carpet at her feet. She knew then that the next two weeks were going to include some very tough training. Just two weeks ago, the town's pet shop had announced that they would hold an annual cat tricks contest. Amelia had been trying for ages but Fuzzy just wouldn't do any tricks. The problem was, Fuzzy was too fat and lazy!

The next morning, Amelia attempted to get Fuzzy to jump through the hoop again. She tried five times before giving up. Just as she flopped down onto the couch, something clicked in her mind. All Fuzzy needed was a diet! Amelia immediately set out half of the food she normally gave Fuzzy and she continued doing that for two days.

On the second day Fuzzy actually looked and felt slimmer. Amelia could even feel Fuzzy's ribs through his thick fur. Well, almost. As the days went by, Fuzzy became more agile and light. On the third day, Fuzzy was able to jump from couch to couch. On the fourth day she was able to jump through a hoop. On the fifth day she was able to jump onto the TV, but Amelia's parents weren't too happy about that because her claws scratched the screen as she was trying to hold on, and her tail got in the way while they were trying to watch their favourite shows.

Amelia was very proud of her cat but she still didn't have a trick she could perform with Fuzzy. She wanted something really special, not just any old 'jumping through a hoop' trick. Everyone would be doing that. What she needed was something really

On the day of the contest, Amelia lugged her radio in her left hand, and Fuzzy in her cat carrier, in her right hand to the pet shop. When they went inside, Amelia could see she had been right. Almost all of the competitors had hoops for their cat to jump through. Most owners eyed the radio curiously, but Amelia took no notice.

As Amelia waited for her name to be called out, she jiggled on her seat nervously. When the announcer finally called out, "Amelia and Fuzzy", Amelia walked onto the stage, put down the radio, and let Fuzzy out. After that, she placed a cat treat on the button that made the CD tray eject and then sat down to watch.

First, Fuzzy did not seem to notice the cat treat, but after a while she sniffed it out. Gingerly, she put her paw on the button and pushed, intending to flick the treat off. The tray came up and Fuzzy back-flipped off the radio in surprise. As everyone clapped and cheered, Amelia waved to the audience before putting Fuzzy back into her carrier.

Later, the judges announced the winners. "We have thought very hard about this and we now know who the winners are." Amelia bit her lip and held her breath. "The winners are... Fuzzy and Amelia!"

Amelia carried Fuzzy up onto the stage to get their trophy. As Amelia held the trophy up to the crowd, Amelia whispered into Fuzzy's ear, "It doesn't matter whether we win or not, as long as we have fun!"

By Olivia Mann

Year 3

*Caulfield Grammar School –
Malvern Campus
GLEN IRIS – VIC.*

2009 YOUNG AUSTRALIAN ART AWARDS

Painting



Photography



Drawing



Computer Art



**HURRY!
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1 OCT.**

Design by Tanya Rossi
www.logopix.com.au

www.YoungAtArt.com.au

The YoungAtArt website and the Young Australian Art Awards are an initiative of the Children's Charity Network. All entrants must be no older than 18 years of age or attending either a primary or secondary college. There are 4 categories: Painting, Drawing, Photography, Computer Art. There are three age groups: Junior (Prep to Grade 4), Middle (Grade 5 to Year 8), Senior (Year 9 to Year 12).

To enter your Artwork you will need to obtain a digital image of your piece of work and submit this image on-line through our website at www.YoungAtArt.com.au.

To do this you will be required to sign up in order for you to have the access to submit artwork. If you or your school do not have access to digital imaging, you may send a copy of your artwork to Young at Art, PO Box 267, Lara, Victoria 3212. Further information is available online.

Rosie

I HAD spent an uneventful decade working at the Stansfield Book Store, a small business on the main street, doing the same monotonous thing. Actually, I lie; once there was a moth that had been caught in between pages 237 and 238 of Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* which was completely flattened. My boss decided to frame it and hang it up in my office knowing that *Twilight* was my favourite book and that I detested moths – so that was pretty eventful. My entire adulthood thus far had consisted of checking, sorting, stacking, reading and recommending books. I knew all there was to know about them. Unfortunately, there was not much more that I did know. Some would call my life boring; I had never been on a plane, never went out clubbing with the few friends I had, I had never even had a boyfriend.

I did have a beautiful nine year old niece called Rosie though, and I spoiled her rotten whenever I had the chance. She loved 'Auntie Elsy' because I would introduce her to the newest, most interesting books and we would read and discuss them together. Rosie was an extremely intelligent young girl. She was already reading at a grade eleven standard and had an extensive vocabulary coupled with very mature communication skills – her teachers would joke that she was the next *Matilda*. She had skipped two grades and so was in year seven at the local primary school, still topping her class. Rosie was both my niece and my best friend.

Every Saturday, Rosie always helped me out in the Book Store. One particular Saturday, like usual, we were sitting at the front desk of the shop sorting out books that had been put on hold or ordered in and which ones were damaged or needed to go back on the shelves. A bell rang, notifying me that the door had been opened and a possible customer had entered the store. I looked up to check for rebellious shop-lifting teens and instead I saw a man approaching my desk. He was jaw-droppingly gorgeous. He was getting closer and saw me staring so he smiled. That one gesture of friendliness made everything else in the room seem insignificant. His perfectly aligned white teeth gleamed and lit up the room. He was now two metres away from my

reach and my whole body had gone to jelly. Rosie could sense my nervousness and squeezed my hand under the desk.

"Hi" he said in an almost seductive voice with a small wave and a heart-melting grin.

"Hi" I managed to force out diffidently, my heart palpitating at a thousand beats per minute.

"I was just wondering; could you show me where a book called *Twilight* would be?"

My heart then skipped a beat. This perfect specimen wants me to help him find my favourite book! I stood there, dazed. He looked at me, waiting for a response and Rosie came to my rescue.

"Sure", she chimed with innocent sweetness, nodding her head and grinning.

He was a bit confused at my bewildered state and so broke the silence by explaining his situation.

"My niece has been talking non-stop about this book, all of her friends at school have read it and there's apparently a '5 year waiting list' at her school library to borrow it" he laughed nervously. "It's her birthday next week and so I thought I'd go search for this book everyone's talking about. Is it really that good?"

He had a niece too! I imagined he would be an outstanding uncle. Yet again, Rosie saved me, "Definitely. It's mine and Auntie Elsy's favourite book!"

"Elsy, is it? That's a beautiful name", he charmed. All I could manage was a sheepish smile. Looking into his eyes looking into mine felt like iridescent lights were illuminating the skies of my life. Rosie nudged me back into reality so I tried composing myself by avoiding his dreamy hazel eyes. I thought

only about the book for a second and regrettably had to answer, "Oh no, I'm terribly sorry, but I'm afraid we sold our last copy last Tuesday. But we have ordered some more and they are due to arrive tomorrow afternoon. Would you like me to place one on hold?"

I was quite impressed at how I managed to speak understandable English. His perfectly sculptured face turned from an expression of disappointment to gratefulness.



Rosie

"Could you? That would be great, thanks." He smiled appreciatively as I searched my top drawer for the hold forms. I placed it on the counter in front of him with a pen and watched as he filled in his details. Even the way he held his pen was graceful and he elegantly wrote his name: *Jeremy Commet*. I looked down at Rosie and she smiled her wise, all-knowing smile at me. I gave an anxious look back. I turned back to Jeremy who placed the pen down on top of the paper and met my gaze.

"See you tomorrow", he promised, and flashed another of his supermodel smiles as he walked away. I stared at him and heard the bell ring as he passed through the doorway. I watched him walk further away from me down the street, catching him looking back once to meet my unceasing gaze. When he was out of sight, I realised I had been holding my breath and so I took a moment to collect myself. Once I was sure that I was breathing again, I picked up the hold form off of the desk and read:

Name:	Jeremy Commet
Contact details:	043 274 0587
Book and Author:	Twilight – Stephanie Meyer
Pick-up time:	Sunday afternoon
Additional notes:	I'll be counting down the minutes



At that, my heart jumped out of my chest and did a jig on the desk. I suddenly could not wait until tomorrow. Books had always been the only love in my life. Could there actually be an Edward Cullen out there for me? Rosie sensed my excitement and we shared a moment of jumping up and down in ecstasy together.

The next day, I woke up and arrived super-early to clean the store. Today, Rosie was not there to cover for my lack

of communication skills and I needed to plan what I would say to Jeremy. All morning I was running through possible conversations in my head with the thought of his enchanting smile etched into my memory. I found myself cleaning the same spot on the counter over and over, waiting for him to grace the store with his breath-taking presence. The hours went by and it was soon four o'clock, only one more hour until closing time. I had mixed feelings – did he have an accident and have to go to hospital or has he just stood me up?

The next depressing hour slowly crept its way by and I eventually found myself lingering in an empty bookstore with my favourite romantic book *Twilight* staring at me from on top of the counter. Rage and misery engulfed me and, in one swipe of my shaking arm, I cleared the desk of all the books that I had loved and they crashed to the floor with a thud. I thought this might have been a chance for me to change the uneventful routine I called my life. How could one person have been so significant in making me realise that I am insignificant? I slid my back down the front of the counter and sat with my face in my hands, sobbing. I was so distraught that I did not hear the bell sound to indicate someone entering the store. I felt someone peel my hands from my tear-stained cheeks and hold them in theirs.

"Don't cry, Auntie Elsy."

And I collapsed in Rosie's consoling arms; for she was like my Edward Cullen, only better.

*By Emma Jayne Young
Year 12*

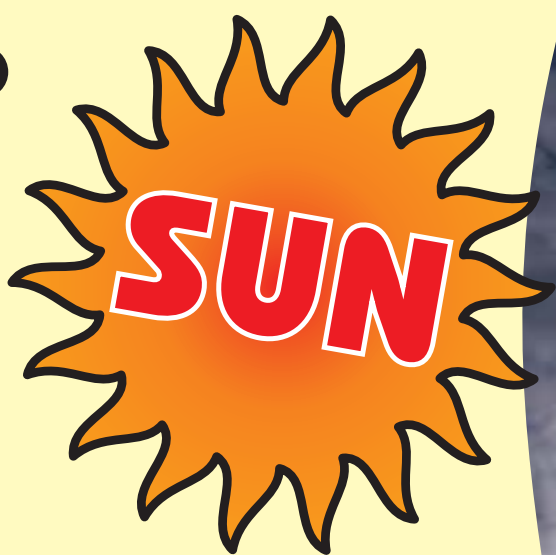
*Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College
ENFIELD – SA*

Love's Garden

It's a warm spring day
my love and I walk slowly,
taking in all the wonderful colours that surround us.
Strolling down the pathway
towards the wisteria draped garden chair
We sit there in silence,
looking at each other.
Finally,
he speaks, gets up and walks away.
I cry.
I lose track of time.
I sit there, hour after hour.
It gets colder, darker.
I feel the wonderful colours get a darker shade of grey every hour, the same way I feel inside.
As I see the sun setting, I feel the Impatiens, Sweet Williams and Forget-Me-Nots getting sadder, sharing the pain with me.
At dusk I finally get up and leave the garden I had once loved.



*By Ellen Carter, Year 9, Clonard College
GEELONG WEST – VIC.*



Ball of Fire,
Stay away from the fire,
It's a natural drier!
We need Sun,
To make our day fun.
Looks like a piece of gold,
Lost in the sky,
Surrounded by clouds.

Clouds are its natural enemy.
trying to cover our heat.
from top of its head to its feet.
Hates night because it disappear.
I cannot wait till tomorrow to see it appear.

*By Pranav Rimal
Age 12
Homebush Boys' School
HOMEBUSH - NSW*



Strong and fierce,
But a wind of ice!
This is a thing you cannot fight!
If you get caught you won't be in sight.

Help! Is the word you can't even say,
because it's so fast you can't even pray!

Hates Sun because it melts it down,
transforms into water which is pure and calm!

Up above the sky the sun says Hi!
But the poor calm water turns into clouds,
Which makes him more sadder!

Until night it stays sad,
telling his story to his lads.
Then morning appears with a drizzle of magic,
But the poor old cloud says
"Oh no not another tragic"!

