

OZ KIDS IN PRINT

Issue 2, 2022

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Dyneeka Jones
Indigenous Art Award
Fortescue Metals*

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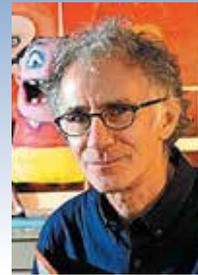
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OZ KIDS IN PRINT

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Nature Connection
By Dyneeka Jones
Indigenous Art Award
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The Selection Committee:

Managing Editor/Layout **Carol Dick**
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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Students & Teachers,

Could you please help us when sending in your submissions?

We do receive all the entries that are uploaded. So there is no need to resend your entries to us. It is a charity run by volunteers. So removing duplicates takes time.

Thanking you for your help.

Keep those entries coming in. There are two more editions for this year.

- Carol

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**KEEP ON WRITING
(TYPING)!**

Carol Dick
Managing Editor

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OUR LITERARY JUDGE



Emeritus Professor Margot Hillel OAM PhD, MA, BA, TPTC

Margot Hillel has had many years of Higher Education governance experience as Chair of Academic Board at Australian Catholic University, a member of University Senate and a variety of other leadership positions. She also has proficiency in teaching, higher degree supervision, thesis and literary editing. Her governance experience extends beyond the university sector to serving as Chair of the Children's Book Council of Australia, as a literary judge, and as a mentor. Margot also serves on the Boards of two other not-for-profit organisations supporting women leaving domestic violence and the education of Cambodian girls.

Margot has been the Literary Judge, for Childrens' Charity Network, for over 23 years.

We are honoured to have such a celebrated expert in Children's Literature as our Chief Judge for the Children's Charity Network Literacy Awards.



Margot Hillel receiving her gift from Rob Leonard, for her 20 years of volunteering, as the Literary Judge for Children's Charity Network.



The Childrens Charity Network proudly promotes the Young Australian Writer's Awards and recognises the literary excellence of young Australian writers. Our selection committee judges all entries and entries selected for short listing will be published in the Oz Kidz in Print magazine.

At the end of the year all published entries are entered into the Young Australian Writers Award. Which has the potential to open the doors to many fantastic opportunities such as scholarships and professional publishing.

The Ghosts

I propelled my spear into the air, hoping it would catch the emu off guard. It landed on its behind, startling it and slowing it down. I howled in delight and threw another spear; this one hitting it on the hind leg. It stopped and fell to the ground. I dragged the emu to our camp and murmured thank you for the food.

I soon reached the camp, dropped the emu on the sand and sat down. I was a good hunter, fast and strong. I was only young, but the elders said I have great potential.

"Good job, Bindi. You caught that all by yourself- now that's a good hunter!" Dad smiled. I beamed back and looked at the clouds.

I could see pictures in them- one looked like a kangaroo, the other looked like a snake. I wondered if they were the spirits of real animals who had been caught just like that emu, too.

I blinked and looked at the ocean waves. I could see people fishing and swimming. There was also a white cloud with crisp outlines against the blue sky. It was a weird shape, something I've never seen before in clouds. It seemed like it was shifting closer...

"Hey, Dad," I looked at him. "What's that thing over there? It looks like a small white cloud... but it doesn't look natural." I frowned.

"Eh, I wouldn't worry about it," Dad said, shrugging it off. "Come on, let's go eat."

A few minutes passed and we had finished eating the emu. I was going to collect some water from the pond when I saw it - the oddly shaped cloud that was coming closer.

But it had something under it too. A brown shape, that kind of looked like the bark of a tree, but it wasn't shaped like it. I looked at what was on the tree bark, and there were multiple figures looking at us. Staring.

"Dad!" I rushed back to our camp. "Dad, the cloud is approaching! And there are people on it!" I was out of breath by the time I reached our huts. Dad frowned and stood up.

"Show me," he murmured.

I guided him to the shore, and by then the cloud had inched even closer. We could hear yelling and gibberish noises. They weren't speaking our language. My eyes widened as soon as I saw their skins.

"Are those... the spirits?" I breathed. Dad didn't say a word and edged towards the sea.

I realised I should go and tell the others. Running back to camp at full speed, I shouted: "There's an unusual figure, very close to the shore and there are people on it. They have the skins of spirits!"

Multiple eyes widened as the rest of my family jumped up and sprinted across to the beach.

The spirits started speaking gibberish, and my great-auntie, Barangaroo, stood nose-to-nose with them and tried to communicate.

But the spirits were starting to grab things from their cloud and dropping them onto the beach. What were they doing? Awful-smelling spirits exited the cloud, scanning the area. It looked like they were looking for land.

My older brother, Kaiya, walked up to the spirit in the colourful clothing and exclaimed, "Are you the ghosts? Or are you fakes? Tell us! Why don't you know our language?"

But a spirit shoved past Kaiya and shouted something to the cloud.

We watched as things were unloaded onto the beach. We were pushed out of the way and our huts were scavenged.

"Hey! They can't do that... they aren't the spirits. Spirits have respect!" An elder roared. He carelessly threw a spear at a figure.

It barely hit him in the thigh, but the so-called spirit roared and screamed at the leading figure.

He pulled out a long, slim stick that looked shiny. Then, BANG. The elder fell to the ground in spasms.

We screamed and threw spears at the white people. I ran as fast as I could, trying to warn the other tribes. But everything went downhill from there.

I never saw dad again, or any of my family, for that matter.

And now, here I am, lonely. Living with these unknown people, in a modernized hut, with tools and supplies used for learning about useless things.

I thought I was fast.

But I guess you can never outrun fate.

By **Abigail Maller**

Category: Middle

Ravenswood School for Girls

Gordon, NSW

Teacher: Sharon Shapiro



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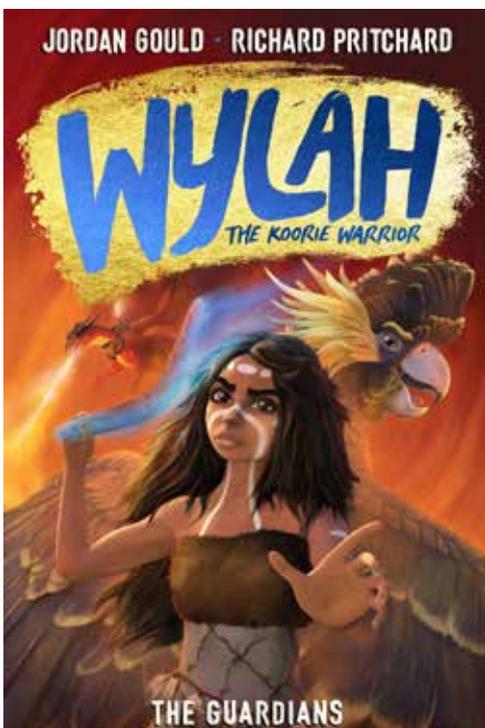


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**Pictured: Marjory Gardner, Meredith Costain, Phil Kettle,
Marc McBride, Paul Collins and George Ivanoff.**



Wylah: the Koorie Warrior

by Jordan Gould and Richard Pritchard

Published by Allen & Unwin

Wylah: the Koorie Warrior, a new Indigenous middle-grade fantasy adventure series for ages 8–14. Wylah is an entirely original adventure story that is inspired by First Nations history and grounded in culture.

About the book:

Meet Wylah: warrior, hero and friend. Her adventures have been 40,000 years in the making!

Wylah is brave, clever and strong-willed, and all her best friends are animals. But she isn't a warrior. Not yet, anyway.

Then comes the day when her family is stolen by the dragon army, and her life is forever changed. She must find the courage to set out on a journey to save them.

'Wylah is the kind of character I longed to read about when I was a kid – gutsy, determined and kind. I love her. And I love her world – full of adventure, humour, animal friends ... and megafauna! I know kids all over Australia will revel in Wylah's amazing adventures, and I couldn't be more proud to be publishing this series.'

Susannah Chambers, Albert Street Books Publisher

'We want people to know that Indigenous media and storytelling can be FUN, and it can be mainstream. We wanted to teach language, art and culture alongside a commercial acceptance of Indigenous culture. Wylah is aimed at both Indigenous people – to feature a young, determined heroine who looks like them – and non-Indigenous people, who want an enjoyable entry point to learn more. We are so proud of this book.'

'As a New Zealand born Samoan, I could see connections with Pacific Islanders, Maori and Indigenous Australian cultures. In New Zealand, we have very strong female characters in our heritage and history. Traditionally women are as much warriors as men. Jordan had always wanted to bring his Ancestor's stories to the mainstream media. With both of us coming from different but similar cultural backgrounds, we decided to team up and bring Wylah to life. Jordan named our hero 'Wylah' based on the word 'Wilan', the Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoo – which is his tribe's totem.'

Jordan Gould and Richard Pritchard

Richard Pritchard

About Jordan Gould and Richard Pritchard:

Jordan Gould is a Peek Whurrong man from Warrnambool, Victoria. He performs welcome to country ceremonies at corporate and private gatherings. He is passionate about teaching and talking to groups about culture, language and reconciliation.

*Richard Pritchard – a New Zealand-born Samoan man – has had a dream of writing books since he was a teenager. His passion for visual storytelling has led him to work in film, animation, commercials and video games. He has worked on feature films such as *The Great Gatsby*, *Happy Feet*, *Mad Max: Fury Road*, and *Prometheus* as a visual effects artist.*



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CONTACT:

Yvette Gilfillan email: yvetteg@allenandunwin.com

phone: 0431 584 091

Blue to the Rescue

Rain lashed the darkening sky. The last streams of sun vanished. Grampa finished reading. "Good night, Dusty," whispered Grampa. The lights were extinguished and I slid to sleep.

A swirl of colours whooshed. I was in the snow. "Chirp, chirp." A fluffy baby penguin was on the floor. There were tears of terror in her shining blue eyes. I looked around for her mother, but all I can see is the endless blinding white snow. Sadness fills me. I can't leave her or she will perish. I woke up. A fluffy white penguin was staring at me! The beams of a new day seared my eyes. Out on the street I see a girl about my age muttering under her breath. She was shabby looking and I recognised her, Katy Bell, a Burnside fifth year.

When I went to school that day, I was sure to sneak my penguin friend because I had a feeling that the world will need her. At break, I saw Brian, the school bully, with his faithful gang bullying Katy. Then, "Chirp", Blue soared at Brian and I couldn't believe my eyes or ears. She was actually speaking to Brian.

"Don't bully! How would you like to be bullied?" asked Blue. Brian looked astonished. The gang dashed away at top speed. But, Brian stood rooted to the spot, literally dumbfounded. I tiptoed away. If

you weren't there, Blue, it would have been catastrophic. Katy could have got seriously hurt.

Katy was stumbling towards me. "Thanks a lot, your penguin was incredible!" "Please don't tell anyone, including my Grampa," I pleaded. "Of course," whispered Katy. "Friends," said Katy. "Yes," I agreed. On Saturday, I invited Katy to the breathtaking final soccer championship. When we were entering the gates, we saw a lost little girl walking behind us with a ticket in her hand. Then a tough looking guy marched up to her and said, "Give me your ticket or I will thump you!"

The little girl was trembling so violently I was surprised that she wasn't drilling into the gravelly ground. "Chirp, chirp." I knew what was coming, but I made myself do it, instead of Blue revealing herself. "Stop!" I yelled. I had done it. The tough looking guy stormed up to me. "What are you going to do?" he asked me threateningly. "I am going to tell you again, please stop," I asked calmly, but my temper was bubbling just below the surface. He just looked at me with a confused and beaten expression and he floundered and stumbled away until the darkness swallowed him up. "Thank you," said a timid voice. It was the little girl. "No problem," I said. The little girl

shuffled away, desperately searching for her family, with a relieved but shaken look on her face.

Blue had given me confidence. Over the years, me, Katy and Blue stopped many incidents of bullying and became famous all over the world. We gave speeches to encourage not to bully and be kind and just have FUN!

