

# OZ KIDS IN PRINT



**Issue 3, 2021**

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**Pictured: Marjory Gardner, Meredith Costain, Phil Kettle, Marc McBride, Paul Collins and George Ivanoff.**

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'Snowy'  
Front cover image by  
**Tarni McCosker**  
2019 Dymocks Camberwell Art Award

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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

It's Spring. Some of you may not have noticed, as States have had days and weeks of lockdowns. Some students are not getting outside to see the changing season. It has happened while most are too busy just getting homeschooling done, and/or studying for exams. This is how we feel right now. Time just continues and it seems to go too fast.

We have all seeing the same four walls a bit too much. Whatever it is you prefer, take your supplies outside and work there. Look around and get inspired by what is happening there. Take a photo and write about it, or think of where you would like to be, then write about it.

Even though we haven't received a large amount of entries, we certainly understand why. The entries have been more creative and imaginative. Art entries have increased, which shows what students are enjoying doing.

Stay safe and...

**KEEP ON DREAMING and WRITING (TYPING)!**



*Carol Dick*  
Managing Editor

Find us on 

# DOG ATTACK

**E**ARLY on a Sunday morning I was out on a jog with my dog Rouzy. Rouzy was a cattle dog and need a lot of exercise so here I was on a Sunday morning walking her. I was going the usual way. We jogged around the block which was 5km, then down Hiccup street where I let Rouzy off the lead.

I was halfway when a black dog jumped out of nowhere!! The dog had blood red eyes and teeth as sharp as knives. I stumbled backwards but I fell over and accidently let go of the lead! Rouzy took this as her chance and lunged forward growling and snapping her teeth at the black dog. I could already tell this was going to be bad.

There was lots of barking and then Rouzy ran away!! My head was spinning as I stood up. I was hoping that the dog would be gone and Rouzy would be back but as I stood up properly Rouzy was still gone and the dog was still growling and staring at me ready to lunge.

As it came closer I started trembling in fear. Now it was too close for comfort and crazy thoughts started whirring through my head. Should I climb that tree and jump on it? NO WAY!! Should I play dead? No. YES I've got it. Pretending to fall over I picked up a rock and threw it down the path. As the dog spun around to inspect what the sound was I pounced forwards and jumped onto the dog's back riding it as if I were a jockey!

The dog fell to the ground whimpering. I wasn't going to fall for that trick so thinking quick I ripped off my necklace and tied it around the dog's neck like a collar. Well done I told myself. I spoke too soon because I didn't know what to do with the dog now. I was the boss so it would go wherever I went.

Suddenly I heard someone calling a dog's name. "TWINKLE WHERE ARE YOU?!" Twinkle? I thought. And then the dog's ears perked up. That must be the dog's name, Twinkle! I unclipped the necklace on the dog and it ran to a boy stepping out on the same path as me. "TWINKLE there you are!"

The boy had mousy brown hair just like me! He had bright blue eyes and was carrying ROUZY!! "ROUZY" I screamed. With her tail wagging at the speed of light she jumped out of the boy's arms and at top speed sprinted towards me. "Hi my name's Angus" said the boy "but you can call me Gus". "Hi Gus my name's Amy." Now as I looked down at the Twinkle she was wagging her tail and looked friendly. Rouzy and Twinkle were playing! The change in her was remarkable. We are best friends now and Twinkle... well she's starting to like me.

By **Lila Hall**  
Year 4

*Eagle Junction State School*  
*Clayfield, Qld.*

*Teacher: Mrs Gemma Burchard*



# JAMES' BIG JOURNEY

**H**IS SWORD went straight through the skull of him, like cutting butter. Killing him. His town was free, he did it.

James lived in the town Phoenix, with his caretaker Rodgers who treated him like a father, he was James's everything. A once enchanted land, people could sing, dance and just relax until their hearts were content. This land was so very magical. The water and food was amazing. The water and Earth benders were very nice. If only thing stayed like that. The evil good for nothing sorcerer Phoenix took over, ruling with an iron fist. It... All... Changed! Thousands of people died, those who remained here, lived in horror and terror.

James had finished his daily jobs after hours, practicing kung fu, studying the arts of water and Earth benders and meditation. A water bender is a person who can move water with their hands, and a Earth bender is a person who can move rocks, trees and dirt with their hands. They protected the village from evil spirits, but when we needed them most they disappeared into thin air.

"James, I have a surprise for you, come over to me", yelled Rodger. The only surprise James ever got was goblins killing him in his nightmares. He rushed to Rodgers.

"W... w... what is it", James stuttered feeling as scared as an elephant seeing a

mouse but as excited as a jumpy kangaroo.

"The past 14 years you have mastered kung fu and learned about water and Earth benders, I think it is time to test you", said Rodgers with a smirk on his face as big as Uluru. He grabbed a bucket and filled it up with water.

"Now try to move it", said Rodgers.

"That's impossible", responded James in confusion. Rodger just walked out of the room. A few hours later, James tried again. He moved his hand and noticed the water had gone out of the bucket. A few hours went by, he had given up. He remembered, his Dad used to say,

"When in doubt don't give up meditate." He began to meditate. He tried again to move the water, he had made a sharp sword, he did it. Then he tried to make a bubble around him and other objects it worked, he did it. A day later, James could make a sharp sword and a bubble around him and other objects.

"You are ready my boy, you are a water bender. Go defeat Sorcerer Phoenix", said Rodger watching from the door.

"I won't let you down", replied James. James had never been allowed out of the house because the small green goblins would get him and kill him. James did not know how far he had walked, it felt like an eternity.

James was so tired his eyes just got heavier and heavier, he fainted. He woke up in a tiny cage, with 3 concrete walls and one wall being strong metal bars.

"Where am I?" he thought to himself. Goblins approached his sad gloomy cage.

"Chosen one he is, kill him we must." They spoke a language that puzzled him, but he assumed that they were going to kill him because they were holding giant spears. They opened the cage, James stabbed one in the face going right through its skull. It fell to the ground, some ran away as fast as a cheetah but some stayed holding their ground. He sprinted down the long corridor.

"That was cool", thought James. One tiny goblin shot a tiny poison dart at him. It stopped, it hit something as hard as steel he had caught it with the water. "Where did that water come from?" James questioned in his head. He looked to his right, he saw a goblin with all the water sucked out of him.

James used the water and put the two ugly green goblins in a huge water bubble suffocating them, until they drowned. He scooped up the water in his bottle his beautiful Mom gave him and sprinted down the spiral stairs that went on forever.

*By Lucas Gronberg  
Year 5, Greenslopes State School  
Greenslopes, Qld.*



# Man's Best Friend

**T**HE YEAR was 1928. I had just turned 31 when I finished my training and enrolled into the New South Wales Police force. I never knew how immature people could be while working until I met my colleagues who were absolute fools. I was different. I liked to get the job done quickly and get on with life.

I came back from the office one day, tired from work, and saw my wife making dinner.

"Hey doll", I said while taking off my buzzer and coat and placing them on the rack. I put my hat down and went to smell the food she was making.

"Hey Rob", she said, placing creamed beef on toast onto the dinner table. I sat down across from her and started eating.

"How was your day?" She asked me.

"Same as usual. Boring. No one in that place takes their jobs seriously enough", I said back. She told me that I need to lighten up and have fun, but no. These people needed to be working, not messing around.

The dull days continued as a blur and time passed quickly up until 1932. I was working at my desk when the chief came out of his office to deliver some 'important news'.

"Attention coppers", he said with demand. He whistled once and an Alsatian dog came waltzing out. "This is Laura", he announced. "She's going to be partnered up with one of you." As if on cue, all the policemen started to inch forward towards the dog, started patting it and calling it cute names. Its fur was jet black with pure white on its socks and nose. I guess you could call it cute, but it was more majestic and strong, than adorable and fluffy.

"Jones!" said the chief interrupting my thoughts.

"Yes sir?" I asked.

"You'll be Laura's partner." Around the room I heard annoyed grunts and felt everyone's eyes on me.

"You want me to work with that thing!?" I blurted out.

"Yes", he replied.

"But she's just a stupid dog! She can't do anything!" The dog looked at me unimpressed and I could already tell we weren't going to get along. The chief gave me a stern look. "Fine", I gave in. I turned to face the dog. "I guess I'm just going to have to deal with you now Lara", I said annoyed. The dog growled at me.

"Oh, I forget to mention she hates it when you get her name wrong", the chief told me mockingly.

Months had passed and although the dog had made it clear to me that she didn't like me, everything was going rather smoothly.

Then the Great Depression hit. Stock markets had hit a low and people were running out of money. Luckily for me, my salary was well enough to keep me and my wife on our feet. It was still disappointing to see billions of people on the streets begging for food and money though.

It was 1935. Three years with Laura and we just hadn't been getting along. Nothing would bring us together... Or so I thought...

I went home one night with Laura to find my wife Mandy on our kitchen floor. I felt sweat running down from my forehead down to my chin and could feel my heart pounding. I called the ambulance and told them what happened. They told me they were on their way. I looked back towards Mandy, and Laura had been pouncing on her chest. I started shouting at Laura to stop because she was harming Mandy and only making it worse but soon enough, Mandy was awake. It was some kind of miracle! Laura had performed some kind of CPR on Mandy! It was at that moment that I realised... I loved Laura.

From then on, Laura had been treated like royalty by me. I don't know why I couldn't see it before, but she really was man's best friend.

I made her feel special and she returned those feelings. For the first time in ages, I had loosened up and was living life at its finest!

The year was 1937. It was Christmas eve and Laura and I were just assigned a case of a kidnapped girl in Windsor.

After searching for 30 long hours, Laura finally picked up the scent of the little girl and tracked it back to an abandoned house. She followed a trail to a creek where we found the pale distorted body of a girl in the water near some rocks. Although the girl was dead, we successfully captured the murderer and put him behind bars for his life. It was Laura's biggest achievement and everyone down at the station was so proud of her, as was I.



Two years passed and the police were holding a carnival! Laura and I were both invited to walk in a parade along with all her dog friends! There was music, tug-of-war, and more than 50,000 people having the time of their lives. I let Laura go play while Mandy and I walked together on a late evening stroll down a path of trees.

We were walking down the aisle of jacarandas hand in hand when Mandy

fell to the ground having a seizure. I tried to help her, but it was too late. By the time the ambulance came, she was already gone. Her hand still clasped in mine; I was reassuring her that everything was going to be okay, but I wasn't telling her that... I was trying to calm myself down because I knew I wouldn't take it well. I felt tears running down my cheeks. My eyes stinging at the thought that I would never hear her melodic voice again.

I tried to forget about everything, but that wasn't very effective. From then on, I knew that I had to learn to cherish and appreciate everything that I'm so lucky to have.

By **Hannah Cox**

Year 8, Cheltenham Girls High School  
North Epping, NSW  
Teacher: Lara Curtis

## Friend from the Sea

**S**PLASH! I dived into the cooling water, like a bullet. I was so ready to explore the mysterious world under the sea. I felt the force of the next wave crashing over my head and Mum calling out, "Don't swim out too far!" But out of nowhere, a tiny dolphin calf shot up to me.

"Hi, little dolphin. Where is your mother?" The water rippled away from me, pushing Dolphin Calf away a tiny bit.

"Chee-chee-ee!" She chattered in confusion. I scanned the vast area. There wasn't a single pod around, let alone one looking for her." I'll tell mum to ask SeaWorld. They'll know what to do."

An hour later...

"So you say this calf wasn't with a pod?" A man questioned, tapping his chin.

I quietly answered that she wasn't and he turned on his heel and silently strode away.

The Big-looking Man and his team carried Dolphin Calf into a big truck and noisily drove away.

His big, burly body was slightly intimidating, but I couldn't worry about that now. The worst thing that I found out was that the poor calf's mother had died, making tears roll down my cheeks. The little dolphin was without a mum and lost! That night I twisted and turned in bed, but I just couldn't sleep. For some reason, I was starting to care deeply about the Dolphin Calf and her safety.

I woke up the next morning with the sun beating down on my bed. "Mum, can I send an email to SeaWorld?"

She agreed, and surprisingly, with no question, Mum kindly gave me their email address that the Big-looking Man gave her. T-tit-diddit-tit. I was done typing in about fifteen minutes flat. Mum nodded her head and pressed "send".

A week later, we finally got a reply, although it wasn't very useful. It read:

*"Thanks. Your question was worth asking, but you have to wait one more day.*

*Kind Regards, SeaWorld."*

We let the long day pass. Then finally – FINALLY! – we got a proper reply.

*"Mrs. Edwards, we have found a compromise. You can live near SeaWorld, there is a respectable home you can buy. And you won't need to worry about education, as there is a great school nearby. Sincerely, SeaWorld."*

"YES!" I squealed, 'Yes!' I couldn't wait. Thankfully, Mum said yes too. So we would be moving to live near SeaWorld.

But wait! It also read, "P.S. We've named her Lillian." I beamed broadly.

At least, the little dolphin was in good hands.