*By Suvrashree Rimal
Age 9
Lidcombe Public School
LIDCOMBE - NSW*

BLIZZARD

Biodiversecology

The curtain rose lightly like new morning mist
Reminiscent of old Greek mythology
The conductor's hands fluttered like leaf litter, softly
Revealing a hidden ecology

Old man Orangutan swayed a bass pulse
Mimicking kinesiology
Monkeys and marmosets chased violins
Ignoring their sweet musicology

Percussion played elements, deep in the forest
Water and air and geology
Cats prowled the brasses, threatening all
Showing their feline psychology

Until interval

When the Electus parrot shrieked like a broken record
"Will all patrons please turn off your mobile phones.
Photographs are NOT permitted"

The audience shifted with sloth-like reproach
And the camel looked quite supercilious
"Those kids today think they're SO special", he sneered
"Their arrogance makes me feel bilious."

"I agree" cried the dugong, "they're full of themselves,
We'll never be able to beat them.
Unfortunately we're all vegetarians so
We can't even manage to eat them".

Up on the stage, the dancers peered querulously
Without any thought of apology
They said "They're pathetic, completely bizarre.
They're not joining OUR rich ecology".

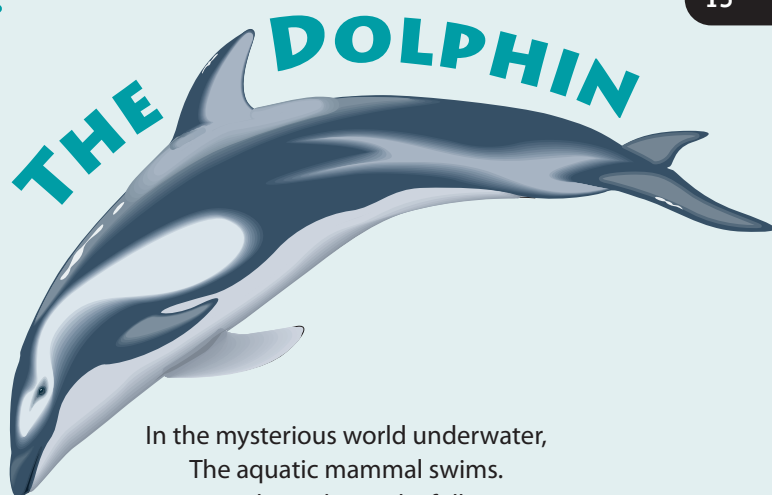
By Elizabeth Waldron

Year 7

Newtown High School of the Performing Arts

NEWTOWN - NSW

Teacher: Ms Ellis



In the mysterious world underwater,
The aquatic mammal swims.
He dives about playfully,
Carrying a friendly nature within.

The graceful, flamboyant dolphin;
Happy as a lark in the heights of the blue sky,
Explores the depths of the ocean,
With spirits soaring ever so high.

The elegant creature with a gently curious mind,
Just like a white dove flying free,
Is nature's messenger,
Of peace, justice and harmony.

He very much likes the company,
Of his close relative, the whale.
He also enjoys singing,
While he swishes his powerful tail.

Frolicking merrily above the water surface,
Performing acrobatic tricks,
Is what he does to impress us, humans,
Especially in a pod, while he whistles and clicks.

He loves to surf and ride waves,
It's just so much fun!
It also looks amazing,
Especially against the orange glow of the setting sun.

When you look deep into his sparkling eyes,
Wonders of the ocean you shall find,
For he holds your gaze,
And reflects what's on his thoughtful mind.

The dolphin is intelligent;
Our most playful flippers-friend of all.
You might think he's a quite creature...

...But if you listen carefully, you just might hear him call!

By Sahibajot Kaur

Year 9

Glenwood High School

GLENWOOD - NSW

I Believe

What is love?

Would you know if someone asked you? I wouldn't. But these are the questions that I ask myself frequently. For I do not, and probably will never, know the answers.

Is love the joy of friends and family? Or is it the fear of not knowing what is just around the corner? Or could it be, that love is simply a part of our world, a part of our life that we take for granted? Who knows? But I do know that when I was born into this world again, God gave me absolutely, positively, no love.

It was almost like I was born without the ability to love. Without the ability to see those around me as friends, not foe. But that is how it has always been.

Every step of my life has been sheltered. I walk in the shadows. I let no one see my true identity.

No one knows who I am.

No one knows that I live.

But they know of 'Them'.

delicate patterns of my mind – an unwinnable war is raging. A war where my mind, body and soul fight for power on the sides of love and hatred, peace and conflict, passion and neglect.

As the war in my mind rages, I try to remember right from wrong – love from hate. But I can't. Everything blurs together. Voices taunt me, telling me to avenge myself, telling me to feel things that I cannot. I try to block them. I do. But they keep coming back.

By being one of 'Them', people shy away and do not take you seriously. They do not believe.

But I believed. I believed before I became one of 'Them'. And look where it got me. Feeling nothing, and never knowing anything.

But I will still believe.

Even if I die again; even if I leave this horrible world where nothing makes sense and all who live here, live a life of ignorance and deprivation, I will always believe. Because I sacrificed my everything for this world. I sacrificed my life for another being and by doing that, I am a lost soul.



Being one of 'Them' means no emotions.

No love.

No hate.

No peace.

Just beliefs.

What I wouldn't give to have someone love me just once.

But no one will.

Because no one loves ghosts.

By Kirsten Mann

Age 16

Cheltenham Secondary College

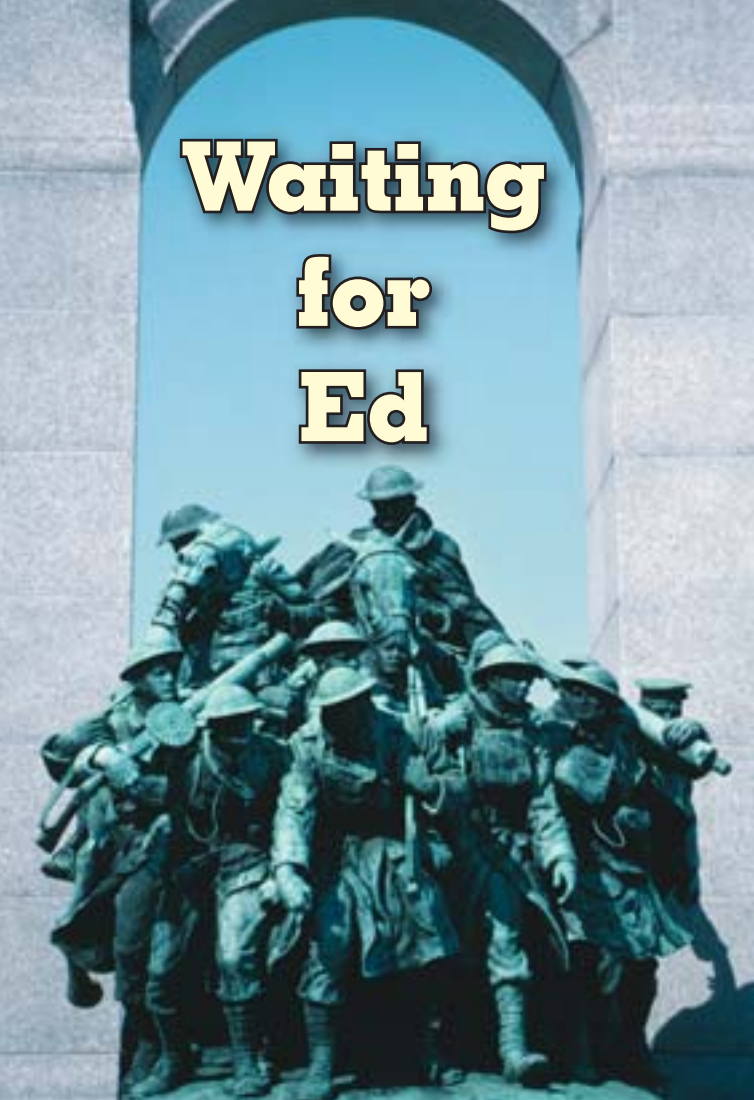
CHELtenham – VIC.

By being one of 'Them', I know I am not wanted. By being one of 'Them', I know that no one will ever know what I have sacrificed, what I have given to be what I am today. Nobody cares for me. I am nothing but a lifeless creature with nothing better to do than die. Why should I live in a world where everything is beautiful and light, when I am a creature of pure horror and fear? Why was I born into this life? This life that is a lie.

Would you, no, could you live like this? Never knowing what love is. Never knowing how to befriend someone and love them for themselves. Never knowing how to be at peace with oneself. For I don't, because inside my mind – inside the intricate and



Waiting for Ed



THE 12th of April 1942 was a cold day in London. This was not unusual as many days were cold and dark during the Second World War. Red-nosed people bustled through the cobbled streets, covered from head to toe in winter woollens and jackets. Nobody said 'Hello' or 'Good Morning' to another. All were anxious to return to their warm, safe homes.

Nearby, in Hyde Park, the gloomy sky warned of an impending thunderstorm and the wind angrily ripped brown, autumn leaves off the trees. Carried by the wind, the leaves gently fell and landed at the feet of a woman. This woman was called May. She too was dressed for the weather in a thick blue anorak, a knee-length skirt, black woollen stockings, heavy brown shoes, pink mittens, and, on her head, an old grey and red hat which came down to cover her ears. Beside her was a tartan bag filled with food and blankets to sustain her for the day.

This mismatched appearance gave the impression that May was homeless. Young children stared and mothers held them closer and clutched tighter to their hands, but May was not homeless. In fact, she was quite looking forward to a warm cup of tea when she returned later in the evening. No, she was not homeless; she was just waiting, waiting for her son.

It would have been a year ago now that May was told by two strangers wearing uniform that her son had been killed in action with no body accounted for. It was as of this day that May would walk through the cobbled streets to Hyde Park and sit on a park bench to wait. He was not dead, or that was what May believed despite numerous inquiries and allegations of denial.

The wind pushed angrily against May's delicate face. She shivered as she reached for her tartan bag, extracting a thin woollen blanket. She looked down to where the pigeons were standing, cooing gently at her feet.

"Sorry", May said. "I've got to save my food today. Ed will be hungry when he arrives."

Hours passed and May filled her time by watching the comings and goings of the day. Business men walked briskly by, two young boys rode past on bicycles, and a young couple strolled along hand in hand. It soon became the late afternoon and the prospect of a thunderstorm became more certain.

The wind seemed to grow colder. May twisted in her seat and pulled the thin blanket further up to her chin. She closed her eyes listening to the harsh whistle of the wind and the rapid beating of the pigeons' wings as they hastily escaped the bitter cold.

May saw a fountain. Ed was 10 years old and his skinny arms were splashing in the water. His face was illuminated by the midday sun and the sparkling smile that stretched across his face. The water was soaring up towards the sky and the sound of Ed's jubilant laughter echoed in May's ears. The clarity of the image was decreasing. The sparkle in the water became dull. Ed's figure and that of the fountain became warped. May felt numb, the bitterness of the wind no longer piercing her skin. The image faded and May was still.

★ ★ ★

A young man wearing long khaki pants and a stained white singlet trudged along the path leading up to the fountain. His hair was a dishevelled mess and his face was unshaven. He carried a large green rucksack upon his back and held a black umbrella over his head. He stopped as he approached the fountain and watched the rain create delicate patterns on the water's surface. He glanced up and saw a peculiar looking woman asleep on a park bench.

He stared curiously at the woman for some time before a grim realisation overcame him. He collapsed his umbrella and hurriedly walked along the rest of the path towards her. He knelt down in front of the bench and cautiously placed his fingertips on the woman's arm. The icy coldness of her skin took him by surprise and he bowed his head as a tear peacefully rolled down his cheek. He held her hand as he eased himself into the space beside her. He placed his arms around the woman's shoulders and rested her head against his chest. He lowered his head and placed his lips on her ear.

"I'm home Mum." He whispered through tears.

The wind howled forcing the trees to sway precariously from side to side, the rain fell heavily from the sky, and curled up on a park bench, a mother and son embraced, together once again.

*By Ashleigh Maihi
Year 10, Castle Hill High School
CASTLE HILL - NSW*



A Canvas

This canvas is white on white.
Nothing shows up.
A canvas black on black,
Just black.

Black on white, brown and cream.
This canvas is beautiful, interesting.

Our world weaves a tapestry, a history,
Riddled with dark patterns of oppression,
Blotting out colours and beliefs.
One dominant,
One enslaved,
But neither giving up.

All will stand for their colours,
I for mine,
You for yours.

If we held hands, the contrast would be the beautiful canvas.
But both our hands are stained with red. Oppression.
Black and white, with red in between.
This can end, but not until we hold our hands.
Together.