By **Maya Sandberg**

Category: Junior

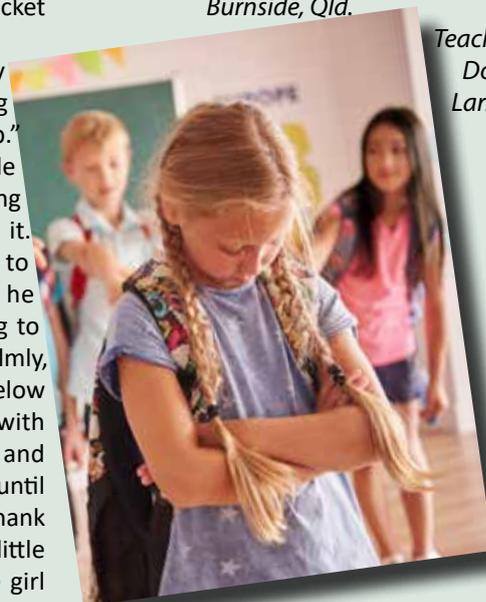
Burnside State School

Burnside, Qld.

Teacher:

Doug

Larsen



CRY

*The way the water flows,
it pours with grace.
Like drops of dancers,
trickling down her face.*

*Her water tastes pungent,
bitter and sharp.
Her water tastes different.
Sour? No, tart.*

*The way it bends
Down each wrinkle and crack.
The way it bends,
Around the smile, she lacks.*

*Her liquid eyes
start rapidly flowing.
Bursting down,
continuously growing.*

*A waterfall emerges,
Gushing and spitting.
Out the water purges,
Consumed, yet unwitting.*

*Now the water rumbles,
it vibrates with pain.
A shrieking voice,
calling out in vain.*

*The stillness, the calmness,
is now gone.
Now an ocean stands,
where her loved one
once was.*

By **Diadem Ajani**

Category: Senior

St Patricks College

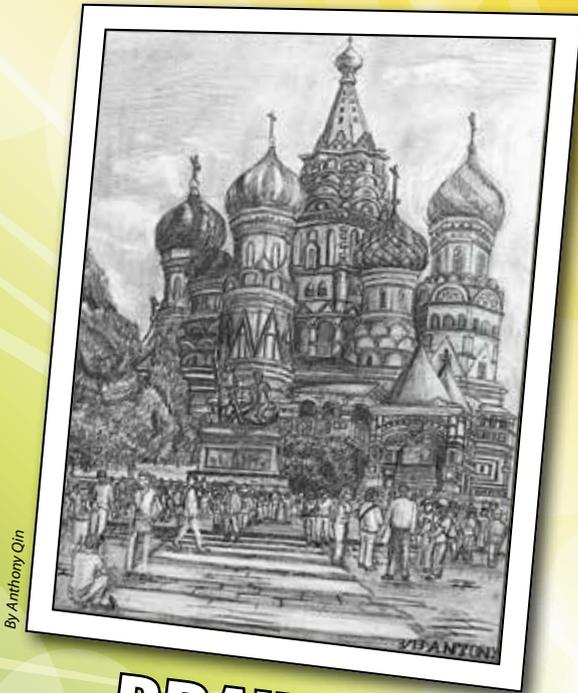
Campbelltown, NSW

Teacher: Shayne Denford



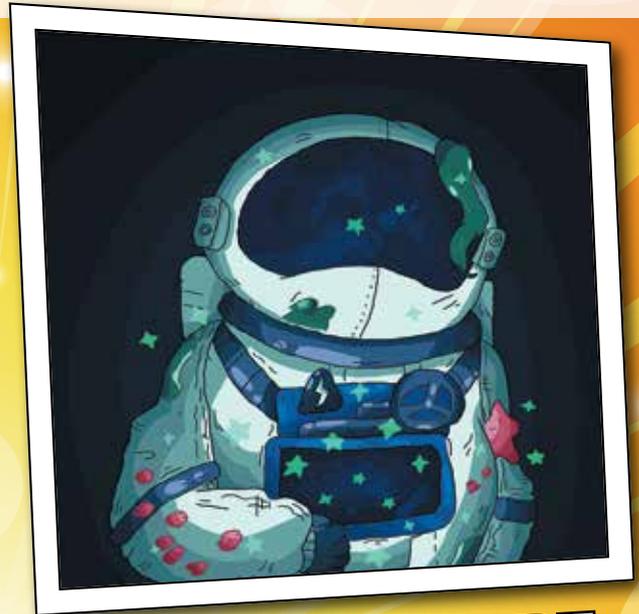
2022

YOUNG AUSTRALIAN ART AWARDS



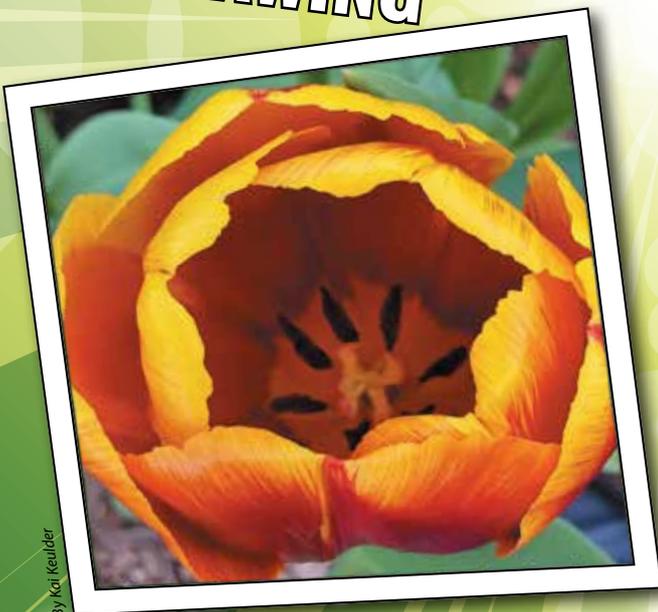
By Anthony Qin

DRAWING



By Nanna Tsuchiya

COMPUTER ART



By Kai Keulder

PHOTOGRAPHY



By Matthew Ropeyarn

PAINTING

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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.

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.

Where am I?

Aching all over, I awoke from my sinful, dreamless slumber. My whole body was frigid from the hard tile floor beneath me and a loud buzzing noise vibrated my eardrums. Planted on the ground, my face was covered in dried blood and a metallic taste lingered in my mouth like paint on carpet. I struggled to open my eyes, blinded by the sarcophagus of bright lights in which I was encased. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't manage enough strength to lift myself from the ground. My elbows buckled beneath me as my knees slipped on the smooth tiles. I seemed to be wearing some sort of thin dress that didn't make it past my thighs. Eventually, feeling very light-headed and dizzy, I made it to my feet where I began to observe my surroundings. The room around me was bare, with nothing but white walls and a small puddle of blood remaining from where my head once rested. Confused and nauseous, with no memories of prior, I searched around the room for any sort of clue of my location and turned to find a large white door. Chilling fear stabbed me in the back. Where am I?

Heading towards the door, I drowned in a pool of dread. What was awaiting me behind the door? My head was full of stressful thoughts rushing around, like a building of people caught on fire. The closer I came to the door, the more I wished to be unconscious again. The thought of the other side scared me, my subconscious mind coming up with an assortment of crazy stories. What if there were people out there, bad people? What would happen if I was alone? I wished to stop thinking, for my mind to be blank once again, engulfed in an infinite nothingness like it had prior, but I knew that wasn't going to happen. Stretching out my pale arm, I gripped onto the cold metal door handle, as the dried blood on my wrist began to flake off. A tingling sensation came over my body as the hairs on my back raised. Slowly turning the shiny handle, my heart pumped so fast it felt like it would burst out of my chest in seconds like a bullet out of a gun. There was no turning back now.

Screeching like a crow, the door yawned open. The scenery before me did not fulfil my expectation and I began to question my sanity. I was in a hospital. Why was I so scared? And why was I left on the

floor? This hospital was nothing like the one I am used to back at home, where the receptionist is more plastic than the purified water dispenser. Here there is no openness, no space, nothing shines or has the smell of disinfectant. Instead, the way in is down a long hallway so narrow that if a wheelchair or trolley were to come the other way, I'd have to dip into a side room to let it go by. I can tell that the walls were once painted from the cream flakes that remain, though mostly they show the grey undercoat or perhaps the



concrete beneath that. The floor, darker than a mausoleum, is uneven from so much traffic with both feet and wheels. The air is stagnant like I just went into some pit. There was no hand sanitiser to be seen within the vicinity of any patient, how they prevent the spread of germs here I don't know. From ahead, I heard some muffled voices, angry and placating. I bit down hard on my lip; this isn't going to be fun. My chest constricted and every breath I took was excruciating, taking more and more effort as time passed. I was hyperventilating. This fear is my challenge and my demon to slay, for it will come until I do, unannounced and gnarly. The only way out is to order this brain to function, to demand solutions instead of this crazy-making circling anxiety. So, though it feels that my bones have no more strength and my muscles are all out of power, I still have the option to remain still, to be quiet enough to choose how to fight. Continuing further, the voices became clearer. There seemed to be a woman talking to two men, who sounded very angry.

'She will be looked after, I promise,' the voice sounded raspy, like an elderly man who was in great need of a glass of water.

The other man sounded much younger, his voice very shaky,

'We need to take her home, she...'

Who were they talking about?

'You know the rules, Mr. Bradshaw.' Spoke a woman's voice, 'The variant breed must be detained.'

What was the variant breed? Whatever it was, I was sure that I never wanted to

be near one. They sounded dangerous. Bracing myself, I got ready to run, to burst through the door and flee.

A sudden force had pulled me to the side, and it felt like my heart had fallen out of my chest. Unstable, I regained my balance. There was a weight resting on my shoulder, the same shoulder which I had been pulled from. I looked down, there was a hand. My eyes followed up the arm which this hand belonged to, to find a boy, skinny and pale who wore the same wristband and gown as I did. Had he woken up in a strange room too? Did he know where we were? His eyes were a dark hazel brown that matched his hair which had been shaved back as far as possible. He looked as if we were the same age, around fifteen. No matter how hard I tried, I could not manage to make a sound. Every attempt to speak was unsuccessful, no noise came, not even a grunt. What did they do to me? Why can't I talk?

The door ahead of us started to open. 'Hurry, come with me,' he whispered as he sped off down the hall. I still hadn't enough energy to stand up straight, however, was I supposed to run? Fearing what was behind us, I tried to catch up

with him. My sprint came to an abrupt halt as something touched my back. This sensation, like no other, was beyond description. Investigating the source, I turned to see a man staring directly at me, the man adjacent to him held a minute box with a long black cord. After further examination, it became apparent to me that this cord lead straight to my back, where it became infused into my spine.

The old man's, maniacal voice sounded again, 'You are mine now.'

My eyesight blurring, everything around me became fuzzy until I saw nothing at all. My consciousness was floating through an empty space filled with thick static. Throughout the inky space, my heartbeats pounded loudly, echoing in my ears, alongside fading pleads for help. Eventually, all feeling in my body had drained away until finally, all was black.

As my eyes open, my limbs flex in shock. Tubes run up each nostril and all that meets my skin is the warm glass that surrounds. A clear fluid runs through these tubes. What is it? Water maybe, for hydration? There are bindings on my limbs and around my neck. Without a conscious thought, a choice, my body does what any must to survive. Every muscle is stronger than it should ever be and there is no mental restraint on the force I can use. Snapped bones are preferable to death. In this way, my captors have underestimated my strength. The liquid rushes out of the newly shattered glass and I step out, bindings in place but their anchor points free.

I want to stand but for the moment my legs have given way to gravity, shaky, weak. The retching goes on for so long I lose track of time and then I realise what the stench is. This isn't water after all, but a strange liquid, medication maybe? I blink, the blurriness fading and my surroundings growing clearer. The coldness of the air becomes more apparent, stealing the warmth given to me by the foul concoction that has swept all over the grey floor. I want to use all my senses, get a feel for whatever this is, but the foul odour dominates the air, and the chill air freezes my skin and the little brain power I can muster.

I step forwards, only to slip on this strange fluid. Over and over again, until, finally, I gain my stance, and begin the walk towards the door. The tall, metal door blocks my view. Yet again, a door blocks my view. Why is it always a door? It's fine, I can just open it. Just like I did the last time. Stepping slowly to avoid slipping, I approach the door and reach for the handle. Where is it? There isn't a handle to grasp. I am trapped. This is my end.

I collapse to the floor. It feels like I have been running for hours. My heart is racing, and my limbs burn with pain. Is this what a panic attack feels like? I need to calm down, I need to try and think rationally and gain some way out of here. My school chaplain

once told me to list all the objects in a room whenever I need to calm myself down. Let's see; a shelf holding folded towels, a metal trolley with multiple drawers, and the door. The door that I really need to get through. Oh, I really want to get through that door.

I jump. The door begins to open. Someone must be coming. But no one. Was that me? Did I just open that door? Either way, it was open, and I had an escape. I must get out of here.