By **Shaambhavi Modak**

Year 4, Eagle Junction State School  
Clayfield, Qld.  
Teacher: Mrs Gemma Burchard



**G**LEAMING down on me, the sun roasted my skin like a marshmallow on a campfire and my feet charred in the scorching, red dirt around me that enveloped all land as far as the eye could see. The lofty, metal clothesline cast many reedy lines over the ground and the bronzed skin of my two siblings who sat in front of me. I watched as two drops of sweat travelled down my arm, it reminded me of the race that I had just won against my babana and djurumin. The neighbourhood was strangely quieter today than usual but it didn't seem to bother us.

Regaining our energy, we sat outside swigging small glasses of tepid badu, preparing ourselves for another

game. We were to play hide and seek next. Placing our glasses down on the table, we paused to decide who would be 'it' in our first game. As we came to a decision, the fun was put on hold when our Wiyanga rushed out of the house and demanded that we come inside immediately, her usually joyful voice now sounded tense and uneasy. Almost immediately, we stood up and began the gloomy walk to the front door when thunderous noises came from behind me and all of the dirt where we had sat was suddenly lifted up from the ground in an immense garaguru of red smoke. From this dust arose a copious number of figures.

These figures were hefty, square-shaped containers that after further observation seemed to be carrying people, but not just any people. They were Gubba. Forcing us into the bathroom, my Wiyanga locked the door behind us. Did she want to play hide and seek too? She could have just asked. Waiting around for a while, my siblings and I became curious of the events occurring beyond the thick wooden door that blocked our view. Placing our heads against the door in an attempt to hear any

sort of sound that could give us a clue as to what was going on, we heard our Wiyanga scream. There were many continuous bangs and yells until all of a sudden, there was silence.

This silence brought us both hope and worry. We hoped our Wiyanga was ok, but what if she wasn't? Attempting to see the brighter side of things, we were ready to leave the bathroom, past the locked door, assuming our Wiyanga awaited us on the other side. Just as we had hoped, the door's lock began to open. Exhilaration engulfed my body, filling it with warmth like a hot chocolate on a cold day. But I was wrong. A tall figure emerged, his eyes were the gross green of a swamp and his hair was brown like tree bark. But there was one feature about him that throughout my life, I had learned to dislike. He was gubba. Followed by many other maiyal who looked almost identical to him, he leant down in front of us and reached for my arm. Lifting me into the air, he carried me out of the bathroom. Whilst trying to break free, I saw each of my siblings being carried away too, screaming and punching in their attempt to break free. Leaving the house,



I was horrified, pinned down on the porch by three more gubbas, was my Wiyanga. I wanted to break free of this maiyal's grasp, I needed to help my dyinuragang, but this thoorgala was too strong. Wrapping one hand round my legs, the other my arms and torso, he had complete control over me. He carried me to one of the strange vehicles. It was short and box-like with a shiny black coating, the top was covered in windows and underneath were four round dish-like objects that seemed to hold it above the ground. Ramming me into the room on wheels, he locked me in and it started to move, the house slowly left my view, so did my mudjin.

Arriving at an outlandish house, nothing like the one I was accustomed to, the thoorgalas yelled a strange gibberish that I couldn't understand. Pulling my hand, they dragged me inside where a petite, plump dyin stood at the door waiting. Feeling trapped, all I wished for was to go home. To return to my Wiyanga. But this was expected to be my home now, with the gubba, never to see my mudjin again.

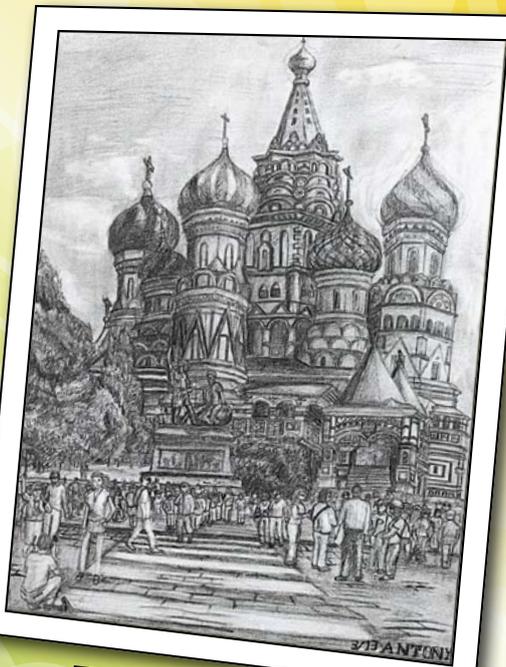
Translation:

- Gubba means white man
- Maiyal means stranger
- Babana means brother
- Djurumin means sister
- Wiyanga means mother
- Dyin means woman
- Dyinuragang means old woman
- Badu means water
- Garaguru means cloud
- Thoorgala means man
- Mudjin means family

By **Kaylee Jesnoewski**  
Year 9, Kinross College  
Quinns Rocks, WA  
Teacher: Juliana Forbes

# 2021

# YOUNG AUSTRALIAN ART AWARDS



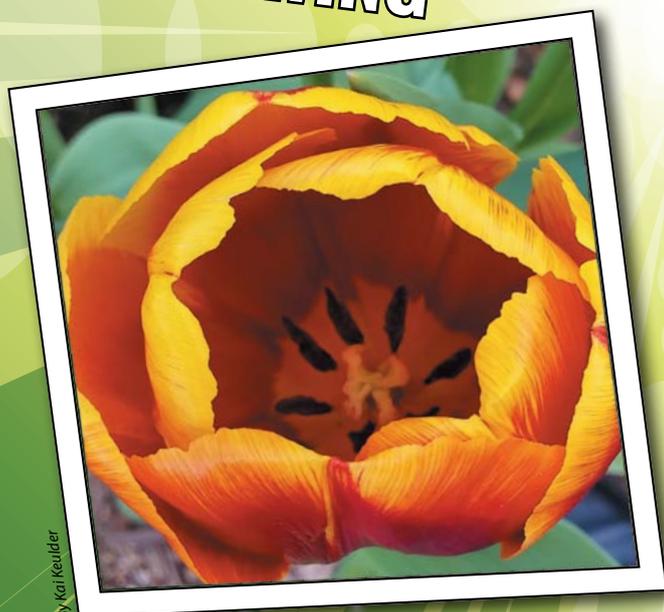
By Anthony Qin

## DRAWING



By Manna Tsuchiya

## COMPUTER ART



By Kai Keulder

## PHOTOGRAPHY



By Matthew Ropesam

## PAINTING

[www.ozkids.com.au](http://www.ozkids.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).

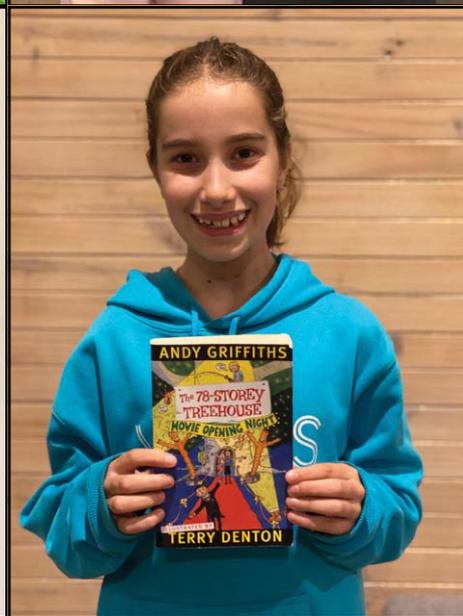
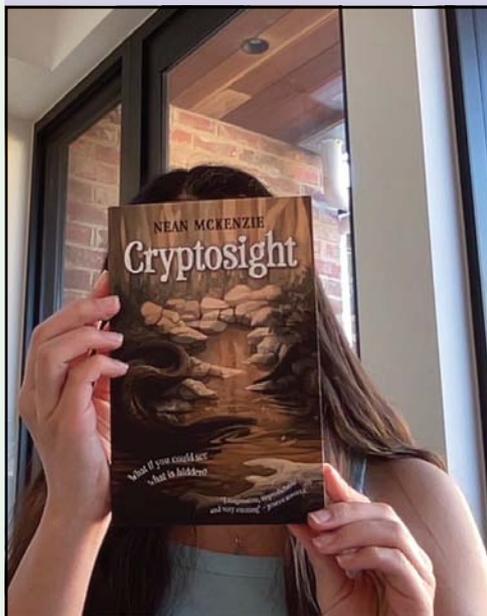
To enter your Artwork you will need to obtain a digital image of your piece of work and submit this image on-line through our website at [www.ozkids.com.au](http://www.ozkids.com.au).

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.

# BOOK REVIEWS

Meet our book reviewers for this lockdown issue: Chloe, Charlotte, Grace, Aiden, Arlo, Milla and Holly.

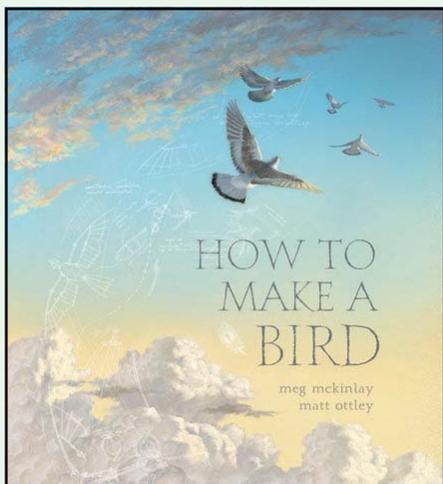
Reviews coordinator: Meredith Costain



## How to Make a Bird

by Meg McKinlay and Matt Ottley (Walker Books)

It is very hard to make a bird! You need lots of bits and pieces.



The girl who makes the bird puts it on the windowsill and slowly, it starts to spread its wings. But could it really become alive?

This book is very calming and relaxing. It is also very interesting and lovely and it has some really nice drawings. I think kids aged 5 and up would enjoy this book.

Rating: ★★★★★★★★☆☆ [9½/10]

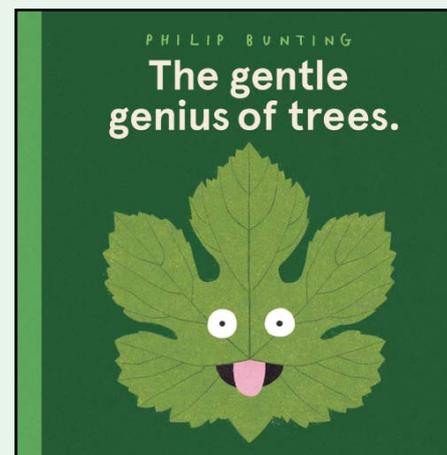
— Charlotte, Year 2

## The Gentle Genius of Trees

by Philip Bunting (Scholastic Australia)

Did you know that trees communicate with each other through their roots? An amazing book called *The Gentle Genius of Trees* taught me some fantastic new information. It is a non-fiction picture book that is perfect for students of all ages.

Younger students may enjoy the pictures and diagrams whilst older students may enjoy the scientific facts about trees. At first I thought the book wouldn't be that interesting, but after I read a few pages I was hooked. Trees are definitely smarter than you think. What would happen to



the world if we didn't have trees? Read this book to find out!

Rating: ★★★★★★★★☆☆ [9½/10]

— *Chloe W, Year 4, Tucker Road  
Bentleigh PS, Vic.*

## **The 78-Storey Treehouse**

by Andy Griffiths (*Pan Australia*)

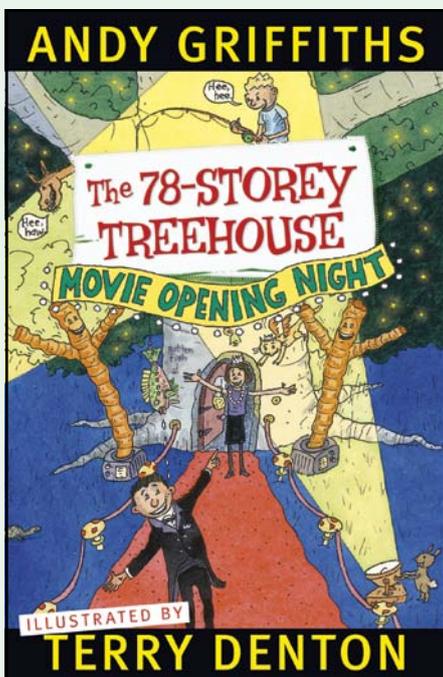
I have read an amazing book called *The 78-storey Treehouse*. It's a chapter book about Andy and Terry who are busy writing books and making treehouse movies. But there are spy cows who are trying to copy their movie. This treehouse has heaps of cool inventions too.

The book is very funny and has amazing illustrations. If you look closely you might even find the hidden cows!

I recommend this to readers aged 8+ who love funny stories and pictures.

Rating: ★★★★★★★★☆☆ [9½/10]

— *Milla, Year 4*



## **We Are Wolves**

by Katrina Nannestad (*ABC Books*)

I think that people who enjoy reading history will love this book. It tells you about the terrible reign of Adolf Hitler from another perspective. The perspective is that of a village family who still believe

that Hitler is a good man and Russia is the enemy. It follows the point of view of Liesl, Otto and their baby sister Mia.