*By Imogen Hanrahan
Year 6
Kingswood College Junior School
BOX HILL - VIC.
Teacher: Mr Michael King*

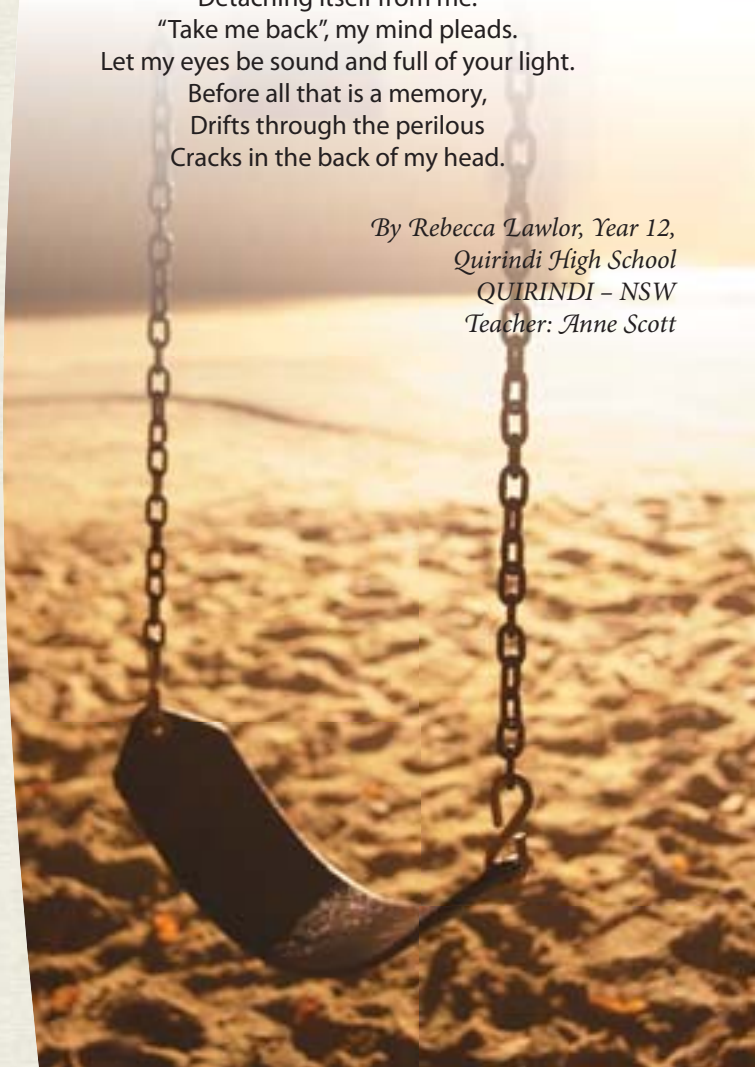
Long Forgotten

My body lies resting in
Blackened darkness.
'Tis not sound, but still.
I feel this darkened blanket
Thrust over my gibbous moon-pale,
And weightless skin.
It is heavy and melts into my
Lifeless frame, to enrich the soul.

Where have the playful hours gone?
Of impish children and mischievous games.
I wind back to times when
Skies were mild September blues
And I was innocent and naïve,
Frivolously dancing in the garden
At Wild Ash Grove.
I would pick the sweetest, brightest flower
And inhale its untamed splendour
Clutching so firmly at the stem.
I would beg for them to let me stay
In this tranquil haven for the rest of my life.
But indigo hues deepened as daylight waned
Over the rolling hills and fields,
Dragging me away,
Forever.

Now I struggle to feel your warmth.
Your presence is slowly getting luke-warm.
Floating away on a spiritual updraft,
Detaching itself from me.
"Take me back", my mind pleads.
Let my eyes be sound and full of your light.
Before all that is a memory,
Drifts through the perilous
Cracks in the back of my head.

*By Rebecca Lawlor, Year 12,
Quirindi High School
QUIRINDI - NSW
Teacher: Anne Scott*



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The bird upon the Tor with her beaded eyes shining bright,
Sits gaily whilst singing beautiful tunes about solitude and flight.
Her feathers are as red as those of a burning flame,
Where glowing yellow embers leap about to destroy or maim.
Eventually, she spreads her wings and takes off on her flight,
That bird upon the Tor with her beaded eyes shining bright.

Now this bird who sat upon the Tor, with her beaded eyes shining bright,
Is flying miles and miles away in the dead of the night.
Towards the place where Humans dwell – where they live a sheltered life,
Ignorant of the world around them – sheathed like a knife.
As the sun rises, she will fold her wings, and end her long flight,
That bird who is no longer upon the Tor, but her eyes still shine as bright.


That bird who was upon the Tor, with her eyes still shining bright,
For now, is dwelling in trees, hunting only by the night.
Her feathers now gleam as do her eyes, with the tinge of the silvery moon,
And her eyes reflect the golden stars, which we will see all too soon.
But in the morning, she will sleep, and will not think of taking flight.
That bird who was upon the Tor, with her eyes still shining bright.

That same bird is now growing old, and finally returns to the Tor,
Where she will lay down to rest, as she has never done before.
The Tor is a magical place, filled with enchantment, love and peace,
Where no human may ever set foot, not even for a feast.
And you may ask how I know of the Tor, you may ask me quite outright,
For I am the bird, who returned to the Tor, with my beaded eyes shining bright.

THE TOR

*By Kirsten Mann, Age 16,
Cheltenham Secondary College, CHELTENHAM – VIC.*

Earth vs Neptune



THERE was a small battle between Neptune and Earth because Neptune wanted to grow things on Earth and the Earthlings did not like that idea. All the invaders were robots which had one thumb and pointer finger and a laser gun for the other hand. 18 year old Jack had to stop the boss. The boss was a white alien with four eyes and he has four arms and is super strong and is GIGANTIC.

Jack had a small fighter ship with 8 missiles and laser bullets. Jack was flying in his ship to the alien mother ship which succeeded. Jack got on the mother ship safely and was ready to find the boss.

Jack had sneaked into the boss's room and it had robots that had robots powered off and a drivers seat with wheel and red buttons. He made it undetected and was hiding in there. They're sending a warning down to Earth so Jack jumped out of hiding and got out his laser sword and chopped it in two.

"Go you useless bits of scrap metal."


"I can deal with him myself." The boss got at his laser sword and so did Jack.

The boss was too powerful and he knocked Jack's sword right out of his hand. The boss jumped right at him and punched Jack and he went flying right next to a laser gun but it was a gun with a laser net in it and it was meant for trapping people and Jack quickly shot it at the boss and he was trapped.

Jack ran straight back to his ship and hung the boss at the bottom of it. He went back to Earth and the boss was locked up in a laser prison cell meant for aliens.

Neptune sent out a spy that had the shape of a human. It was meant to spy on Jack and not to ever reveal himself to anyone and gives Neptune exactly what Jack does.

*By John
Murrowood
Year 4
Caulfield Grammar
School -
Malvern Campus
GLEN IRIS - VIC.*



The Child With No Home

While you're asleep in a nice warm bed;
I lie on the grass, trying to rest my head.
While you're at school trying to learn;
I feel the sun's glare, ready to burn.

While you're in the garden on the fresh green grass;
I stumble on the street, trying to avoid the smashed glass.
While you're cuddling your pet, with eyes so kind;
I avoid the rats, ready to bite from the sewer line.
But worst of all, while you're reading this;
Try to hear my cry.

I'm lying on the ground looking up at the sky;
Ready for death, ready to die.

So heed my words and heed them well;
Next time you want to scream and yell;
Just think of me and my situation,
And maybe then you won't need salvation.

*By Ruby Tribe
Year 7
Aquinas College
EAST RINGWOOD - VIC.*



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.

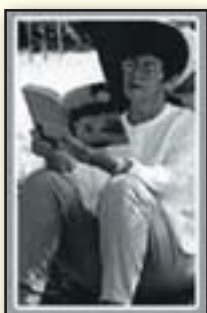
Krista lives with her sons and transport planner husband next to a railway line so she can quickly catch a train to the MCG to watch a football match, or go to the theatre, a concert or the National Gallery in town, or visit South Bank or Federation Square where she can be a professional "stickybeak",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

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 for more. ☛



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.annaciddor.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. ☛



☛ **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

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

The Troubles of Annie

O H dear, block your ears reader, unless you have already got earplugs. That is definitely a good idea! Hi! I'm Annie. Just wait till that little terror comes. She'll scream when she sees the ants on the front doorstep. And Mum won't be too happy either.

Anyway, enough about that. Okay, so I admit that the "Little Terror" is actually my annoying little sister Becky. She screams at almost everything. Including broccoli for dinner! But most of all, she HATES car rides. It's not the seat she doesn't like, it's the speed humps. The thing is I love the speed humps. When the car hits one, I get a fluttery, tingly, jumpy feeling. But Becky thinks it's horrible. Kind of like if you've been dropped from a high cliff and you panic with your arms and legs flailing. That's how Becky feels.

You're probably wondering how I know this. It's because once I entered a tree-climbing competition and fell off at the very last minute and broke my leg. It wasn't a very fortunate accident. I wouldn't have liked an accident at all, thank you very much. Okay, even a sprained ankle would be okay or maybe a really bad bruise? Well, that's getting a LOT off the topic.

Bzzzzz. Going back to talking about Becky screaming and crying in the car. I wonder if she enjoys it. By the way, did I mention that I love reading in the car? No, of course I didn't. I don't vomit in the car like most people do. Well, sometimes, but that's only when I see something gooeey or slimy. That's when I freak out. Well, I gotta scam, Mum's calling. And anyway, it's nighttime. I've got to get to bed too. See you tomorrow morning. I've got to sort this out with my new friend, Katie. Good night!

BRINNG!! BRINNG!! Help! I roll over and switch the alarm off. You would have wished you never had eardrums in your whole life if you had heard that. Oh well. I'd better get dressed. Pants, then shirt, then socks, and last of all, the watch. I wonder if Mum made toast and oatmeal. Probably. Anyway, I'd better start eating it when I get there. Anyway, I am finished. And by the way, it was oatmeal and toast.

"Hi Katie!"

"Hi Annie!"

"Is your little sister still bothering you?"

"Yep" I groan, thumping my fist on my schoolbag in frustration. Even more frustrating than usual.

"Why does it have to be me?" I grumble.

"Wow, that's bad" Katie says sarcastically.

Well, that's all right for you. I was beginning to get in a rather angry mood.

Just then the bell goes.

"Gotta scam" shouts Katie, and speeds off...

Honk! Aahh! The noise startles me and I scream in my head.

It is the end of the day. After a hard day of school, it is a relief to get out. By the way, that "honk" is actually Mum's horn. I usually have to look after Becky after school. But when Mum or some other car honks, she cries. After a few torturing minutes, Mum picks us up. Mum's a nurse which is kind of good in a way. I dive into the car. Becky tries to copy me but bumps her head in the process and starts crying once again.

The rest of the day goes by really quickly. While I lay in bed, an idea starts to form in my mind. I would brainstorm with Katie the next day for ideas. After a few minutes, I am fast asleep...

BRINNG!! BRINNG!! goes the clock. But this time I am ready for it. Ouch! The clock and I are rolling about on the floor. Ow! I bump my head on the leg of the table. Swish! The door opens. I forgot to tell you my Mum's name is Mandy.

"Annie! Why are you rolling around on the floor at six in the morning?" Mum asks.

"Um, well" I falter.

"Well you'd better get in bed before I count to three", she warns.

The morning goes by quickly. We have to do fractions. At recess, Katie tells me some of her ideas.

"First, you should try distracting her with a puppet."

"Where am I going to get one of those?" I ask.

"No worries", says Katie cheerfully, "I brought one to school! Secondly, if that doesn't work, then you should try blocking her mouth with a tea towel."

Sure!" I say, happy that Katie has given me some ideas.



The Troubles of Annie (Cont'd.)

When I come home, I borrow Mum's tea towel. On the way to school the next day, I am ready. Oh no! There is a speed hump coming. I grab the puppet and start distracting Becky. TOO LATE! We hit it. Waaa! Plan No. 1 has failed. I switch to Plan No. 2. Wham! The tea towel does the trick.

"Hey Annie", says Mum, "We're going to pick up Becky's friend Ella".

"Oh no, here she comes", I say.

"Hey Becky!" Ella grabs the tea towel and throws it away. Plan No. 2 has failed.