By **Kaylee Jesnoewski**
Category: Senior
Kinross College
Quinns Rocks, WA
Teacher: Erin Best

The path towards the unknown

The path walked leads you towards the unknown
The landscape glitters from the mists of night,
The shadowy forests straight to the hight;
Lost in the breathless night, alone once more.

The distant roar of the road to my home,
Breaks through the silence as cars rocket past.
I'm lost in a forest whose reach is so vast.
Now I am forever destined to roam.

By **Zoe Parcell**
Category: Middle
Pedare Christian College
Golden Grove, SA
Teacher: Mrs Jude Johnson



BOOK REVIEWS

Meet our book reviewers
Zephie, Chloe, Phillip, Ella, Kiara and Bohdi

From Years 5 and 6 at
California Gully Primary School in central Victoria

Reviews Coordinators:
Linda Windridge and Meredith Costain

The Good Times of Pelican Rise

by Samone Amba (Affirm Press)

Sunday Moon and her besties Ockie, Kirra and Lottie go to Club Koala after-school care when school ends. They think it is so boring! But when they hear that the joeys need pouches, they go straight to work.

The four friends learn to knit (however Sunday isn't too good). Read *The Good Times of Pelican Rise: Save the Joeys!* to find out what they do next!

This book is realistic fiction so if you like real-life stories, you will enjoy this one. I really liked it. I wanted to know how they would save the joeys. I recommend it for ages 9+.

Rating: 8/10

- Zephie, Grade 5



Devils in Danger

by Samantha Wheeler (University of Queensland Press)

When Killarney and her parents hear loud screams in the dead of night and find missing items located under the house, Killarney is determined to find out who is doing it. Will you read this book to find out what happens?

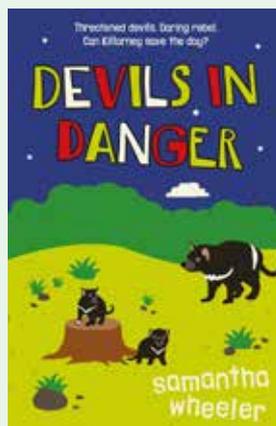
Devils in Danger is one of the best books I have ever read. It is filled with sad but heart-warming adventures with new and old friends.

If you really like heart-warming stories with thrilling adventures, definitely pick up this book to read!

I think people aged 9+ would really enjoy this book like I did.

Rating: 10/10

- Chloe O, Grade 5



Noah Wild and the Floating Zoo

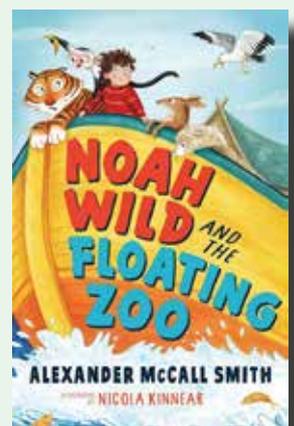
written by Alexander McCall-Smith and illustrated by Nicola Kinnear (Bloomsbury)

This is Noah Wild. He seems like a normal boy and he is until he finds out that his uncle owns a zoo. He is really excited but when he finds out that his uncle can't look after the zoo, everything changes. He has to put a tiger, an alpaca, a kangaroo and a monkey back where they came from and help them to find their families and their homes. Will they or will they not succeed in this adventure with a cheeky monkey and the other animals onboard a boat? Very big trouble comes their way when five sneaky pirates climb aboard and take everything. Who will save them?

This book is an exciting adventure and would be enjoyed by readers 8+.

Rating: 9/10

- Phillip W, Grade 5





The Song of Lewis Carmichael

written by Sofie Laguna and illustrated by Marc McBride (Allen & Unwin)

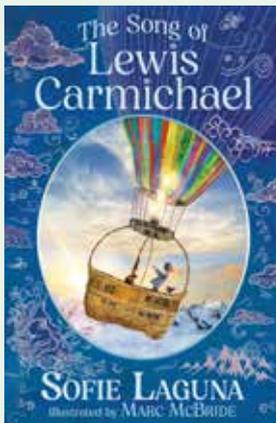
It all starts with Matthew Zajac, who has read and dreamed about the North Pole for as long as he can remember. He heard a bang on the window in the middle of the night. That is the night he met Lewis Carmichael. Lewis said he could take him to the place he has always wanted to go. Matthew thought he was dreaming. Is he dreaming?

From that point on it becomes a hot-air balloon adventure. Later they arrive on the Arctic tundra. This is where some problems happen – some scary and some sad.

I really enjoyed this book, because I love twists and turns in stories and there are a lot of twists and turns in this one. I think ages 10+ would love it. If you are up for a bumpy adventure, this is the book for you.

Rating: 9.5/10

- Ella B, Grade 6



Somebody's Land: Welcome to Our Country

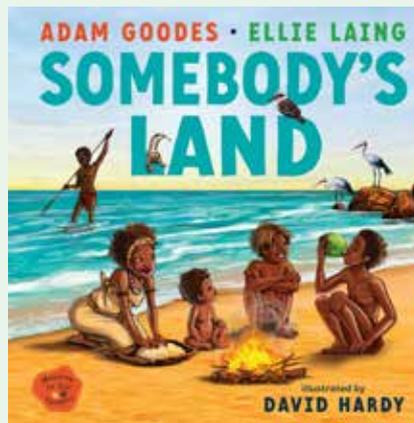
written by Adam Goodes and Ellie Laing and illustrated by David Hardy (Allen and Unwin)

I have been reading this beautiful book called Somebody's Land. I would definitely recommend this book to kids who love to read history and Aboriginal stories. This is also a great book for teachers to read to their students in class. This book is about how the white people took over the land and what the Aboriginal people think about that.

I enjoyed this book because I love the illustrations and I like to read Aboriginal stories. I really hope that you will choose to read this book too. Suitable for readers in Grades 1 – 3.

Rating: 7.5/10

- Kiara, Grade 6



Red vs Blue

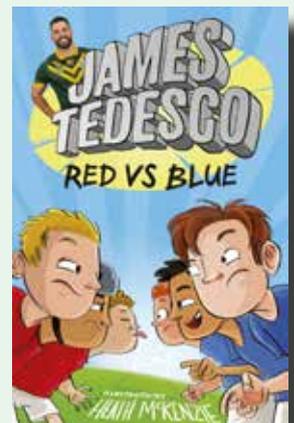
written by James Tedesco and illustrated by Heath McKenzie (Pan McMillan Australia)

Camden Blue don't have nearly enough players to start off the rugby season. James' dad is coaching the team – well actually, half a team. Did you know that Camden Red are the meanest team in the league? Luckily Camden Blue have a plan to get more players and beat them!

This book is filled with action and comedy. At one stage in the book I laughed so hard my hair stood up all by itself! I really enjoyed this well-written book. Suitable for readers 10+ who enjoy humour.

Rating: 8/10

- Bohdi, Grade 5



THE STORM

Thunder crackled outside Liams window. Thunder boomed, making his cat and dog cower together under the couch. "It's okay," Liam said, trying to assure his pets. They were shivering. "It's only thunder." he smiled.

Liam didn't know why some people were so scared of loud noises. He liked storms. Liam sat down on the couch and looked out the window. The rain looked so welcoming and as lightning danced across the sky, all Liam wanted was to be up there. "Mum!" he called. "Yeah?" she shouted from the kitchen. "Can I go outside to play?" "Okay. Just put your raincoat on!" Liam didn't put his coat on. He walked outside and listened to the thunder, distant yet close. He sat down in the garden and looked up at the cloudy sky, feeling raindrops splattering on his face.

After about two hours, the rain stopped. Grey clouds still blotted the sky, and thunder still banged overhead, but the rain stopped. Liam just sighed and went back inside. Sad because there was no storm, he played half-heartedly with his pets.

They played a game of tag, but his dog and cat were both it, and when Liam got tagged, it included a few scratches and a big lick. When he got tired of that, he went over to the window, desperately looking for a droplet of rain. None came.

"Mum, can I go to Graces?" "Okay. By the way, you two make great friends! You should hang out more, not just when you are bored!" "I'm not bored!" Liam lied. Liam's mum walked over and gave that look that says: I know the truth, but I want you to tell me anyway.

"Okay, I am a bit bored, but-" "I knew it!"

"Goodbye." Liam walked out of the door and put his gumboots on. He jumped on his bike and rode down the road to Graces house.

He knocked on the door and Alberto opened the door. Alberto was a personal robot assistant, which Graces parents bought after they won the lottery. That's right. Graces parents won 1 million dollars, and they spent it all on a personal robot assistant.

Not a fancy mansion, a house boat or a home theatre. A personal robot assistant. But luckily Alberto was quite nice, and for some reason always making hot cocoa, even in the summer's hottest days.

"Oh, hi Alberto. Is Grace available?" Alberto's robotic, cylindrical head whirred

the millions of magazines scattered across the smooth Red-Oak desk.

He looked around and saw no Grace. Just as he turned around to search elsewhere, a familiar voice spoke behind him. "Magic!" Liam turned around and saw Grace, sitting in her swivel chair which had been empty two seconds ago. Liam opened his mouth to ask, but Grace just smiled and took a bite of her apple, which appeared to have come from nowhere. "More magic." she said, before Liam could even say something.

Suddenly, a worm popped its head through a left part of the apple and Grace squealed. "Back to the magic world with you!" She threw the apple into the air, whisked her hand and POP! The apple disappeared.

Finally, she turned to Liam. "Bored?" "Yeah. Do you want to do something?" Grace shrugged. "Maybe catch some videos of the lightning flashing in the sky?" Liam suggested. Grace hopped to her feet. "I will be back with my camera and shoes in a minute. Go outside and I'll be right with you!" Liam smiled and walked out to the large backyard.



around, the way he did when he was thinking. Ding! Alberto's head flashed green and then he responded: "Grace. Grace is in her room on the Acer computer, editing the videos she made on Thursday, the eighteenth of November 2021. You should be able to go inside."

"Thanks again, Alberto."

"You're very much welcome. Help yourself to some hot cocoa I made inside."

Liam remembered that Grace loved making photos and videos and then walked to Graces room. He knew it all too well: the posters of movie stars on the walls,

He looked at the sky, and saw huge clouds of grey and black flashing with lightning and booming with thunder. Soon, Grace pulled up next to him and started filming the sky. The only annoying thing was, whenever she saw a flash in the clouds, she imitated it and made sound effects (example: "Boom! Crackle! Zap!").

Liam looked at the ground and thought he saw a drop of rain slowly drift up to the sky, but he must have been hallucinating. But no... there was another one! And another one! Slowly, millions of tiny droplets came off the grass and they slowly drifted up to the sky, as if in slow motion.

FROG

Suddenly, a white bolt shape erupted out of the ground, but it was also in slow motion. "Whoa," Liam said. He reached out to the lightning, touched it and... "Ow! That is hot!" Grace was gawking behind him: "I don't think you should touch lightning!" "Yeah." Liam agreed, nursing his hand.

More lightning and rain drifted into the air, and Liam thought it was the coolest thing he ever saw. Thunder under his feet boomed louder than ever before. After the upside-down storm was over, Liam turned to Grace; "Tell me you got that on camera."

By **Isaac Garcia**
Category: Middle
Harrieville Primary School
Harrieville, Vic.
Teacher: Mrs. Pellegrini

The soft marsh next to the riverbank was wet, the air moist and dense. The only thing anyone could hear was a soft 'Pa bonk, Pa bonk, Pa bonk..'

A frog hopped along, innocently croaking at nearby fish and insects. It spotted a small juicy bug, and its tongue lashed furiously out of its mouth. It got the bug and ate it whole.

With a squelch in the mud, the frog politely went on with its day as it hopped into the river with a huge splash, sending water onto a dandelion, its small petals seemed to bloom a little as the water soaked into the soil below.



The frog swam helplessly into the forever towering mist, never to be seen again.

By **Sophie Butler**
Category: Middle
Coburn Primary School
Melton South, Vic.
Teacher: Ms Svetlana Markovic

The Magic Tree

Boom! The thunder rumbled in our village. There was no sound of anyone. The sky was pitch black. Everyone was asleep except for me. I quietly walked downstairs and out of my little hut. There was no sound at all from a person. I tried to stay under cover because it was raining and thundering. I walked quietly over to the tree in the centre of the village.

