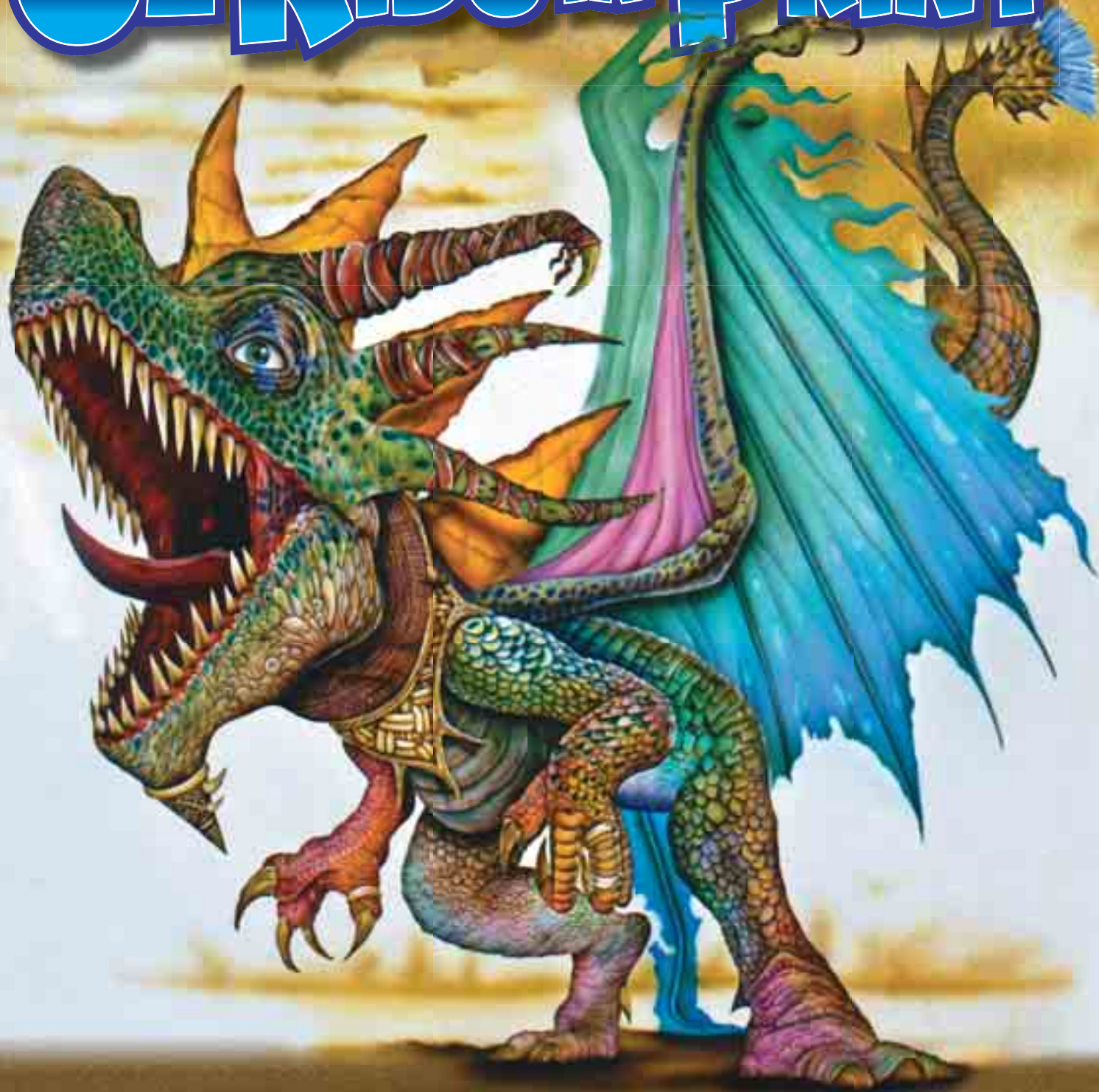


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August 2010

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Get your entries in by the end of September for the 2010 Young Australian Writers' Awards.

Please when you enter your stories/poems on-line, make sure you have checked your spelling and grammar. Entries are being submitted without using capitalisation in the Entrant's Details. This publication is for story writing and many stories have been rejected because there are too many spelling and punctuation mistakes. We cannot give you credit for a story if we have had to edit it to make sense or correct mistakes.

Stories are also rejected if they have no 'end'. Remember what you were taught when you have a 'start' 'middle' and 'end'.

Please make stories more than 50 words. There is not enough content in a story of that size. Sometimes we add these in if they have a good meaning. They could be changed to a poem instead if you like to keep it short.

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**KEEP ON WRITING  
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*Carol Dick*  
Managing Editor

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# CHILDREN WRITING FOR CHILDREN

**By Di Bates**

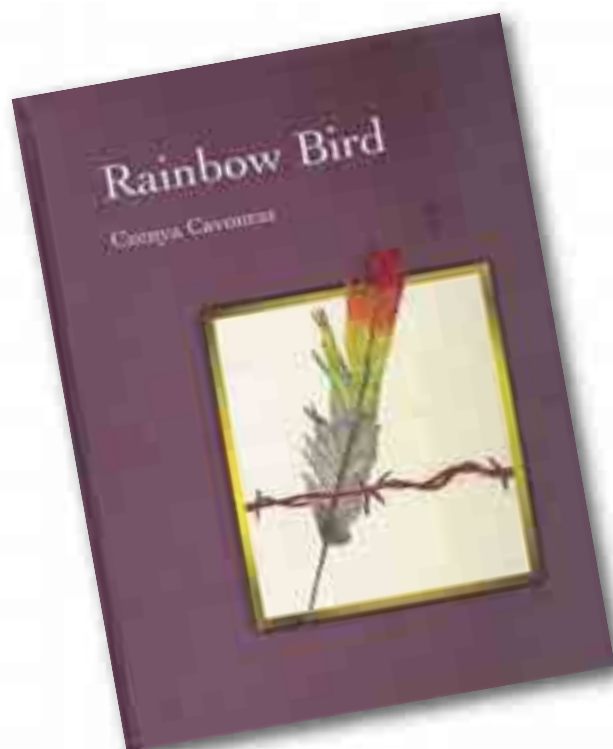
**What stimulates an author to write? And when does the creative process begin? Two commercially published Australian authors are still in their early teens! Alexandra Adornetto was 13 years old, when, bored during school holidays, she wrote *The Shadow Thief* (Harper-Collins). And Czeyna Cavouras' picture book *Rainbow Bird* (Australians Against Racism Inc. with Wakefield Press) began as a four-week school project when she was aged 12.**

From an early age both girls were immersed in book stories and oral recounts of their parents and grandparents' own experiences. Alex says her mother read her Greek myths and Edgar Allan Poe before she was born! "In our household", she says, "reading was a form of recreation. It was a bit like 'Eat your vegetables or no books for you!'".

Czeyna was reading before she started school so it seemed a natural thing to continue to enjoy when she began kindergarten. "Each of my relatives reading to and telling me stories had different things to say and share which made for a rich mosaic of ideas that may have fuelled my interest in books", she says.

And what about reading choices? "For a long time", says Czeyna, "fantasy was my favourite genre – the Emily Rodda 'Deltora' and then the Harry Potter series. But before that my parents used to read picture books like Fulvio Testa's 'Time to Get Out', Dr Seuss and Mem Fox's books".

Alexandra says, "I used to love *The Wanderings of Odysseus* because I was fascinated by characters like Circe and the Sirens. Other favourite book titles that spring to mind are *The Tale of Custard the*



*Dragon* (Ogden Nash), *The Beast with a Thousand Teeth* (Terry Jones) and all of the Dr. Seuss books but my favourite was *Dorrie's Magic* (Patricia Coombs). Dorrie was such a quirky and disorganised witch who got herself into regular muddles. I identified with her”.

For Czeyna, the inspiration to write and illustrate her book about life in a detention centre from a young child's perspective, came about through asking her pumpa (grandfather) about his frequent trips to the Baxter detention centre in Port Augusta. She tried to imagine what it must be like for children in detention and what must go through their minds.

“I have always created stories, usually fantasy and with contrived characters and situations”, Czeyna says. “Each story ended happily, even those with spooky themes because that was how I thought a story must end. I am told by mum that even before I could write sentences, I used to fill a page with words and then include a picture at the bottom of the page.” Before writing *The Shadow Thief*, Alex would enter writing competitions both inside and outside of school so she believes the idea of developing her writing skills was always there. “I knew I loved language as well as writing stories but the idea of doing it professionally never occurred to me as I thought it was a long way off”, she says.

“My first writing forays had to do with magic and fairies at the bottom of the garden. The fairies had adventures and squabbles amongst each other and decided which children to befriend. I also wrote poems and kept a journal before I started writing my novel.

“Once I finished it, I wanted to continue so writing became the obvious thing for me to pursue.” Alexandra is now working on her second, commissioned children's novel.

Asked what she thinks parents can do to encourage their young children to read, Alexandra says, “Make reading part of your regular family's routine. Reading stories

aloud and making up some of your own is harder than plonking children in front of the television, but it is worthwhile if it fires their imagination.

All children love fairytales, myths and fantasy so those stories usually succeed in capturing their attention. Things like video games and computers have their place, but if that is a child's sole recreation, it should be of concern.”

Czeyna's reply is, “Read to your children, tell them stories and make the range as diverse as possible. Ask questions of the book and the pictures, pose hypothetical questions, continue reading the books their children read to share the experiences. Make reading fun – use different intonation and expression when reading and act out some of the story – make the time to do this and share the enjoyment with the listener”.

Both girls believe that reading is one of those activities you can't have too much of. “Children need to feel part of the story and to express their thoughts about what is happening”, says Alexandra. “I think it makes a story come alive when you can relate it back in some way to your own life.”