"Did it work?" asks Katie when I get to school.

"No", I say. We think for a minute.

"Yippee!" shouts Katie. "Suddenly, I've got it! We can make a chart and each time she doesn't cry she gets a sticker."

"Yeah!" I shout. "Great idea." And it works until... the next afternoon at lunchtime.

"Mum, I hate these biscuits!" screams Becky.

By Olivia Mann

Year 2,

Caulfield Grammar School – Malvern Campus

GLEN IRIS – VIC.

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August 2009

WARTIME *Peace*



UNDER a war-torn sky, amidst the wreckage of a home, a young girl sits alone. Cradling her brother's lifeless head in her hands, she is frozen amidst the ruins of her broken life. Tears trickle down her ash-streaked face as the bomb sirens wail a mournful song – a song of lament. She cries at the loss of her family, her friends, her very world, snatched from her in an instant by a single bomb. In the distance she can hear people running to help, but they are too late. From

the corner of her eye, this young girl spots the domed roof of the local mosque, the lasting symbol of Allah. Squatting amongst her broken hopes and dreams, she wonders if He even cares.

Under a war-torn sky, a young man sits in a cave, polishing a battered gun. Little more than a teenager, he carries the weight of someone far older as he cleans his

instrument of death. Revenge burns in his heart, revenge against the Zionist invaders who killed his friends, who ripped out his heart and replaced it with hate. Sorrow and anger building inside him, the young fighter smiles a grim smile and thinks of the suffering he shall inflict, just as he had suffered. He shall hurt the enemy as they hurt him, no longer caring for his own life. At the call of his leader, the young man stands up. Grabbing his weapon, he walks out to finally ease the suffering of his weary heart, hoping to find peace through pain.

Under a war-torn sky, a mother shudders in her closet, holding her children tight. She can hear the sounds of the soldiers outside getting closer and closer. She knows they are coming to kill her, to take her children and turn them into fighters, to tear her family apart. The woman knows she mustn't cry, that she has to keep a brave front for her children. As they cower in the dark, her youngest son looks up at her and says, "Is it going to be all right Mother?". She knows not what to say, knows not how to break her family free of this awful nightmare. Crouching in the dark, waiting for the inevitable, the woman cries.

Under a war-torn sky, an old man, worn and wearied by the hardships he has endured, sits calmly in his cell, waiting to die. His alleged crime: "treason against the state"; in reality, merely extending generosity to a lost stranger. Spending the final hours of his life in a filthy cell, he thinks back to the way life used to be, when all was peaceful. How much his existence has

changed. Once he was a pillar of his community, respected by all. Now he is treated like a common thief, a criminal to boot. The old man sighs as he leans back against the stone walls. He was angry, at first, during that mockery they called a trial. Now he is just accepting of his grim fate, no longer caring about what happens in the cruel world outside. Looking up, he sees the cell door open. Outside, grim-faced guards line the well-worn stone path to the execution chamber. He stands up on shaky limbs, grabbing the door for support, and begins the final walk of his life.

But things can be different...

Under a war-torn sky, in a grassy field, two young boys play together. Both are from different sides, but are united in their games. Both are sworn enemies, not that they know it. Not that they care. They are merely two friends having fun together.

An old woman watches them, and smiles to herself. Studying the wartime peace before her, she thinks to herself, all humans can get along, regardless of differences! She dreams that there can be peace in her troubled, war-torn world. Further away, the children's laughter echoes up into the sky. The old woman grins. For a moment, a brief fleeting moment, but a moment nonetheless, she is full of hope.

By James Lawler

Year 12, Blackfriars Priory School

PROSPECT – SA

Teacher: Pat Patience

The one my heart calls own

The one my heart took for its own is blissfully ignorant.

The earth and skies however know the truth.

We did meet each other's eyes but modesty stood between us.

I couldn't express in words the feelings of my heart.

There is now this excitement every moment.

I must look for him; to him I shall pour out my heart,

But where is he?

The night seemed to have blossomed in the company of the moon.

I'm away from him although I have already met him.

So why is there a twinkle in my eyes and a flutter in my heart?

If only love would awaken in his heart

And bring him here.

He's the one that my heart has accepted as its own.

All day and night I have looked for him everywhere I could.

I was defeated my eyes were disappointed.

My eyes yearn to see him,

Without him what love can I speak of?

It's my world that has been plundered.

He's lost...

But where?

So lonely are the earth and the skies.

But still he is the one my heart accepts as his own.

By Srestha Mazumder, Age 12, MINTO – NSW

Olivia's Opal

When queens wore wire petticoats
And princes scaled their spires
A princess slept, curled up like stone
Through darkest hours.

At times, like shadow, darkness came
And held her in captivity
Her fear, her thoughts, her feelings fought
Tranquillity

Her parents loved her, all the same
Despite a deeper dark.
Her many coloured soul revealed
An opal heart

Her heart flashed colours, vivid beats
A constant flare of change
She knew her duty, knew her home
Her heart was strange

She ventured out to seek a home
She had a path to choose
To sacrifice her differences
To pay her dues.

To rid the dark, to find true heart
She journeyed to the sea
And changed her opal heart to pearl
Uneasily

For pearls are colourless and dim
Their light is unsustaining
Their dance is slow, their feelings seem
Unchanging.

The pearl returned, she travelled
To a land among the stars
This world was perfect, cool and sleek;
A looking glass

The princess claimed a diamond heart
But still was not content
Around her, shattered images
Would not relent.

For diamonds are a vanity
And fracture what they see
Reflecting what is really there
Endlessly

The princess missed her coloured soul
That led her vibrant past
And so her opal heart replaced
Shards of glass

"Once more", she thought, "once more I'll try
To shape a better life
I'll choose a ruby for my heart
A compromise"

"For though it's dark, it has a gleam
A self-sustaining glow"
And so she journeyed through the lands
And earth below

But rubies are so secretive
Quick-tempered and deceiving
She felt bewildered, filled with fear
And grieving

"My heart is mine and mine alone,
I'm best when I am me"
And so she fled back to her home,
So welcoming

She saw her image spread before
In reds and greens and blues
Watercolour artistry in
Canvas hues

She saw the artist paint her heart
And suddenly she knew
His heart was filled with coloured flames
Of opal too.

When queens wore wire petticoats
And princes scaled their spires
A princess slept, curled up like stone
Through lustrous hours.

*By Elizabeth Waldron
Year 7
Newtown High School
of the Performing Arts
NEWTOWN - NSW
Teacher: Ms Ellis*



The Green Tree Frog

The frog approaches the end of the branch,
A flash of green light jumps across to the next tree,
Then again, it jumps,
Unfazed by heights,
It glides gracefully,
Its slick body shimmering in the sun,
The frog lands, clenching the branch as if it was its only hope for survival,
It looks ahead with determination,
And then again,
It jumps

*By Ryan Merrett
Eynesbury Senior College
ADELAIDE - SA
Teacher: Shelda Rathmann*



A Banana Again!

ALEX sighed, and debated what to do with the banana his mother had given him for morning tea at school today. He considered throwing the banana away, giving it to someone else to eat, or possibly taking a little bite out of it himself. Eventually he decided to throw it away – not into the usual bin, but onto the ground where at least the ants could enjoy it.

“There”, he said, satisfied, another banana disposed of.

Alex’s mother wouldn’t give him anything for recess except bananas. Alex had become used to it after a while, but then one day, after two years, he had finally had enough, and had started not eating the bananas but doing something else with them. Today he decided was the day. Today he would confront his mother and persuade her to give up on the banana project and give him something more interesting. Maybe when she comes in to say goodnight he thought, or maybe that’s a bit too late, I might be too sleepy.

School passed and the bell rang for lunch. At least at lunch time he got something more yummy to eat. Today, he thought reflectively, he was going to have a tuckie, which was a treat from the school tuck shop. It had taken Alex many long nights of talking to get his mother to let him have one piece of liquorice. His mother hadn’t been keen, since she very strongly disliked junk food, but he had eventually pointed out that everyone else had treats from time to time and it wouldn’t hurt him to have just one piece of liquorice. His mother had protested – of course – but he had eventually convinced her to agree on one piece of liquorice. Even then she had insisted that he would have red liquorice because she believed that black liquorice was particularly bad for you.

Alex dashed across his classroom, ignoring his teacher’s protests about not running inside the school, and hurriedly picked out his tuckie from all the others that were crowding up the tuckie box that day. He held it close and made sure that no-one bumped it.

Alex carefully put his tuckie down beside his lunch which he had got out earlier and resolved to eat it last, breaking it into small pieces as he went. His favourite

biscuits, which normally tasted like heaven to him, now tasted dull and uninteresting as his mind was looking forward to the delicious flavour of liquorice. He sighed as he looked at his remaining lunch and thought, well I can’t throw my lunch out, Mum would have a fit if I asked for an extra snack after school. He slowly munched his way through the horrible tuna sandwiches which his mother forced him to have and decided that his salad would simply have

to go to his best mate, Joey. No harm in that – Joey loved salad, and was definitely not going to refuse this offer. Well that was lunch all sorted out, now for the highlight of the day.

Wait, no, Alex wouldn’t eat his liquorice here in the classroom. The bell rang for playtime and he ran out across the oval to the hawthorn tree where he sat beneath its boughs with his back to the school and slowly unwrapped one end of the liquorice. It seemed to him that it was as red as a ruby. He gave it a tentative lick. It tasted like all his favourite things in the world mixed together to create one sole flavour which he knew he would always be chasing and he could never have enough of it.

When lunchtime was over, Alex still had some liquorice left. Hmm, he thought, I’ll take it home and secretly eat it in my bed at night. I’d better be careful though, Mum would be worried that bugs might be attracted into my bed by the sweetness.

“Mum!”, Alex called when he arrived home.

As Alex wandered through his corridor he sniffed the air. That was odd. No trace of dinner cooking.

“Oh hello Alex!” his mother called, bustling down the stairs. “I was just about to start dinner when I remembered I had a lot of emails and phone calls to make, for work you know. Well Alex, I’m going to make your favourite nursery dinner of mashed potatoes, baked beans and poached eggs.”

“Does it include tomato sauce?” Alex asked. He wasn’t too keen on his mother’s special tomato sauce, but he loved the tomato sauce that could be bought from the supermarket in a plastic bottle.

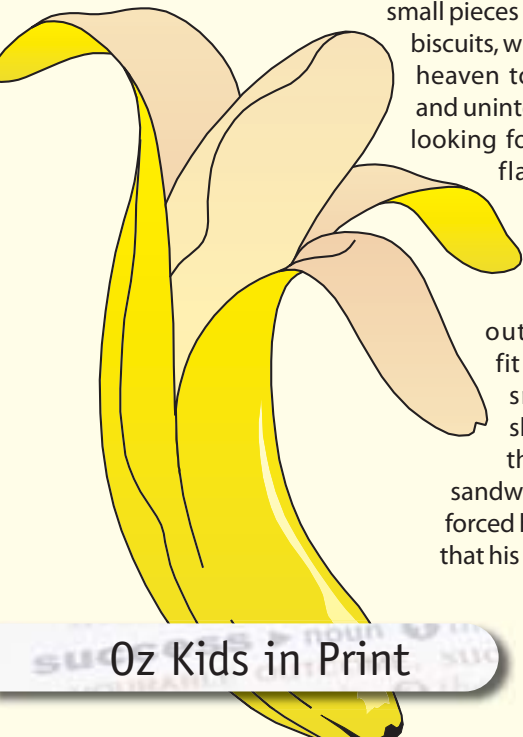
“Oh of course” said his mother, “You can have some of my special home-made organic tomato sauce”. Alex groaned inwardly.

After dinner Alex attacked his homework, skimming through it to find the easiest parts. Well, he decided, I think Maths and Latin are both pretty easy. With Latin I sometimes have to look up words in the dictionary which slows me down a bit, so I’ll start with Maths.

Maths was easy as. Alex’s hand flew across the page and he finished quickly. Latin next. He picked up his Latin book from where he had left it on the kitchen bench yesterday and brought it to the table. Latin was a little harder but still quite easy. His hand flew across the paper for a second time, pausing every now and then to check words. Latin was done within ten minutes.

“Well I’ll be going upstairs to have a shower, brush my teeth and get into my PJ’s Mum”, Alex said.

He quickly had a shower and got into his warm pyjamas. As he brushed his teeth he wondered if tonight was the right time for him to tackle his mum about the banana problem. Oh well, he thought as he rinsed his mouth, he had resolved to do it, so do it he would.