Then all of a sudden, I started shrinking and shrinking until I was the size of a mouse. Suddenly I noticed something. There was a little tiny door. I could fit in it because I was so tiny. I was standing right in front of it. I opened up the door and I started to get pulled in. I began screaming, "Ahhhh, help me!"

Then I woke up on the ground in a weird place, not in my bed or on the couch. I was on the ground in a place I've never been. Then a goblin stared down at my face and said, "Hi, are you okay?" I quickly jumped up and started running for my life. The goblin just stared and had a confused look on his face. I kept looking backwards and then bump, I fell backwards.

There were lots of giants. I tried crawling backwards, but they were surrounding

me. I was terrified! I didn't know what to do. Then they grabbed me with their humungous fingers. I tried to keep my cool, but I just couldn't do it. I started screaming and shouting, "HELP ME!" But no one could hear me because I was so high up. Not even the giants could hear me because my voice was so small.

Then, thump, thump, thump, thump, the giants were marching fiercely, but I just didn't like it one bit. Then we stopped. "I think we are here," I whispered. They put me on a big table and started to talk to me. Can you believe it? They said, "Hi, our names are Bob, Jill and Ken." Then I said in a scared voice, "My name is Nelly."

They asked, "Where are you from?" "I am fr..from the East Village in Africa," I said hesitatingly.

Jill said, "We should introduce ourselves properly." The other giants said in a loud voice, "Yeah." Bob said, "I want to go first." "Okay," I said.

He said, "Hi, my name is Bob. I am 202 years old and I live on Monster Island." My mouth dropped open and I had no words.

Then they all said, "Why did you come to Monster Island?" But I said nothing. Then Bob said loudly, "It's getting late. We should get to bed and you can sleep here if you want, Nilly." Then I said in a shaking voice, "Thank you, and it's Nelly."

In the morning, the giants yelled out, "WE ARE GOING TO HELP NELLY GET HOME!". But all of a sudden, I didn't want to go home. I wanted to stay with the giants. I realised that they are good people and every other monster on Monster Island is probably good too.

By **Zahleiah Jeffery**
Category: Junior
Burnside State School
Burnside, Qld.
Teacher: Doug Larsen

Growing to meet responsibilities

He hides on deck, hoping not to be found,
Trying to stay alive but yet he still hides,
His stomach grumbles, begging for food.
Perhaps he will be safe?
But yet, he still hides.

He gets found and carried to Surgeon Monkhouse,
Who treats him with care,
Making sure his patient does not get in trouble.
He witnesses a flogging of two young men,
And realizes how hard ship life will be.

He stares around deck,
Grateful to still be alive,
Grateful that Captain didn't throw him off the ship.
Happy that he has finally a chance to have an adventure
He certainly wouldn't misbehave after this opportunity.

The men ignore him, except one man,
Called Mr Bootie, a harsh midshipman.
He roams the decks, checking everyone is doing their jobs.
His eye is out for Nicholas Young,
Who he thought ruined his reputation for keeping a stern eye.

He stares off into the distance, forgetting how to stand watch,
Mr Bootie spots him out of the corner of his eye,
Little did he know, the punishment would be far worse than he imagined.
Punishment was to get hit three times with a stick,
Instantly regretting his actions for forgetting to stand watch.

He has all sorts of adventures,
During the three-year long journey,
Despite all he has done on the journey,
Mr Banks offers him employment on his new voyage,
He makes amends with his family from whom he had run.

By **Charlotte Oun**
Category: Middle
Ravenswood School for Girls
Gordon, NSW

A Day at the Beach

I walk along deserted beach
Soft sand between my toes
I smell something that is not right
I think it is a rose

I go on through the gritty sand
Up to the water's edge
The clear blue water's calling me
Next time I will, I pledge

I sit down on my picnic rug
Set to eat a feast
Getting my massive sandwich out
It looks just like a beast

I gobble my huge sandwich down
I get out my new ball
Throw it across the hot, dry sand
Grab it and make a call

And then out of the blue I'm joined
It's great to have a friend
We giggle and laugh for hours
Our day is near the end

We get some greasy fish and chips
Salty, crunchy, warm
We sit down on the fresh, green grass
The seagulls start to swarm

We jump into our little cars
Say a tired goodnight
We slowly wave and then drive off
While sleepy birds take flight

By **Indiana Stacey**
Category: Middle
Pedare Christian College
Golden Grove, SA

What I Like

I like going to the cafe to eat ice-cream, because I really like ice-cream.

I like playing with my toys because they are fun to play with.

I like playing soccer because it's my favourite sport, and it's easy to play once you know how to play.

I like going to sleep because it gives me a chance to relax and listen to some stories.

I like eating chocolate because it is yummy and 100% healthy.

I also like dancing because it's fun and because you can meet new friends at the club and invite them to your party. Hip hop kids are the best. We are super cool! We wear cool clothes and make really cool moves. Sometimes we listen to loud music to get in the mood.

I also like mangoes and green apples because they are sweet. Green apples also taste like sweet juice, which is so good for you.

I like hugging my family, because hugs are so soft, cuddly and warm. They make me feel happy.

I like playing board games because they are fun, challenging and a good way for the whole family and friends to get together and to laugh. I like to win.

I like running because I am very fast. Running makes me feel happy, sweaty and exhausted. When I am tired after running or after a long day, I like when mum reads me books. It makes me feel relaxed and grateful.

I like my blankie, Odeyalko, because it's so soft, cuddly, warm and fun. I like to throw it up in the air, then catch it on my face, and leave it there for a few seconds. I like doing that because that way I can fully inhale a beautiful smell of my blankie. It smells really good! This is because I always cuddle it and have it in my bed with me when I am asleep.

When my blankie is tired, I let it relax for a little while. When mum washes it, I always feel worried because it might lose its smell or colour, or the wind might blow it away, or someone might even steal it from the clothes line... I don't like washing it too many times. When the washing machine stops, it makes me feel really happy. I run to get my blankie and hug it very tightly because it is really special to me. I had it since I was very young. It always makes me calm down and fall asleep faster.

I would never swap it for any other toy. Not even the X-Box! Why would I swap my favourite thing ever for something that makes your eyes go square?

I could never give my blankie away to another kid, even if he was sick. But I would certainly buy him a similar one with my own pocket money. It would definitely help the kid to get better because that's what happens to me when mum gives it to me. I immediately feel a lot better. I think it's magical.

When I grow up, I will always keep it with me. It makes me so happy and grateful, soft, warm, cosy... If you could touch love, I think, this is how it would feel.

It is a little embarrassing to talk about my adorable blankie. I am already 8 years old, but still have it and still love it as if I was a little boy. I love other plush toys too, but especially my blankie.

If I ever lost it, and had to write a letter to my blankie, this is what I would say:

"Dear Odeyalko! I hope you are okay. I miss you all the time. You are the greatest, warmest and cuddliest blankie in the world. I will give you everything you want, the whole world, if you come back to me."

By **Mikhail Fedotov**
Category: Junior
Hale School
Wembley Downs, WA
Teacher: Mr Lane

Ode to Poetry

*O Poetry! My fair lady!
You dress yourself in a million ways.
Epics, haikus, sonnets, and nonets,
You silence the nightingale with every phrase.*

*O Poetry! My dainty lady!
You dance with such elegant feet and form.
With your changing meter, tempo and beat,
You took me on a journey full of rhythm.*

*We sailed across the ancient Aegean Sea,
And led by Homer to the epic Trojan wall.
Eagle, armour, ships, fire and blood,
We saw the gallant heroes' rise and fall.*

*When paused at Elizabethan Stratford-Upon-Avon.
Acquainted we with Shakespeare in the town.
Each time our bard did lift his magic quill,
We saw a billion pearls of love poured down.*

*Then, we took a walk in an Eastern wood,
With Matsuo Basho on a rainy afternoon.
He opened our eyes to nature with no rhyme,
By turning everything into flowers and the moon.*

*Soon, we came across the two diverging roads
And took the one that was less travelled by,
But Robert Frost did tell us with a sigh
That the road not taken was also worth a try.*

*On the edge of the wood, there was a poison tree,
Under which stood William Blake's foe.
We snatched the apple from his hand,
Before he knew from wrath this tree did grow.*

*Suddenly, we were attracted by a thistle field,
And heard Robert Burns singing his nostalgic line,
Which invited us tak a cup'o kindness
For days of auld lang syne.*

*We drop by the Ducal Palace of Mantua,
Monteverdi amazed us with boundless power.
When Orfeo sang with his blessed lyre,
Callous Pluto relented before an hour.*

*Curiously, we peeked into a gothic chamber,
Where in the dark sat Edgar Allan Poe.
With the Raven echoing "Nevermore",
He made us shiver with woe.*

*Escaping, we flew over the vales and hills,
Where Wordsworth wandered lonely as a cloud.
He cheered us up with the golden daffodils,
And filled our hearts with the bliss of solitude.*

*Following Emily Dickinson's singing in the gale,
We conquered the chilliest land in a storm.
She defended us against the cold,
And hope in its feathers did keep us warm.*

*With warmth, we entered the Harlem Renaissance,
And condemned injustice without violent fights,
Along with the darker brother, Langston Hughes,
Who fuelled our dreams of equal human rights.*

*Finally, we settled in the land of the free,
Where we celebrated late into the night.
We sang the "Song of Myself" with Whitman,
And planned a new adventure in the moonlight.*

*O Poetry! My brave lady!
How you untangle the wire I call life.
You'll always guide me through the secret lands
Of good and evil, of love and strife.*

*O Poetry! My wise lady!
You make lifeless words spring alive!
From an ode to an elegy,
You shall forever thrive!*

By Guo Ru
Category, Middle
Knox Grammar School
Wahroonga, NSW
Teacher: Tim Felton



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; www.fordstreetpublishing.com and 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.

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.

Too loud



Other senses have no hope but are there
There is the smell of fumes
There is a blast of air
Though you don't notice

The noise buffeting your body
You shake like a ragdoll
Making you dizzy
like you're drunk

Blinding your eyes
You cover your ears though it gets
louder
Like cockatoos at dusk
Like tractors in a paddock

Like cattle bellowing
The helicopter did stand out
All sounds are louder at night

By **Luke Mathers**

Category: Middle
Pedare Christian College
Golden Grove, SA

Gửi Má

They said, 'What a beautiful girl!'
'Be thankful,'
'For the luck of the world,'
'She seldom shouts and talks little,'

'For she calmly sits and doesn't fiddle.'
But you reap what you sow,
But the opposite some plough and show,
For the voices that were too loud,

She softened hers,
In an attempt to cloud,
And calm them down.
'But I think,' she whispered,
'And I talk too!'
'I'm angry mostly,'

'But just let me think it through!'
I cry, I scream, I shout,
But all this, with me,
my voice is without.
But I scream, 'I'm here!'

Listen to my jeers, And even in my cheers!
I'm shouting somewhere, With me, please bear.
It hid! I swear it did, But I'm here cultivating,
I swear a plan!
My heart is pulsating, Still, And it will,

Forever. Just give me a second! I'm trying i swear,
A second, I beckon! I know it's over there,
Well I hope, Because I'm running,
Towards the hope, Hoping the signs end,
Hopefully, Near, Near me, Near you,

Because this treasure I've gone to find,
Is lost somewhere in my mind,
Somewhere in the labyrinth,
Just let me build up the courage to go in,

And I can't right this instance,
But I swear, I will,
I will and I'll fulfil,
Because I've reached the gates and I know my way,

And in this middle ground I'm to give in and stay, And my
heart's stuck in my throat,
But, I promise Má,
I'll walk myself home.

By **Lyna Le**

Category: Senior
St Patrick's College
Campbelltown, NSW



Christmas Catastrophe

Misty awoke to the laughter of the children outside. Misty had never experienced snow because she was always too frightened of being hurt. She missed out on playing every day. Even when Misty was bored with being inside, she still stayed there. It was like something was stopping her, but what? Ella and Zoe were out that morning playing in the fuzzy, cold snow when they heard shrieking. Ella and Zoe dashed to the sound to find people disappearing and reappearing from the most unexpected places. 'The mystery puddle must have multiplied,' thought Ella. 'But how?' Ella looked at all the puddles. People were trapped inside of them. They would not be out in time for Christmas! "This is a catastrophe!" Zoe yelled.

out her rope and put one side in the puddle. The person grabbed on, and Misty and her sisters lifted him out. Misty handed him a beanie, a pair of gloves, and a scarf. He tipped his hat to the sisters as he ran back to his home smiling. He would be home in time for Christmas.