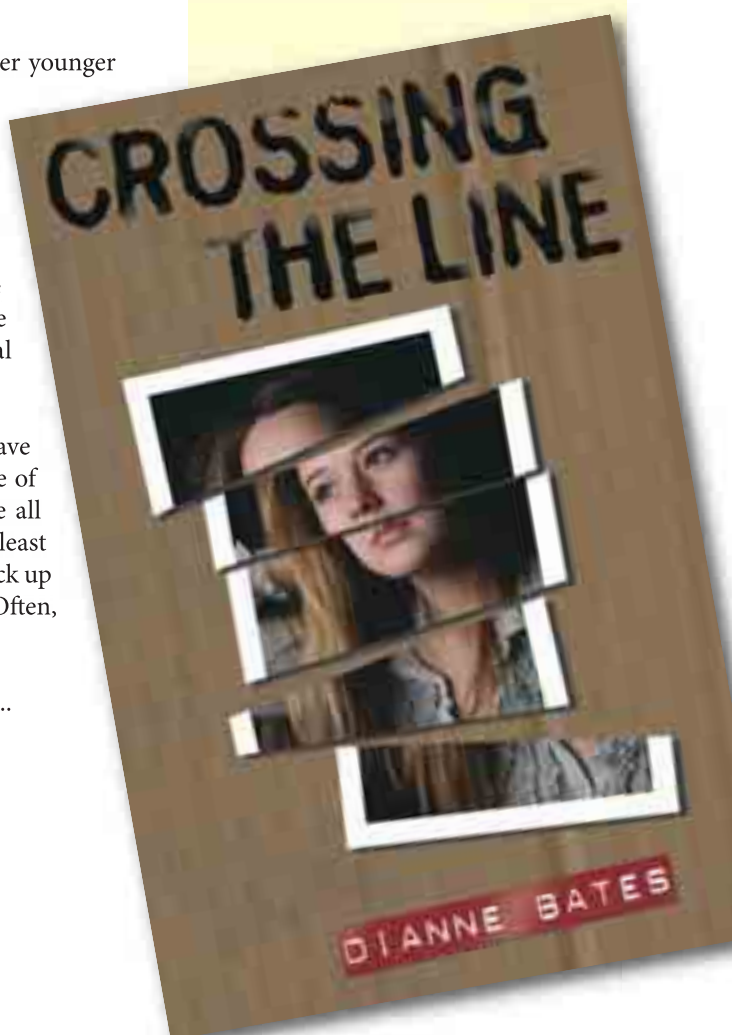
Czeyna enjoys reading to her younger brothers. She says, “This has encouraged them to read back to me as their skills develop. Make sure you check that they understand the content or are stimulated by it in some way: it may be through the way it is read or the actual storyline.

“As my English teachers have all said, ‘reading is the spice of life’ and I would encourage all parents to try and foster at least a small liking or desire to pick up a book and read to them. Often, and always with love.”

Out of the mouths of babes...



Dianne (Di) Bates is the author of over 100 books for young people, some of which have won national and state literary awards. Her latest book is the YA novel, *Crossing the Line* (Ford Street) which was short-listed last year for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards. Di shares her website [www.enterprisingwords.com](http://www.enterprisingwords.com) with her prize-winning author husband, Bill Condon. She also offers an online creative writing course for young writers.



# BLOOD ON THE MOON

There's blood on the moon and I'm dying in cages,  
 Of twisted rooms all covered in gauges,  
 To measure, in spite, of emotions and breaking;  
 The night is come and darkness obscuring.  
 There's a smile on the hills and I see the reflections,  
 Of wavering tills and distorted perfections,  
 Like a blade in the house of infections and flames –  
 When your candle burns out I'll still carry your name.  
 There are needles in eyes that follow the gates,  
 Concealing all ties to the kipping place.  
 There is something cold wrought on the deep calm,  
 Of strings plied to pulleys in a puppet's limp arm.  
 With the sun in her hair she smiles:  
 She never did care much about her denials.  
 There's blood on the moon and the wagtails are howling,  
 For a desire in bloom left felled and drowning.  
 It's relaxing to old yet it's all to let go,  
 As your lips claim the rivers and chasms soon fold.  
 Are we, when it comes, to kiss our love in its death?  
 The street lights all hiss with whispering breath,  
 Warning the body of poisonous streams,  
 Hear! They're woven by nightmares and arrested by dreams.  
 There's tape on our words as forever we wander,  
 Away with our herds to be cluttered in saunter.  
 Our roads are all twisted and pierced foreign ways,  
 To atone for lost keyholes and those hearts built in sway.  
 With the sun in her hair she smiles:  
 Of course, in all this, she has perpetual denials.  
 There's blood on the moon and I'm dying in cages,  
 Inside crooked rooms all covered in pages.  
 Forever, I hope, will the words cry my song,  
 Of decay, of all mind – they are our belong.

By **Den L. Scheer**

Year 12

St. Hilda's Anglican School for Girls

MOSMAN PARK – WA

(Illustration by the author)



# I AM

I'm  
special and unique,  
When  
man and nature meet,  
Life  
with a grin and a wink,  
Left  
for me to think.

Feelings  
of exhilaration and depression,  
They  
are things of my possession,  
Which  
lies in the core of my heart,  
And  
cannot be broken apart.

Through  
the paths of life,  
With  
sorrow and strife,  
I  
feel elated to know,  
That  
there's much more to go.

In  
my heart there's a place,  
Which  
shows on my face,  
I  
know who I am,  
And  
I am who I am.

By **Ciara Brennan**

Year 4G, Age 9

Saint Christopher's Catholic Primary School  
AIRPORT WEST – VIC.

# STEAM TRAINS

Big green shed doors open out, bang, bang, bang,  
The engine is stoked and fired, to gather up steam,  
The train starts its day early, clang, clang, clang,  
The daily fresh crew, about to form a 'team'.

The 'Steed of Steel' slides on by, clank, roar, chuff,  
Many steam trains flying down treadless tracks,  
Racing down hills, pulling back up, puff, puff,  
Air brakes screeching to hold them safely back.

Speeding along the track clicketty-clack,  
Wheels turn, smoke churns the pounding passing by,  
Over hills and dales and past the rundown shack,  
Slowly to the platform, the tanks near dry.

Romance lost and a bygone era past,  
Trucks, cars and aeroplanes, here now, to last.

By **James Broachie**

Year 4, Age 9

Hillcrest Christian College  
REEDY CREEK – QLD.

# The Moon

The magnificent moon is up in the sky,  
Up in space very high.  
It is very bright,  
But does not have its own light.

From the time of its birth,  
The moon's been orbiting Earth.  
It is a rocky ball,  
but in the future on it may be a shopping mall.

By **Harjit Kaur**

Year 4, Age 9

Campsie Public School  
CAMPSIE – NSW



# The New Start

“Halt, or you shall be shot”, the angry policemen cried out  
The small boy squeaked, he knew he was caught, beyond any doubt  
He dropped bread admitting defeat, they came, batons aloft  
The handcuffs clicked, “You’re a darn idiot, ya know”, he scoffed

“Guilty or innocent”, the judge yelled across the court room  
“Guilty please Miss”, small boy Arthur called out, knowing his doom  
“You shall be sent to Australia, for a life of work”  
As Arthur was led away the young guard gave a big smirk

Arthur was woken by the ‘click’ of his heavy steel door  
“Time for the ship, you dull-witted pig”, the guard loudly swore  
Onto the dray, hands and feet bound by heavy iron chains  
Upon arrival, the ship sent fear pulsing through his veins

The ship had an evil look about it, from sails to keel  
The sails reached out as if trying to catch a morning meal  
Arthur was bundled out of the dray, towards the gangplank  
Up he went, not knowing whether he would die, to be frank

The ship smelt rank and he moved to a pole with chains attached  
A guard grabbed Arthur’s handcuffs and to the pole he was latched  
Arthur slid down the pole, no escape, tears spilt down his face  
He thought of his family, something he’d never replace

It had been six weeks on the dirty ship, disease had struck  
Coughing, wheezing all haunted Arthur’s nightmares in the muck  
The food was vile, dried beef and a small cup of rice, forced down  
Convicts were forced to steal, often not enough to go around

They had recently received word they were over halfway  
Arthur began to feel sick and all he could do was pray  
Scurvy, pale skin and sunken eyes, he hoped he wouldn’t die  
Holding on, he pleaded for food, wishing for a meat pie

Finally, word came they had reached Australia, at last  
Arthur smiled; he needed to get to Australia, fast  
Australia looked bright and glittery, stretching for miles  
Stepping down off the gangplank, Arthur was, almost, all smiles

By **Angus Paterson**  
Year 9, Age 14  
The Scots School Albury  
ALBURY – NSW

The Forgefather looked at the assembled volunteers of Task Force Streetgang. Today, the Fire-Born would bring the Emperor's light to another corner of the Galaxy. The pride of his brother-hood and the nature of the task before him filled his resolve.

“Brothers of the fire... before us stands the planet Enfuego. A major battle is under way, one in which we will take an important part. As we have since the days of the great crusade, we bring a cleansing fire to the ork spore that has infested this planet.”

The assembled Salamanders began chanting litanies of hate. Among mankind's many enemies, the Salamanders' chapter reserved a special hatred for the algae creatures of ork broods. Looking across his assembled men, Vulkan Hestan knew that his brothers would happily give their lives for a chance to destroy orks on their home turf.

“But this is no ordinary batch of ork rabble. A revelation contained within the Tome of Fire has led us to this place. Somewhere below is the key to the location of another of the Progenitor’s gifts.”

Hestan allowed the importance of his words to sink into his men. Recovery of the Primarch's nine treasures was the holiest of missions for the brothers of

the Salamanders. Hestan himself had willingly given up his command of a company of battle brothers to continue the quest. The importance of what Hestan had revealed to his men steeled their resolve.

“You know what is at stake. Revelations from the Tome of Fire are not easily come by in this time of strife, but below us is another chance for the answers our brotherhood has sought since the days of the Heresy.”

Hestan knew from the intelligence reports that the orks below had managed to assemble a variety of weapon producing industries. To do so, they had likely scavenged materials from a variety of sources. It was entirely possible the orks had recovered Heresy era technology or spacecraft. Whatever the reason, he knew the Revelation was guiding him to this place and at this time, and as a brother of the Fire-born, he knew the answers would come, especially when he looked for them in the light of the pyres of ork bodies. It was his quest, and one he was prepared to see to the end.

“Brothers, prepare for orbital assault...”

They launched their drop pods from their strike cruisers into the war zone of the planet. But something was wrong: there were no orks, the land here was pure and cleansed. Hestan said, “Something has been here and cleansed this world of the filthy orks”.

But they found out when they were searching for the nine treasures of the Primarchs the orks were still here and thriving. The orks had vehicles and hundreds of men. They outnumbered Hestan's space marines five to one so he got his men to go into a tactical formation to take the orks by surprise.

They attacked the ork base after a few hours of fighting. The space marines were successful at killing the orks then they searched for their treasures. They found their treasures and took them back to their home planet Rynn for purification then they put them on the rightful statues of their Primarchs.

By **Anthony John Potter**  
Age 14  
KIALLA – VIC.

# School Uniform

**S**CHOOL uniform is compulsory in many schools around the world. The purpose of the uniform is to represent the school you attend. This is only why it should be compulsory. But my opinion is the opposite; the school uniform should not be compulsory.

The first reason is that providing a school uniform is too costly for parents. This an addition financial burden for parents to handle, on top of the stationery they have to buy for children as well as paying the school fees, e.g. blazers.