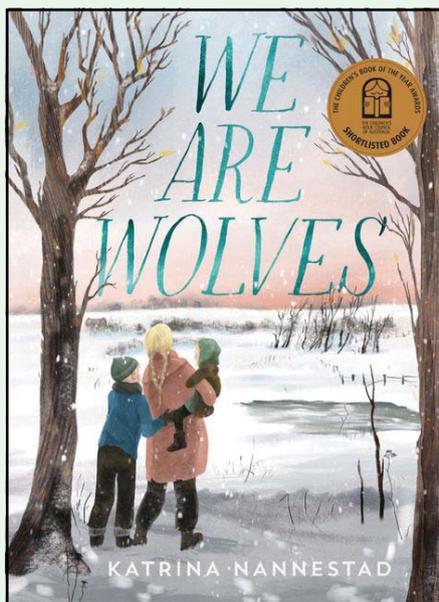
*We Are Wolves* is set when the war comes to East Prussia. The Wolf family is forced to flee from their day-to-day routine in search of safety. However, in Amistad, the citizens panic, and the children find themselves separated from both their own family and extended family. Now they must learn to survive on their own, while the Russians are on the prowl.

Who makes it and who doesn't?

Suitable for readers aged 10+ who enjoy historical fantasy.

Rating: ★★★★★★★★☆☆ [9/10]

— *Aiden Shimmin, Year 6, St Leonards  
College, Vic.*



## **Plum & Woo: Book 1 – The Puzzling Pearls**

by Lisa Siberry (*Hardie Grant Children's Publishing*)

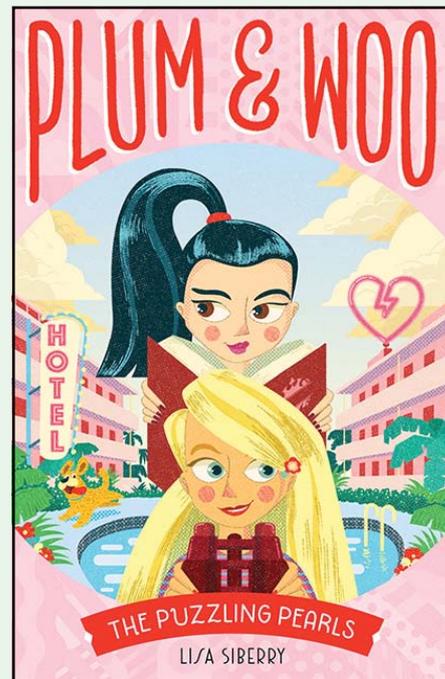
*Plum & Woo* is a series full of mystery. Lisa Siberry fills up the first story with cliff-hangers and exciting vibes.

Hannah Plum and Patti Woo discover something odd is happening in the hotel they're staying in. With pink dresses going missing and something mysterious happening in Room 44, Hannah and Patti work together to find out who's ruining the fun for everyone.

I loved this book, mainly due to the personalities of the two main characters. They're soooooo different. Plum loves fashion and shopping and is kind to everyone and Woo loves sport and being the best at everything. I think kids aged 8 and up should read this book.

Rating: ★★★★★★★★☆☆ [9½/10]

— *Grace, Year 4*



## **The Boy Who Stepped Through Time**

by Anna Ciddor (*Allen & Unwin*)

This book has three main characters; Perry, who gets trapped in time, Carotus, who is a slave (and becomes Perry's friend), and Camilla Valentia, who is the daughter of Perry and Carotus's master.

Perry's family are on a holiday in France and he doesn't expect to be transported back 1700 years in time. As Perry tries to return home he makes a new friend, but soon realises he might already know her terrible fate. And so, he has to make a choice, go home – or stay to protect his friend, which might result in him being trapped in the past forever!

I enjoyed this book because it described everything very finely and I couldn't put it down.

*Continued on page 12*

# BOOK REVIEWS

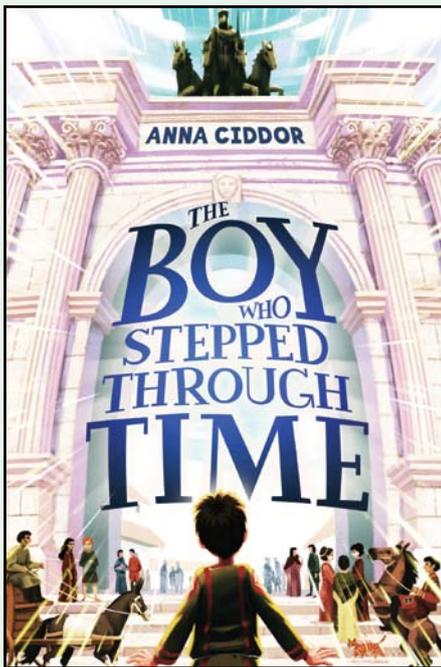
Continued from page 11

The book would suit readers who like thrilling and scary stories.

Suitable for readers aged 10–14.

Rating: ★★★★★★★★☆☆ [9/10]

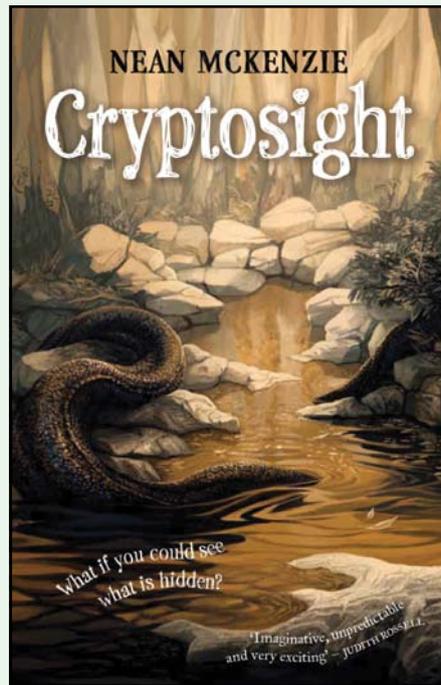
— Arlo Ghoukassian, Year 5, St Leonards College, Vic.



## Cryptosight

by Nean McKenzie (MidnightSun Publishing)

*Cryptosight* is a great book for readers who enjoy mystery and fantasy. The main characters are 13-year-old Raff, who believes in facts, and his adventurous



and stubborn younger sister, Zara. She aspires to be just like their dad, who is a cryptozoologist, searching for creatures proven not to exist.

When their father takes Raff and Zara on a trip to the Flinders Ranges, he suddenly disappears. Nean McKenzie tells their story as they travel through the Australian bush, on a quest to find their father. Along the way, they learn that their father is part of a secret organisation, and they are pursued by bunyip hunters.

Raff slowly begins to be drawn into the mysterious world of cryptozoology as he and his sister follow 'sightings' of creatures around Victoria. Will they be able to find their father before it is too late?

This book was exceptionally well written, drawing you in more and more with every sentence, and the smallest details making you itch to read the next line. For readers aged 10-13.

Rating: ★★★★★★★★☆☆ [8/10]

— Holly, Year 9

## Pandemic



To those who we have lost and will never forget,  
For those who lay infected on a hospital bed,  
This virus has to go,  
Otherwise it will grow and grow,  
So many lives are on the line,  
Including yours and including mine,  
A mask helps but will it stop it?  
I'm sure we will be able to block it,  
If an outbreak occurs we know what to do,  
We will stay home and get tested too  
Lockdown will help stop the spread,  
Before it was confusing but now we are prepared,  
So Covid-19 better scram,  
Because we are ready with a plan  
The vaccine will save lives,  
It will save yours and it will save mine

By Brisha Jadav  
Year 6, Mill Park Heights Primary School  
Mill Park, Vic.  
Teacher: Sue Nolan

# Caught



I turn to Mum and half listen, half not, as she tells me where she's going,  
I watch the door close,  
Finally, it closes.  
I wait ten seconds and then close the lid of my laptop,  
which I am supposed to be doing homework on, I jump onto the couch and turn the TV on.  
Lightning fast I press the numbers to my favourite channel,  
though to my disappointment there are only those super boring education shows on.  
Defeated.  
My eyes drift towards the kitchen. I go into the kitchen and stand on the table,  
making sure that I am high enough to reach the cabinet, where my parents keep all the good food in.  
By good food I mean the chocolate, lollies, all of the above.  
I open the door and ruffle through the cabinet,  
pushing protein bars and bags of healthy chips out of the way, which my parents put there as decoys.  
I push my way to the very back of the cabinet.  
A smile tugs at the corner of my mouth as I spy the lollies, bags upon bags of low nutrition wonders.  
I am examining my options when I spot an already open bag of lolly snakes.  
I'm about to dig in when I notice there are only six left.  
I decide it's too risky and put the snakes back,  
Then I see a bag of fruit chews.  
These are Mums favourite and I automatically know they are hers.  
I stick my hand in the bag and pull out a massive handful.  
I run back into the living room,  
do a forward roll and land in the middle of the couch.  
I turn on the TV and watch while I eat the delicious chews.  
Victorious.  
When I'm finished, I run upstairs, to my sister's room.  
I stuff the evidence under her bed, making sure to spread it out,  
as if she had been doing it over a period of time.  
Then I run downstairs and back to my laptop,  
I turn it on and open up youtube.  
Which my parents never let my watch,  
I browse through the options to see what to watch.  
I am about to choose something,  
When I hear the ominous click of the door.  
Mum is home.  
  
I swiftly turn off youtube and go back to my homework,  
and plug in my headphones.  
Pretending to watch one of those educational videos, teachers set so that she won't disturb me.  
I act like I can't see her as she walks past me towards the kitchen.  
And that's when I remember... I forgot to close the cabinet door.

By **Chanel Charles**  
Year 6, Beaumont Road Public  
West Killara, NSW  
Teacher: Mr. Gadsden

# CYCLONE YASMIN

SIX MONTHS ago, cheering and laughing filled our beautiful town. Happiness was spread everywhere by the sounds of church bells. Children were playing in the school grounds. Even the busy markets that made the most mouth-watering delights were always bursting with festive music and joy. There was no better place on Earth... until the deadly storm arrived.

It started with howling wind in the middle of the night which made it impossible to sleep. Soon we were deafened by roaring thunder and jagged strikes of lightning only to feel like we were trapped in a war zone as we tried to hide from the enemy. Buried deep under my bed sheets, I cried in fear and could hear people screaming in panic. My parents called my name as they desperately tried to secure the house. The storm grew more violent by the second. At that point, trees in the garden started falling to the ground and buildings collapsed like a trail of dominoes. It

seemed like only a matter of time until our house would fall. Suddenly, the roof of our house crumbled on top of us as my parents were shouting and trying to shelter me. This was the last thing I could remember.

I found myself confused, wondering where I was whilst I questioned the whereabouts of my family. I realised that I lay weak on a hospital bed. My body battered and bruised with a cast on my leg.

Unexpectedly, Aunt Edith walked in the room with a melancholic look on her face. She had let out a long sigh as she grabbed my hands sympathetically. Tears started to roll down her cheeks as she sniffled into her wrinkled and damp handkerchief. Words started to tumble out of her mouth.

“I’m so very sorry darling, but mum and dad... they did not survive Cyclone Yasmin. However, you must always know that they loved you very much and will always be watching over you.” Aunt Edith

sniffled into her handkerchief again whilst I sat there, frozen and in disbelief. I started to sob which continued over the next few months.

When I had fully recovered, Aunt Edith drove me to the only place I knew as home. The town was silent and derelict, completely unrecognisable. There was a sinister feeling in the air. A few houses remained, barely standing whilst the power lines had been repaired, but it felt empty. Everything had disappeared, including all the warmth, joy and love. I felt so heartbroken. As I explored the area where my house once stood strong, I spotted my old bike next to a fallen tree. I grabbed the bike and rode away from the town into the distance, leaving my past behind. I did not look back.

By **Sara Rezaeian**

Year 5, Ravenswood School for Girls  
Gordon, NSW

Teacher: Sharon Shapiro



# Worried

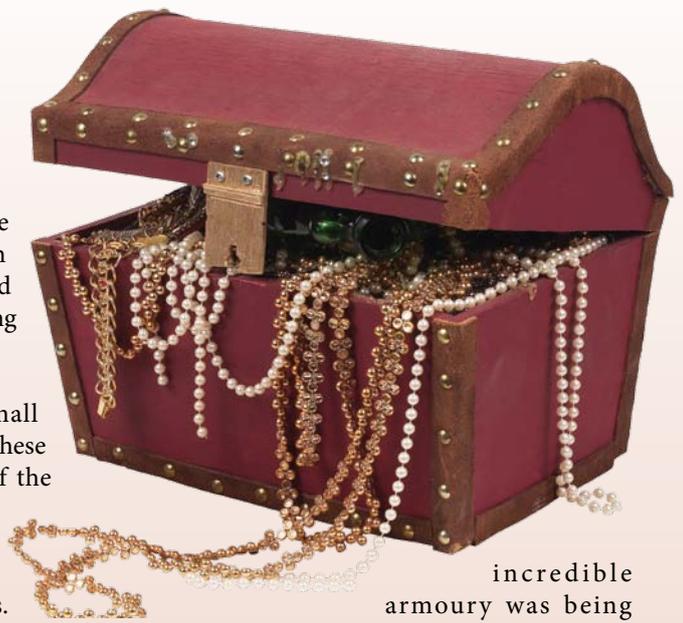
**W**ORRIED about what could happen entering this unseen, rural village, the large team of world class experts all had adrenaline rushing in their stomachs. The knees of the explorers knocked faster and faster as they approached this. This remote village was unknown to mankind until these experts unintentionally found this small village while on another exploration. The small place had a wall blocking it from the outside world. The village had no knowledge of the outside world. They came to the monstrous wall, carefully pondering how to cross the wall.