They ran back inside to see Misty staring out the frost covered window. "We need your help," panted Zoe as she shivered in front of the heater. Zoe explained what she and Ella saw. Misty did not want to go outside. She realized she was stopping herself from helping people. That was not okay. Misty grabbed ropes, scarves, gloves, and beanies. "Let's save the citizens of this city," cried Misty. Nothing was holding her back. She ran out the door; her feet were squelching in the frosty patches of snow. Misty ran to the first puddle. She pulled

Misty and her sisters kept pulling people out of the puddles. The girls were getting colder, and it was extremely late. The girls only had one more person to rescue. Zoe and Ella headed back inside. They thought Misty was behind them, but she wasn't. Misty helped the last person out of the puddle. Misty handed the old lady beanies, gloves, and a scarf. The woman thanked her as she tip-toed back to her house smiling from ear to ear.

Misty bolted to her house and slowly

opened the door. She sat in front of the heater. Her lips were blue, and she was as cold as ice. Misty slept on the couch which was close to the heater and fell asleep briskly. She was dreaming about getting over her fears which is what she had done today. When Misty woke up, she felt warm and snug like a polar bear. She thought about the fellow citizens of the city which she and her sisters had saved last night. Misty did not want to be remembered by the town folks as a hero. She wanted to be remembered as a normal girl who helped others when they were in need and Misty guessed that is what her sisters wanted too.

The end

This is not the end. The adventure continues...

By **Jessica Brimson**
Category: Middle
Greenslopes State School
Greenslopes, Qld.
Teacher: Mrs McCarthy

A Last Adventure

Dark, sinister thoughts flow through his mind,
The bitter wind brushes past, but he hardly notices it.
His ways are cruel and cold but so is his heart,
And you can't change your ways as easily as you think.

He curses and curses; he continues to mutter,
But nothing can change his past or his undecided fate.
The moonlight glistens on the deep ocean,
And the bright stars will guide his way.

He tosses and turns for sleep to come,
But with so many dying from illnesses it is too hard to rest
He could be next to catch the deadly sickness,
And he could be next to rest his eyes.

A hot fever trickles through his tough body,
He continues to fight though he is struggling.
He fears that this journey will be his last,
As it has been for his fellow crew members.

He struggles against the pain as it hits him in a wave,
Days have started to feel like long months.
The little demon tries to help him cool down,
By putting cold, wet cloths on his burning forehead.

He struggles to speak but strains a few words,
Though they are his last; silence fills the air.
His tired, weary eyes gradually close,
They are going to rest there.



By **Abigail Wu**
Category: Middle
Ravenswood School for Girls
Gordon, NSW

The Lucky Country

Nikola's stomach made a weird noise. He never knew coconuts could taste so bitter. 'Not that it matters,' he thought, 'not that it matters when you're stranded on a tiny island the size of a rugby field in the middle of the vast Indo-Pacific Ocean with no other food source.'

But he knew that this island wasn't always like this. There used to be more coconuts, more hope, more everything. Before the ancients abandoned it, it was once called New Guinea. It was once as huge as 785000 square kilometres. It once had about 15 million people. But nothing gold can stay.

The wasteful ancients did foolish things with technology to satisfy their endless desires. Big steel monsters called factories breathed out black smoke which drove the climate mad. Sea levels surged up, slowly consuming the island to this miserable size. And even worse, Nikola's home city, Jakarta, would be the next victim.

The government announced that they were going to build engines under Jakarta, making it a marine traction city like many of the other major cities, such as Naples and Tokyo. It would sail like a large, clumsy cruise ship and devour any smaller city on its way. The government said that the first city Jakarta would eat is Da Nang. And he, Nikola, would be one of the engineers working on the engines.

But Nikola wasn't stupid. He knew that it

was a pointless battle against time. The rising sea had tasted prey and was hungry for more. According to his calculations, Jakarta would perish under the sea in six years, while the engines would take at least a decade to finish. With nothing to lose, since everything, including his job and family, were assigned by the government, Nikola decided to escape.

His destination was Sydney, a city in what was called the Lucky Country. He knew it would be a miracle to survive, with the callous ocean confronting every second and pirates in every corner of the ocean, but it was better to risk it than to wait for death in Jakarta. He secretly built a boat in one of the abandoned docks in the city and set off immediately.

A lone boat is nothing against the mighty sea. After 3500 kilometres of struggle, the boat's engine surrendered to the sea. The waves washed his boat onto the shores of New Guinea, where he was eating a barely edible coconut. In front of him was the boundless sea, whose roaring waves seemed eager to nourish itself with what was left of the island. The scorching tropical sun shot its rays at him, and the sand he sat on felt like it was frying him.

"There must be a solution," Nikola assured himself. If he learned one thing from his engineering training, it was that every problem has a solution. But how he could get to Sydney, he had no idea yet.

He didn't know how long it passed until something sounded in his ears, but at first, he dismissed it as the wind playing tricks on him. But the sound just got louder. It eventually got so loud that Nikola looked up. And he gasped. In the distance was a lump of steel the size of Jakarta. Hope stirred in him for the first time in what seemed like ages. "It must be another marine traction city," he thought. "I could certainly find a way to get to it."

As the city came closer, he saw a giant flagpole hovering above the city's top-tier. The flag was green with white in between. The dots suddenly connected in his mind. It was the legendary traction city Lagos! And even better, it was heading for trade in Sydney.

Lagos, like Jakarta, had to battle rising sea levels, but it started building engines many years earlier and had now travelled thousands of kilometres since the city made its first move seven years ago. It traded with cities its own size, hid from cities larger than it and ate cities much smaller than it. Nikola had heard stories of how it annihilated Libreville and narrowly escaped from Cairo.

There was now no time to waste. Nikola switched on his sharpest intelligence and started to conjure his plan to get onboard Lagos.

By Guo Ru

Category, Middle
Knox Grammar School
Wahroonga, NSW
Teacher: Tim Felton



The Hands of God

*She came to the Banjos' land as a refugee
She waited for her turn behind the bars
Her dignity aside, she watched her mates
Develop deep, proliferated mental scars*

*At times she felt like scum, unwanted like ballast
She went from door to door, in search of basic help
Who would have thought... in less than seven months
She'd claim the top of the 'lucky nation's' social map*

*Bushfires. Perth is burning. Hard to breathe
The raging flames are taking homes mile by mile
Three days like one, with no rest or sleep
Her son's brigade defends what's been hostile*

*Mum also fights. She's treating burns and pain
Masks, scalpels, gloves, supporting doctors' squad
Once shamed and needy, helpless woman's hands
They now have become The Hands of God*

By **Elizaveta Fedotova**
Category: Middle
Bob Hawke College
Subiaco, WA

This poem is dedicated to and inspired by two extraordinary Australian immigrants: Dr Fiona Wood, and Dr Munjed Al Muderis. Dr Wood is a Perth based plastic and reconstructive surgeon and world's leading burns specialist. She came to Australia from the UK and has pioneered research and technology development in burns medicine. Dr Wood focused her research on improving established techniques of skin repair. Her revolutionary spray-on skin repair technique involved taking a small patch of healthy skin from a burn victim and using it to grow new skin cells in a laboratory, and then splaying that liquid skin onto the burnt area of the patient's body, saving millions of lives. A Melbourne based Dr Munjed Al Muderis escaped war-torn Iraq, arriving to Australia's Christmas Island detention Centre in an illegal refugee boat. He spent months in one of WA's detention centres, along with other escapees, many of whom had later become prominent Australians in their various fields of occupations. Dr Al Muderis had later pioneered a technique where artificial limbs could be permanently attached to the human body, changing the lives of millions of people around the globe.

TILLY

*Tilly likes to travel
But be aware
as Tilly's path begins to unravel
As her enemy watches her in an evil way
She wonders for what crime he must pay
For the next doorway is the next adventure
Would she find cities,
or will she find treasure?*

*If the next book is another dead end
She would just have to try again.*

By **Jessica Brimson**
Category, Middle
Greenslopes State School
Greenslopes, Qld.
Teacher: Mrs McCarthy

Osten Vir

The year was 2987, and a large wall stretched from one end of the country, to the other, splitting it directly in half. But not only did it split the region, it split society. On one side lived the male population, and on the other, the female. Both were oblivious of each other's presence. This was done to ensure order in society. With separation, there was no need to worry about any unfair treatment from one sex to another, and no need to worry about any violation of rights. This wall had been built 235 years ago. Just as long as the Dura Family has possessed dominance over Novterra, the newly established nation on land once known as Australia.

Other than the citizens, things weren't too different on each side of the wall. For example, there were still long roads, framed by houses, that connected to larger areas consisting of shopping centres, parks, and so much more. And the Duras' had power over it all.

On the female side, lived Norma and Debi. Besides the rulers themselves, no one knew what was on the other side of the wall. But, with no way of knowing, people liked to envision it in manners such as movies, television shows and song lyrics. Norma, sitting on the couch in her cosy home, watched one of these television shows with her friend Debi, who sat up in her wheelchair. Although most of the shows involve monsters and dangerous creatures, this show in particular, mentioned a wildlife conservation with dangerous animals called 'bears' and 'lions'. It states that the Duras built the wall to protect the civilians from these 'ferocious creatures'. Although Debi never really cared much for these shows, Norma always wanted to hear whatever crazy ideas people could come up with.

"I really don't see what you like about these shows, Norma. Why do you really care what is on the other side?" Asks Debi.

"The real question here," Norma replies, "is why don't you care? There could be a whole new world on the other side, and we have absolutely no clue."

"Well, we are both stuck on this side, aren't we? Why is there any need to question something that we will never have the answer to?"

"I guess," Norma responds, "I just thought it was interesting. Like, imagine if there was another group of people just like us. Or a

new, undiscovered species."

"The Duras know what's over there, if it is important enough, they will deal with it. And I'm sure that Scelus would tell us if there was anything to worry about." Scelus Dura was the current heir to throne, and she possessed more power than anyone. Even her predecessors. "There probably isn't much over there, anyways. For all I care, it is just flat concrete as far as the eye can see."

"I know, but I just can't help being curious. Everything here is the same, every day. We wake up, look at the wall. Go to the park, look at the wall. Every night, just before bed, I'll look out my window and see the wall." Norma sighs. "It's always there, yet we don't have any clue what it conceals."

"Well, sorry to burst your bubble, but there's nothing that I can do about it. Even if I wanted to, I can't. Last time I checked, it's not very easy to climb in a wheelchair. But that's beside the point, there is absolutely nothing we can do without the Duras' permission. Do you really think they'd let a

decided it best to keep quiet. The screen now displayed the '24AT3 News Channel'. The reporter on screen spoke quite fast and appeared to be nervous, holding a very straight face that dripped with sweat. Around her, stood multiple reporters who stretched their arms forward, directing their microphones towards her.

The words 'Breaking News' suddenly appeared, stretching over the entire screen. "Citizens are urged to remain indoors on order of Scelus Dura herself!" Declared the reporter, "A dangerous creature is attempting to climb the wall! To ensure your safety, you must stay inside."

If her speech hadn't worried the viewers, her behaviour would have. She was so stressed, that the urgency of the matter was made very clear. On the brink of tears, she was hyperventilating and fiddling with her loose strands of hair with shaking hands.

She began to speak again, but no sound was heard over the screams that followed. The news reporter, and those surrounding



couple of old ladies look over the wall, just because they are curious? If they did, they may as well take down the wall and let the whole country know."

And with that, Debi reached for the television remote, and changed the channel. Norma wanted to retort but

her, ran off somewhere behind the camera, and from the top of the wall emerged a figure. A tall, lanky figure.

With two arms and legs, it looked almost identical to a person. In fact, it was a person. But, thanks to the wall, and the Duras' strict policies, the citizens living on

this side of the wall had absolutely no clue what a 'man' was.

Norma looks over at Debi, "See! I knew there must've been something over there! See!"

Debi didn't respond, but slowly turned her head back to face the television set.

The man wore clothing similar to that of most women, just a blazer and trousers. But despite the low-cut hair, there was something about him that made him different than a woman, but no one could quite put their finger on it.

"Do not fear me!" He spoke in a low tone, "I am not here to harm anyone."

Despite these words, the remaining people did not seem to calm down at all.

"My name is Osten Vir, and I am just like you. I too have been trapped behind this wall, not knowing what was on the other side. Well, here's your answer!" He raises his arms high in the air, "Me. They have hidden half of the country from you! There is a whole civilisation over here, filled with people just like you. The Duras' have hidden us from each other with this obnoxious wall."