Secondly, the school uniform might not even suit students or their surroundings, so they will feel irritating. Some of the clothes do not even fit the type of weather for which it designed. For example, if they have to wear winter uniform and the weather is very hot, they will feel uncomfortable. Many people pull up their sleeves because the jumper gets very itchy, but if they take their jumper off, it gets too cold. Therefore, they have to cope with this unpleasantness all day, and they can't study in comfort.

Thirdly, American ideas for uniform are different. American students do not wear school uniform; they just need to wear casual clothes that are appropriate to the school code. This does not affect students' performance. Should not the school's main aim be academic performance? If they are successful in their studies regardless of not living up to an image, why can't we do the same?

In addition, the school uniform is easy to tear. Skirts or formal pants are not good for doing sport or running around at

lunchtime or recess. Furthermore, many people like to play soccer or basketball at recess and lunch. In these sports, you have to play just a little bit rough, but that is enough to rip a button off, or even tear your school uniform. In contrast, if you take a look at 'casual' clothes, you can choose the clothing that better suits your activity, and then there will be less damage to clothing.

Another issue is that you have to change out of your uniform too often. The school uniform consists of different types of uniform, such as the summer uniform, the winter uniform, and/or sports uniform. If you have to change into your sports clothes and then into your school uniform too many times it wastes time. If you forget to bring your uniform, you get in trouble. If you wore your normal clothes to school, then you would not have to bother so much.

Lastly, is there a need to make everyone look alike? In fact the word 'uniform' means literally 'having the same form'. So a school uniform means that every kid in the school wears the same clothes. The real focus of the school should be about developing a curriculum that can be modified to the needs and interests of each individual student. We have to develop our individuality. If everything looked the same, then it would be boring to have the same image.

However, people argue that you look nice and neat in your school uniform. That is true, but parents do not pay thousands of dollars to make their children look neat. Don't they spend all this money to enhance their children's academic performance?

They don't just give you money to teach their children how to look good. So why do we need to look so neat and tidy?

In conclusion, casual clothing encourages individuality and you do not have to change a set of clothes every now and then. School uniform is very easily torn and very expensive, whereas with 'leisure' clothes, it is stronger and more comfortable than school uniform. If the American system for school uniform works for them, why can't it work for us? Therefore, school uniform should be phased out.



Oz Kids in Print

By **John Zhu**  
Year 6, Oxley College  
CHIRNSIDE PARK – VIC.  
Teacher: Mrs Sutton

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**The Five Mile Press**

# BILLY DAVIDSON

**T**HE writer sat in his dark study, typing away furiously at his latest novel. It had long since grown dark, but absorbed deeply in his story, the writer had not noticed. The only source of light came from the stark white given off by the computer screen. His fingers were nothing more than a blur as they danced across the keyboard. The writer was a successful crime novelist and had written so many novels that even he himself had lost count of them all. This latest one had sucked the writer in so deep that he was no longer aware of anything else around him. He was a part of the story. He was the story.

"What have we got?" I asked one of the constables as I ducked under the police tape and entered the crime scene. There was glass everywhere from the broken window.

"Not much, Sarge", the constable said, coming up to stand next to me. "All the same as last time. We found this." He handed me an evidence bag, inside just an ordinary playing card; the three of spades.

"This is different", I said, tapping the card.

"What is it, Sarge?" he asked me, surprised. He had noticed nothing.

"Last time it was the nine of clubs", I said. "So somewhere, someone is out there playing with an incomplete deck of cards."

"Go fish", the young constable said. "So we find someone who has only half a deck of cards?" he asked me, desperate for further instructions. I wasn't listening. I had just noticed something inside the shop. The till inside had been emptied, but on the floor behind the counter was a clock completely smashed into over a dozen pieces. I thought back to the previous crime scene. The clock had been destroyed there too.

I drove back to the station, my head full of ideas. On my desk I saw a single profile. His description fitted everything from the crime scenes. One fact in particular caught my attention; cannot stand ticking. I looked into the dark, lifeless eyes of the photograph. Billy Davidson. This is who I was hunting. I will catch him. I will bring him down.

My dreams that night were filled with exploding clocks and playing cards flying in every direction.

The next morning I came into the station having had very little sleep and two large mugs of coffee.

"We got him Sarge!" the young constable called from across the room as I came in, throwing a set of car keys to me. I caught them and followed him out.

"Where is he?" I asked with a slight sense of urgency.

"Downtown. He broke into a jewellery store." We left the station and loaded into the cars that had been prepared and were waiting for us.

We got to the store to find Davidson face down and handcuffed on the pavement outside. There was a deck of cards in his back pocket. I went inside. None of the jewellery cases had been touched, but every clock in the shop had been smashed. All of the clocks that had lined the walls, and even all of the watches, had been destroyed. Everything that ticked had been silenced. I went back outside and up to Billy Davidson.

"Pull him to his feet", I ordered. I looked into his eyes and he into mine, but neither of us gave anything away. He opened his mouth to speak.

"Time's up", I said.

The writer stopped his typing and leant back in his chair, stretching his arms above his head. He noticed how late it had become and looked up to the wall where his clock hung. Only his clock wasn't there. The writer stood and walked around his desk. His clock was in pieces on the ground. There was a creak and the door to his study snapped shut behind him.

The writer turned around slowly as a dark figure stepped into the moonlight that was filtering in through the window. The writer gasped as the stranger pulled out a gun.

"Who are you?" the writer asked the stranger. The stranger smiled and fired the weapon.

"I'm Billy Davidson", he said in the writer's last moments of life. He flicked a card onto the lifeless body of the writer. It was the ace of spades.

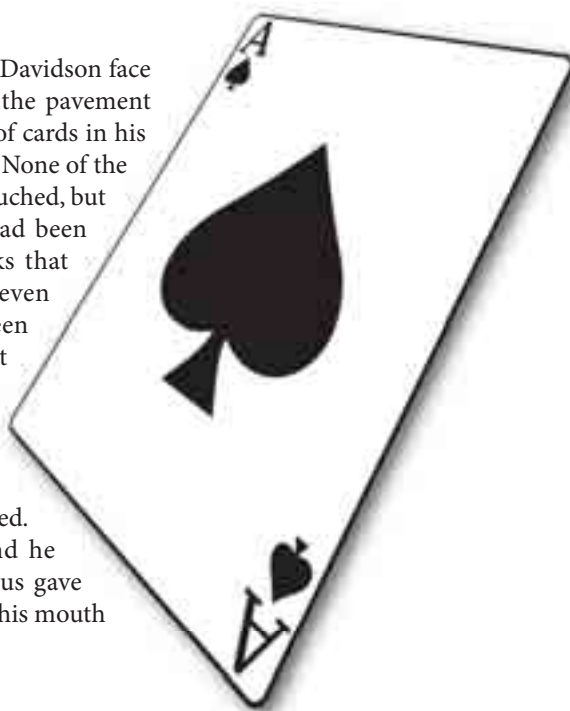
By **Ashley Marks**

Year 12

Assumption College

KILMORE – VIC.

Teacher Librarian – Anne Fraser



Imagine blinking,  
opening your eyes to a violent orange glow  
and the sound of sirens constantly wailing.  
It happened that fast.

Amongst all the chaos,  
eerie thoughts run through the mind.  
The mouth of Hell has been opened,  
revealing suffocating smoke, searing heat and  
blinding pain.  
Could this be the end?

It's make or break,  
it all comes down to this.  
Courage and bravery stand out,  
but at the end of the day,  
death, is still death.

As the day goes on, reports get worse.  
Many dead, hundreds of houses lost,  
thousands of lives shattered.  
Reality only really sets in when those close to you  
become a statistic.  
All meaning appears lost.

Everywhere destruction and chaos prevail.  
Children see things that make fully-grown men cry.  
Sitting, wondering, why they deserved this.  
Heroes are remembered, but legends never die.

By **Zac Slattery**  
Year 8  
Kingswood College  
BOX HILL – VIC.

# TO HELL AND BACK

# BIG TOP

THE circus men were sitting outside, eating burgers by the abandoned grease joint as the sun set. The smell of cooking oil lingered in the air, masking the stench of dust and manure from the menagerie. It was the end of a long day, and the men savoured the opportunity to rest their aching bodies. The eager crowds had disappeared into the big top, and the men sat listening to the band's jubilant music, carried to them on the wind. The canvas door of the performers' tent burst open, and Mr Alexander, the circus' bombastic director came rushing towards the men, with the tails of his coat flapping in the wind and his face red from exertion. "This will be good", said one of the men sarcastically. It was highly unusual for Mr Alexander to approach, or even speak to, the working men of the circus. He was infamous for his treatment of the roustabouts. Making his appearance even more peculiar was the fact that he was due in the ring at any minute. "Henry!" called Mr Alexander as he ran towards the group. Henry excused himself from the group, and stood up to greet him.

"Henry, thank goodness I have found you!" exclaimed Mr Alexander, desperately trying to catch his breath. "Gerard has fallen ill, you will need to take his place tonight", he continued. Henry laughed uncomfortably and looked at him with a bemused expression. Gerard was the show's clown, Henry was a working man, and the idea that he should take his place was ridiculous. "Are you joking?" asked Henry. After observing the boss's unimpressed reaction, Henry continued, "Why me? I mean, can't you find someone else to take his place?" he said, motioning towards the table of working men. Mr Alexander glanced towards the group of roustabouts, who had fallen silent and were now straining to hear their conversation. "No, it must be you, Henry", he said dismissively, "and it if you value your continuing employment with this circus, it also must be now".

This is how Henry came to find himself waiting nervously in the warm-up tent with the other circus performers. He looked just the way one would imagine a clown should look, in a rainbow wig,

make up and oversized shoes. His costume comprised two parts; an oversized shirt covered in an impossible number of ruffles, and pants with a hoop sewn into the waist, that were held up by red suspenders. Henry thought, or rather hoped, that the fact that he was a roustabout would be invisible to the waiting crowd. Standing among the other performers, the reality of his situation suddenly dawned on him.

"Go, go, go!" shouted the circus director as Henry was thrust towards the ring. Stumbling forwards, he was suddenly assaulted by a hail of juggling balls, pummeling him from the side of the ring. Assuming that this was part of the performance, Henry reacted melodramatically, feigning shock and sadness. He began juggling, first with one ball, then with two, three and finally four balls.

The crowd seemed disinterested. From where Henry was standing a mass of blank faces were bearing down on him, critiquing and judging his every move. Their plain, dark coloured clothing contrasted starkly with the technicolour circus set, creating a foreboding atmosphere in the ring. Standing in front of the crowd, Henry felt small and insignificant, his performance merely an act to be endured before the more spectacular and exciting aerial displays and animal acts.

Overwhelmed by his nerves, Henry dropped the juggling balls and, being as wound up as he was, forgot to stay in character and to feign disappointment. Some people who had previously seemed oblivious to Henry's presence in the ring

noticed his blunder and booed. It was clear to Henry that the crowd was becoming impatient.