They slowly walked around the wall looking for an entrance. Suddenly, a loud rumbling sound arose. The explorers jumped up in fear. Their hearts started racing now but they kept searching. One of them unexpectedly put their hand on the wall and an entrance appeared. They carefully walked in and were surprised of what they

saw. The explorers saw the rare and valuable items such as diamonds, rubies, gold and emerald. They set on robbing this village.

The explorers made a small plan to get their hands on these items. They went inside of the place and glanced across the room. The explorers slowly took the items and stored them in their big bags. As they hesitantly walked out someone saw the filled bag after he looked through to an empty room. He curiously checked the explorers' bags, not recognising their faces he called out loudly "Intruders, Stealers!". It was all over news because they had secretly been broadcasting the interesting mission.

A fight arose and countries stepped in and bombs, unique, powerful guns and



incredible armoured planes were being invented. Planes and jets with atomic boosters were being invented. A battle started as planes flew over. This is the great tale of how the Mot Battle filled, and an enormous war started.

*By Aarav Roopchandani  
Year 4, Eagle Junction State School  
Clayfield, Qld.  
Teacher: Mrs Gemma Burchard*

# MIDNIGHT

It was midnight when they came.

They stormed through the house, no care for our belongings.

It was midnight when we ran, ran from them with the guns.

Then they found us.

It was midnight when a gun shot rang clear through the air.

It was midnight when mother's heart stopped, stopped beating.

It was midnight when mother's mouth stopped talking, her eyes stopped looking, and her blood flashed red in the dark night surroundings.

It was midnight when I ran, tears streaming down my face.

It was midnight when I got on a small boat, and spent too long on that rotting wooden deck.

It was midnight when the boat reached the harbour and cheering split through the clear night air.

And it was midnight when the people came out and told us, 'No, you can't stay here'.

So it was midnight when I, sobbing, was led to a horrible place with barbed fences and a dry cracked ground.

It was midnight when I realised that I was not welcome here or in my country, and that I might never have a true place to call home.

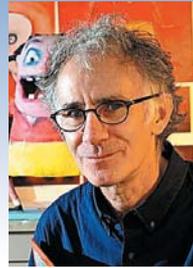
*By Lachlan Taylor*

*Year 5, Ballarat Grammar, Wendouree, Vic.*

*Teacher: Donna Hanneysee*



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# Protector



DARKNESS had fallen.

The dark devil clouds melded together perfectly like a puzzle making me glide lower in the majestic sky of Blacktown. The telephone lines stood high and tall supporting the dull wires proudly. The sun said its gently goodbye as sunlight slowly disappeared over the mountains. 'It is a warning,' I thought. My strong razor-sharp claws grabbed onto the electric wires intensely as a gust of wind roared and howled. I treasured every breath of wind which blew through my iridescent coloured feathers. A rosy, soft light feather fell but the wind boosted it.

The feather landed on a boy's neck then on his shoulder as one of his hands tried to sweep the feather away and the other still sat firmly on the bike's brake. He giggled, snatching the feather from the air and stuffing it inside his pocket. He rode his bike back and forwards, left and right every day. From the moment I saw him, I knew I was his protector.

Darkness engulfed Blacktown like a heavy

blanket. Blacktown isn't exactly the place of paradise. It was dark, dangerous and crime rates are high which made some women refuse to come out of their houses without a man by their sides. Homeless people were sitting on the side of the street begging for a dollar. Drugs and cigarette packages were thrown on the cruel, cold street. For many people stealing was their last card to play in life. I glanced at each shop with hard metal bars firmly guarding the windows and the broken blinds swooping and waving with the wind.

"You are such a disappointment!" I set off to a shabby, old, worn-down house where the insult came from.

"I wish I had never had you!" The boy's mother took another gulp of beer and shook feeling terribly drunk.

SMASH!

The poor bottle slammed onto the crusty wall. The boy swung his hands over his head rapidly as he carefully reached into his pockets searching for the feather and

held it close to his chest. His mother's beefy arms hovered in the air, as they were about to land on the boy, she collapsed. I felt helpless watching from the window as a tear rolled down the boy's cheek as he weakly stood up from the corner. The feather was not just an element of beauty: it was an amulet.

I chirped at the top of my lungs as the boy peeked from the window and the look in his eyes met as mine. I flapped my wings and flew towards the sunset letting the last bit of warmth hit my body as I lifted my head and waited. The boy ran outside without any hesitation and leapt onto his bike and followed.

I didn't know where I was going. All I knew was I trusted him and he trusted me. I flew, he rode leaving the past behind and living in the moment. After all, I am his one and only protector.

*By Ariel Bai*

*Year 5, Ravenswood School for Girls  
Gordon, NSW*

*Teacher: Sharon Shapiro*

# Second Time Unlucky

**"T**HIS STORY must be on my desk by 4:00pm today!" yelled Mr Hargrove, my easily aggravated boss.

"Absolutely sir, I won't let you down", I replied. I needed this story to do well. Mr Hargrove explained to me a week ago that if I did well on this piece, I would be promoted to editor of political journalism. This was the key to my dream job! If this story flopped, I didn't know if I would ever get a chance like this again. I sat at my desk, let out a breath of air and opened up my laptop.

Brrr brrrrrr

My phone vibrated in my pocket. I pulled out my phone, it was Mum. Mum was diagnosed with stage four breast cancer a few months ago. She's been doing well, but her incessant phone calls have been nothing but a distraction.

"Yes mum?" I queried into the phone.

"Oh my dear, how are you going?" she replied back with a tone of softness.

"I'm a bit stressed out at the moment mum, I have quite a big story to write before the end of the day, you know, the one about Labor's win at the election?" I replied hurriedly.

"Wow, how exciting, my son the big writer!" Mum exclaimed with glee.

"Yes mum, I know, I know, I really have to get this done", I explained with haste.

"Oh ok, I was just wondering if you wanted to come see me some time soon, I... I", Mum's voice trailed off.

"Mum are you ok!?" I worriedly sprayed down the phone.

"Oh, oh yes dear, I just lost my train of thought, I really would like to see you", said Mum, voice sounding croaky.

"Uh, well, I do have this big story Mum", I replied.

"Oh, ok son..." replied Mum, the softness of her voice trailing away with despondency.

"Listen, I think I could pop over to the suburbs for ten minutes on my lunch break", I decided.

"Oh yes, that will be wonderful! I will get some tea ready", said Mum, as excitedly as she could these days. No matter what diagnosis Mum has been thrown throughout her life, her spirits have never hindered. I was only young the first time she got cancer and all I can remember was the determination to beat the disease and the joy surrounding her golden smile in the hospital.

"I'll see you there Mum", I replied, hanging up the phone. I had to stop these distractions, this story was going to be the feature for the ABC website, it had to be perfect.

A few hours passed and suddenly it was my lunch break. I don't know how but I still had such a long way to go. The ever-marching presence of time was a looming reminder of the weight I had building on this story. Mum sounded so excited on the phone, so I knew I had to go see her. I hopped in my car and began to drive



out of the city to Mum's little home in the suburbs. The entire drive was a painful anxiety-filled trip of thoughts.

"My entire reputation leans on this one story."

"What will you possibly do if this fails?"

"I should have just stayed at the office for my lunch break to make the story perfect."

As my car rolled up my mother's tiny driveway, I noticed she was sitting on the verandah waiting for me. That joyous golden smile appeared across her face as I got out of the car. I traversed the steps towards her and we embraced. Her frail old body was just a reminder of the terminal monster slowly killing her, but as it seems, nothing could kill her joy.

"Come on inside, the tea is getting cold", Mum said as she slowly led me into the house. We took a seat at the dining room table and began to sip the tea. "So, how is that big story coming along?"

"Oh you know, it's definitely getting there, I only have a short bit of time before I should

be getting back", I answered her with an anxious tone.

"My boy, I can see you are stressed, have some more tea, it will make you feel ten times better", she assured, almost as if she believed tea was the remedy to all ailments.

"I'm all good Mum, besides I really should be getting back", I exclaimed hurriedly.

"Oh, no matter, drink some more tea, trust me", she insisted, motioning towards the tea.

"No!" I yelled at her, obviously fuelled by stress, "Listen Mum, I'm sorry but I really have to get back to finish this story", I said with a ferocious tenacity. I got up and left before she could say anything. As I reversed out, Mum was on the verandah blowing me a kiss as I left.

"All right Jameson! Is that story ready?" Mr Hargrove yelled as I typed my last words.

"Yes Mr Hargrove! Coming right away!" I replied as I rushed the printed copies over to him.

"Well this is fantastic! Be on the lookout for that promotion young Jameson!" said Mr Hargrove with pride in his eyes. Relief washed over me and the stress seemed to let go of it's grip on me.

"Urgent call for Lachlan Jameson!" said Sylvia, the secretary. It turns out that was the worst thing to have ever been said to me. Mum had died.

That night, as I lay in bed, the tear stains on my pillow were all but a reminder, a reminder that she was gone. A void of ever-growing darkness encapsulated me. It was that stupid story, the story that stopped me from ever saying goodbye. There is now a giant hole in my life, a giant hole created by the monster that took her. The monster was nothing more than a ferocious, darkening diseased void-maker that takes what you love most. My tear stained pillow, dry now as my tears were seldom lost. A life had been robbed and I was left with the pain of my own regret.

By **Ben Springhall**

Year 11, Kingaroy State High School  
Kingaroy, Qld.

## BIRTHDAY TO REMEMBER



**A**RE YOU scared of mummies, ghosts and the boogey man that lives under your bed? Well, I'm not, I mean I wasn't, not until my tenth birthday. It all started in a foggy day of October at school camp. The darkness had spread across the sky, and it was my turn to tell a spooky story. It was about the boogey man, a mummy, and a ghost. It was so terrifying that all the children were hidden in their blankets and biting their nails. Suddenly, a deep, loud thundering voice boomed "Night-time, night-time children. Everyone please go to your beds". Phew, it was only the principal. I snuggled up in my warm blanket. My forehead was burning, and I was wet with sweat. A

slimy black hand was gripping the leg of my bed. IT WAS THE BOOGEY MAN! THE REAL BOOGEY MAN! I was sure the boogey man didn't exist but there it was in front of me. I ran up to sleep at the top of the bunk bed. A translucent white figure erupted from the bed. IT WAS A REAL GHOST! My next stop was the bathroom. "Sorry", I said. Someone was already in there. ACTUALLY IT WAS A REAL MUMMY. OK this is getting way too crazy! I pinched myself to see if I was dreaming but somehow, I wasn't. I started to run, run for my life. I didn't know where I was going but that was fine. I knew I was running away from the monsters. Click. Click. Click. A strong arm

grabbed my shoulder. A flashlight was on me. It was the principal. He seemed like a giant compared to me. "Your story was an irresponsible choice James. Charlie hid under the blanket; Harry went under your bed and Jack wrapped himself in toilet paper. Therefore, I shall call your parents and they will decide what to do with you", said the principal leading me to the camp. That day, my mum took my iPad but it was worth scaring my friends. By Lila Hall

By **Aadya Kariot**

Year 4, Eagle Junction State School  
Clayfield, Qld.  
Teacher: Mrs Gemma Burchard

# The Forest Man

**Y**OU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO SEE THAT

LEAVE HIM BE, HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT WE ARE

NO... THE BOY... HE HEARS US...

I sat up in a pool of sweat, breathing heavily. I anxiously checked my surroundings. Nothing here but trees. I must've fallen and hit my head. But when did I go to forest? Was there a forest near where I lived? Where did I live? Who...? Who am I?

I put my hand on the nearest tree to pull

myself up, but my hand was ghostly and pale. Instead of gripping the dark wood, it went right through. I tried standing up again, and this time it worked. But instead of stopping at a normal height, I kept going. Through the trees and leaves and birds. I towered over the forest. I outstretched my hands, to find long, bony, translucent arms. My fingers were like knitting needles belonging to a giant. I couldn't see my feet, just the giant hole where my stomach should be. But I wasn't scared. Was I supposed to be scared?

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO THE BOY?

I... UNLOCKED... HIS POTENTIAL...

HE ISN'T READY! HE WASN'T READY!

LITTLE SNEAK DESERVES IT! LISTENING WHERE HE DOESN'T BELONG!

I looked for the voices, they were nowhere. I took a giant step, and my lanky legs rose out of the forest. My knees were the same translucent grey as the rest of me, but speckles of red covered them. I followed the blood up my legs, to my hips, my chest and then to my hands. When had they become covered in red? Why was the blood so thick? Whose blood was it?

WHOSE BLOOD IS THAT?

That was my own voice, booming across the forest. I hadn't tried to say the words, but I had.

NO! TURN HIM BACK! WE MUST NOT LET HIM SEE US! WHEN HE IS READY WE WILL COLLECT HIM!