The sound of mumbled conversations fills the air.

"I stand here today, to represent my fellow males, and make a stance against the government systems. We, males and females, are equal, and we should not have to live separate lives, in solitary societies, divided by this giant wall." He points to one of the many reporters, a stocky girl with dark hair held up by a silver hair pin, "You. Will you stand with me, and make a point? I am no monster, no dangerous beast to steer clear of. I am just like you. Human. Guilty of nothing except wanting freedom for those around me."

With a look of dread on her face, she steps forward. "Okay."

Osten lifts a ladder over the wall, and she climbs it, joining him on the top. They stand, hand-in-hand looking down at the people who remain.

From the left of the camera, a hand emerges, yielding a revolver.

"We, the people, will make a stance against the government." Osten declares, "We will destroy this wall, and live as one. Who's with m-"

Bang! His sentence is cut short, as he and the reporter's bodies are thrown backwards, falling from the wall. The

arm is lowered, and its owner is revealed. Scelus Dura.

Suddenly, the image viewed on the television screen changed. It now displayed a football game. Norma, confused by the sudden change of show, looked over at Debi. She had the television remote in hand, and continued to change the channel yet again.

"Why did you change it?" Norma asks. "Don't you wanna see what's on the other side of the wall?"

"No, I don't." She replies. "But did you hear what he said? There's been a whole civilisation over there, this whole time, and we've had no clue!"

There is a moment of silence before Norma continues. "I wonder if there are more people out there now, trying to get over the wall?"

"Well, I'm not gonna," answered Debi, "You saw what happened to those two. I don't wanna get shot."

Norma lets out a long, sad sigh. "I guess."

"Either way, I wouldn't be able to climb it."

"What?" Asked Norma, distracted.

"Either way, I wouldn't be able to climb it. I'm in a wheelchair."

By **Kaylee Jesnoewski**

Category: Senior
Kinross College
Quinns Rocks, WA
Teacher: Erin Best

Miss Hiss

Through the prickly bushes,
Miss Hiss went.
A slimy, slithering slender snake,
In the dark forest.

This charming, beautiful brave
snake,
Ventured near the frightening
lion's home.
No fear in her twisting body,
No worry in her yellow eyes.

This kind old gentle lime-green
snake,
Knew something was amiss.
For the scary, graceful forest
king,
Had not been seen for days.
So through the prickly bushes,
Miss Hiss went.
To find the quiet lion's home,
To see where its bliss had gone.

Because this deafening,
screaming lion,
Roared only when he was in
bliss.
His roar had not been heard for
ages,
And dear Miss Hiss was anxious.
Though its presence was
unwanted,
Miss Hiss liked it a lot.
For she was the kind of rare
snake,
That loves everyone at home.

By **Nethya Wijesekera**

Category: Middle
Gordon East Public School
Gordon, NSW



The Rope

*Trampling over my own dreams
I sit with my legs up to my chest,
Head buried in my legs as I scream
"No longer does anyone call me blessed"*

*Ropes of expectation slither onto my broken body,
Holding onto me, holding onto me tightly
Maybe one day I won't embody
What people want of me.*

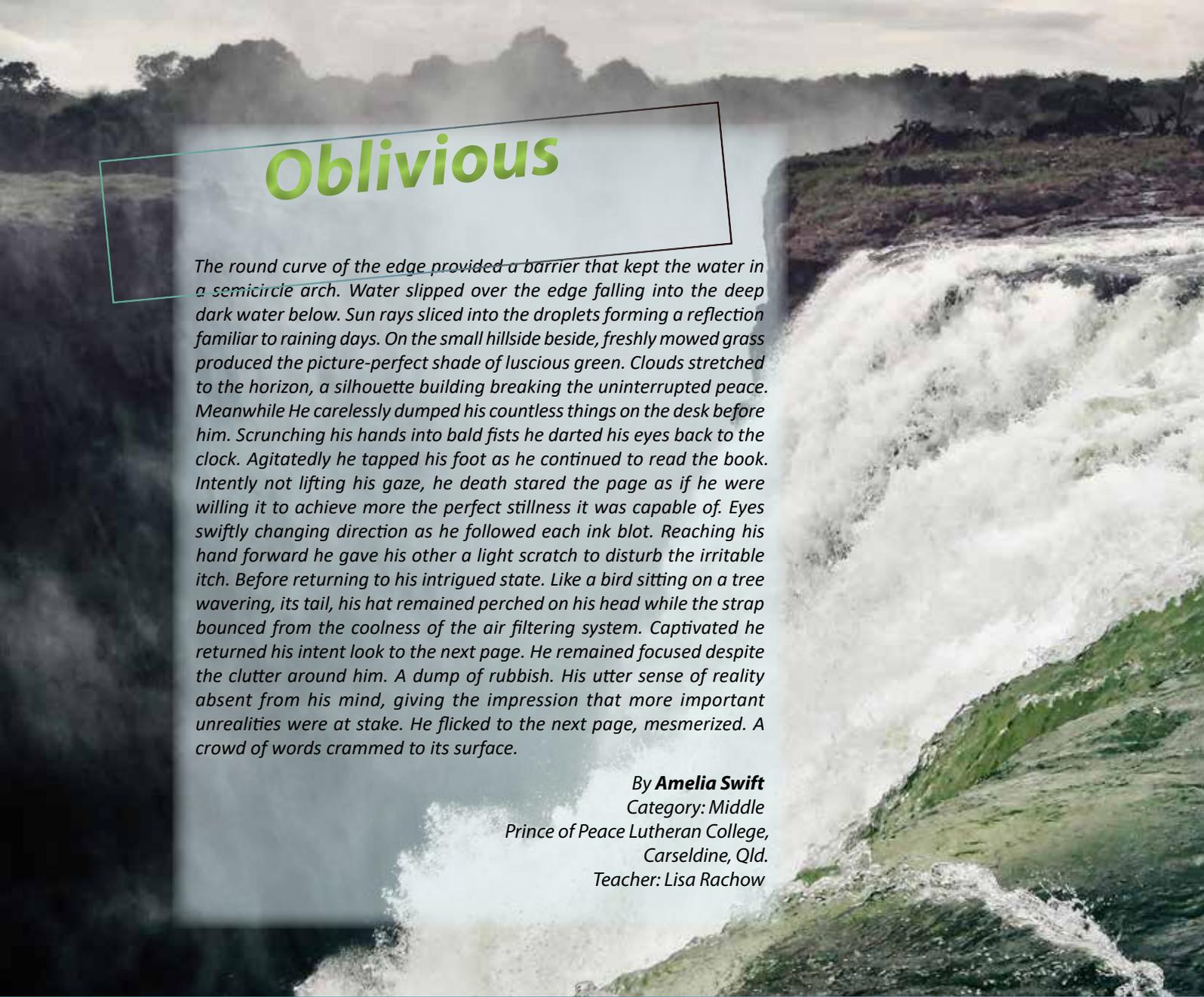
*I watch myself deteriorate, turn into a wreck.
The Rope getting ever so tight
Around my arms, my legs, my neck.
No longer do I put up a fight.*

*There I lay in my desolate thoughts,
Unmotivated, unstable, unmoving, dead.
The floor falls beneath my body, my eyes no longer gloss.
Death offers their hand and we walk, as if newly weds.*

*To my parents who raised me
And the friends that hate me.
Are you happy?
Look at what your child has become.
Look at what your friend has become. Look at me.*

*Why won't you look at me? Is something wrong?
I've become what you wanted, why don't you love me?
Tighter the Rope got and yet I held on to hope.
Now The Rope swings with that child on the tree,
A happy child. A happy child with its rope.*

By Archana Kumar
Category: Senior
St Patrick's College for Girls
Campbelltown, NSW



Oblivious

The round curve of the edge provided a barrier that kept the water in a semicircle arch. Water slipped over the edge falling into the deep dark water below. Sun rays sliced into the droplets forming a reflection familiar to raining days. On the small hillside beside, freshly mowed grass produced the picture-perfect shade of luscious green. Clouds stretched to the horizon, a silhouette building breaking the uninterrupted peace. Meanwhile He carelessly dumped his countless things on the desk before him. Scrunching his hands into bald fists he darted his eyes back to the clock. Agitatedly he tapped his foot as he continued to read the book. Intently not lifting his gaze, he death stared the page as if he were willing it to achieve more the perfect stillness it was capable of. Eyes swiftly changing direction as he followed each ink blot. Reaching his hand forward he gave his other a light scratch to disturb the irritable itch. Before returning to his intrigued state. Like a bird sitting on a tree wavering, its tail, his hat remained perched on his head while the strap bounced from the coolness of the air filtering system. Captivated he returned his intent look to the next page. He remained focused despite the clutter around him. A dump of rubbish. His utter sense of reality absent from his mind, giving the impression that more important unrealities were at stake. He flicked to the next page, mesmerized. A crowd of words crammed to its surface.

By **Amelia Swift**

Category: Middle

Prince of Peace Lutheran College,
Carseldine, Qld.

Teacher: Lisa Rachow



The Witch's Friend

The Blood Witch has a special friend,
A girl whose kindness has no end,
Away to school, they claim they'll send,
Only Nana could comprehend,

But all that The Witch did condemn,
And their friendship was just pretend,
And the girl twisted where she ought not to bend,
And to her wounds, they could not tend.

By **Angelina Hemsworth**

Category: Senior

Cairns School of Distance Education
Manunda, Qld.

Teacher: Ms Venkatraman

Impossible

Impossible The young defenceless girl stared at the hungry, raging wall of water, slamming through houses, getting closer and closer. People screamed with terror as they ran from the giant barrier. Trees snapped in half, resort houses spewed out belongings. Mothers grabbed children and ran for their life not letting another second pass.

“Just make sure you stay in the pool area.” Her mother had said, her father nodding. They had trusted her. She had done everything right and thought of how proud they would be. The girl longed for them now.

She was not Einstein but she knew she would never see her parents again. She was a wreck, sobbing and hugging her arms. She needed to run. But it was too late. Although she knows how to swim, The water takes her in. Under and over she tumbles, Like how the water rumbles She was taken under.

The tidal waves working against her, loose debris and lifeless bodies thrashed and churned through the water. Trees sliced her with their gleaming hands, like how her brothers had with their toy swords. Memories came flooding back to her, pulling her deeper and deeper. The girl needed to breathe.

She took in a gulp of water and used all her dying energy to get to the top. Holding onto a tree trunk, the girl cried, cried like there was no tomorrow. All of a sudden, another body plopped onto the tree trunk, they were almost dead.

“Are you okay?” she choked, gasping for breath. No answer. Maybe they were dead. Suddenly, a second wave came into view, doing as much damage as the first, and in a split second, she was under once more. Squinting, she tried to comprehend the bottomless pit beneath her. She could almost sense the waters satisfaction.

“This is it.” She thought, trying to dry her stained red eyes, but with no success, she continued sobbing until her eyes stung even more from the salty water surrounding her. Without notice, a branch impaled her, and her leg began bleeding. While the water around the girl turns red,

Thoughts rushed through her head, Of the beautiful Christmas at the resort, Of her loving family at New Port.

She only realised how much she missed them now, They had all most probably drowned, But then she remembered, A thought that had descended. The girl needed to find a medical camp. She struggled to find her way, but resurfaced, heaving in air. She quickly looked around, craning her neck in search of one of the big tents.

After examining her surroundings, she located a busy tent on the crest of a hill-away from the raging body of water. The girl forced a smile and let herself drift towards the looming hill. She held onto the dirt like a wounded puppy and pulled herself up with all her might.

She slumped on the ground and a Thai speaking nurse scooped the girl into her arms and rushed her into the bustling tent, full of dying, hurt or dead people. Towards a far corner a family squeezed each other, crying and praying. They looked familiar. Too familiar.

“Mum!” Shrieked the girl, wiggling out of the nurse’s grasp. There was a feeling the girl hadn’t felt for a long time- hope. The warm embrace from her Mother, Father and two brothers reminded her - she had survived the Impossible.