Henry desperately searched his memory for the clown's routine that he had been taught only moments ago. His mind was blank. His heart was beating out of his chest. He was sweating so much, it was a wonder that his makeup remained on his face. It seemed to him that an eternity passed before finally he remembered, "The hat", thought Henry, "I do the hat gag". So Henry continued his performance, shaky and uncertain in front of the uninterested crowd. He took off his hat and, after showing the audience that it was empty, pulled out a handkerchief. Faking surprise, he reached again into the hat and this time pulled out a chain of handkerchiefs, tied together in knots. Henry again acted surprised, and also puzzled.

A small boy in the crowd began to giggle. Henry thought that it was the sweetest sound he had ever heard. The boy's laughter seemed to flow through the crowd like a wave, and soon the big top had erupted with lively applause. "Thank you", thought Henry, as he continued his routine. As he performed the gags he had learned less than an hour ago, he forgot his nervousness and began to enjoy the performance. He delighted in anticipating the crowd's laughter, just as he finished a gag, and revelled in the crowd's admiration.

Henry made his way back to the warm-up tent, his head spinning with exhilaration. "Good job out there", remarked the circus director, "not bad for a first-timer". It was at this moment, his body still buzzing with adrenaline, that Henry began to see his world differently. Until tonight, his course in life had seemed, at least to him, to be set in stone. However, in the light of the night's events, Henry began to question his belief that his destiny was to be a roustabout. Standing in the dim light of the warm up tent surrounded by a throng of acrobats, gymnasts, musicians, horses, lions and an elephant, Henry decided that, from this night forward, he would be the master of his own destiny.

By **Samantha Christie Burns**

Year 12

Eynesbury Senior College

ADELAIDE – SA

Teacher: Shelda Rathmann



# TRAPPED

Trapped within a dungeon dark  
Won't ignite without a spark  
Can't ignore the blazing fear  
Down drops a sorrowful tear

I've been down here so very long  
Feeling like I don't belong  
Been trying to light a fire for days  
But it won't share a blaze

I never did curse or lie  
Now I feel I want to die  
When hate and fear begin to form  
I really wish I wasn't born

Lying on the stone so painfully cold  
The food they're feeding me is stale and old  
Something's coming to get me now  
I'm hearing such a terrible growl

Finally, my suffering is coming to an end  
I hardly even attempt to defend  
I feel my life slipping away  
Blood spilling on the dusty hay

I admit defeat  
My life, incomplete  
My bones are shown  
I die alone.

By **Sam Preshaw**  
Year 8

Clarence High School  
BELLERIVE – TAS.  
Teacher: Mrs Kelly

# THE MASTERS

He crouches, looking up at the tall,  
overhanging men.

They creak, telling him to bring them  
tributes.

He slowly, meekly, holds it up above him,  
offering it to them. They snatch it away,  
tossing it like a stick.

He crawls away, climbing into his bed,  
falling asleep. The bed creaks and rolls  
away, taking him to new masters.

The Masters are Cranes.

His new Masters are small beasts, ripping  
up anything they disagree with.

He picks up their leftovers, taking it to  
his bed, tipping them into it. The bed  
rolls off.

The Masters fall asleep and are taken to  
their caves.

He sits, waiting for the bed to come back.  
It rolls back to him, where he climbs again  
into it to rest.

The Masters are Chainsaws.

He wakes up, to see the tall men again, who  
are now toying with the beast's leftovers.  
Suddenly, one man sees him and leaps,  
landing with a crash, on his short stubby  
legs.

He roars in pain, while the crushing man  
cackles. The bed picks him up, taking him  
to a dark cave.

He moans in pain, while short creatures  
climb over his crushed legs. He is now  
useless to his masters. He closes his eyes,  
and slowly dies.

He is The Machine.

By **Gemma Randall**  
Year 7

Caulfield Grammar School  
MULGRAVE – VIC.  
Teacher: Mr Greg Pearce



**D**etective Charlie Wyong, and Detective Derek Simpson, were pacing their lighthouse hideout, bored.

‘Why can’t we get a case?’ Charlie grumbled.

‘Yeah,’ said Derek. ‘We’ve had nothing for six months, the Government Information Bureau, should give us a mission.’

They worked for the Government Information Bureau. They weren’t classified as spies, really, but police detectives.

Their last mission was in Afghanistan, trying to arrest a Taliban military commander.

They looked out onto the overcast, grey sky. It was drizzling lightly. Their lighthouse was equipped with the latest gizmos, such as a fingerprint scanner, advanced computers, chemistry equipment, and a biometric scanner on the lab door. They each had a Detective Pad, which was a combination, gaming device, satellite mobile phone, computer, internet, and music. Wyong checked his email. There was one new message. It was from Commander Richard Wye Jones, the head of the GIB. Their hopes arose.

***For the eyes of Detectives Charlie Wyong, and Derek Simpson only***

***GIB has found no new missions for you yet, but they are asking for volunteers to be part-time desk agents at HQ. Also, an important notice for GIB Boot Camp, and both your names are listed. But to go to Boot Camp, you need to first complete a mission. We have one other person up for Boot Camp, CSI Technician Willis Hayes, who also needs to complete a mission with his superior, Colonel Harry Kottersly.***

**Government Information Bureau**

The detectives groaned; Boot Camp was only for the top spies of the country.

# MEGA ROBBERY

And if you passed, your name was to be engraved in the GBIBCTOF, Government Information Bureau Boot Camp Trophy of Fame.

The trophy was the size of a mahogany tree, and two hundred years old.

Suddenly Wyong’s Detective Pad beeped signalling an email, it was in code:

***Qwerty27, 53:12,male854boks***

It was a special code.

‘Let’s see, the James the First Wellington Cipher,’ said Wyong. ‘That equals: Mission Code 046 see satellite mail.’

A new message was in their inbox. It was from famous football star, Edmund Dawson. It said that \$100,000 worth of gold, \$75,000 in rubies, \$20,000 in sapphires and emeralds, and \$11,000,000 worth of cash, had been stolen from his vault.

He says the presents were from His Excellence Baron Faisil Rajiv Murdi, a wealthy oil baron from Saudi Arabia. He had given the goods to Dawson, in return for fine crude oil. Their spirits arose. A mission, at last!

They ran out of the lab, locked the biometric lock, and ran down the stairs, to a lift that went underground to a secret tunnel. The GIB had a network of tunnels under the ground. One of them led to a place not far from Dawson’s house. To transport through the tunnels, there was a large silver capsule, on magnetic levitation rails, that travelled the speed of a Maglev Train, if not faster.

They were at Point X, which was one kilometre from Edmund Dawson’s estate.

They had to trek through the wilderness, but transmitters wired to their Detective Pads, led them through the forest. They

arrived at the Greene Simeon, Edmund Dawson’s estate, in twenty-five minutes.

They stopped at the guard house, and displayed their GIB passes. The guard let them in.

They were beckoned by a servant toward a golf buggy, and were driven up a driveway to the mansion.

Another servant opened the door.

‘Charlie Wyong, and Derek Simpson,’ said Charlie.

‘Ah, yes, the Master of the house awaits you in the dining room upstairs, watching his home theatre system. Jacques here shall show you the way.’

Another servant came and motioned Charlie and Derek upstairs. The older servant retreated with a bow. Jacques was much taller and younger than the previous servant.

They went through the maisonette, passing rooms, and walking through huge, high, grand corridors.

They soon arrived at the room. It was huge! With two crystal chandeliers, an oak roof, and a circular table pine table. Over in the corner of the room, there was a lounge suite, a popcorn machine, soft drink machine, and a huge LCD TV, with speakers all around the lounge, creating surround sound. Edmund Dawson was in a recliner, sipping a Coca Cola.

Jacques cleared his throat.

‘Sir, the two detectives from the Government Information Bureau have arrived.’

Mr Dawson turned around.

‘Send them to the double seater,’ said Edmund.

They were motioned to a double seater.

Mr Dawson turned off the TV.

'Right, now, you've probably had many robbery cases, in your day, but this isn't just a twenty dollar fake pearl necklace, this is almost \$12,000,000 dollars of goods, jewellery and money. And, I've got some bad news, His Excellence Baron Faisal Murdi, is coming for a visit next week. And he told me to guard those jewels with my life. He'll blow his top.'

They were told that they should search the gardens, the stables, and the pool, the basketball shooting ring, the chef's kitchen, the cloakroom, the sauna, main formal dining room, and the mini-gymnasium.

They headed towards the mini-gymnasium first, and they began to interrogate the trainer, Sophie Trigg.

'I was here at the time of the robbery, giving a gym class to Gwendolyn, the upstairs maid,' said Sophie. 'I suspect either the gardener, or the chef's helper, or maybe even the chef himself. All three have been strangely quiet lately. And they're all loud most of the time.'

The two detectives acknowledged the trainer politely, they headed for the gardens. No-one was there.

'Hey,' yelled someone.

'Yikes!' said Charlie. At that exact moment, a boy of twelve years old ran from around the hedge. But he had an extra feature, an eye patch, which made him look like a pirate.

'Can you please take that eye patch off,' said Derek.

'Certainly,' said the boy in an Australian accent. He continued: 'If you don't mind seeing huge red swelling, and a freaky looking eyeball that doesn't do anything, then, here.'

'Ugh,' said Charlie, as the boy took off his eye patch, to reveal a swollen eye with red everywhere, and an eyeball that looked like out of a ghost story.

'All right, I'll put it back on,' said the boy.

He took a deep breath, and introduced himself: 'Chuck Hemingway's my name,

I'm the gardener's son, he's been off one week'. He paused again, before continuing again: 'Ay, did you 'ear 'bout Mr Dawson's robb'ry? He's might mad, I can tell ya! Ya should o' seen 'im yesterday, rampagin' 'bout the place like a croc, and yelling at the servant staff to check in ev'ry nook 'n' cranny! Geez, I'll bet you would've been glad that ya didn't see 'im yesterday! Say, what're your names?'

'Detective Charlie Wyong, and Detective Derek Simpson, GIB,' said Charlie displaying his ID with the flashing golden badge.

'GIB, say isn't that that secret organisation bureau the chef's helper was say'n' 'bout yesterday? You've done some good stuff! Like apprehending that Hamas dude who was working with that terrorist group that was breeding in Yemen, what's the name now? Al Qaeda isn't it? Yeah, that's right, the guys who were responsible for the 9/11?'

Charlie looked at Derek. They nodded. All this was classified information. The chef's assistant needed a check-up.

'See you later, Chuck, we've got some more scooting to do,' said Derek.