A Banana Again! (Cont'd.)

Alex padded down the hallway past his mum's bedroom, past the study where he could hear his mother tapping away on the computer and past the library that held thousands of books and many photographs of ancestors long dead. Finally he was in his comfortable bedroom at the very end of the hall. He slipped across his room, stopping at one of his bookshelves for a book to read. As he pulled back the covers he thought, If Superman can defeat his enemies I can overcome my mother on the banana project.

After a few minutes of reading his mother came in to say goodnight.

"Goodnight sweetie" she said, bending over the bed.

"Goodnight Mum" Alex said. Then, as his Mum was walking out of the door he called out, "Mum." She turned around. "Mum, about the bananas, they are getting a bit boring day after day, can I have something else please?"

"Don't you like bananas?" asked his mother in a rather injured tone.

"I do Mum, honestly", said Alex, trying not to hurt his mother's feelings. "It's just that I need a change."

"But bananas are healthy, they give you lots of energy."

"But, Mummy, just for once can't I have something different?"

"Well, I suppose I could give you a different type of healthy snack", said Alex's Mum. "I'll think of something really delicious."

"Thanks Mum. You're a star", said Alex, pulling his doona up to his chin.

Alex's mum walked out of the room, and Alex waited a few minutes until he could hear her typing away again on the computer. His hand reached under the pillow and he pulled out his partly eaten liquorice. It tasted just as wonderful as before, and he fell asleep to dream of liquorice.

The next morning Alex sat in class while the teacher explained the next maths challenge. That's the easiest problem I've ever seen, thought Alex. Morning lessons dragged on and Alex found himself thinking about what his delicious new recess snack might be. Maybe it will be a juicy crunchy Granny Smith apple he thought, or perhaps a lovely, sweet, beautifully polished Pink Lady.

The bell rang and Alex snapped out of his reverie to find himself drooling with anticipation. He dashed across the floor over to the lockers and unzipped his bag so fast that it seemed as if he had only touched the zip and it had moved by itself. He drew out the plastic box with his recess snack inside it, but was unable to see through the clouded lid. Outside in the playground he settled on his favourite bench in the sunshine, next to the hawthorn tree. With trembling fingers he slowly opened one side of the box, then the other. He licked his lips, took off the lid and looked inside.

"Noooooooooooooooo" he cried. "It's CELERY!!!"

*By Jane Plenderleith
Year 4
Caulfield Grammar School –
Malvern Campus
GLEN IRIS – VIC.*



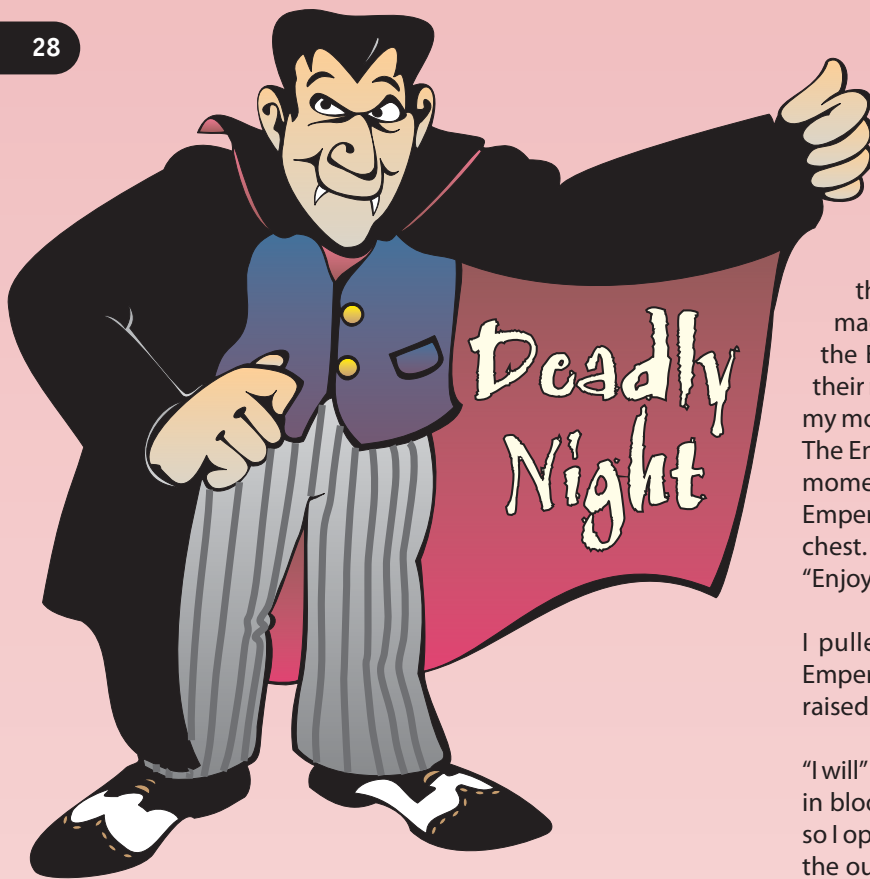
My friend my flower

A friend is like a flower
A rose to be exact
You feel a petal crackling
Against your nice firm back
You look upon the stars
But all you see is Mars
You wonder where it came from
Maybe from a dark red heart

You look behind you
And you see a light
Striding in the darkness
And riding in the night
It's shining on your great friend
Sitting on a flower
But of course a rose to be exact

*By Laura Dooley
Year 5, St. Cecilia's Primary School
GLEN IRIS – VIC.
Teacher: Mrs Phillips*





I SLIPPED through the open window and into the dark hallway. The stale air whipped back my black hair as I moved like a shadow past the kitchen and towards the Emperor's chamber.

I pressed myself against the marble wall and held my breath as an armed guard strutted past. I clenched my silver dagger, getting ready to strike at the guard, but then I remembered that I was here for the Emperor's blood and it would attract too much attention to murder an insignificant guard. I slunk further and further towards the Emperor's chamber.

I reached the lounge room where a drunken guard was asleep in an old brown arm chair next to the warm, flickering fire place. The guard mumbled something in his sleep about wolves and a brick on his plate. What kind of a dream is that?

I crept passed the sleeping guard, trying not to awake him from his peaceful dream. I was halfway across the room when the Emperor's hound started barking. I furiously darted over to the hound and before it could bark again it was silenced by three soundless stabs to the neck. The hound yelped as it fell into an endless sleep.

I dragged the hound's body into the corner and threw a cloth over it so hopefully no-one would notice. I turned around to see the drunken guard stirring in his sleep so I crept quietly out of the room.

I was coming closer to the Emperor's chamber. I had the map of the mansion imprinted on my brain. I could almost hear his slow breathing and smell his expensive perfume. I was close.

I walked up the corridor near my victim's chamber and peeped my head around the corner. I saw two muscular guards with massive broad swords. I could take them both out with ease

but their shrieks would wake up the whole mansion and it would also make a mess.

I thought about it carefully and got an idea. Those guards were as thick as a brick and I knew this would fool them. I took off my belt and ripped the buckle off the leather then threw it as far as I could up the hall. It made a loud clank but it wasn't loud enough to wake up the Emperor. The guards jumped and jogged to the noise, their massive swords slowing them down. That's when I made my move and sprinted to the Emperor's chamber and entered. The Emperor lay on his bed snoring away. I had waited for this moment for five years and now it come. I moved over to the Emperor's bed, slid out my dagger and drove it deep into his chest. He gasped in agony. He took one last breath and said, "Enjoy".

I pulled out a jar from my jacket pocket and poured the Emperor's blood from his body into the jar. When it was full I raised the jar and trickled the warm liquid down my throat.

"I will!" I said, looking down at the Emperor's dead body wrapped in blood stained sheets. I couldn't stay there for much longer so I opened his window and climbed down the ivy growing on the outside of the mansion. I dropped off the ivy and walked away into the darkness.

I am Von the last vampire.

*By Jasper Powrie, Year 5/6,
Manly West Primary School
BALGOWLAH - NSW*

Memories

The sun is hot, the wind is dry,
I walk around and around,
But then I find a chest,
I look for a lock but there is no lock.
I lift up the lid, it opens easily,
I look inside, I find a key.
What does it open, there's nothing in sight,
What does it open, I hear someone say.
Look inside your heart, you will find it there,
So I do, it opens my memories that will last forever.

*By Olivia Kate Dorsett, Age 10,
Lauderdale Primary School
LAUDERDALE - TAS.*





Absorption of all visible light

The brain's distance
Has no crystal definition,
But crumbles and withers,
Not without the nutrients of knowledge,
but with the sufferance of disease-riddled memory,
Yearning agony falling away
into bottoms of jars – to make bitter pills.

Wired to the electric beacons,
I gaze into lengths of darkness,
the immeasurable sands of time.
Staring up at the ceiling of
twisted images manifested
by growth of
tiny refracted slips of light,
Piercing through drawn blinds.

Slurs of grey and white
Encapsulated by inward
circumferences. Deadened
flowers in lone fields of opiates.
Fragile protection of grief lining,
for a poisoned mind.
Injected like venom of a snake,
up through bundles of fibres
to throttle rotten sensations.

*By Rebecca Lawlor
Quirindi High School
QUIRINDI – NSW
Teacher: Anne Scott*

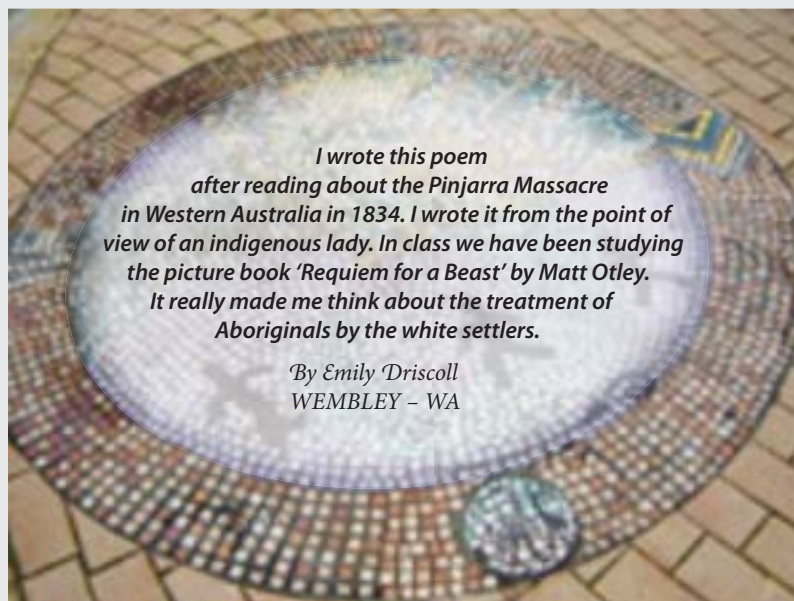
White Ghosts

On one beautiful morning in 1834
I was travelling in search of food along the shore
I was collecting some berries in a basket in my hand
When I noticed something strange, this had not been planned
I ran back to my loyal Bindjareb tribe
I was feeling uneasy, I was getting a vibe
The men came together, this was not good
They told us women to take the kids to the wood
We kissed our husbands, we ran in fear
The men went to the coast each holding a spear
Out on the water a ship was getting close
The men were afraid, what they saw looked like ghosts
The ghosts were fancy, all dressed and clean
They were new to us, like nothing we had seen
Our men ran to us and told us the news
Each one of us had our different views
"They are our elders, back from the dead"
That is what I thought and many people said
After a week we realised this was not the case
These invaders were evil, a deadly race
They killed the tribe near the sea
They were putting up fences and cutting down trees
More were arriving and more tribes were dying
At night all you could hear were the scared children crying
This was not good, we decided to fight
We stood together and gathered all our might
The rain filled clouds covered the sun
And from that moment on the war had begun
Those who had been hit lay still on the ground
The crying and screaming was the worst possible sound
I knew I had to keep going, I couldn't stall
But in the corner of my eye I saw a black figure fall

I turned around and screamed and ran
It was my husband, my love, my strong brave man
I fell down next to his side
Curled into a ball and started to cry
I cried and cried, I had lost my mind
But all of a sudden I was hit from behind
I gasped for air and coughed up blood
I fell on my back in the now red mud
I took one last breath and then slipped away
The ghosts killed me on that awful day
I now look down from the wonderful place above
And realise we were beasts to the ghosts, we could never be loved.