Atrocious pain filled my head, like I was being bludgeoned with hundreds of rocks. An argument erupted from the three voices.

NO -

HE IS TOO -

WE WILL - HIM

HE IS -

STOP

The voices stopped, shocked I had been able to command them with such power in my voice.

WHO AM I?

There was silence, before all three voices chorused:

OUR NEW KING

By **Angelina Hemsworth**  
Year 8, Cairns School of  
Distance Education  
Brisbane, Qld.



# Freedom

**T**HE LIGHT barely touching the horizon; a pre-storm chilling breeze isolating his body. He keeps riding, not even trembling from the wind slapping his face. The gravel speeding by underfoot as an unstoppable force. A world to explore. Open roads, no right nor wrong. This is freedom.

Days turn to weeks and weeks to months, and yet he is still riding. Stopping only for food or rest. No one notices the figure travelling by. Passing houses, libraries, stores containing exquisite and fine detailed shoes and clothes of every size and colour. Things he could only imagine possessing. He peers down at his ripped and worn shoes, smiling. They mark where he has been and the memories that were made. Every turn of the pedal, a new adventure. Open roads, no right or wrong. This is freedom.

Leaving behind what once was hard, resulting in hunger and boredom. Now opportunity, life, and self. Knowing he can go anywhere and do anything at his own

will. Open roads, no right or wrong. This is freedom.

A couple of weeks pass. He reaches an old country town. Skeleton hills roll farther than the horizon. Beige crops blanket the land. Rusted tin and crumbled brick ruins, structures collapse in empty paddocks. The light whispering of the trees. The screech of an old sign swinging on its hinges. Stopping in the centre of an intersection, a street sign directs, but which way? Forwards, the future? Left, the past? Or right, the present? Was he to explore what he has known, what he knows or what he is to know? Finally, a choice of his own to make. Is this freedom?

A familiar sign – he has been here before. How can it be? Returning to the beginning? The start, the hunger, the hardship, the boredom. Is it home? A sense of place, belonging, family, friends and ancestors. Is this freedom?

A sense of presence. A strong but solemn presence. One that we bury deep within,

waiting for the right time to reveal itself. Secrets of the past. Children gathering and chatting around a campfire as the elders present stories of noble warriors, ancient clans and Dreamtime. The creation of the Earth. This was freedom.

All new thoughts come flashing into motion. Men stalking animals with spears, women foraging for plants and children running through the open bushland, playing behind trees and laughing. This was freedom.

Distant voices growing louder, and he is pulled from his thoughts. Surrounding him are people, many people. His people. All gathering in ceremony, dancing, singing, telling stories. Are they calling him to re-join them? He reaches out to someone familiar. His grandfather. They have not forgotten him; they were calling him, home. He does belong. He is the future. This is freedom.

By **Heloise Clark**

Year 6, Ravenswood School for Girls  
Gordon, NSW

Teacher: Sharon Shapiro



# THE RECIPE

**C**REAK! In the dim moonlight, a housecat stepped on the boards of the old house. There were many rumours about whether anyone lived in this house. One rumour was that the house was deserted and haunted; another was that the house had been taken over by some mad, lonely scientist. None of this was true.

The housecat made her way to the back of the house. She jumped onto her old master, who had not yet fallen asleep, and nuzzled his forehead. Then, she cocked her head to one side, believing she had heard something.

“It was probably just a mouse”, the old man said.

“It wasn’t a mouse”, insisted the housecat, who was magical and could speak. Normally, she kept her powers to herself, but today it just burst out. Luckily, the old man didn’t notice. “It is an ant.”

“An ant? How can one small ant possibly harm us?” scoffed the old man.

The housecat sighed and turned her paw over the blanket. “The problem is that we can’t stay here. There are bugs everywhere you look, a billion cracks in the wall, and creaking floorboards. It needs repairs, or we have to leave! Any minute now, a letter will come from the government,

even though the neighbours doubt that anyone’s living here, saying that we have to leave the house!”

“But my dear Perry-Pussy—” the old man said. “This house has been known by my whole family for generations, just the way it is. I don’t have the heart to change it.”

“Then you must know it properly, and keep the thing that will protect us.” declared Perry-Pussy, the housecat, glad that the old man still hadn’t noticed that she was talking.

“But I know this house well”, exclaimed the old man.

“Not everything”, replied Perry-Pussy. “Follow me.”

Wordlessly, the pair left the room. Perry-Pussy led the old man, who was carrying a candle. She stopped at a Mona Lisa portrait. It seemed that all the secret passageways were hidden by Mona Lisa portraits, though she did not tell the old man so. Instead, she slid back the portrait and pointed behind.

There was a narrow winding staircase, and automatically a pale set of steps leading up to where the portrait had been had pushed out of the wall. The old man and Perry-Pussy began to follow them . . .

There was a tiny room with an immense circular table that had a cumbersome pot on it, and several shelves on the walls, each containing various peculiar things; fragmented light bulbs, a decaying shoe, a jar of silkworms, and a recipe book.

Perry-Pussy stepped in front and reached out for the recipe book. The old man realised it was not actually a normal recipe book, but a book labelled ‘How to stay in your old house.’

Perry-Pussy instructed, “When I read out these ingredients, take them off the shelves and put them in the pot. Okay?”

The old man readily agreed.

And so she read out what was needed and the old man propped them in the pot.

Halfway through, the old man looked inside the pot. It divulged a murky green, lumpy, swamp-like liquid, with shattered glass, decrepit hunks of oily shoes, and rigid sections of a jar lid.

Perry-Pussy also peered in, and at once her face clouded over in anguish.

“This isn’t the conventional reaction! We must have done something wrong!”

While Perry-Pussy intelligently observed the pot, as if this would help her notice the dilemma induced, the old man watched as the mixture in the pot swirled around slowly. Finally, Perry-Pussy looked up and said, “I’ve realised our little quandary. We need coconut oil, the one in the storeroom.”

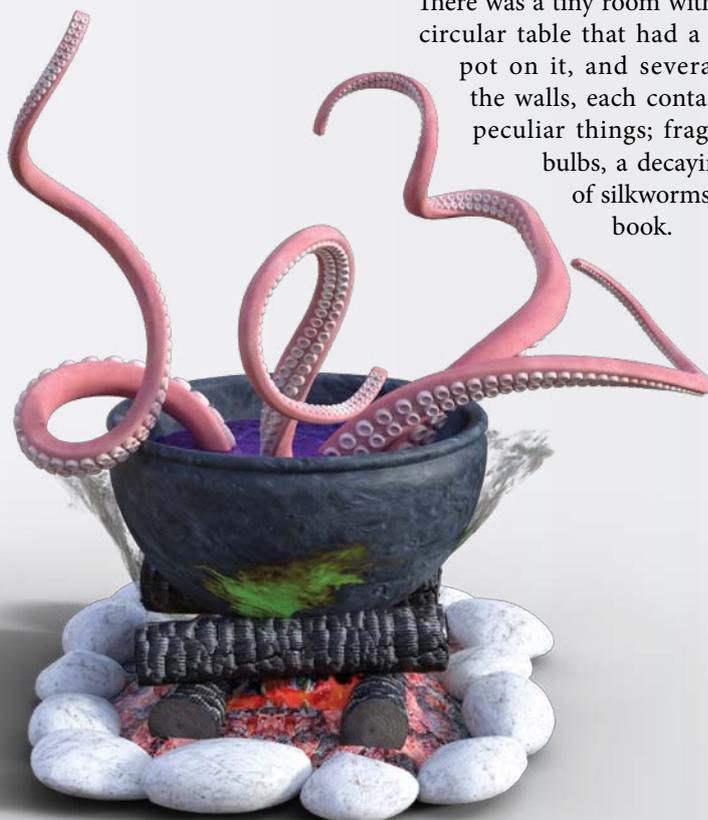
The storeroom was quite far away, and it took them a long time to collect the coconut oil. Perry-Pussy emptied the oil with a great dexterity that the old man admired, and softly whispered, “We need to leave it alone till midday. Let’s get some sleep.”

So they went back to bed, feeling somehow more happy and content than before, and fell fast asleep.

And guess what – the dreaded letter aforementioned by Perry-Pussy never came! – even though the government had intended to send it the very next day.

Hurrah!

By **Nethya Wijsekera**  
Year 4, Gordon East Public School  
Gordon, NSW



# Ambassadors



☺ **Paul Collins** has written many books for younger readers. He is best known for his fantasy and science fiction titles: **The Jelindel Chronicles** (*Dragonlinks, Dragonfang, Dragonsight* and *Wardragon*), and **The Quentaris Chronicles** – co-edited with Michael Pryor – (*Swords of Quentaris, Slaves of Quentaris, Dragonlords of Quentaris, Princess of Shadows, The Forgotten Prince, Vampires of Quentaris* and *The Spell of Undoing*). His trade books published in America are *The Earthborn, The Skyborn* and *The Hiveborn*.

Paul has edited many anthologies which include *Trust Me!, Rich & Rare* and Australia's first fantasy anthology, *Dream Weavers*. He also edited *The MUP Encyclopaedia of Australian SF&F*.

His recent fantasy series is *The Warlock's Child*, written in collaboration with Sean McMullen. His book, *Slaves of Quentaris*, was listed in *1001 Children's Books You Must Read Before You Die* (UK, 2009). His latest book is *Harry Kruize, Born to Lose*.

Paul has been short-listed for many awards and has won the Inaugural Peter McNamara A Bertram Chandler, Aurealis and William Atheling awards.

Other than his writing, Paul is the publisher at Ford Street Publishing, a children's specialist publishing everything from picture books through to young adult literature. Two books, *Pool*, by Justin D'Ath and *Crossing the Line*, by Dianne Bates, were short-listed for the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards and the NSW Premier's Literary Awards. A third, Shane Thamm's *My Private Pectus*, was short-listed in the Territory Read Award. Paul spends much of his time travelling around Australia giving writing workshops to students from grade four to Year 12.

Paul's websites are: [www.paulcollins.com.au](http://www.paulcollins.com.au); [www.fordstreetpublishing.com](http://www.fordstreetpublishing.com) and [www.creativenetspeakers.com](http://www.creativenetspeakers.com).

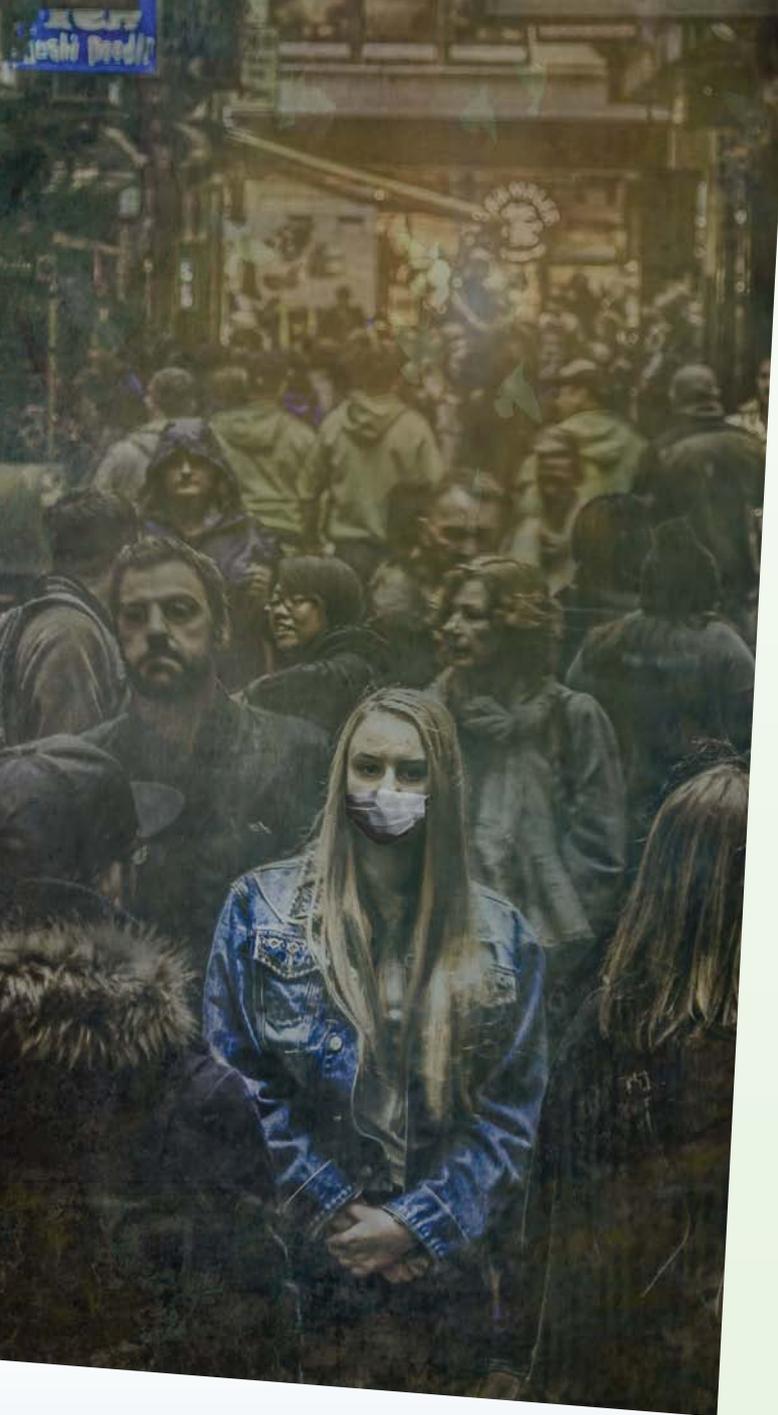
**Anna Ciddor** has always been fascinated by the question, 'What if I lived in another time or place?'. She changed career from maths teacher to author so she'd have the excuse to spend lots of time doing research. She has written and illustrated over fifty books, including the highly popular and exciting 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](http://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. ☺



☺ **Meredith Costain** is a versatile writer whose work ranges from picture books through to novels, poetry and narrative non-fiction. Her books include CBCA Honour Book *Doodledum Dancing, Disaster Chef!, Daddies Are Great!*, novelisations of ABC TV's *Dance Academy*, and tween series *A Year in Girl Hell*. Her best-selling series, the quirky *Ella Diaries*, was shortlisted for both the REAL and the WAYRBA children's choice awards, and has sold to 24 countries. Her latest series, *Olivia's Secret Scribbles*, features Ella's 'naughty little sister', Olivia.