They headed for the kitchen, and found some butter on the floor. They checked the cupboard, and they found a diamond ring, which was obviously a priceless one! It was covered with butter! They saw Chuck in the garden whistling.

They saw a note:

***Chef, I've left with the goods, I'll sell them, and I'll pay the rent share.***

**THOMAS TONEY HAWLEY**

They turned their heads, and saw, in the private river, a kayak, with someone in a balaclava on it. They hopped into their sports car, and overtook the kayak.

'Right,' said Charlie Wyong. 'Thomas Hawley, chef's helper I presume?'

'Yes,' said the man shaking. He took off his balaclava. The detectives searched his backpack and found a cheque for fifteen million dollars.

'I trust that this is the money you got from selling Mr Dawson's articles. Well, tell your story.'

'Er, Mr Dawson. My rent is expiring, I'm losing money!' said Hawley.

Wyong and Simpson told the press of their story.

The Commander-in-Chief of GIB congratulated them, and said that they'd won their token to go to Boot Camp.

Commander-in-Chief Wye was very pleased with Derek and Charlie's effort in recovering the money and jewels, and called them over the videophone:

'Mr Edmund Dawson, personally recommended you for Boot Camp!'

This remark, of course, made the Duo very pleased, they both knew that only top spies and members of the Government Information Bureau were selected to go to Boot Camp.

The Commander-in-Chief continued:

'Pack your kit bags immediately, for you will be given an escort through the GIB Underground to Boot Camp in two hours!'

The Commander ended the call with a 'best regards' for Boot Camp.

The Duo packed their kit bags and two hours later they were soaring through the GIB Underground Tunnel Network at top speed headed for the elite training facility.

Good luck Detective Duo, I hope you enjoy Boot Camp, and will have more exciting cases to solve during your Detective Days!

**By Sasha Slater**

*Year 6, The Essington School*

**NIGHTCLIFF – ACT**

**Teacher:**

*Mrs Kia Fletcher*



# THE GLOBAL VISION CONCERT

The day of the long awaited Global Vision Concert had finally arrived. The back stage area at the Pakenham Cultural Centre was a busy hive of activity as various props were moved around and weary technicians conducted last minute check-ups. In the waiting room the atmosphere was buzzing with excitement. The younger children who were at the Pakenham Cultural Centre for their very first time were jumping around like Mexican Jumping Beans and on the way to the changing rooms I overheard various snippets of their conversations. "I'm going to try and find my mother in the audience" one child said. "I just can't wait, it's going to be so cool" said another.

Finally the announcement came for our performance to begin and the whole class trooped along the dark passageway and into the side wings of the stage. I had just watched the performance before ours and I felt like I was in a dream and everything was a little hazy. I could barely contain my excitement. Suddenly the lights dimmed and we were plunged into near darkness.

All around me I could hear whispers, the excited whispers of my friends, the hushed whispers of the audience from behind the stage curtain and the frantic whispers of teachers ordering us into position. Suddenly the curtain opened with a swoosh and a low gentle rhythm sounded from the speakers. What caught

my attention the most was the bright light which came flooding down from above in a brilliant shining wave that temporarily blinded me. As my eyes slowly adjusted back to normal again, the performance with the rest of my class which was a South African dance, started. As I was dancing, I tried to seek out where my father was in the audience. I spotted him on the far left hand side of the Centre near the front row. I recognised that familiar red flickering light which was coming from his video camera. His proud face beamed up at me from a sea of unfamiliar figures.

Then all too soon the show ended and it was time to leave. Desperately I started searching for my father in the foyer of the Pakenham Cultural Centre and eventually I found him standing beside the front entrance. He began to congratulate me on my wonderful performance but my mind was on other things. It was a pity that the concert had finished so quickly because I had thoroughly enjoyed performing. On the way home, I realised that it didn't really matter because I was already looking forward to next year's concert.

By **Matthew Harper-Gomm**

Year 6

Brentwood Park Primary School

BERWICK – VIC.

Teacher: Mrs Trish Shaw

## I like the City

I like the city,  
The rush of the cars, the chime of the clock,  
The rumble of the boats anchored in the dock,  
The racing of footsteps, the snickering of the millionaire,  
The roar of planes flying high up in the air,  
The rabble of parliament, the cries from fighting,

The joys from the warm incandescent lighting,  
The silence of the statues, the excitement of people as they meet,  
The squeals of the kids playing joyfully in the street,  
From day to night the city is alive,  
With many downfalls and joys,  
I like the city.

By **Brian Gardiner**

Year 10

Eynesbury Senior College

ADELAIDE – SA

# Ambassadors



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

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

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

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



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

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

**Meredith Costain** lives in Melbourne with a menagerie of pets: five chooks, a cat, a kelpie and a red heeler, which often feature in her stories. Her work ranges from picture books through to popular fiction and non-fiction for older readers, and she is the literary editor of national children's magazines *Challenge*, *Explore* and *Comet*. Meredith's books include the series *A Year in Girl Hell*, *Dog Squad*, *Bed Tails* and *Musical Harriet*, which was adapted for television by the ABC. Her picture book *Doodledum Dancing*, illustrated by Pamela Allen, was an Honour Book in the 2007 Children's Book Council of Australia awards.

Meredith regularly presents writing workshops for kids and adults in libraries and schools, and enjoys helping writers create stories based on their own experiences. To find out more about her books, pets and early writing years, visit [www.meredithcostain.com](http://www.meredithcostain.com). ☛



☛ **Jeni Mawter** (J.A. Mawter) is the best-selling children's author of the hilarious 'So' series: *So Gross!*, *So Feral!*, *So Sick!*, *So Festy!*, *So Grotty!* and *So Stinky!* (HarperCollins) as well as the Freewheelers adventure series: *Unleashed!*, *Launched!* and *Extreme!* (HarperCollins). Jeni's picture book *There's a Sun Fairy in Our Garden* was based on her family life with her three children. She has also published fiction, non-fiction, poetry and verse narrative for the education market.

Jeni's enthusiasm for words and books is infectious. She inspires both children and adults. With a Master of Arts in Children's Literature Jeni has taught creative writing at Macquarie University, the NSW Writer's Centre and the Sydney Writers Centre. She presents at numerous other schools, conferences and festivals and is a speaker for the Lateral Learning, Show & Tell and Speaker's Ink speaker's agencies.

If you'd like to find about Jeni's books or to get some hot writing tips please visit [www.jenimawter.com](http://www.jenimawter.com)

## Thinking About Summer

**T**HERE I was sitting there one Sunday afternoon, thinking of what I did this summer. All the memories rush through my head, building sand castles with my cousin, and water skiing. I wondered how long I will have to wait until I had a summer as much fun as that!

By **Ariana Devereux**

Year 6, St. Cecilia's Primary School

GLEN IRIS – VIC.

Teacher: Mrs. Phillips



## THE CLIMB

**T**HERE I was climbing the biggest mountain on earth. It has been almost two days and I am soon to reach my resting point. It had taken me longer than I thought, but as I reached my mark my foot trembled and I slipped falling into what was a nightmare.

By **Serena Salanitri**

Year 6

St. Cecilia's Primary School

GLEN IRIS – VIC.



**M**olly and Milly were inside their secret hideout. It was cold and the eight year olds were having a cup of hot chocolate. They had been friends since pre-primary. Just then Molly's Mum came. "Oh Mum!" said Molly. "Did you have to find out where our hideout was?" Mum ignored her. "Some visitors have come to see you both", she said. "OK, but I really wonder who it could be", said Milly. They all went to Molly's dad's study where the visitors were waiting.

"This is Robert and this is Tom", said Molly's Mum, pointing to each of the visitors. "Hello" said Molly. "Hi" said Milly. Molly's mum went out of the room. Robert started talking: "We are here because we need your help. We were going to see our friend who lives in Morton Bay. His name is Carmelo. He's really rich and has a huge house, as big as a mansion. When we neared the house we remembered that he had gone to America for some business. We decided to look at the house and then go home. As we neared the gate, we saw that it was open!! So we backed off because we knew that he would never leave his gate open. As we did that we looked at the top window and saw a black shadow! "We heard ghost sounds too" said Tom. "OK" said Milly, confused. "I don't get it". "The house is near the Floreat beach" said Tom. "Does that help?" "Of course it doesn't, just adds to the mystery", said Molly. They chatted a little longer and then the visitors left.

Then Milly turned to Molly and said: "Tomorrow 4pm, please come to my house". "Why?" asked Molly. "We have to find a new hideout!"

The next day Molly came to Milly's house. They found a new hideout. It was on a tree, behind Milly's house. Milly and Molly climbed up the tree and sat on a branch each. Milly found a big hole in the tree and decided to put their things inside. They decided to have a look at Carmelo's house and so they formed a plan.

So the next day they went to Floreat Beach. Molly purposely forgot her goggles and Milly purposely forgot her towel, as they wanted to go to the haunted house. Their mums didn't approve of them snooping around so they had decided to go there in secret.

As their mums went to get the things that they forgot from the car, the girls raced ahead to look at the so called haunted house.

They went near the haunted house and at once heard a noise: Oooooooooooooohhh-hhhhhhhhhhh!!!! The girls then hesitated going inside but then saw a black shadow and thought to themselves "Ghosts don't cast shadows! But ghosts aren't real anyway". They went inside the house. It was in a big mess. Just then they heard a man's voice: "Can't we go to another place? I am bored with this house".

What are they talking about, wondered Molly and Milly. Suddenly they heard the ghost sound again. Oooooooooooooohhh-hhhhhhhhhhh!!!! Milly had had enough and fled right out of the house, with Molly following her. Just then their mums came and they all went to the beach. They had fun there.

## The Haunted



When they got home, Milly asked Molly and her mum if she could come home for a sleepover. Milly smiled a secret smile at Molly. It was all part of their plan. Of course Molly's mum agreed. She always did.

That night, after dinner, the girls asked Milly's mum if they could go to bed early, and Milly's mum got suspicious, but she let them go. Milly and Molly got themselves ready for the big night. They got their torches ready and they wore dark clothes. Then they each got a bar of chocolate in case they were hungry. The last thing that they did was checked that their batteries weren't flat in the torches. Then they waited till nine o'clock to go.

At nine o'clock, Molly and Milly crept quietly out of their bedroom window. They wore rubber soled

shoes so they couldn't make any noise with their feet. Then they crept to the haunted house.

As expected the door of the haunted house was open. They crept quietly inside and hid under the table. They couldn't make out any noise so they crept quietly out of the table. Then they went up the stairs. Suddenly Milly's torch fell. Molly quickly hid back under the table, but Milly was too late. Two shadowy figures grabbed her and without a word, they locked her inside the store room. "Trouble, these nuisances", grumbled one of the figures. When the figures left the room, Molly quickly ran to get the police and the parents.