*I wrote this poem
after reading about the Pinjarra Massacre
in Western Australia in 1834. I wrote it from the point of
view of an indigenous lady. In class we have been studying
the picture book 'Requiem for a Beast' by Matt Otley.
It really made me think about the treatment of
Aboriginals by the white settlers.*

*By Emily Driscoll
WEMBLEY – WA*



The Magic Pen

ADDIE was staring out of the window, daydreaming in front of her work sheet. I need a new pen, she thought; mine is running out. Then she remembered she had bought a new pen at the glitter shop. She could feel it in her pocket. It felt warm. She took it out. Her hands tingled. Her fingers gripped it. She felt more able to do the work sheet.

Just then the teacher yelled at her to do her work. The teacher said, "You have only one minute left to do the work sheet or you are staying in".

Sixty seconds, thought Addie. She picked up the pen and started the next part of the work sheet. Suddenly she felt as though someone else was holding her hand. She let go of the pen. She saw that the pen was writing. She thought she was dreaming. She looked up at her teacher to see if she had noticed. She hadn't.

Then the teacher turned around and said "Time's up!". Addie jumped, and looked down at her work sheet. She saw that everything on it had been done. The teacher went up to Addie and took her work sheet and looked at it. "So you were working", she said.

Two seats away Caitlyn had seen Addie's pen writing by itself. She knew Addie had not done the work all by herself. She thought to herself, I must get that magic pen and do better than Addie. Caitlyn was jealous because she had always been the best in the class. She wasn't going to let Addie beat her now.

At playtime Addie put the pen in her pocket for safe-keeping. Caitlyn walked up and said, "Hi Addie! Do you want to go onto the grass and do cartwheels?" Addie knew something was going on because Caitlyn would not normally be nice to her like that. She thought she would go along with her anyway, because what could go wrong just doing cartwheels on the grass?

It wasn't until they were back in school that Addie noticed that her pen was missing. She couldn't look for it then because it was class time. Immediately Addie was out of the classroom

again she rushed back to where she was doing cartwheels, but the pen was nowhere to be found. Then she realised that Caitlyn had tricked her, and taken her pen.

Caitlyn had seen the magic pen fall out of Addie's pocket. When the bell rang, Addie had run off and Caitlyn had picked it up and locked it in her drawer. She had wondered what to do with the key so that she could say she had lost it, and no-one could look in her drawer.

Addie knew that Caitlyn must have locked the pen in her drawer, so she had to find the key. She waited until everyone had left the classroom to go home and then she got some paper and wrote a note to the magic pen asking where the key was, and posted it in Caitlyn's drawer. Then she put her ear to the drawer and heard the pen writing. Suddenly a little piece of paper slipped out of the drawer. Addie picked it up and read:

*Keys cannot be taken home,
If you look please look alone
If you find what must be found
Look inside what spins around.*

Addie was puzzled. She could not see anything spinning around. She looked up at the ceiling fan but she knew that Caitlyn could not reach the fan to put the key there. Addie looked at the teacher's computer chair. It spun around. She went over to the chair and looked underneath it. She tipped the chair upside-down to see if the key had been hooked under the chair. There was nothing there.

Addie repeated to herself:

*If you find what must be found,
Look inside what spins around.*

"What spins around?", she thought. She was about to give up but then she saw the small globe of the earth on the cupboard near the fish tank. Addie went over to it and looked for a way it might open. There was a little line around the equator. She picked up the globe and started to twist it. It came apart. In the bottom half was the key.

Addie goes over to the drawer. She puts the key in the lock. She turns it. Then she hears footsteps in the hall. She gets under the teacher's desk. The footsteps get softer and move away. Addie tiptoes back to the drawer. Now, she thinks. She opens up the drawer and sees the pen sparkling. She picks it up. There is a note beside it. The pen has written: "If you try to steal magic it will work against you, not with you".

Addie decides Caitlyn needs a payback for stealing her magic pen. She goes home and gets her brother's fake spiders.

Addie arrived at school as early as possible the next day. She went straight to Caitlyn's drawer and stuffed all the fake spiders into it. Then she locked it and put the key back into the globe.



The Magic Pen (Cont'd.)

She waited for class to start. The teacher said, "Get your books out of your drawers".

Caitlyn went to her drawer. She screamed out, "Spiders! Spiders!"

One of the boys rushed up to the drawer and yelled out, "They're only fake!". Everyone started laughing.

The teacher walked over and picked up the note. She read aloud, "If you try to steal magic it will work against you, not with you. Now that is something to remember", she said.

*By Emma Mahar, Year 5,
St. Peter Julian Eymard
MOOROOLBARK – VIC.
Teacher: Connie French*

My Brother

My brother is a horror movie,
snarling and ripping through shadowed rooms,
he chases and growls, bearing his fangs.
His heavy step shakes the house
as he thuds around with his torso rumbling.

He squeals with fright,
piercing our ears.
His footsteps are fast and quick,
as he becomes the hunted.
Suddenly his roar bellows back
And the chase begins again.

*By Gabrielle Coard, Year 10,
Eynesbury Senior College
ADELAIDE – SA
Teacher: Shelda Rathmann*

Le Temps Est De L'Essence (Time is of the essence)

TICK, TICK, TICK, TICK, TICK!!!

Fleeting 'Time' – past
Gallop, steaming, thundering past
We're left behind,
In two minds,
Where did 'Time' go?

When do we notice 'Time' in the tabloids?
Are journalists feverishly scribing?
When are we bombarded with 'Time', at the 7 o'clock news?
Are Year 12s zealously essaying?
When does Big Ben ever stop?

In a digital 'Time'
Where hands type, not write,
We are all minute in the Grand Design.
Where we continue to fight
To be better than second.

We face the world,
From dusk till dawn
From midday till midnight
From early till late
But 'Time' never stops!

Are you aware?
What are you doing with your 'Time'?
Is it passing by?
Do you even realise?
Don't watch 'Time' pass by!

TICK, TICK, TICK, TICK, TICK!!!

*By Jake Cole
Year 12
Blackfriars Priory School
PROSPECT – SA
Teacher: Pat Patience*



Anticipated, but the extent would not be known.
So great that cost.

The seeds that had been so well sown,
All lost.

The towns and homes built through years of sweat
Lost in a second as the fire swept.

Once they stood so proud,
Now only ashes, charred.

Orange flame, grey smoke, the rumble loud
Victoria's pride so marred.

Choked air, barren land
The emblem of the fire's hand.

The numbers dead from the orange flame
A flood of tragedy filled

Victoria will never be the same
But WE WILL REBUILD!

Amidst the tragedy, the sorrow
Victoria's true beauty shows

As a single green in the dry furrow
Once fire reigns, then life flows...

What has fallen we will restore
Together, with united soul

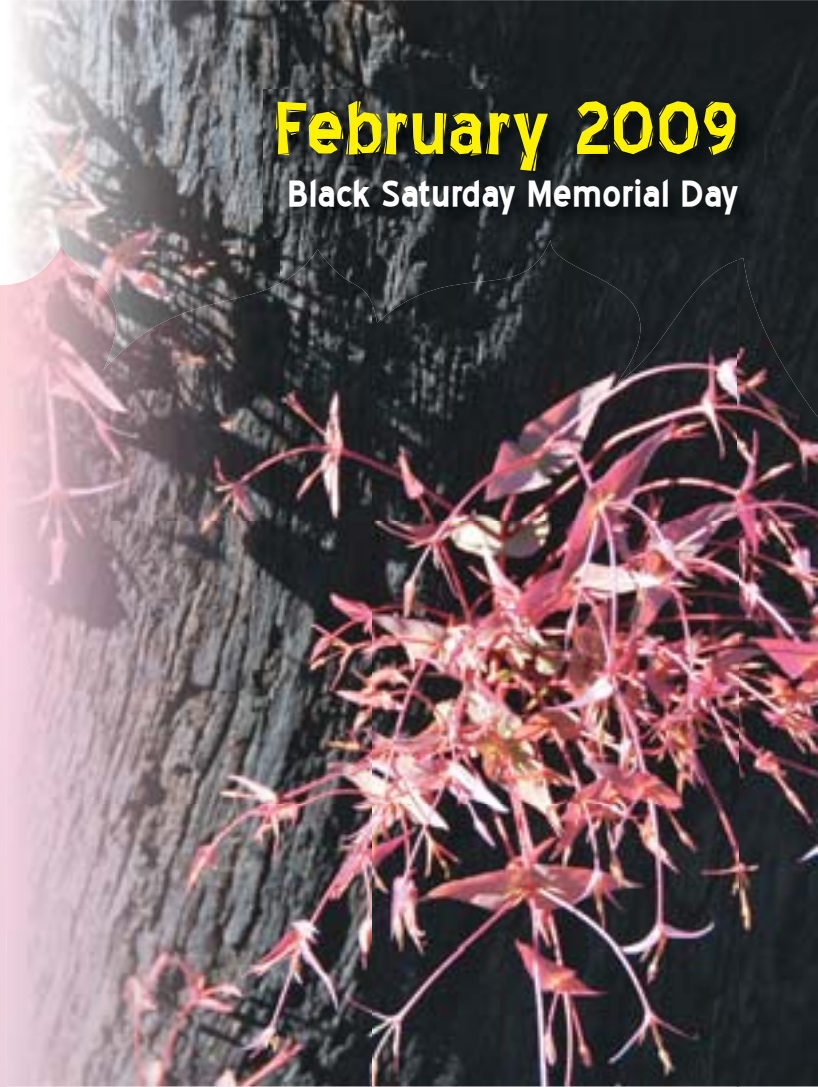
Though Victoria's people have been hit to the core
Though the fire has taken its toll

We shall labour together with help from above
And our work will not be in vain

For from the fire springs forth love
In its fullest – and it will sustain.

February 2009

Black Saturday Memorial Day



A reminder, the ashes remain
The fire's trace not yet sealed

Victoria will never be the same
But WE WILL REBUILD!

*By Evangeline Yong, Age 11,
School: Homeschool
BOX HILL NORTH – VIC.*

The Man Who Owned the Bike

A MAN called Peter owned the Shark Bike. He was a person with tanned skin, small carrot nose and a small mouth. His bike was striped and painted like a shark, that's how it got its name.

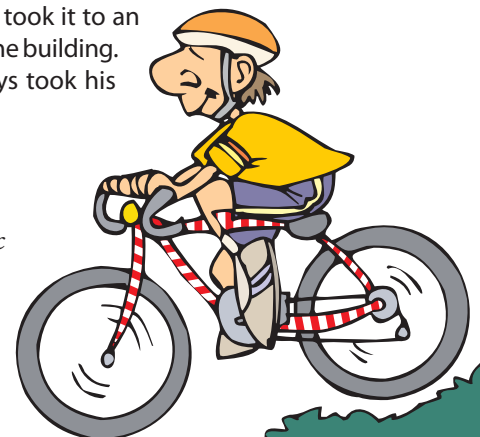
One day the man was riding his bike down a steep hill. He always rode up the hill to use calories each day. He only weighs fifty kilograms but he is quite short. He is so strong that he breaks his dishes when he washes them.

He decided to rest for a few days, so he left his bike outside and a thief took it! When he was outside he shouted angrily, "Someone stole my bike!"

Peter explored everywhere looking for his bike, each time

passing a house. There was one more place to search. It was the Thief's Hideout. He saw his bike so he quickly took it to an asphalt area near the building. After this he always took his bike inside.

*By Leslie Fang
Year 3
Manly West Public
School
GLEN IRIS
– NSW*



The Best Day of My Life

THE seventh of February was going to be the best day of my life, my wedding day. I looked over the mountain of pillows where my fiancé, Susan's head should have been to see the digital clock that had the fluoro green numbers 6:23 on it. This fortunately meant I had to get out of bed in seven minutes and start getting ready for my perfect wedding.

After the long seven minutes had passed I pulled myself out of bed and went straight to my ensuite. There was no time to waste as I only had three hours to get ready. I scrubbed my dark tanned skin until it hurt and washed my golden brown hair with Susan's favourite shampoo and then walked to my robe to collect my only suit, the one I spent a whole week's pay on. I slipped the suit out of the cover that kept it untainted in the very dusty wardrobe. I removed the snow white shirt and charcoal black suit jacket from the coat hanger and carefully lay them on the bed. I slowly slithered my arms into the sleeves and then drew the button hole and button together over my smooth chest. Once I was dressed, I peeked around the corner into the bathroom where a tall handsome man stood.