Meredith lives in inner-city Melbourne with a menagerie of pets, who often wrangle their way into her stories. She regularly presents writing workshops for children and adults around Australia, and enjoys helping writers create stories based on their own experiences. To find out more about her books, pets and early writing years, visit [www.meredithcostain.com](http://www.meredithcostain.com).

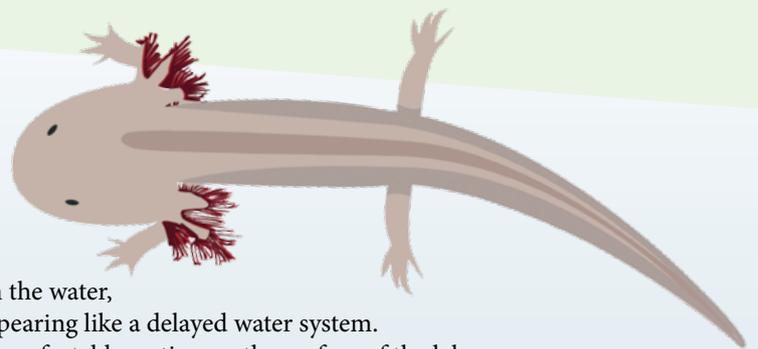


# WEAR A MASK

We wear our mask – hide teeth and bone,  
And cheeks and lips and cry alone.  
You've never heard me cry, seen my dreams die,  
From where you stand, faint in the distance,  
It's too quiet here, where the wind just blows,  
Where our house no longer feels like home.  
I make the most of all my sadness,  
And live with no reveries,  
This place will drown, not with water or with sounds,  
Not with emptiness unwound.  
I've held it in but it calls and runs free,  
Because you can't seem to understand,  
The rage, hatred and resentment that fills the space between us,  
All slow and gradual, like with everything I love, I've ever found.  
Seems I feel I have been held in some tranquil dreaming state,  
A tourist in another world, always wistful on their way,  
No place, no gentle word could ever make me leave this slumber,  
Until I find that it was always you who held me under.  
The white light sears into your eyes,  
Please blink, please cry,  
Instead, you just stare above,  
Allowing the pain to cascade over you in tiny rivulets.  
You seal my heart, you keep your pride,  
No fear in sight and no one to lie,  
your heart, body and mind, all aligned,  
To face what you've done and take what was mine.  
There's a room where the light can't find us,  
Where we stay till these walls crash down,  
And when they do, I'll be smiling close behind too,  
Slow dancing in a room where I burn with you.

By **Fatima Hammad**  
Year 8, Cheltenham Girls High School  
Epping, NSW  
Teacher: Miss Curtis

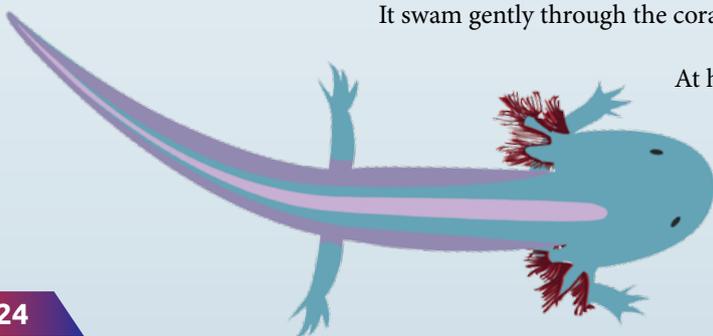
# Axolotl



A flicker in the water,  
An opaque tail appearing and disappearing like a delayed water system.  
The tail stops and an innocent head appears, comfortably resting on the surface of the lake.  
Unblinking eyes settled on the campers by the river. Friendly and tempted but having no idea what it sees with its blurred vision.  
A subtle sploosh in the water and the Axolotl was gone!

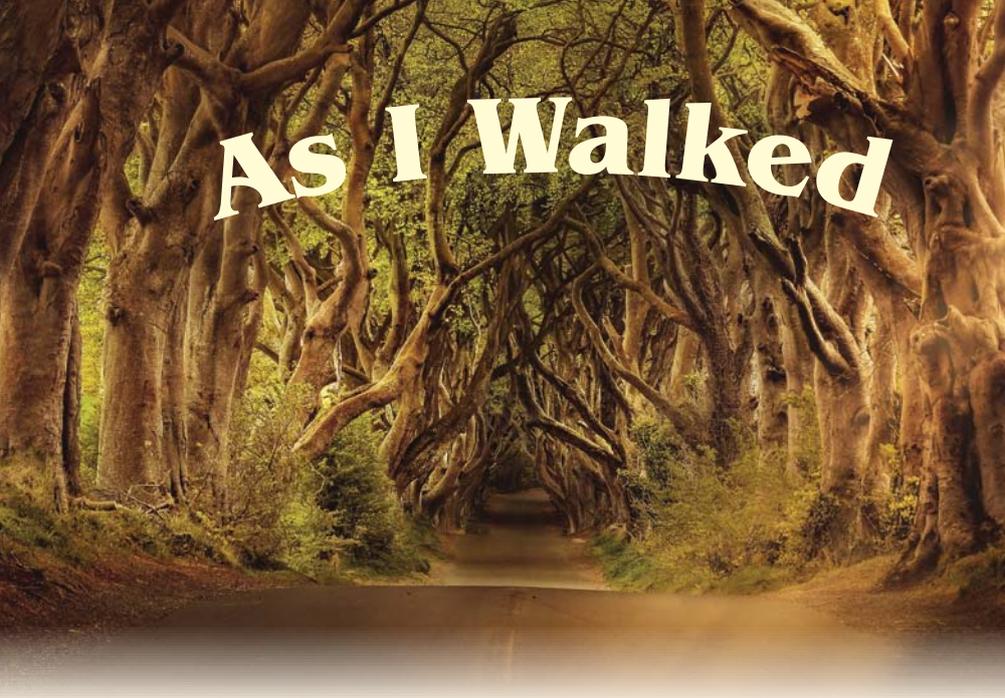
It swam gently through the coral, swearing neatly through the sea grass.

At home, at last.



By **Sophia Butler**  
Year 5, Coburn Primary School  
Melton South, Vic.  
Teacher: Mr Dylan Ward

# As I Walked



**A**S I walked through the deep, wooded valley, I heard it again. The sound of quiet footsteps. They had been padding after me for hours.

I had become lost in the Valley of Shadow. I had accepted a bet, a worthless bet, and had been forced to enter the valley. It had seemed all right at first, but after night had fallen, strange things had started happening. I emerged in a misty glade and cried out. I had walked straight

into a skeleton. This wasn't the clean, white skeleton from movies. No, it was a bleached yellow pile of bones, with the flesh stripped off and hanging in tatters.

Screaming, I ran to the edge of the trees. I had stepped on an eyeball, and it had exploded all over my legs. Hurriedly, I tried to wipe it off, but the thick, gooey sludge wouldn't budge. That's when I heard it. The footsteps. I turned towards the sound, but all was quiet. Not even a cricket was chirping.

Then, something fell from the trees. I instinctively twisted my body, but the creature rolled and came up standing. I could see down its bloodstained throat. Its lips were dripping with saliva, and its teeth were barred. I went to take a step back, and that's when it sprung at me. The beast's jagged claws slashed at the air inches from my face, and then I realised.

This beast was the reason that the skeleton had been mutilated. It had looked as though someone had murdered it with a blunt knife, but no person could survive in here, with or without weapons. This was why people never returned from this valley, and it was why eerie sounds emanated from it during the icy night.

Time accelerated as it dived over my head and slid over the mossy rocks. It had fallen into the enormous ravine. I hadn't realised I was near the steep walls of the valley, or near the gorge. I thought the monster was dead, but then I heard a strangled, animal cry of pain. It had survived.

*By Riley Lorenz*

*Year 7, Pedare Christian College*

*Golden Grove, SA*

*Teacher: Mrs Johnson*

## Déjà Vu

There's a familiar sense inside you  
It's called Déjà Vu  
You think it's seen before  
If only that you brew

It comes up first as a stir  
But then it would get bigger  
An overwhelming feeling  
Like a pull of a trigger

Probably it's from your before-life  
Where you're a different being  
Or perhaps it's just your brain  
Messing up that thing

Maybe it is, Maybe it's not  
Déjà Vu's not hard to find  
All if that you don't recognise  
It rings a bell in your mind

*By Meii You*

*Year 4, Wahroonga Preparatory School*

*Wahroonga – NSW*

*Teacher: Mrs Bridget Vardy*



# Australia, Australia



Australia, Australia,  
One big and beautiful land.  
From desert plains to lush forests,  
sand dunes, the deep blues and mud lands.

Australia, Australia,  
We have animals to treasure.  
Echidnas, Possums and Emus.  
We take care of them in pleasure.

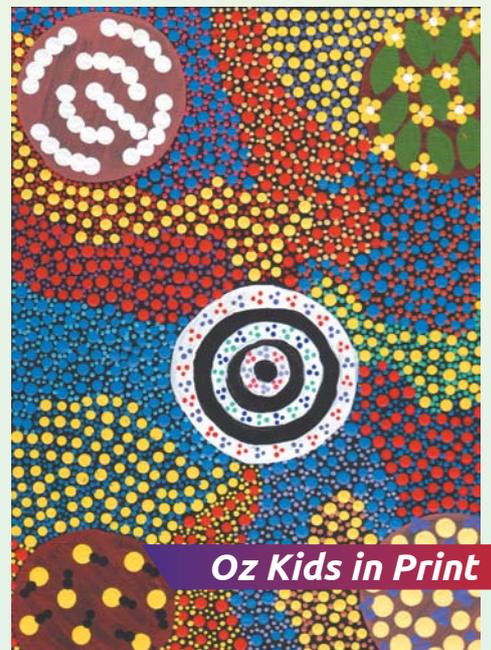
Australia, Australia,  
Crystal clear water is here,  
leading onto oceans and seas.  
Makes delightful sounds when to ear.

Australia, Australia,  
We have the Torres Strait Islands,  
close to our coastal Queensland shores.  
Up north they are known as the dry lands.

Australia, Australia,  
Here I dream, here I play and want to stay.  
Life here is fun with boomerangs.  
Here we have many sandy bays.

Australia, Australia,  
I leave my handprint on you.  
As a Koori girl I am,  
from New South Wales I leave blue.

*By Cacia Charles*  
Year 4, Beaumont Road Public School  
West Killara, NSW  
Teacher: Mrs. Kingston



Oz Kids in Print

# Rain Rain Rain

Every thing is rain, never stops,  
An endless world  
interesting part takes place  
Rain, what an interrupt  
Please stop raining on the roof of peace  
Hiding in shadow grass  
like a washing wing of window glass  
Here comes storm  
Rushing through the streets  
quick as airplane's speed  
Off you go the glittering wings  
stop for a second  
faster than me  
Flying down to the land of grass  
quick as wind

Blowing through the windows  
Sweep like a mop  
to the coast of the emerald sea  
Rain sweeps over the blushed air  
quick as flowing sand  
Blocked by the tall buildings  
right to the left rain flew  
Massive rain sweeps fast at any time  
the wind is blowing time to time

*By Macie You*  
Year 1, Knox Grammar School  
Wahroonga – Preparatory Campus  
Wahroonga, NSW

# STRESS

When pressure overtakes the mind  
What we most often find;  
We tend to scrutinise the benign.  
Of what we must do,  
Of who we must be,  
Of how we must act,  
Of what we can guarantee.

What we need to truly do  
Is not what we are inclined to pursue.  
We need to treasure ourselves and trust  
That happiness is our only 'must'

*By Molly Waters*  
Year 12, Queensland Academies |  
Creative Industries  
Kelvin Grove, Qld.  
Teacher: Ms. Gleeson





## TOPAZ, GOLD & MALACHITE

Topaz, yellow or golden brown  
 Gold, the yellow sparkle underground  
 Malachite, the shimmering green light,  
 Shining very very bright  
 Hidden in a cave so deep  
 In a sort of coma sleep

Soon explorers hike throughout  
 The cave, their home and someone shouts  
 "Something twinkling in the dark  
 Pure white, just like a spark!"