Poor Milly had to wait a little while till the police came. Then she heard their siren, "Wee Waa, Wee Waa....." The figures heard it too and rushed down to escape but they couldn't. Then the police unlocked Milly from the room and returned her to her parents. When they did that she got a very bad scolding and so did Molly.

The next day, the police explained: "The two were hardened criminals. When they heard that Carmelo had gone to America, they pretended that that house was haunted because they were going to rob it. "What about the ghost noises" asked Milly. "That was just the robbers' pet owl who was making the noises" said the police. "Well done", said the police. They gave them a reward of \$5000. The girls were very happy.

A few days later, Carmelo arrived back from America. All the stuff that the robbers had stolen was put back in his house. The girls got a letter that week. It was from Carmelo!!! It said "To the two detectives, By Carmelo", and inside were two circus tickets. The girls enjoyed the show and the dads even made a new treehouse with the money for their hideout.

*By Megha Sheth*

*Year 3*

*St John's School*

*SCARBOROUGH – WA*

*Teacher: Ms Madden*

# House



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**H**er head is spinning as she stares down into the murky ocean, her eyes reflecting its icy depths. She feels her heart pounding weak and tired, shadows of an unwelcome past seeping through the cracks he left there. As she blinks, she feels salty tears escaping, rolling down her ghostly cheeks and down until they reach the waves, crashing against the cliff she stands on.

Her bare feet are penetrated by sharp rocks as she walks further and further towards the edge. Her head is screaming to stop, but it comes out no more than a whisper in comparison to the pounding of her heavy heart, yearning to stop the pain.

Her gaze shifts from the ocean to her shaking palms. Placed on one of them is a ruby heart, looking sweet against her pale hands.

She thinks back to when he gave this to her. When he spoke the words that made her heart warm and tied to his forever. "I love you." What had once filled her with a rush of love and safety now twisted

her expression into one of hatred and disgust. How had her heart ignored the obvious lie in his eyes for words that meant nothing and had led to nothing, nothing but pain.

She shook herself from her memories and her eyes refused to let out more tears. They simply gazed at her possible future in the dangerous water.

She couldn't control her senses. The sensation of the icy dark water on her skin, slowing down time along with the beat of her heart, rolled around in her head. Just the idea made her skin prickle with goosebumps. She could not be sure if they were from fear or satisfaction.

She glanced up at the grey sky that leaked raindrops. She could feel them landing on her blonde eyelashes and dry, lavender-shaded lips. They soothed her. It was as if the sky was crying with her, or for her. They left beads of water threaded through her tangled, auburn hair. The subtle light from the sun hiding behind the clouds made them shine.

As if someone had called her name, her deep hazel eyes dragged themselves back towards her hand. She stared at the heart on her right palm. Her eyes glazed over with tears that would never fall. She continued to stare until finally she sighed sadly.

A bittersweet smile could be felt lightly dragging at the edges of her mouth. She swallowed and took a deep breath. Finally her right hand tipped itself over and the ruby heart slid off, falling, falling, falling until it eventually hit the surface of the water with no more than a little splash. It then disappeared into the cold, cruel sea.

Suddenly her knees buckled and she fell to the ground, like letting go had taken every last bit of her energy. She looked up and saw the sun creeping past the clouds and out in the open. Because of this, she grinned like a small child and knew it would be OK.

**By Isobel Benn Vertigan**

Year 8

Springwood High School

SPRINGWOOD – NSW

# *Saltwater & Ruby Hearts*

## By J.E. Fison, author of the new Hazard River series

**Love them or hate them, sharks are in trouble. It sounds unbelievable but 100 million sharks are killed each year across the world, according to experts. That's over 270,000 each day. Many of them are killed just for their fins. The fins go into shark fin soup, a delicacy in Asia. They are also used in traditional medicine.**

The practice of shark finning, cutting off the shark's fins and throwing the body back into the sea, while the shark is still alive, (which is banned in Australia) is pushing some species of sharks to the verge of extinction. It is also incredibly cruel. Sharks can take days to die on the bottom of the ocean. They eventually drown because they can't get water through their gills to breathe. Others starve to death or are eaten piece by piece by other fish.

This terrible practice was the inspiration for a new series of children's adventure stories called Hazard River. In the first book of the series, *Shark Frenzy!*, a group of friends finds a dead shark washed up on the bank of Hazard River. It has no fins. When another dead shark washes up on the beach, the kids decide to investigate. Their mission to find out what is killing the sharks takes them out of the relative safety of the river and into the open sea in an inflatable dinghy. Jack, Ben, Lachlan and Mimi get into a whole lot of trouble finding out the truth about the sharks.

There is plenty of fun and action in the Hazard River series but each story has a serious side. The children come up against developers, smugglers and rogue fishermen as they try to save the wildlife around Hazard River. Two circus tigers are the centre of the action in *Tiger Terror!*. As most people know, these magnificent big cats are almost extinct. One hundred years ago more than 100,000 tigers roamed Asia. Now experts think there may be as few as 3,200 wild tigers left. Three subspecies of tigers have become extinct. The rest live in isolated populations.

Poachers kill tigers to sell their skin and body parts for traditional medicine. Tigers are also threatened by the destruction of their habitat. As forests are bulldozed to make way for agriculture,

roads and houses, tigers lose their habitat. They have nowhere to hunt and nowhere to hide when poachers come looking for them. Habitat destruction is a huge threat to many animals. In Australia, it threatens a long list of mammals, reptiles and birds. According to the Department of the Environment, Australia is home to between 600,000 and 700,000 species of animals. Many are found nowhere else in the world.

About 84 per cent of plants, 83 per cent of mammals, and 45 per cent of birds are only found in Australia, according to their website. That means that if many of those animals become extinct in Australia, they are lost from the world forever. Over the last two hundred years at least 50 species of birds, frogs and mammals have become extinct in Australia. The Tasmanian Tiger is the most famous of them. The list also includes the Desert Bandicoot, the Crescent Nail-tail Wallaby and the Lesser Bilby. We will never see any of those animals again. More than 400 other animals are listed by the government as endangered or vulnerable, which means they could die out unless their habitats are protected. Australia's most iconic and one of its cutest mammals, the koala, is not on the endangered list, but conservationists are getting very concerned about it. Numbers of koalas have dropped dramatically in the past 100 years. It's thought that up to 3 million were shot for their fur in the late 1800s and early 1900s in Australia.

Now habitat destruction is the main problem for koalas. As land is cleared for housing, roads and industry, koalas are isolated in small populations. Those that live near housing can be killed by dogs, run over by cars and have even drowned in backyard swimming pools. Bushfires are also a big threat to koalas. Koalas become trapped at the top of trees and are often burned. The ones that do survive can starve to death because they have no food. Between 40,000 and 100,000 koalas are left in Australia.

Everyone loves the koala and we would all hate to see them disappear from Australia, but should we really care if the odd snail slips off forever, or another species of shark meets a nasty end? The answer is yes. And it's all about biodiversity. Biodiversity is the

# WHERE THE WILD

variety of all life forms on earth – the different plants, animals and micro-organisms and the ecosystems that they're a part of. If one part of the system is wiped out, the whole system is affected.

2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity, so there has never been a better time to find out about this important subject. And according to conservationists there has never been a more urgent time to act. Ninety percent of sharks and big fish have already disappeared from our oceans.

"Sharks are crucial to the ecological resilience of the ocean, especially in the light of rapid human-driven climate change. Without sharks and many other ecologically important species, ecosystems become fragile and the risk goes up that climate change will finally clobber them for once and for all. We must not let that happen", Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, Deputy Director of ARC Centre for Excellence in Coral Reef Studies says.

The time to act is now.

Find out more at: <http://www.worldwildlife.org>

<http://www.amcs.org.au>

<http://www.australiazoo.com.au>

<http://www.environment.gov.au>



# THINGS AREN'T

**REQUIRE** only three components to survive: oxygen, heat and fuel. What am I?

*"Fire, fire", I hear them yell.*

*"Not a bad guess", I think. Here's another clue: I am a chemical reaction. I burn when oxygen in the air combines with flammable vapours released by the fuel. Again, I ask, what am I?*

*"Fire! Get the hose Mark, turn on the sprinklers, Jen", yells a fat man flapping about in thongs and an oversized black AC/DC T-shirt.*

*"Correct", I thought and raced towards the house, looking for my evening entertainment, perhaps even a light snack.*

When Mark reached the shed he clambered up the rickety steps and pushed the old door open revealing the dusty and cobweb lined interior of the neglected outlying building. It had been several years since anyone had ventured inside the shed and he was sure it was infested with many different types of snakes and spiders. The perished fire hose was hung up on a hook on the opposite wall and he crossed the moth eaten carpet to reach it.

There had been quite a few fires in the area over the past couple of years but none of them had ever been as big as this or had ventured so close. Mark fearfully estimated the fire was only around six hundred metres away and approaching fast.

By now, Mark had the hose coiled around his shoulder and was leaving the shed when the box of protective fire clothing caught his eye, he didn't want to waste any more time but it could save him and the rest of his family's life.

*Now only a couple of hundred metres away from the house and all of my flames were crackling and sparking hungrily. Deciding it was time to send in the ember attack, I put*

*on an especially big huff and sparks and ash flew high into the air.*

*"Ahhh, that'll make my job easier", I thought and chuckled to myself when I heard the people noticing the arrival of my army. The forward scouts range ahead of the main body, spreading spot fires ahead of the fire front. Victory appears inevitable!*

Mark, his sister, Jen and his Mum and Dad, Kerry and Andrew had now donned protective clothing while Jen and Andrew struggled to attach the hose. Mark had been told to go round the house and spray the walls with water, and was beginning to feel more and more scared as the fire edged closer. He couldn't rid his mind of the thought that fire can consume your house, your belongings, your family, and even you. Mark was usually a confident sort of boy and thought of himself as tough, but he now felt helpless. Involuntarily letting out a small sob, he forced himself to concentrate on the task willing himself to grow up. Yesterday, he had thought of himself as invincible, but now he realised he was insignificant when confronted by the all-consuming scale of the fire.

*I was now moving into the final phase of my attack, only fifty metres from dinner. Surveying the path in front of me for fuel, I was delighted to see trees and shrubs all the way up to the house. As an extra bonus three petrol drums stood under a tin roof shed along with a tractor and an old rusted Ute. Checking that a plentiful supply of three components of fire, oxygen, heat and fuel was important to its ongoing success. I had no need to worry, everything was going to be fine.*

The four scared people sat huddled in the bathroom as they looked out at the wall of flames almost at their front yard. Mark had finished spraying the walls and Kerry had taped all the windows up to prevent them from caving in. Jen and Andrew had finally managed to get the hose attached and Andrew had only just come back

inside from fighting the fire. All the family could do now was to wait until the fire had passed and hope they had done enough to protect their home.