I looked in the mirror at my angel-like perfection, my short wavy hair still wet from the shower, my straight white teeth glistening in the sunlight and immense happiness in my eyes because today was the day that I, Matthew Truston, was getting married to the love of my life. I was in my own world looking at my beautiful reflection when there were three frustrated knocks on the front door. I power-walked to the door expecting that it was my best man. As I opened the door I smiled, realising my wedding day was actually here. When I looked up, I gasped for air and squeezed out the words "What's wrong?"

Two policemen stood at the door with their hats to their chest and a sorrowful look on their faces. The taller policeman opened his mouth and with a soft voice he said "It's your fiancée. She's dead". When I heard those painful words, I dropped to my knees. I felt my heart shatter into thousands of pieces, tears spilled down my face as I screamed in agony. I heard the policeman talk but I couldn't hear him, for all I could hear was his excruciating words "She's dead".

The shorter policeman knelt down next to me and whispered gently in my ear, "Would you please come with us to identify the body?"

I mumbled back "I'll take myself. I need some thinking time".

I wasn't actually sure if I would go; I wasn't sure if I could even drive and I knew the police were very aware of that when they nodded with uncertainty. I slowly walked to the garage thinking what I should do with my life now that my love was gone. I walked into the garage, wandering around blindly with my tear-filled eyes. Suddenly I screamed in anguish as I hopped on the foot I hadn't just stubbed on a container of petrol. As I picked it up to move it out of the way, I had a brainwave of ideas. I had a change of mind and I held the petrol in one hand and changed my direction to the back yard.

I walked to the location where a pile of dry leaves lay and I made the leaves into a circle around me. I opened the lid of the petrol with my shaking hands and began pouring the petrol over the leaves. Without thinking I tore my jacket, making the buttons pop out onto the dead grass. Still blinded by the tears in my eyes I ripped off the rest of my expensive suit and dumped it on the ground. I grasped the petrol container in my sweaty hand, and tipped most of it over my wedding suit and with the last few litres, I covered my miserable body.

I bent down and searched through my ruined suit's pocket for my cigarette lighter. I grabbed it with my trembling hand and stood up straight. Petrol dripped down my face, blending with my tears as I tossed the flame-bearing lighter on the petrol-soaked foliage and let the fire consume the leaves. I watched the leaves blacken and turn to ash and fell to the ground as the throbbing in my legs took over. I felt the fire sweep over me, which was when in a painful realisation I knew that this was the end, the end of my life.

By Lauren Young
Year 9, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College – Enfield
ENFIELD – SA

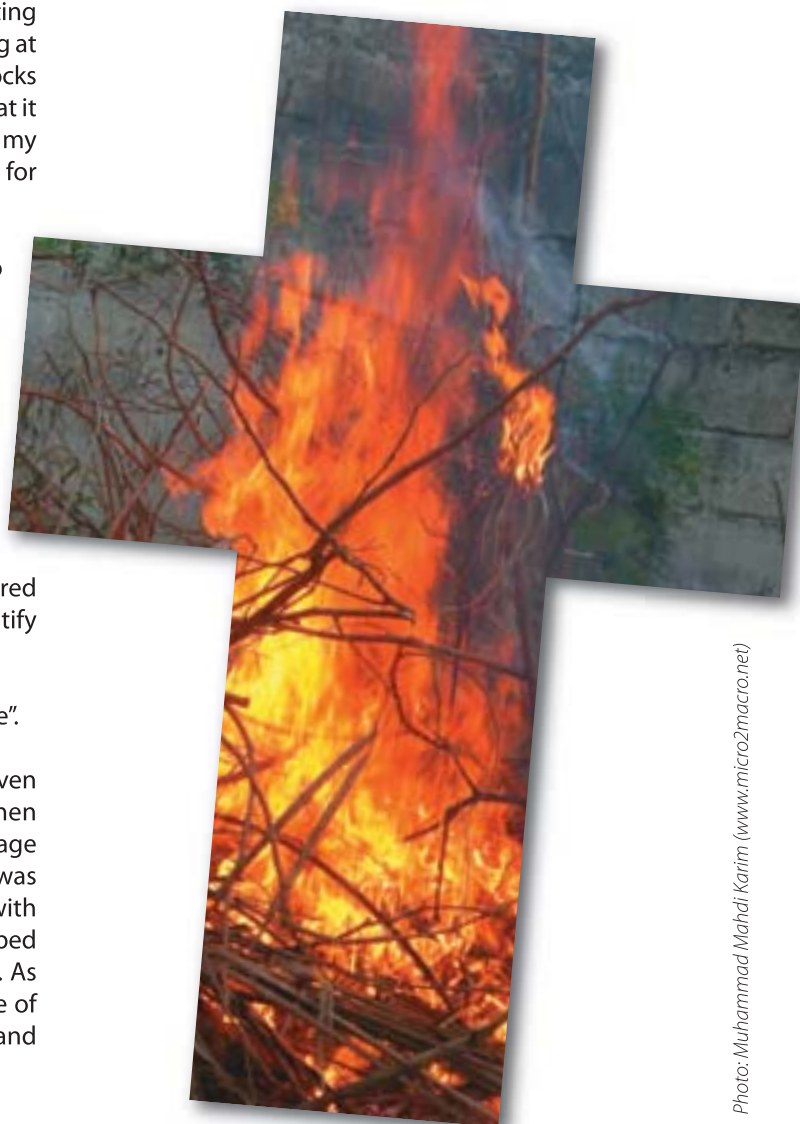


Photo: Muhammad Mahdi Karim (www.micro2macro.net)

“untitled”

HOOFES clattered on the cobbled pathway as Isabelle McNamara rode along the seemingly endless road. Her mount, a pure white horse-like creature, proceeded, though the two of them had already travelled miles, most of the distance over rougher terrain. To Isabelle, it seemed as though there was nothing left in the world except hard rock and grey horizons.

Isabelle shifted her weight. Even after two days of travelling, she had not yet grown used to being perched uncomfortably in front of the wing joints of the magnificent beast that was her only companion on the dangerous journey that lay ahead of her. A dangerous journey from which she may not return.

It had all begun one cold night in December, when the city of Dubrovnik, Isabelle's home, had been invaded. The city, however, had a lookout in the form of Pagiflius, the winged horse that Isabelle had taken care of, that was now taking care of her. Pagiflius had patrolled the skies, looking for any signs of trouble, and defending the city. It was he who had seen the invaders approaching, and it was due to him that all of the original inhabitants of the city had escaped. Oh, what a scene it had been. The sharp horn of the invaders rent the air but already the town was in chaos. Families, trying to stay together, to salvage some small belongings before fleeing to nearby, hidden caves. Animals, confused by the commotion, charging about in all directions, rearing and snorting and barking and covering up all the footprints of the escaping villagers. And circling above was Pagiflius with, for the first time in history, the small shape of a human girl perched upon his back and clutching at his long flowing mane, unnoticed in the desperate mayhem below.

The leader of the invaders had been a wizard whose power could be matched by only one other. The one other wizard would, in the course of time, pass on the magical powers to a child, legend said. A child who had shown bravery in the face of danger and had fought on even when almost alone and hope was gone from the world. A child to whom magic came naturally, who didn't have to think about learning magic but did it as instinctively as breathing. It was said that in years to

come, that child would inherit the magical powers that had been legend since the beginning of time. Strangely, it was this child that the magician had thought of as he, furious that the people of Dubrovnik could not be taken for slaves, sliced his wand through the air. And strangely, as from it shot a jet of light and a pool of grey had spread from the point where the beam had touched the ground, he thought, that somewhere he detected a small ripple... a ripple caused only by the strongest type of magic.



The pool of grey covered everything, draining the colours from the once cheerful town of Dubrovnik. From there it grew, to turn the scraggly green bushes of the country side to a drab, grey spread of land.

As the wizard stepped back upon his grand vessel, he had felt unnerved by the small disturbance that he had felt. Surely the child that legend spoke of would not be around for many, many years to come. Still, it would be foolish not to check if there was any purple glow in the pool of magical change. A purple glow would show a new beginning. The fiercer the light, the closer the beginning would be.

The wizard could see in his mind the child, the child of legend. Dressed in flowing purple robes with a elegant, regal carriage, the child would radiate magic. The child would, of course, not be alone. He would have an army around him, a devoted army, a strong army. And his identity could be found in the pool of magical change. So the wizard must make his journey there – And make it alone.

★ ★ ★

Isabelle sighed as her thoughts turned once more to the curse. Though the land and buildings were varying shades of grey that was not the worst of it. Oh, no. Every single person's identity, their sense of self, vanished. They appeared to be robots, saying the same things in the same dull voice. Isabelle had been protected from the effects by Pagiflius, who had a powerful magic of his own. She kept her personality and thoughts individual, and was the only one who could do anything, though as she did not know exactly what spell had been cast and the extent of the damage, even that was questionable.

Isabelle slid off Pagiflius and landed with a soft thud on the pale grey grass, where she stretched her aching muscles, feeling a little light headed. Her meagre supplies were diminished, and there was not enough left to sustain both her and Pagiflius well. Pagiflius did not have enough energy to fly to Cavtat, where the wizard of legend would be, guarding the pale waters of the fabled Pool of Magical Change, hidden deep in a cavern. It was Isabelle's only hope.

Isabelle, by now more or less used to the hardships of this troubled time snatched up handfuls of the dull grass, and began arranging it into a makeshift bed. She looked up to call Pagiflius to her side, but the whistle died on her lips, for what she saw took her breath away. Pagiflius, pure white and shining, pranced across the barren landscape, mane flying. The grey sunset cast light that danced off his gleaming coat, making even the dreary countryside seem to come alive. Isabelle, drawing breath once more, whistled softly once, and Pagiflius trotted immediately to her side. Isabelle rubbed his smooth white coat, trying to get as much dirt as she could from it, and also gaining comfort from the warmth beneath her hands. At last, she gave up. Although Isabelle knew that it was important for Pagiflius's wings to stay free of dirt, she was just too tired. Nothing mattered much to her except for sleep. Everything else could wait until morning.

“untitled” (Cont’d.)

Isabelle woke the next morning just as the first gray rays of sunshine were finding their way to Europe. Her muscles were aching. Painstakingly, she groomed Pagiflius of all dirt and matted grass. As the sun worked its way higher into the sky, she pondered why the sunlight was also gray. Was it possible that the curse had actually spread that far? Or did anything passing through the atmosphere turn gray on its way down to Earth?

Isabelle sighed. There was, after all, little point in thinking. All that really mattered was ending the dreadful time of darkness. If they set off soon, they could hope to reach Cavtat by early evening at the latest.

★ ★ ★

Isabelle had at last reached the final hill that overlooked the seaside town of Cavtat when rain began to fall in earnest. Pagiflius shook his head in displeasure, sending shining droplets flying through the air. “It’s not far now”, Isabelle soothed, reaching forward to pat Pagiflius’s firm, wet neck. She nudged the creature, but he baulked, refusing to move forwards. Isabelle thought that she knew why. She had grown up surrounded by the little, everyday magic that all possessed the small magic that healed the sick and helped with harvests. She could feel something different here. Isabelle could sense, through the deep swell of magic from the pool that was always there, a sort of decay, as though the magic was tinged by something darker, more dangerous.

Isabelle gazed towards the ocean, the strong wind whipping her hair. Dark gray waves pounded against the rock, and thunder crashed overhead as lightning lit up the sky. Isabelle felt a rising sense of foreboding. The town did not in any way look welcoming. She shook herself as Pagiflius snorted. She was tired and wet. She was probably just imagining things.

Isabelle stood, shivering, in front of the huge door that was the entrance to the wizard’s cave. The door was magnificent with intricate carvings showing tales of magic and wizardry.