By **Juliet Mackintosh**
Category, Middle
Greenslopes State School
Greenslopes, Qld
Teacher: Mrs McCarthy



Change

The merciless sun beat down on the baked surface as a distant figure became visible. Her wide-brimmed hat lowered, overalls tinted red from the dusty terrain. She was from out here. She knew the dangers, and she knew what happened to those who didn't. She had just finished her check on the cattle - they were running short on water. She could see the road from here, and she knew she could make it in time. Her boss had told her there wouldn't be any calls until midday. She retrieved her walkie-talkie and flicked between channels. "BossMonkey123, this is OrangeOveralls456. Stand-by for arrival and have a darn good lunch waiting! Over and out." As she reached the ranch, her piercing blue eyes scanned the veranda. "Oi! Boss-Man! Where're you?" A yell came from the building. It was her boss. "Crikey Acacia, I was just coming up! There's been a call from Coober Pedy. Some galah has been bit by a snake," he griped. "Right-o," Acacia sighed, her chocolate plaits swinging by her shoulders as she nodded. "Alright to send the chopper?" Five minutes later, Acacia's

helicopter rocketed through the sky, and her calloused left hand forced the joystick forward. There was word that the snake was a brown, and that this life would depend on her. She muttered coordinates into the walkie-talkie while her stomach groaned for lunch. She wanted to do her bit in the community, but she wished she had time for snacks. "Landing in a field now," she spoke to her boss through the headset. "Should be back up in ten minutes at most." Only five minutes later, the helicopter rotors swirled dust up around her hard, leather boots. "BossMonkey123! Patient seems fine, I've given the anti venom, but he still looks a bit woozy. I can confirm the snake wasn't a brown; it was most likely a grass snake," she concluded. "So, I reckon you can rest up or something," she looked over at the patient, who was wobbling on his feet. "Toughen up mate and be wary next time you go bush bashing or something." Acacia was born into an easygoing family. She had ridden dirt bikes at three years old and never knew anything else. Then, when she was seven,

her parents moved to the city for a more satisfactory lifestyle - dirty, stacks exhaling smoke, cars sardined in rows, never-ending highways. Acacia hated it all, and promptly packed up to live with her uncle who lived in the best place ever - the outback. "No calling me Uncle on the job," her uncle and boss reprimanded her.

"It's important to maintain a good image!" Acacia rolled her eyes; she wanted to speak her mind, which was sometimes hard to control in significant situations. "Alright," mumbled Acacia. "Alright- uncle!"

By **Frankie Raffles**

Category: Middle
Ravenswood School for Girls
Gordon, NSW



Alone

While the rain was pouring down and the leaves were slowly playing a melody too quiet for anyone to hear, one girl was staring out the window looking at a little tree which somehow she felt a strong connection to. She kept staring and staring not paying attention to the physics lesson that was happening. The bell rang and the girl still stared out the rainy window once more. Her heart was pounding and her eyes were beginning to fill with little watery tears. She looked at the surroundings of the baby tree more closely, it was all alone just like the girl felt all alone. The next morning, she rushed early to school so she can spend some time with her secret little friend. When the girl arrived at school she found leaves covering the black concrete path and found the wind whistling with the leaves. She sat down on a wooden bench and got a pencil and a notepad from her backpack. She was going to draw her little companion.

A twig like figure froze in the middle of the blank page. Her drawing captured the tree and even more, their bond. The school soon became crowded and she did not want anyone to see her. Running, she looked back at the small helpless tree. She skipped into her classroom to watch from the window. People were running around carelessly not caring about the little sprouts of nature that rose beneath their two feet. 'Nature must be recognised,' the girl thought. A light bulb flickered up inside her head. She had an idea.

Night after night the girl made plans on how she could make nature known. Finally, she was ready. Shyly she walked into the school gates as if she were walking through for the first time. Her head pounded and her breath came quicker. Stumbling, she shuffled into the cold room. People were staring and it made her feel little and helpless. She took a deep breath and began her complaint. "Nature must be known," she said feeling a bit braver. "It is not okay for nature to be forgotten. It is a living thing like we all are, so help speak for nature and you will be doing the earth a big favour. Thank you." The class cheered as she happily sat down glancing at the little tree. She seemed to think 'I did this for you.' The girl smiled at the tree. 'You are now known.'

Over the next few days people kept appreciating nature and looking down before they stepped. The girl smiled as she sat down on the wooden bench. The tree had grown into a toddler tree. The connection began to feel stronger. The girl chuckled as the tree leaves whistled to her. The tree kept whistling until the bell rang and then it remained silent until the girl showed up once again.

As school holidays grew closer, the girl kept visiting the tree more often. Day after day she would go and listen to the tree's nature. Today the tree played a piercing harmony. The girl swayed along cheerfully. Her smile was wider than ever and her teeth gleamed bright. Soon she left the toddler tree and headed for class. When it was the last day of school as usual she spent some of the time with her toddler tree.

She gasped. Her toddler tree was now an adult tree. Hmmmmmmmmm. "What was that?" she said curiously. Suddenly, she was pulled towards the adult tree. 'It was the connection' the girl realised. She stretched out her arms to hug her big friend. Smiling, she whistled along with the leaves.

By **Jessica Brimson**
Category: Middle
Greenslopes State School
Greenslopes, Qld.
Teacher: Mrs McCarthy



Nature's Song

As the young girl, Lily, stared into the meadow, a slight smile crept up on her pale face. She sat comfortably on her pillowy bed and absorbed all of nature through her deep, green eyes. The scent of oak tickled her feet whilst she rested her damp hands that shook with the cool breeze. The sky was painted with rich shades of orange, as the sun emerged from the clouds. Lily's bones that bulged out of her rosy cheeks were deeply embraced with warmth and love. As the wind brushed across the grass, Lily inhaled the crisp air leaving specks of peace resting over her soul. Flowers bloomed in the distance whilst colours bounced through the clear blue sky. Suddenly, a soft and delicate melody began to resonate in her ears. It stroked her heart with comfort and relaxation, letting her hear nature's song. As Lily entered the depth of the meadows, birds began to chirp gently alongside nature's song. The meadow was delicately painted by light strokes of green with hints of yellow.

The waves of grass danced

contentedly with the wind, as the melody repeated itself. The young girl felt as if she had entered a peaceful world when swimming in the depths of the field. Her knotted hair began to sway with the grass, as it followed the rhythm of the wind. Lily spread her arms out in freedom whilst running her narrow and bony fingers through the moist and rich soil. She carried a straw basket where fallen leaves and

flowers were placed and nurtured. Lily wanted to preserve and protect nature and restore it with love. She gently rested over the dry tips of the grass whilst smiling at the blue sky. As the sun settled into the clouds, the sound of galloping drew closer to Lily. It felt like the percussion to this melody. Lily laughed joyfully whilst a silhouette of love embraced her. She stared at the green ocean of grass ahead.

"Home at last. This is where I belong!" Lily exclaimed whilst kicking her thick leather boots stirring a puddle of water. The melody began to drill into Lily's ears and loosened her tight and fragile body. "Oh, how I love to be free!" Lily cried as the grass tickled her gently. As the sky grew dark and stars appeared, a layer of mist delicately covered the surroundings. Lily skipped towards the light where her farmhouse stood. She grasped her basket, never letting go of her connection with nature. "Tomorrow I shall hear the melody after the rebirth of a new day," she said excitedly whilst gently shutting the thick timber doors of her farmhouse. Lily's farm was encased in patches of mould and dirt that blended into the crimson colour of the timber wood. The paint began to peel off the walls and droop in despair whilst vines of ivy spread across the windows, blocking all light.

Old pictures and tapestry contained an entire layer of dust

bedsheets, she hummed nature's melody. As Lily drifted off to sleep, she realised that every note of this melody was her calling to be one with nature.

By **Sara Rezaeian**

Category: Middle

Ravenswood School for Girls

Gordon, NSW

Teacher: Sharon Shapiro



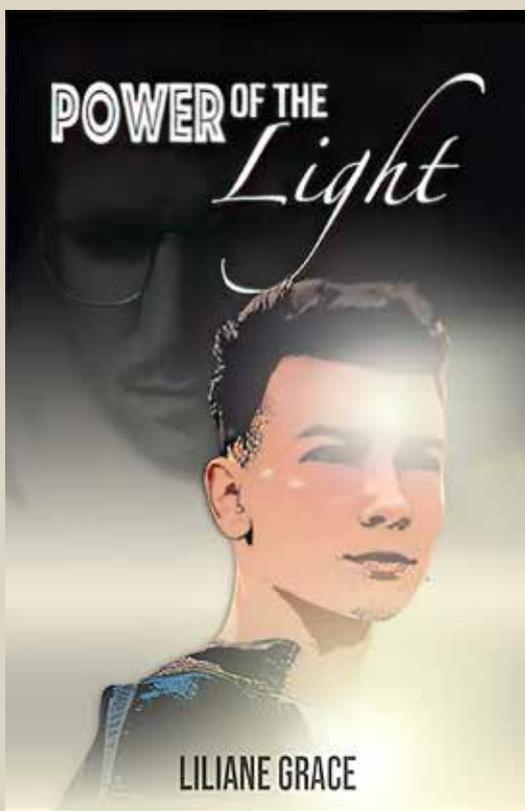
whilst a sour scent covered each room. Ancient carpets itched Lily's feet in discomfort. The house stood weakly as floorboards cracked with every footstep. Despite this, the farm accommodated and preserved all generations and memories of Lily's family. Goosebumps appeared from Lily's bony arms as she entered the gloominess of her bedroom, wanting to feel the comfort of nature. As she nestled under her cold

POWER OF THE Light

Published: 20th July 2020

ISBN: 9780648562450

For Ages: 13 - 18 years old



Nathan's father has just been diagnosed with cancer, and the only place Nathan can go to escape the stress at home is into a fantasy world that he accesses through his dreams. But, even there, trouble is brewing as a growing breed of 'Reactors' attempt to control people's minds.

Nathan joins a band of rebels led by a carefree woman called Rada, and as he struggles to understand her cryptic leadership style, he begins to realise that the messages he is hearing could help his father... and himself.

Power of the Light is an allegorical story that sheds light on the ancient theme of good versus evil whilst affirming healthy life choices that are backed by the latest research in nutrition, human behaviour and quantum physics.

This book is dedicated to the many courageous women, men, and children who are diagnosed with cancer and choose to trust the healing power of nature above medical intervention, and, in particular, to those among them who shared their inspiring stories with me. I would also like to thank the authors and educators who have woken me up to our body's ability to heal, and to Jay, a writing student of mine many years ago whose characters were in trouble. In coaching him, I stumbled upon the possibility of 'the Power of the Light'.

****20% of the profit from each sale will be donated to Farmer's Footprint, a path to soil health and food independence via regenerative agricultural practices.****

About Liliane

I've been interested in personal development, the mind and human potential since I was a teenager, and specifically in the power of language to influence our feelings and state of mind. I wrote The Mastery Club because I saw a gap in the market between youth fantasy literature (wizards, vampires, dragons) and reality literature (war, refugees, drugs), and I wanted to inspire kids to create magic in their real lives by realising their own life dreams.

The Mastery Club was an utter joy to write because it brought together two of my favourite interests: writing fiction and living consciously. The program evolved out of the book. I'm really touched by the responses of students who have experienced it, and of their parents and teachers. You can view some student and teacher testimonials [here here](#). I was delighted when people from around the world began to contact me also wanting to teach the program. Early in 2020 I signed a deal for a screen adaptation of The Mastery Club. Watch this space!

I've continued in the 'teaching through story' niche because (a) 'entertaining education' is surely the best way to learn – it's certainly my favourite way! and (b) because I'm fascinated by the ideas and principles I share through my writing. Writing shouldn't be 'didactic' (teaching in a tedious, moralistic way), but I believe that our purpose here on earth is to grow, to realise more of our potential, so it makes sense that our books and entertainment should support that outcome.

Each of my books shares ideas that have inspired me through stories

about contemporary children and adults.

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THE SWING

I like to sit on the swing and watch the people. But only the sad ones. The happy ones make me angry. I don't like being angry. I'm not allowed on the swing when I'm angry. People come by who aren't supposed to. Bad things happen when I'm angry. So, when I hear the happy ones, I have to cover my eyes and sing loudly so I can't hear them. LALALALALALALALALALALALA I wasn't a happy one. I wonder if someone else used to sit on the swing. Were they a happy one? I think they were. I don't like them. Maybe they watched me and now they aren't a happy one. LALALALALALALALALALALALA

Sometimes I think I was going to be a happy one. But then I got lost. Or I was late. Or I was early. I don't remember ever being happy. I don't remember. I just know I'm sad, I'm not allowed to be angry, and happy ones make me angry. So, I sit on the swing, because the swing is sad, and the swing is simple. I don't want to sing. My voice hurts. I want to see.