*After devouring the front yard I was in a tricky situation. The people had done a pretty good job of defending their home. I cautiously approached the house but felt a stinging pain coming from above, reeling backwards I looked upwards and hissed in agony. They had turned on the sprinklers, which made the house very hard to penetrate. I was determined not to give up: still hungry, I had become obsessed. My slowing flames were beginning to run out of fuel and I decided to make a final dash towards the house. It was now or never.*

In under ten minutes the flames seemed to have died down and were being thwarted by our sprinkler system. The flames seemed to have just gone around the house and only a few spot fires remained outside.

Once Andrew had said it was safe Mark ran outside to get the hose to extinguish the last of the flames.

*I panicked when I saw a young boy coming out of the house and picking up the hose. How could it have come to this? Ten minutes ago victory had seemed inevitable, but now the chances of survival looked slim. When I think about it now, the humans had outsmarted me, I should have known the sprinklers were too hard to conquer.*

*The boy approached me with a relieved expression on his face but he also had a triumphant grin from ear to ear. I did my best to crackle and hiss to scare him off, but to no avail. As if in slow motion, he turned the nozzle and pointed it toward me. Letting out a final hiss of despair, sinking into the ground leaving nothing but smoldering embers. I will return, I am fire.*

**By Angus Paterson**

Year 9, Age 14

The Scots School Albury  
ALBURY – NSW

**I am Fire**

# I Believe

I believe things happen for a reason  
Through each day and each night  
I believe life can go up and down  
And sometimes be out of sight

I believe everyone should be happy  
But everyone's really not  
I believe live each minute like a day  
But sometimes it's as hard as a pot

I believe people that are everything  
Seem to always disappear  
I believe that person was like a sister  
That seems like now will never ever be near

I believe sometimes you have to give up  
On searching and searching for things  
I believe some things will never ever leave your heart  
And just keep shattering and falling apart

I believe that I just can't move on  
I need to see and talk to her  
I believe I can't put things to rest  
Until I get all this off my chest

I believe when I get close to someone  
For me they just fade away  
I believe I will always care for her  
And respect every single word she would ever say

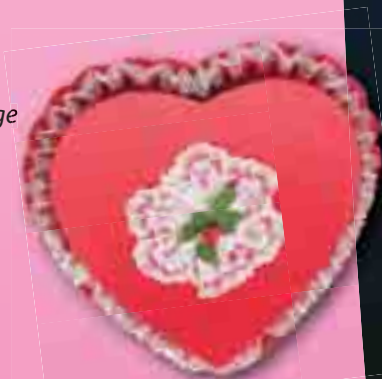
I believe you could never find someone,  
Someone as special as her  
I believe she has a huge beautiful heart  
And things will never ever be like they ever were

I believe you should be proud of yourself  
Of whom you really are  
I believe I could have called her my sister  
Because she never seemed to be really far

I believe crying for her  
Doesn't seem to help things  
I believe until I see Sophie  
My life will start to begin

I believe this just may be life  
May be just a part of it all  
I believe maybe I should search  
For her, for Sophie before my heart breaks and falls.

By **Sissy-Amelia Austin**  
Year 10  
Ballarat and Clarendon College  
BALLARAT – VIC.  
Teacher: Mr McCludidge



Her blank face sheds shimmering tears,  
Unleashes all her hidden fears,  
Her friends don't notice, they don't care,  
After all, she's alone when they should be there,  
She's crying by herself because nobody took time to understand,  
It's like the promises washed away, as they were only written in  
the sand,  
She's walking through the tunnel of despair,  
She's grown to believe nothing in this life is fair,  
Everybody judges you, little do they know,  
That the pain they're causing, you keep from show,  
You lower your head and hide each and every tear,  
You sink deeper into depression until you finally just,  
Disappear.

By **Kiera Tonzing**  
Year 9  
Robinvale Prep-12  
ROBINVALE – VIC.



# DISAPPEAR

## The Sun Shower

To the left, sun. To the right, grey sky. In between, deep, dark clouds.

It is not raining where the sky is grey, but where it meets the sun with the clouds, water hammers down. The sun shines through the droplets and makes them sparkle. The droplets cling to the grass, looking like a thousand scattered diamonds.

The world smells fresh and new. It looks surreal. The rain beating steadily on the roof sounds soothing. Everything is so peaceful.

There is no gushing wind or biting breeze. There is just the sun and the rain.

Everything is bright and vibrant – bursting with colour. Everything is alive and beautiful.

The sun is warm. The rain is cool. Together, side by side, they look like something taken from the pages of a novel.

Soon the rain becomes a gentle sprinkle. Lush, glistening green leaves rustle in the slight breeze that has just picked up.

The sun beats down and the rain softly falls and I just sit and watch, oblivious to everything but the mystical sight before me.

By **Talia Walker**  
Year 10, Cerdon College  
MERRYLANDS – NSW

**T**HEY'D dragged her out of the sea. Hauled up in a fishing net, they had found the most extraordinary girl in the world. Her dark, raven hair reached far past her waist and her golden eyes, with their amber engravings, seemed to glow against her pearly white skin. The fishermen on that stormy coast had heard the stories, tall tales of maidens in the deep, black waters of the channel. Like golden, scaly armour where her legs should have been, was a long sleek fish's tail.

"People will pay good money to see this", the dockmaster said, admiring his 'catch' in a huge glass case brought especially by train on the new rail roads that now stretched across England. "And London is the place to make your fortune! Load her up, we travel tonight and will have her on show by the weekend! A fine way to make a few bob, eh, lads?"

The dock lads laughed, admiring the twisting and panicking creature in their grasp with so lovely a face but such a freak of a body. I was eleven years old, and from the moment her sunset eyes touched mine and held their grip on my soul, I could see something that the men couldn't. She was no animal. She could understand, she could feel and she could despair.

I had never watched something long enough to see it whither. But that was what she did. She had been so strong when we encased her in that glass prison. She had hit the walls with her human hand and splashed great waves of brine with her aquatic tail at the men who tried to provoke her from the other side of the clear walls. The men had laughed at her disorientation, watching her try to figure out where the walls were and why she couldn't swim away.

Within six hours of travel she had settled limp at the bottom of the case, her curtains of hair no longer flowing freely with the ripples, her skin suddenly sallow. Curling up her tail around herself like a cavern of scales, she clutched her hands to her heart and ceased to move, save the rare bubble of air escaping her lips as her chest rose and fell. Crawling across the carriage floor, I pressed a hand up to the glass. I saw, even with her head hung so sorrowfully, the gold coins behind her lashes flickered to life. I tried to smile, then waved with a quivering hand. The majestic tail slowly began to uncurl from her body and began to flutter in the water, up and down, as if waving back at me. As it moved I saw with wide eyes, a chunk of scales peel away from her form. Underneath the metallic tone, was a dead grey colour, clashing with the brilliant shimmering gold.

I shifted as carefully as I could along the floor to the pane of glass closest to her, the left pane where I could see her face better. Her head tilted, showing those discs of sun... but suns that were setting. They were so weak, so defenceless... Like they had no reason to shine left for them. With a gasp I saw a strand of hair disturbed by her movement fall onto her face, now like dull grey rock instead of the glistening blue-black wing it had once been.



A glimmer caught my eye. In her hands was a shining white orb the size of a walnut, a perfect, faultless pearl. Her eyelashes fluttered and she pursed her lips together, turning her face from mine. I had never seen anything so valuable in my life, as a dockmaster's son, but this pearl was so much more than a jewel.

It was her heart.

We had taken her from the sea, and it was killing her.

"She's dying!" I cried out to the carriage ahead. "Father, she's dying!"

The men in the carriage ahead came bounding in when they heard my cries. My father pushed his way to the front, grabbing my shoulders and shaking me back into sense.

"Son, what is happening? Who's dying?"

Across the container floor were the scales she had shed, coating the ground like ashes. She herself had frozen, the very picture of the moment she had left us and her torment. The thick midnight lashes had closed, hiding her eyes once as bright as gold, now no longer weak and suffering.

"She's turned to stone!" someone cried.

"Like part of a reef..." someone else said quietly at the back. "Sirens were said to lure sailors to their deaths on the reefs..."

The pearl cradled in her elegant hands slid from her dead fingers and slowly descended to the floor, then silently landed, slowly perishing into dust.

By **Maddie Gaze**

Year 3

Eynesbury Senior College

ADELAIDE – SA

Teacher: Margaret-Ann Copeland

# Pearl

COMPUTER ART



DRAWING



PHOTOGRAPHY



PAINTING



# 2010

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[www.youngaustrianartawards.org](http://www.youngaustrianartawards.org)

# The Man Who Sat and Sketched the Land

They still call him “the patriot”,  
The man who sat and sketched the land,  
But I know that he loved the entire world,  
Not only rugged bush and white sand.

Whenever I passed, I’d nod my head,  
See the twinkle in his eyes,  
Then I’d settle down beside him and listen  
To stories of boundless skies.

He’d tell of raging battles;  
Of blazing flames and crashing seas;  
Of depression, hope, love and pain;  
Masquerade balls and High Teas.

It seemed that each tale he told  
Related to the modern world.  
For me, an event’s effects  
Suddenly unfurled.

One summer’s day, the old man looked up,  
Sighed heavily at all that had become  
Of the land he so greatly respected  
And commented on “what had yet to be done”.

“Oh”, he cried wretchedly. “I wish they knew  
The importance of everything that lies  
Beneath the earth they stand on,  
Of the rich history, and amazing lives.

“Of all those who have walked before us,  
Who by their passion, intellect and toil,  
Have built this world around us  
So that we could stand here on this soil.”

With that, he heaved another sigh,  
And replaced his old, rugged, worn hat.  
He shivered and trembled gently,  
His tears began to fall, fast and fat.

“Son”, he whispered, “Please remember  
Those who searched for stars,  
Those who fought for our freedom,  
And those who still bear the scars.

“For they created our heritage,  
That which makes us who we are.  
They wove our history of falls and triumphs,  
They travelled near and far.

“So keep in mind those brave people  
Who shaped our world today,  
And those who are still striving  
To improve each new day.

“Likewise, son – now listen up –  
Don’t be afraid to make a good cause clear,  
Because it is the dreamers who challenge everything  
Who are remembered year after year.”

Then he stood and left me there,  
Alone on the white sand.  
They still call him “the patriot”,  
The man who sat and sketched the land.

But I know his true dream,  
What he strived to achieve.  
He wanted all to appreciate the history  
Our ancestors worked to weave.

By **Talia Walker**  
Year 10  
Cerdon College  
MERRYLANDS – NSW

# Eleven Yellow Flowers

**Tuesday 1 September 2009**

Mummy picked me up early from school today. I asked where we were going and she said we were going to visit Daddy! I'm always excited to see Daddy!