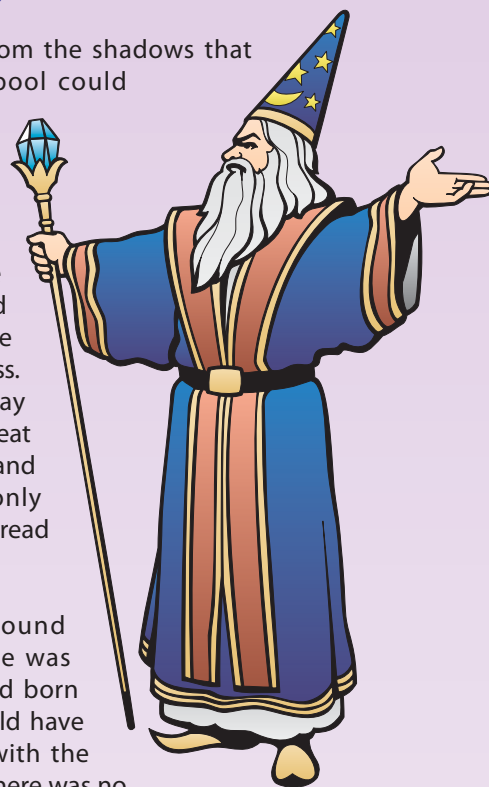
Isabelle raised one trembling hand towards the large brass door knocker that hung on the gray door. She felt Pagiflius’s wet muzzle on her arm and suddenly Isabelle felt strength rushing through her. She was not alone.

The door slid open to reveal a stone passage. Walking slowly along it, Isabelle suddenly felt eerie. It was just too quiet. The dark, rough walls of the passage were cloaked in darkness and the floor was damp and wet.

Suddenly, Isabelle came to an abrupt halt as the passage widened. Before her lay a smooth pool, surrounded by a fierce purple glow. On the still surface, two lines of writing were clearly visible.

“Speak the words you know so well, though you have never heard them”, Isabelle murmured.

Then, suddenly, from the shadows that the glow of the pool could not penetrate a tall figure emerged. He was cloaked in long robes, but Isabelle could feel that this was not the magic that spread light. It was the type that left all in darkness. The feeling of decay was stronger. The great wizard had gone, and in his place was only the one who had spread the grey.



Isabelle gazed around desperately. Where was the child? The child born to magic who would have become the one with the power to protect. There was no one. Nothing of the old magic was left, nothing except the fierce, eternal glow of the Pool of Magical Change.

The wizard spoke. “What did you see in the pool of change?”

“Nothing! I saw nothing.” Somehow Isabelle knew to lie. Yet surely the wizard could tell. And there was no one there to help her.

The wizard seemed to know what she was thinking. “There is no one.” He spoke in a soft, dangerous voice. “You are alone.”

Isabelle heard the words yet they somehow gave her courage. She drew herself up tall. She was not alone, and she never would be. She had Pagiflius, and he had her. Isabelle slowly started edging around the pool, Pagiflius by her side.

The wizard gazed at Isabelle. “You saw the face of the child.” He hissed, and for the first time, something like fear flitted across his face.

“No, I did not.” This time Isabelle spoke the truth.

The wizard stared for a second. “It matters not.” He said, “I will find out soon. The light of the pool has never been so bright. The child is coming. And I will be ready.” The wizard’s voice was cruel and sinister and his gaze left Isabelle’s face, turning instead to the glowing purple waters.

Isabelle was at last on the far side of the pool. As she watched, the wizard drew his wand. Suddenly feeling rushed back into Isabelle’s numb brain and limbs as she understood. The wizard had no need for her. And that meant...

Cont’d...

“untitled” (Cont’d.)

As the wizard sent a jet of light at Pagiflius, Isabelle launched herself in front of him. She would not let Pagiflius be harmed. Yet just as the jet came near Isabelle, it shot away, reflected by some invisible force. Isabelle didn’t give herself time to think.

In one smooth, fluid motion, she mounted Pagiflius, and wheeled him around to face the opening at the end on the passage. Without any signal from Isabelle, the great winged horse cantered forwards and then launched himself into the air in the tunnel. Isabelle heard the angry shout of the wizard but Pagiflius was flying far too fast for anything to hurt them. Yet just for a second, as she had gazed down at the pool of magical change, Isabelle could have sworn that she had seen her own face reflected in its waters.

Suddenly they were soaring upwards, free at last from the dark confines of the tunnel. Isabelle still felt shaky. What had happened to deflect the spell? Did Pagiflius really have magic strong enough to deflect such dark magic?

The wind swept her long hair back and Pagiflius rose until the two of them were enveloped in the wispy whiteness of the clouds. With strong steady wing beats, Isabelle was carried back towards her home. Back towards where she was, at least temporarily, safe. When Pagiflius at last landed, Isabelle gazed around the town, now in darkness as night had fallen. Isabelle felt so scared, so insignificant. Who could she turn to for help now?

There was no one, no way forwards, no way to save the town... No way to save the world. The child from legend was, after all, just a legend. Who was left?

She was left. She was the only one, but she was still there, still fighting. The writing on the pool... “speak the words that you know so well, though you have never heard them”. Perhaps some things came from within. Perhaps the child from the legend was not one born to magic... Perhaps it was one who became part of magic.

Raising her cupped hands to the sky, Isabelle heard a chant coming from within. She had never heard it, but its sound was as familiar to her as Pagiflius’s soft whinny.

*Let all that is true conquer all that is not,
Let love and courage that come from within, save our world.
For it is ours.*

A jet of brilliant light streamed down to Isabelle’s hands. It whirled, not gas nor liquid nor solid, but definitely real. Isabelle bent to the ground and gently brought her fingers apart, dropping the light onto the ground it spread. It brought colour back and made happiness more than a word... It became a truth. The people, seemed to wake from a daze, and turned as one by one to face Isabelle, their leader, their savior and guide. Isabelle, however gazed out to the Eastern sky, Pagiflius’s pale head resting on her shoulder. The first rays of sunlight had begun to shine down, a bright pinkish orange light.

Isabelle smiled. Never had the beginning of a new day seemed so bright.

*By Laura McArthur, Year 3,
Methodist Ladies’ College, KEW – VIC.
Teacher: Claire Reid*

I Peeked Out of the Window



I peeked out of the window
I saw many wild animals
A possum was eating a gnat
Two koalas were having chit chat
Three kangaroos stood still on the path
Four kookaburras were being silly and laugh
Five wombats used all their might to dig
Six echidnas tried to poke a slithery snake
Seven flying foxes were ready to glide
Eight baby bandicoots wanted to have a ride
Nine dingoes were walking on tip-toes
Ten Tasmanian Devils were fighting for a bowl
I loved the scenery
But my eyes were weary
I returned to sleep
When the night was still deep

*By Phoebe Leung, Year 5,
Pinewood Primary School
MOUNT WAVERLEY – VIC.
Teacher: Mrs Jessica Murphy*

GONE FOREVER

Lifeless plains,
Stretched out
Further than I can see.
Once magnificent rainforest
Gone forever.

What was it like before?
Towering trees
Ruling over the land and animals.

Walking over crumbling land,
Trudging across the dirt,
Sitting on a tree stump,
Examining the ground.
No life.

Walking back to the car,
...a little seed!
Hope.
Pick it up,
In my pocket.
Excited,
Worried,
My secret.

In the car,
Watching the cracked, crumbled earth
Flashing past.

"Stop!"
Digging the hard soil
With my hands,
Dirt in my fingernails,
Starting the rainforest again.

A month later
A tree shoots.
The rainforest grows again.

How can you help
The rainforest come back?

I could,
You can.

Dear Lord,
Help us to realise
How important
The rainforest is
To us,
And the animals,
And the plants.

*By Eleanor Gershevitch
Age 10, Our Lady of the Nativity
LAWSON – NSW*

Bali

Bali is a sunset right in front of you
And you can make new friends
Lay down at the beach on the golden sand
I know you will see what I see

*By Waverley White
Year 4, Manly West Primary School
BALGOWLAH – NSW*

DIVISION



I TWIST and turn in the cold, hard hospital bed that has been my second home for as long as I can remember. A cold sweat has developed on my forehead and the blaring light from the small television above my bed does not help the searing pain in my head. I turn to the right, trying to find a comfortable position which is difficult with tubes running all over my body and needles inserted in my hands. I glance over to the foot of my bed and see my mother slumped in the green armchair. Her chest peacefully rises and falls and she is snoring gently. I envy her. She can escape, at least for a couple of hours.

I turn again, onto my back. There is pain with every movement but the strongest pain is in my stomach. Anxiety swirls around in my gut. I press my hands against it, attempting to dull the pain but wince when I push too hard. I try to remind myself that tomorrow is the day that I have been waiting for. Tomorrow I will be free from the stab of needles, the pushing and prodding of the doctors, free at last from the everlasting strain of sickness.

I turn onto my side with another rush of agony. I watch the clock tick slowly past 2am. Tick, tick, tick.

This is unbearable. With the thoughts of freedom come merciless thoughts of fear. In just a few hours time I could die. I feel a tear roll down my cheek, a tear for my family. I no longer care for my own life but for the lives of my loved ones. The ones who have had to watch me in pain. The ones who have had to endure years of sleepless nights. The ones whose lives would crumble if I were to leave them.

I have a one in a million chance of success. I could be that one, or I could be included in the million. It does not matter what category I will be placed in. Either outcome, death or life, will let me escape and that is the only thing that I need.

★ ★ ★

I must have fallen asleep. I wake to find my mother's face smiling down at me. I look into her eyes and see that they are wet and full of worry. The bags beneath them have changed into a darker shade of grey.

"Good morning, sweetheart", she coos, her voice broken, "It's time now".

I nod. The smiling nurses transfer me onto a trolley, muttering sugary words of reassurance that I do not listen to. All that I can hear is my heartbeat grow louder.

A new wave of anxiousness sweeps through my body. I watch the lights on the ceiling zoom past me as I am wheeled down the white corridor. The trolley stops. I hear the nurse speak.

"I'm sorry but this is as far as you can go. You're going to have to wait here now, Mrs Ford."

My mother's hand tightens around mine and she leans down to kiss me on my forehead.

"I love you", she whispers.

I smile and she lets go of my hand.

I am pushed through the double doors and into a room filled with silver machines and strange instruments. It seems colder in here and it smells sickeningly of disinfectant. I am lifted from my bed onto the icy tabletop. A surgeon enters and walks over to me. He can sense the fear in my eyes and places a comforting hand over mine. A mask is placed over my mouth. The pain in my stomach is dulled and I fall into darkness, listening to the rhythmic beep of my heartbeat.

*By Ashleigh Maihi, Year 10,
Castle Hill High School, CASTLE HILL – NSW*

Can You Follow?

Time loses presence when someone isn't there,
Time loses meaning when no one's left to care.

Time loses purpose when the darkness is complete,
Time is a force with which no one can compete.
However...

Time will remain when the world is good and done,
Time will not slow, time's only just begun.

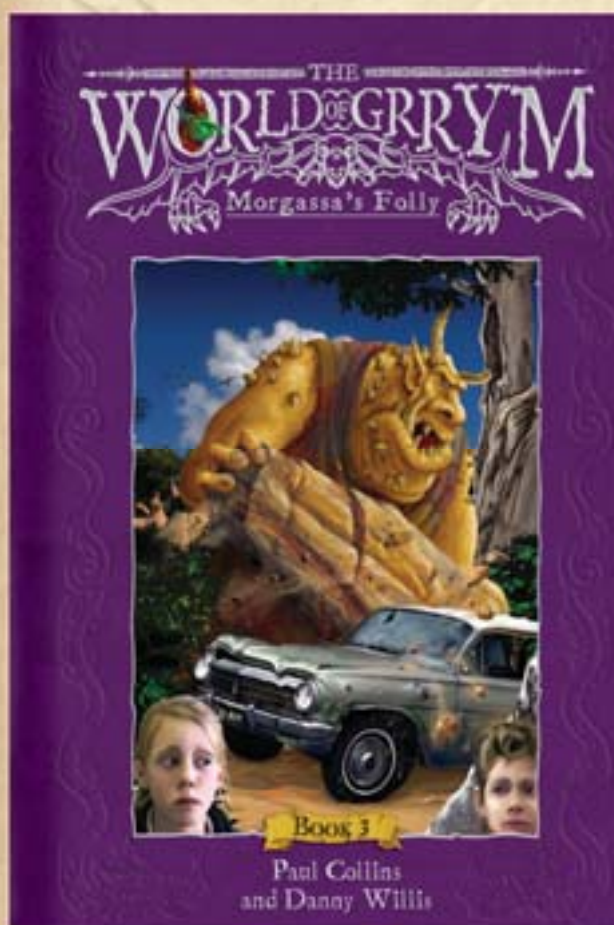
Dripping Ink

*By Lauren Elizabeth Hay
Age 14,
Wynyard High School,
WYNYARD – TAS.*



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Morgassa's Folly



Book 3



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