My eyes are bruised from always covering them. What if I don't get angry?

Maybe then I'll be happy. Is happy good? There's a happy one... No going back... I feel so sick- "Henry, why is she coughing?" Everything is bright, and colourful and loud. It's so, so loud. "Henry! Henry, hurry!" I liked that voice. It wasn't happy. Is that good?

Do I like happy? "Sue! Sue they're here! Come on!" That voice sounded happy, but not happy. But it wasn't sad or angry either. Neither of the voices were. "Sue! Now! Hurry up!" The colours and lights and noises were moving. I felt so sore. LALALALALALALALALALALALA

*I was elsewhere now. Not on the swing, but elsewhere. What else is there but the swing? The brightness was better now, but I felt very queezy. The noises were too beepy, and I felt very angry. I want to go back to the swing. *** Why can't I do my singing? *** "We need to monitor*

her, most likely for the next few weeks." A new voice. This one was smooth and very, very sad. "We- Why- You..." It was the nice voice again. It sounded even sadder. "You're supposed to fix her..." And all the soreness and itchiness and pain were gone. I could breathe. Had I ever breathed? Suddenly there were lot's more voices and lot's more beeping, and the two voices that weren't happy or sad or angry were crying but not sad. And I started to forget the swing. I must remember the swing. I must remember the... swing.

*The swing? *** "UMA, UBBA!"*

By Angelina Hemsworth

Category: Senior
Cairns School of Distance Education
Manunda, Qld.
Teacher: Ms Venkatraman



A Lion's Shadow

A lion's shadow
Glistened dangerously below me
A pool of courage
Stuck in my mind
A green light of anticipation

Can be seen in my thoughts
Can be seen in my words
Can be seen in my eyes
I can see a burst Of bright blue flames

Burning right through my skin
I survive a heroic scene
A lion's shadow
Can't haunt my dreams
Because I am it
The lion's shadow

By **Sandra Wang**
Category: Junior
Abbotsleigh School
Wahroonga, NSW

COMING HOME

He departed Plymouth, England,
To the vast open sea.
Hoping to forget his life on land.

The wind filled the sails,
Pushing the Endeavour onward
To places unknown.

He watches and waits,
For land up ahead.
He sees what is now known as Young Nick's Head.

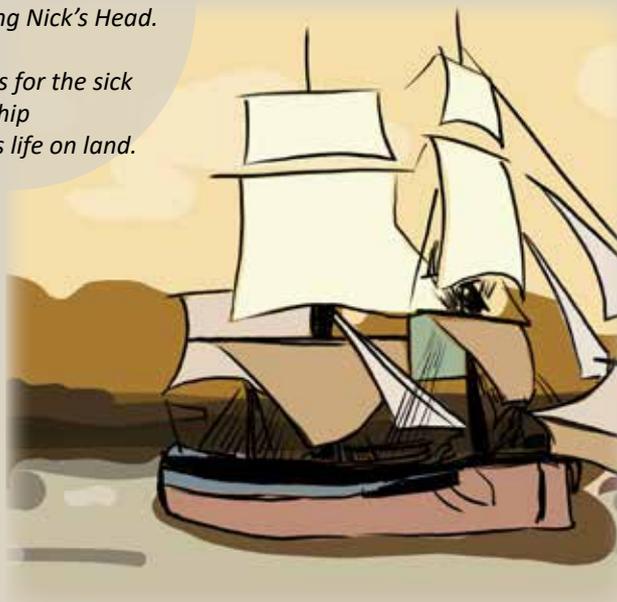
While he meets new friends, cares for the sick
and works aboard the ship
He becomes happy away from his life on land.

He travelled across the sea
Helping to claim new land for the king.
Going to places he had never seen before

But soon there were more people to care for,
And lots of people died.
They were all waiting to return to their lives,

When the Endeavour reached England,
After three long years,
Nick was finally at home.

By **Siena Fernandes**
Category: Middle
Ravenswood School for Girls
Gordon, NSW
Teacher: Sharon Shapiro



The Water, the Waves, The Worry

*The sea is savage, doesn't say sorry.
Every time you go in you might not come back;
Trust, is what this monster of water definitely lacks.
The water, the waves, the worry.*

*Swim down deep, your world will go blurry.
As what you thought was once your friend sucks you in;
Trapped under the waves you pray for someone to forgive your sin.
The water, the waves, the worry.*

*In the water you don't know what animals scurry.
Underneath your feet to await your death;
In that chaotic place you could have your last breath.
The water, the waves, the worry.*

*When people drown it is no fake story.
As they travel under the waves to the unknown;
Sinking down into the water like a stone.
The water, the waves, the worry.*

*We think the sea is fun but it will never take mercy.
To the poor, unfortunate souls that dare to go in;
Who are now on the sea floor, their life chucked in the bin.
The water, the waves, the worry.*

*Don't mistake this unpredictable beast as your death may vary.
Be careful and wise with your choices when it comes to him;
Because you might end up losing an arm or a limb. Or even your life...
The water, the waves, the worry.*

By *Cacia Charles*
Category: Middle
East Launceston Primary School
East Launceston, Tas.
Teacher: Mrs. Stevens/Mrs. Natoli

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This coincided with the birth of their first son, the beautiful Hudson James. Knowing that they would do whatever they could to provide their child with the best upbringing they humanly could, and recognising that there are many who were not born into an equally loving family. This, coupled with an understanding of how important 'family' is to raising robust individuals and building strong communities led to the forming of the Foundation which spent the first several years doing work in the space of replacing a little bit of the warmth and benefit of family where it was missing.

During this time the Foundation has undertaken work in ten services for young girls, domestic violence shelters, hospitals, music therapy, mentoring programs for teenagers, women who have experienced domestic violence and more.

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Gregory and his 3 wishes

A little boy named Gregory loved mythical creatures and ghosts. The favourite thing to do is to learn about them. One day, he had a dream about a thing giving him three wishes and he could choose anything. He woke up frightened, he didn't know what just happened.

One week later, there was a teapot in his bedroom, he didn't know how it got there he never put it there. He grabbed the teapot and examined it. He wondered if it was a normal teapot or not. He tried to open it and then he rubbed the teapot a bit. BOOM !!! A burst of wind came out of the teapot and all of the stuff in his bedroom was flown away. There was a figure standing in front of him and that was like a ghost. "Umm, who are you"? He asked, looking frightened. "I am a Genie. I grant three wishes to who ever open my teapot, so what are your three wishes?" Replied Genie, looking into his



eyes. Without any thought, he said my first one would be me and my family become so rich told Gregory hastily. "Very well" said the Genie suddenly. There were stars around his room. He looked at his piggy bank and it was flowing with money. Gregory was shocked. For the next one he thought hard about. "Can you hurry up", yelled the Genie. He came into senses at once. "Okay, okay" said Gregory furiously at the Genie. He said, "I wish that there is

no virus in the world."

"Ahh yes everyone would do that at this time", said the Genie. Again, stars were circling around the room. He heard the news reporter saying that covid is gone.

Airports and shops will be opening very soon. "Wow, I just did that" said Gregory proudly. What's your third and last wish, asked Genie. Gregory thought hard now. After few minutes he said, "I wish everyone could have an access to education". Genie smiled at his wish and said, "your wish has swelled my heart with pride. You could have asked for anything but you chose happiness of everyone over yours." Again the stars were twinkling around. Genie disappeared and so the teapot. Gregory looked around but could not find anyone. He looked sad that he is gone but happy that all his wishes were granted. He went to his bed wondering where is the teapot now.

Next morning, when he got up, saw the teapot lying on top of his books.

By **Muhammad Qasim Raza**
Category: Middle
Felixtow Community School
Felixtow, SA
Teacher: Laura Batchford

The Young Boy Crying

*Staring at the window,
but not looking at anything.
Is he sad, is he mad,
about mean things?*

*It is a sad moment,
all chains unbroken.
The boy didn't wail,
he didn't cry out loud.
But if you look at his eyes,
they're red from crying.
Oh poor little boy!
oh poor little boy!*

By **Arin Lee**
Category: Junior
Hambledon Public School
Quakers Hill, NSW
Teacher: Miss Porter



CRUSH

His eyes were as dark as the night sky. But they were twinkling, like stars. Except those were just the reflection of the fairy lights lacing the park trees. When we passed the lights, his eyes went back to looking like pools of tar floating in white. His nose was perfect, in my opinion. Not too small, not too big, not too masculine, not too feminine either. It had a red scar on it, the product of his annoying habit of scratching his nose.

His lips weren't pale, but they weren't bright either. They were almost the same colour as his skin, but darker. His skin... oh, his skin. Imagine a horse, a glorious brown horse. Now imagine its skin a few touches lighter. That was his colour. His breath smelled like one of my favourite scents. A bit sweet, a bit spicy. "You should tell me the next time you're eating butter chicken," I told him.

He smiled and scratched his nose. Idiot. "If I did call you, you would finish it all!" He half whined, half-chuckled. His voice wasn't deep and manly at all this time. It was a mystery, his voice. Sometimes it sounded like a child's, other times a man's. But on a rare occasion, it was right in the middle. That was my favourite voice. I reached over and ruffled his hair. My favourite part about him?

His hair. Lovely, dark brown, not too long, and falling over his eyes when he moved too much. It was always tangled. He said it was because he was scared all of it would fall out if he tugged on it too much. His mother suspected hair loss. I suspected hormones.

"I... have something to tell you," he said, looking away. "Mmm what?" He got down on one knee. I stood, frozen. He pulled out a ring. "You complete idiot," I rolled my eyes. "We've been married for four years and had twins. Now you finally presented me with a ring?" "Uh.....well..."

"I told you to wait till we're at least 28!" I caught myself before I started

to get into a fury. "Where did you get the money?" I whispered. "I took a small portion out every time I got paid," he said quietly. I resisted the urge to dab my eyes. "What if we get broke again? What if we can't support our twins? What if you or I get fired again? What if I can't---" "Stop," he said firmly. His man-voice came out. "I only took out a small portion. Besides, it's a small diamond." I looked away. He scratched his nose, stood up and walked two steps behind me. He did this every time I came close to pouring out an emotional outburst. I wasn't very good at emotional stability. "I also borrowed some money from my friends. You know I have a lot of them. They actually gave it to me as a birthday present. I knew how much you dreamed as a kid wearing matching rings and... I wanted to at least fulfil that one dream. Though I can, in no way, make up all the dreams you fulfilled for me."

I sniffed. Took a few deep breaths. His calming voice didn't always soothe me. But this time, it did. Somehow, it did. Thank God for his social skills. Something which I completely lacked.

"You got one too?" I turned to face him. He nodded and grinned. A big grin. He really wanted this, I realized. He got another ring out of his fanny pack (oh how I loathed that pack). The ring was just like the other one. I smiled too. I fell in love with his perfections and imperfections. He fell in love with mine. My uneven dark hair, my pale gray eyes, my bloodshot lips, my horribly tanned skin, and not to mention my figure. But he found it hot. I found his features hot too.

'But most importantly, it's your personality that caught my eye,' His voice streamed into my thoughts. With a start, I realized that it had started. The time when your soulmates receive their telepathy temporarily. '7:49pm,'

I streamed my voice into his. 'The time we first met. '27th of May,' he replied.

'The day we met.' He smiled his beautiful crooked smile. I smiled mine.

By **Mariam Qanitah**
Category: Senior
Mitcham Girls High School
Kingswood, SA

Tears In My Heart

- Tears in my heart

*I didn't want to give you away,
To see you walk away one final time.
It leaves my heart utterly empty,
And my mind a dark, deep pit.*

*I didn't want to experience the pain
Of losing something I loved so much.
Your whines still echo in my heart
Resonating forever and ever.*

*I didn't want to come to this moment
Where I knew I had to let you go.
My heart breaks and my tears overflow,
Is there any hope at all?*

*I didn't want you out of my life,
Where I could never see you again.
I knew it was my only choice,
But it caused so much grief.*

*I didn't want to see you suffer,
To hear your whines and barks.
My heart aches thinking of you
Resting peacefully in heaven.*

*I didn't want to leave you,
To never see you again.
Your soft grey fur, your kindly look
Vanish forever, lost in my mind.*

*I didn't want to entertain the notion
Of never seeing you again.
For I know when death clouds my eyes,
We will meet each other again.*

By **Nicia Zhang**
Category: Middle
Ravenswood School for Girls
Gordon, NSW
Teacher: Sharon Shapiro





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