All the hikers cheer hooray  
 All the crystals were found that day

Woken by the smell of clay  
 Slowly, slowly they were chipped away  
 Smelted into jewels and rings  
 Soon the working time begins  
 People rush into the store  
 Eager to get the diamond ore

"Pure diamond, all!" They say  
 Diamond's quickly taken away  
 Then goes topaz, then goes gold  
 But Malachite is very bold  
 Refusing to be taken away  
 "This is my home and I will stay!"

By **Mei You**

Year 4, Knox Grammar School  
 Wahroonga – Preparatory Campus  
 Teacher: Rosemarie Raward

## Rapturous

Life breeds death, as death calls life  
 The wheel splinters and is mended all the same  
 The rooster calls away the night,  
 The moon recedes yet emerges once again

The father spends his troubled toil  
 Scraping up the fallen few  
 Resources for his sickly coil  
 And shards of life that sprout anew.

The mother tends to chastened children  
 Skipping idly through the dirt  
 Laughing, lacking lowly languish  
 That exceeds their share of mirth.

The flowers bloom like open gashes  
 Springing out in fits of folly



Someone, somewhere, slashes,  
 Plucks them out,  
 like shining silks  
 and liquorice lollies.

The pen marks paper,  
 The pick marks stone.  
 The knife carves deep  
 And underneath.  
 The freedom,  
 for the foolish,  
 Roams.

By **Molly Waters**

Year 12, Queensland Academies  
 Creative Industries  
 Holland Park West, Qld.  
 Teacher: Ms. Gleeson

# Alma

**O**N A cold winter's day, when the delicate snow was gathering gently in heaps on the ground, a small girl was to be seen skipping and dancing along one of the darker, sadder alleys. She may well have been the only one out in the streets that day, but Alma, (for that was her name) did not seem to notice or perhaps she did not care, but that is not of significance at this point. The snow was wet and cold, but strangely peaceful. Alma felt as if she were a cold fawn, snuggling into his mother (even if she was chilled to the bone.) she felt free, wet, but free.

Alma turned to a wall, it was large, black and covered in names written in chalk and jumping out into the snow like cold floating shadows. She picked up the piece of chalk she had brought, and slowly wrote her name large and clear in a space near the bottom of the wall, ALMA.

Alma turned, something wasn't right. She listened and slowly looked around, no one. She blinked, and saw a small building with a large window across the street, Alma crept cautiously toward it, she was interested, curious about the secrets the shop may hold. She frowned, staring at the window, and rubbing the frost off of the uncared for, beast like window, and saw a doll, it was not really a very magnificent doll, but rather, plain. Alma's head tilted, her eyes widened, her eye brows rose and her jaw dropped. She looked the doll up and down, as though it was going to disappear any minuet. Alma realized that, the doll was wearing similar, or perhaps the same clothes that she herself was wearing. Alma looked up smiling, it was her doll, or rather a doll in her image. The fleeting moment of excitement and joy that had over come her, was suddenly was reduced to confusion as her face fell, the doll was gone.

She looked up at the shop, its window was strange and rustic with an eerie feel to it. Scaly reptile like tiles were beneath the window, and frostbitten glass allowed the darkness to seep into the shop. Smaller windows lined the top of the larger in a teeth like formation, as if ready to swallow the first person to open the shop's door. The colours of the shop were dull and dark, the windows reflected the wall covered in names and to the shop's right were



around twenty missing posters. Above the main, there were 2 smaller windows, one to the left, and one to the right. The main window separated into three sections, the beams dividing them dripping suspiciously from its arch, as if there were some kind of monster hiding in the strangeness of the window...

Alma was puzzled, that doll had been her, a rather less authentic her but still her. No one was allowed to own her. She ran to the door of the shop, all these thoughts swirling in her head like a hurricane. She pushed, but the door did not budge, she pushed again, harder this time, but still nothing happened. Alma felt a surge of anger overtake her, like the tide taking over a beach. She bent over and plunged her hand into the snow, making a large snow ball. She forced all her resistant anger into that ball and threw it hard at the door. Then, feeling slightly out of breath, she turned and began to walk moodily away. After she had walked about ten steps, the door creaked open and Alma heard the tinkle of the shop bell. She turned once more and stepped cautiously into the shop, the stench of dolls, mice and dust overwhelming her senses.

The tiles, broken and decaying, moved noisily as she walked to a table in the center of the room, her doll was standing there, looking innocently out the window, not a care in the world. As Alma reached

for the doll, her foot nudged a smallish doll on a bicycle, he was so obviously mechanical, because his feet were peddling like a terrified circus clown. Alma took pity on the doll and bent down to lift it upright. As she rose, the doll on the bicycle sped towards the closing door, he wasn't fast enough. Alma smiled, 'silly doll' she thought. When Alma reached her full height, she gasped, gripping the table she looked wildly around, searching for the doll. Then, she saw it, sitting on a high shelf above an old, dusty couch. Alma hurried over, climbed onto the couch and scrambled up the shelf. Taking off her glove, Alma stretched, as she did, she imagined walking through the door of her home and showing her doll to her mother. 'why, Alma, that doll is your splitting image!!!' she would say. Alma continued to stretch, her full attention on the doll as her fingers became level with the dolls nose, she swayed slightly excitement overcoming her.

As Alma touched the doll, she saw flashes of not only her own life but of the doll's too. She saw things that she hadn't experienced in many years, and things she did not know or understand. Suddenly everything was still again, and Alma was staring through clear, glassy eyes. Her heavy and out of control breathing mixed with the slower, calmer breathing, the movement of her eyes imitated by hundreds of others, clicking from side to side. As Alma heard these things she also looked around the room, she felt betrayed, scared and miserable.

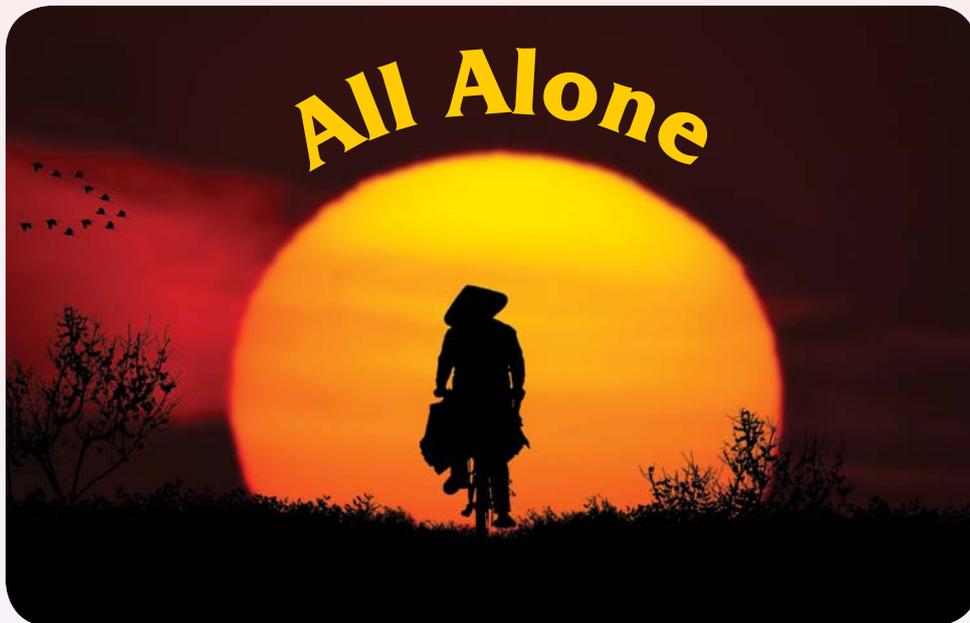
She saw another smaller doll rising up in the window, it had scraggly red hair, pale skin and was wearing a pinkish flowery dress with little gold buttons going down the front. She had a sad, disoriented look on her face, as if she was lost, or lonely. She had bright green eyes that could have been very pretty, if they were not clouded with confusion. Alma felt sorry, not just for the little girl that would be the new doll, but for herself she would never see her family again. For she had been sucked into the doll.

By **Grace Peucker**  
Year 6, Mil Lel Primary School  
Mil Lel, SA  
Teacher: Emmanuelle Pratt

**T**HE FIRST few rays of dawn were like the golden beams of a fragile hand. The warm summer wind blew affectionately on my back. I raced outside. I saw no one. Everybody was gone. My heart sank to my toes, I was all alone. I frantically grabbed my tattered bike with its torn handles and rusty tyres. I left our tiny house,

racing down the streets without any idea of where to go in mind. The wind blew ferociously on me like a sword slicing across my face. But who was going to help me? There was no one.

I had been riding for what seemed like an eternity. My back was aching, and my hands were bright red from riding my bike. Tremendous storm clouds were heading in my direction. I was being followed. It was as if I did something wrong that dissatisfied the furious clouds and they were coming for me. I stood still as the shrieking wind blew across the tiny dirt track. I shivered uncontrollable with fear. But there was nobody. Just me. I was all alone.



I was tiny compared to the storm clouds; they were a million times my size. I cried for my beloved family. But now they were all gone. I was all alone in this enormous world, yet I am so small. I cried in desperation. But how was that going to help? I had to do everything on my own.

I focused on a tiny raindrop that fell alone onto my nose. I could imagine that it was here to tell me that I shouldn't give up on trying to find my family. No matter what. Suddenly, splatters of shiny, clear raindrops fell down from the sky. One by one, they motivated me as I jumped on my bike and decided to continue my long journey.

I searched day and night. But it was as

to give up. Everything was too hard.

I left the tiny home I loved so much. I couldn't stand the feeling of my lost family. Year after year. I haven't been back. I lived an isolated life, with nobody to love or care for me. I dealt with that for years, until I finally had enough courage to go back to the tiny house.

It sat still on the bare ground. It was completely empty. I was all alone.

**By Elaine Chen**

*Year 5, Ravenswood School for Girls  
Gordon, NSW*

*Teacher: Sharon Shapiro*

## *The Whirling Storm Surrounds Me*

The swirling fog abounds.  
Twirl through the raging inferno  
Of freedom, love and war.  
Shrug off the past, a thousand years of hate  
A key in a lock,  
And the bounds spiral to the floor.  
Vaporising the embrace of hate.  
A paved path of shackles  
Transforms to the twisted path of uncertainty.  
Nothing less than what it seems,  
The mockingbird has ceased its call

**By Paige Hook**

*Year 7, Burnie High School*

*Burnie – Tas.*

*Teacher: Nicole Chettle*

# Fire Fly

The glow of the firefly burns through the night sky,  
the golden grass is lush and harsh.  
You created the ground, you created the sky,  
you created the sea and left it to die.  
Dreams in the air, dreams everywhere, there in my soul and calling.  
When lava flows demons die and rocks crumble in the sky.

Do you want to sleep in a coffin tonight?  
Do you want to be mummified?  
Lying dead in a pyramid where it's dark and cold,  
When the light fades out, all that's left are revolting souls,  
When darkness runs across the room it assassinates all light,  
Beware! Darkness can blind your eyes.

*By Harrison Schwabe  
Year 4, Brunswick North West Primary School  
Brunswick, Vic.  
Teacher: Belinda Marty*

# The Witch's Hat

They can't just see a woman and her cat  
They look at us  
And they see a black cat, a woman in a witch's hat

The child start to run or cry  
I never understand  
I just watch them and wonder why

My fur is black, my eyes are green  
My best friend is hunched over a cauldron  
In the dead of night, she casts her spells, unseen

They think she's evil, say she's bad  
They don't know her dreams  
To make people happy, cure all who are sad

When stars twinkle overhead  
She goes from door to door  
While children lie sound asleep in bed

Fills hearts with love, cures the ill  
With her magic spells  
Leaves candy on their windowsill

*By Amy Mengler  
Year 12, Mount Barker Community College  
Kendenup, WA*

# Alice



Her dress is white and silver  
With golden thick fine hair  
Her beauty and looks are really rather rare

Her steps are like tomorrow the mysteries unknown  
Of who she might follow or where this girl will go

The sorrow and the horror of the dreadful echoing past  
The shadows and the pain will not stand to last

Her rosy red fine cheeks  
Her dazzling bright blue eyes



Brighter than tomorrow  
And sweeter than the sky

Her mind is always thinking always day and night  
Reading and doodling her thoughts are oh so bright  
When she looks right at you she's smiling like the sun  
She's always playing with you and always having fun

*By Elenib Xanthos  
Year 5, Greenslopes State School  
Greenslopes, Qld.*

# Random Thoughts

Random thoughts they fill my head  
All through the day and night  
I'm not sure why it happens to me  
I'm not sure I'm all right

I wonder why the sky is blue  
I wonder why dogs won't eat peas  
I wonder why emu's have wings  
Or why elbows aren't called armknees

Why do these thoughts fill my head?  
Am I strange? Am I weird?  
Is there something wrong with me?  
Why can't I grow a beard?

Do clowns get sad when we laugh at them?  
Is there really a staircase to heaven?  
Does it hurt the grass when we mow it?  
Why is it 7, 8, 9 and not 9, 8, 7?

Why are fingers called fingers  
Why are toes called toes  
Why are my teeth inside my mouth  
And not hanging off my nose

Why do caterpillars turn into butterflies  
What would happen if rain went up not down  
What would happen if when we were happy  
our mouth turned to a frown  
if broccoli tasted like chocolate  
if sleep we did not need  
if school was something no-one did  
id be a happy girl indeed

these random thoughts they come to me  
there's worse but I'm scared to share  
you'll think I'm super loopy  
and will point and laugh and stare

my mumma says I'm normal  
then we laugh together some more  
she doesn't think I'm crazy or weird  
but she does bark at the door

*By Cassidee Reitsema  
Year 5, Miss B's Student Services  
Legana, Tas.  
Teacher: Miss B*



# BOOK REVIEW

## The Amazing Case of Dr Ward

By Jackie Kerin & Tull Suwannakit

Release Date 1st March 2021

ISBN: 9871925804690

FORD STREET PUBLISHING

**H**ERE were plants they had never imagined; from places they would never visit.

When you peel a banana, or bite into a pear, when you smell a rose, pop a fuchsia bud or scrape your knee climbing an old pine tree, do you ever wonder how those plants came to this country?

Let me tell you of the amazing case of Dr Ward.

### Review

Dr Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward was an exotic plant lover. But how, in 1833, did he manage to get them to survive the perils of the sea, and grow them successfully at his home in England?

Well you have to read it for yourself.

A great Christmas gift, for young readers who love history.

### About the Author

Jackie Kerin comes to writing with a background in acting and storytelling. She is a familiar face in schools, libraries, folk and literary festivals where she is sought after for her storytelling skills.

Jackie is interested in nature and history and loves gardening and riding her bike.

Her stories are finely crafted, language rich, fun and heartfelt.

### About The Illustrator

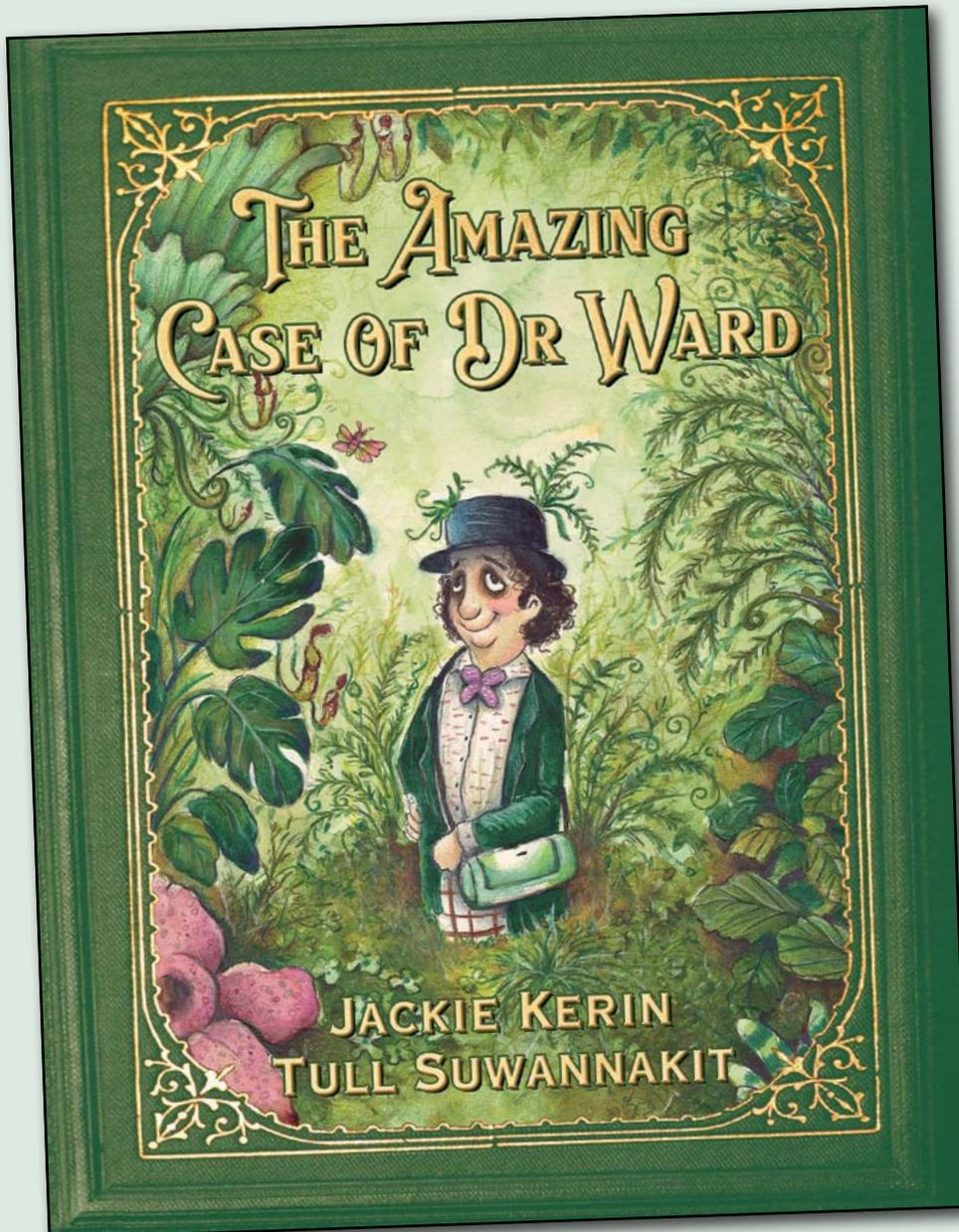
Tull Suwannakit is a children's book author and illustrator with a background in animation and fine art. He began his artistic career as a set designer and sculptor for an independent animation studio in New York.

Tull's books have been published in Australia, the UK and the US, as well as being translated in numerous languages worldwide.

What Happens Next? (Walker Books Australia and UK) was featured in the Sydney Morning Herald, ABC Mornings Radio and Play School on ABC4Kids, and was short-listed for 2015 Speech Pathology Australia Book of the Year Award. His latest collaborated picture book, Sad, The Dog (Walker Books, Australia and Candlewick Press, USA) written by Sandy Fussell gained positive reviews from The Age, Sydney Morning Herald and The New York Times.

AGES 6+

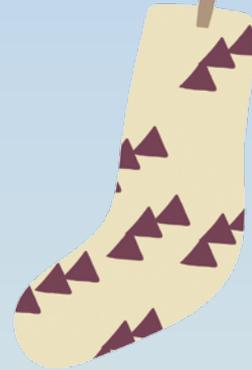
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# Unicorn Socks



**S**OME unicorns were lost in the sock factory and didn't know what to do. They saw lots of socks that were colourful and fun.

First, they tried on some brown socks but it was not their colour. Red was too red and green was too green and orange was too orange. The unicorns looked for a long time but could not find the socks that were the right colour. They tried pink sparkly ones, green with blue spots, blue with green spots, super big soft socks but nothing was right. Then one found a purple sock with rainbows on them but it was on the top of a very tall shelf. All the unicorns were so happy that it was purple and rainbowy because they loved purple and rainbows.

They gathered as many socks as they could carry and stacked them on top of each other making stairs to the top of a tall shelf. It was very hard and tiring because the socks were bigger than the unicorns. But soon they made it, the socks were soft but not too soft so the unicorns found a spot on the sock and it was the Best Sock in the world.

In the morning when everyone was back at work, they found the sock stairs leading to the purple rainbow socks and saw the unicorns on it but did not get mad at the unicorns. They just smiled, took them down and put them in a frame.

Now when the people come to make socks for old people, young people and people in the middle they are happier than before because they can see the socks of the unicorns. And the unicorns are happy on their socks looking over the people. So, everyone is happier than before the unicorns found their socks and got a special frame.

The frame is where the tall shelf was but it got moved for the frame and everyone loved to look at the socks of purple rainbows and unicorns all over it. People from all over town would come just to see them and that made the unicorns very happy. The workers told the unicorns that if the factory burnt down, they would be safe, if they were stolen it would be OK. If

anything happened to them, they would be mended so the unicorns were safe forever.

Everything was fine everyone was happy everything was good and the unicorn socks were the best socks in the world. Nothing ever happened to the socks and the people kept their promise forever.

By **Amelia Treasure**  
Year 7, Miss B's Student Services  
Riverside, Tas.  
Teacher: Miss B



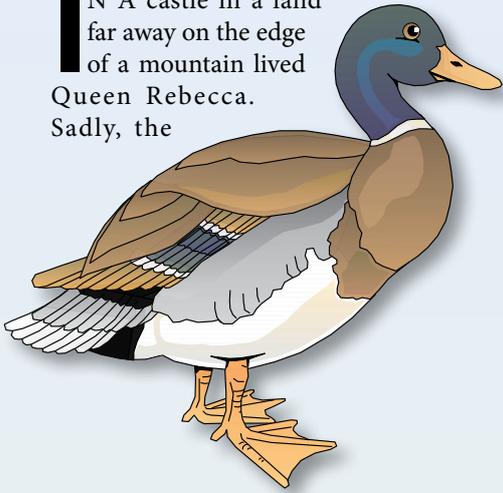
## Nature

It is all around us.  
But what makes nature so beautiful?  
Is it the whispering of the trees?  
Or the birds singing to their friends?  
Or the colour of the leaves?  
Or the crunch you hear when you walk in a pile of leaves?  
The answer remains unknown.  
Nature is beautiful.

By **Anabelle D'Rozario**  
Year 5, Trinity Catholic Primary  
Narre Warren South – Vic.  
Teacher: Mrs Rima Darwish

# Queen Rebecca's QUACK! Quacking Quest

**I**N A castle in a land far away on the edge of a mountain lived Queen Rebecca. Sadly, the



**QUACK!**

potion known to witch kind."

all gone. "Would you like to come and live in my castle?"

"QUACK QUACK," quacked Queen Rebecca. "Where is this QUACK swamp?"

"No thank you," said the Witch.

"It is 63 kilometres North of Bumberlee Mountain, Your Majesty," the quivering messenger answered. "It is called Onionland swamp."

When the Queen, the Negotiator and scouts returned to the castle they saw the brave Knights waiting patiently with the Queen's Mother and the evil Todd in hand cuffs.

"Thank you QUACK you are dismissed QUACK and close the big doors after you." quacked the Queen.

By **Sebastian Whelan**  
Year 5, Miss B's Student Services  
Legana, Tas.  
Teacher: Catherine Byers

Queen was under a quacking spell put on her by the evil Wizard Chad!

Queen Rebecca summoned her loyal servant, John and ordered him to fetch food, water, a few loyal scouts, a negotiator and of course some mudproof boots and trousers.

The evil Chad, using his special wand, put the spell on Queen Rebecca to make her miserable because her constant quacking was so noisy and loud it kept all her staff awake.

After a delicious lunch Queen Rebecca waited for John, the Negotiator and the scouts to arrive.

One day Queen Rebecca was sitting on her throne when a messenger burst through the door panting and said,

Queen Rebecca dressed for the occasion, when she was ready, they discussed the plan to get the witch to join them and give the Queen the potion to reverse the Evil Chad's spell.

"Your Majesty we have just got news that your mother has been kidnapped by the evil Wizard Chad's brother, Todd!"

When they reached Bumberlee Mountain they stopped and checked the map. They continued on until they saw in the distance the huge Onionland Swamp and a little hut. In the hut the witch was brewing a potion. You could hear the bubbling of the potion and the occasional ribbett of a frog.

The Queen was both shocked and surprised by the bursting in messenger and the shocking message.

Queen Rebecca, John and the Negotiator cautiously approached the hut and knocked on the door.

She quickly stood up. Her lips were quivering as she shouted,

The witch opened the door and shouted, "WHAT DO YOU WANT?"

"QUACK! Knights go to Todd's tower QUACK It's on the ice mountain, Slippery Slope QUACK! Find my Mother and arrest the evil Chad's brother Todd QUACK! go quickly and quietly and do not quarrel. QUACK and do not return without QUACK my MOTHER!!

The Negotiator spoke nicely and asked the witch if they could have the potion to rid the Queen of her quacks.

The brave knights asked no questions and quickly clattered off on their quest to rescue the Queen's mother.

The witch agreed and gave the Negotiator a small bottle of yellow liquid. Queen Rebecca quickly swallowed all the yellow liquid.

"Excuse me Your Majesty," said the quivering messenger quietly. "In the market this morning I overheard some people speaking outside the farmer's market, saying there is a witch who lives in a swamp who has the power to make any

"Thank you" said the Queen, her quacks

## WILD LOVE



We run like wild beasts,  
Chasing after that cold longing light.

Our eyes refuse to see the sense  
That we lost, oh, so long ago.

Then when we fall,  
We shatter like twigs.

All alone: that's when  
The shadows finally catch up.

Drowning in darkness,  
We are strangled.

The sense kicks us  
In the gut, and leaves.

We lie there,

A  
b  
a  
n  
d  
o  
n  
e  
d

With a broken heart.

By **Monika Falkowska**  
Year 11, Sacre Coeur  
Glen Iris, Vic.



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