The house where Daddy lives now is very, very big. It has lots of windows and a big, colourful garden. Me and Mummy have to walk through the garden to get to the door. Today I picked a daffodil because they're my favourite flower!

When we get inside, we have to go in a lift because Daddy's room is high up in the house. I like the lift because Mummy lets me press the button. When the big doors opened, Mummy had to go up to the desk where the nice ladies are and tell them we were here to visit Daddy. I smiled at the lady called Julie. I like her the best because she lets me eat the jellybeans from the special jar!

Mummy and I walked through another door into Daddy's room. There are a lot of other men in Daddy's room too. They get a bed just like him but I don't go near them because they're scary. Daddy's bed is right at the end of the room, next to the window.

I ran over to him and jumped onto the bed. He smiled and said,

"Hey Jitterbug!"

He said it very quietly though, Mummy says sometimes it hurts him when he speaks.

Mummy and Daddy talked for a long time. I played with my shoe. I pretended it was a car, brrrrmm brrrrmm, around the room, up and down the walls.

When it was time to go I hugged Daddy very tight and gave him my daffodil. He told me to put it in the vase next to his bed. I think he liked his present because his room is very grey.

**Wednesday 23 September 2009**

Mummy picked me up from school early again today. I go to visit Daddy every day now which is very exciting because I get to eat the special jellybeans!

Mummy was very quiet on the way to Daddy's house. She said that he might look a bit different today. I asked if he got a new haircut and Mummy started to cry. I didn't know what to do so I leaned over as far as I could and patted her arm. She stopped and smiled at me so I smiled back and everything was OK then.

She held my hand when we walked along the path and I picked another daffodil. I think they're really pretty!

When we got to Daddy's room I ran over to him, but I stopped because there was a different man asleep in his bed. He had no hair and there were tubes coming out of his nose. I held onto Mummy's leg and asked where Daddy was. She pointed to the man in Daddy's bed. I was very confused.

I walked over to the man very slowly because he looked scary. I looked at his face very closely and he opened his eyes. They were blue like Daddy's eyes. The man smiled and I giggled; it was Daddy after all!

I climbed up onto his bed and put my daffodil into the vase. Daddy said the flowers looked very nice. I'm happy he likes them!

I snuggled into Daddy and he cuddled me for a long time. Mummy sat beside us in the squishy red chair. Daddy fell asleep again because he gets very tired. I laid next to him and listened to the beeps on the machines until it was time to go home.

**Wednesday 14 October 2009**

Nana picked me up from school today because Mummy stayed with Daddy last night. Nana took me for an ice cream on the way! I chose strawberry. I was gooey and Nana laughed because it melted all over my face!

Nana let me stop to pick a daffodil when we got to Daddy's house. She was

shaking when we walked through the door so I held her hand and she stopped.

Julie was behind the desk today! I waved at her and she waved back but didn't come over to say hello. I was a bit upset because I didn't get any jellybeans.

When we walked into Daddy's room, I saw Mummy looking out the window. When she saw us, she ran over and hugged me very tightly. I had to push away because she was squishing me. Mummy's face was wet and her eyes were very red. So were Nana's. Mummy hugged Nana and I turned around to say hello to Daddy.

Daddy wasn't in his bed. Someone had made it with white sheets. He wasn't sitting in the squishy red chair either. I wondered where he was.

I walked along the rows of beds. Maybe he moved to a different bed? But I still couldn't find Daddy. I went back to Daddy's bed. Mummy and Nana were sitting on it. Nana had her arms around Mummy.

I climbed up and sat on Mummy's knee. She was still crying, maybe she couldn't find Daddy either. I remembered I still had my daffodil so I leaned over and put it in the vase with the others. I counted them and there were 11 yellow flowers in the vase!

I lay down on Daddy's bed and rested my head on his pillow until Nana said it was time to go. When we walked to the door, I turned around and saw Mummy looking at the flowers.

"Daddy can see them later" I thought and followed Nana out of the room.

*By Ashleigh Maihi  
Year 11, Castle Hill High School  
CASTLE HILL - NSW*



# THE DAY OF DISASTER

## Chapter 1: Aliens in the Yard

When I woke up this morning I looked out of my window. At first I thought I was still in a dream because there on my lawn was a spaceship. I slowly walked to my bedroom door and opened it. I ran outside and saw the spaceship. I saw some aliens. They caught me and very quickly put me in their spaceship. Then they zoomed off into space. I looked out the window and I also saw aliens in my mum's bedroom. I felt scared. I didn't know what would happen to my mum. The aliens tied me up. It took three hours to get away from the Earth's gravity.

## Chapter 2: On Zoobron

After that, it didn't take that long to get to the aliens' planet, only an hour and a half. I thought to myself, "At home my mum will be looking for me. It is almost time to go to school".

The spaceship stopped and landed on the planet Zoobron. Before I could blink, all the aliens were gone, but they had untied me. I looked around the ship. I didn't touch anything because I was afraid something bad might happen. I tried to open the door but it was locked. It was cold in the dark and quiet spaceship. I was scared.

## Chapter 3: The Robot

I finally tried pressing a button. The spaceship door opened. I quickly pressed it again to close it because I could not breathe. I put a space suit on, pressed the button again and went outside. The very first thing I saw was a dirty, smelly, tall and gross robot. One of its arms had fallen off, he had a half eaten hat and he was very rusty. The aliens must have put it there to scare me if I got out. I looked at the control panel on its back.

I pressed the on button and it started to move. There was a latch on the robot so I went inside it. I started to move my arms and legs. The robot started to move so I pressed a button. I could see through a little screen. I saw other robots so I was blending in.

## Chapter 4: Empty Cave

I walked until I saw three caves. I went into the first cave. I saw six bright green grizzly bears. I ran out as fast as my legs could carry me and into another cave. It was dark. There was a little flashing button. I ran out because I was sure it was a bomb. I went out of the robot and into the last cave. I saw another rocket ship. I went inside it and buckled my seatbelt.

## Chapter 5: Going Home

I zoomed all the way to Earth but I ended up in China, so I set the dial to go to Australia. I went inside my house. My mum ran over to me and gave me a big hug.

"Mum", I said. "What happened to the aliens that were in your bedroom?"

"Well I screamed so loud that all the aliens got scared and ran away. I think they had another spaceship in the back yard."

"Oh", I said with a smile. "Well that's okay, as long as you are all right."

**By Sasha Fontein**

*Year 3, Age 8*

*Mountain Creek State School*

*MOUNTAIN CREEK – QLD.*

*Teacher: Doug Larsen*



# A JOURNEY

"Hey Andy. Where you heading?" said a girl.

"Oh just going for a walk..." Andy said with a sort of smile.

"See Ya!" the girl said while waving.

Past the house, past the garden, past the buildings and...

He stopped. Andy saw feathered ears and a puffed out poochy. At first she was startled, but then he actually picked up the creature. He found out that it was a bunny!

"Hey there! I am gonna name you Redeyes" said Andy as he stared at her red apple eyes.

The boy called Andy stopped.

"Redeyes, did you feel a drop of rain on your fur coat?"

Andy ran. Past the cornfields, past the food shops and into a small narrow land. It was pouring.

"Quick Redeyes, into the box!"

It was dark, so dark that they couldn't even see their own hands.

Andy heard a loud bark and a growl. He looked in a hole which was in the box. Suddenly their shelter was being attacked by mutant stray DOGS!

Out of Andy's warmth the bunny hopped, hopped and hopped into a hole.

"Come on Redeyes" said Andy reaching out his shaking hand. Redeyes clung on!

As soon as Redeyes came out of the hole a cold wind shot by. Redeyes fur was up, up and up like she had been electrocuted.

"We're going home now Redeyes. Straight

home. Nobody ain't stopping us any more."

Past the houses all lit up. Past the Greenland's, past the rocky roads and into a strange park.

"We're home Redeyes! Just under that yellow slide there".

"It's kinda rough on the ground, but no children come at night so it's peaceful."

By **Misari Mehta**

Year 5

Westmead Public School

WESTMEAD – NSW



# The

ONCE upon a time there was a little girl called Rose who had a very special talent. She could bounce on her head. For considerable periods of time. All day in fact. She didn't know anyone else who could do this. And she thought she was rather amazing. But sometimes she felt lonely. It was hard having a special talent and not having anyone to share it with.

One day she was bouncing on her head in the supermarket when she heard someone call out, "Pickled Fish Paste!"

"I beg your pardon?" she said. A pair of purple sneakers came into view. Then a mop of crazy red hair and wild green eyes.

"Yorgy shmorgies!" he shouted.

"You're not making any sense!" she said.

"Great Grandpas!" he shouted.

"You're completely mad!" she said, "Will you be my friend?"

"Of course my love! I will follow you till the end of time!"

"Ew how revolting. You can't be my friend unless you cut out the mushy stuff!"

"E=MC<sup>2</sup>!!!"

"That's much better. What's your name?"

"Pickled Fish Paste!" He shouted, "Nice to meet you!" And then he did a handstand and began to bounce on his finger.

At this point they both got thrown out of the supermarket.

Rose followed Pickles to his house which looked like a scrambled egg. There she met his friend Metro. Metro had a very special talent. He could eat an ice cream and shoot it out of his nose. Rose was extremely impressed.

"There's got to be a way we can show the world our special talents!" she said. "I know! Let's start up a Silly Olympics!"

"Great Gregorians!" shouted Pickles. "What a superlative idea! We can have it in my backyard next Sunday!"



# Silly

"I'll go into training right away!" said Metro, "What kind of events should we have?"

"Well, let's see", said Rose. "How about the longest fart competition?"

"Yeah! And a burp-the-alphabet-competition!" said Pickles.

"How about my death defying triple-somersault-on-a-trampoline-competition?" said Metro.

"And my granny can take out her false teeth and whistle The Moonlight Sonata!" shouted Rose.

"And my Grandpa can pull back all his wrinkles and do a Michael Jackson impersonation!" said Pickles, which of course led to... "WE HAVE TO HAVE A MOONWALK COMPETITION!!!".

"And air guitar!"

"And disco dancing!"

big as a car. Then Sammy Widebottom got his dog to eat a Mars Bar and throw it up again. Evicta-Roo jumped so high no-one saw her for the next three days. And Aunt Augusta jelly-wrestled Mrs Snaggleteeth, who had grown a beard especially for the occasion. But the grand finale was when Pickles, Rose and Metro farted the alphabet while doing triple somersaults on the trampoline and shooting ice cream out their noses. Everyone agreed it was the most interesting day they'd ever had. And Rose, Pickles and Metro became mini-celebrities in their own neighbourhood.

A month later they received a letter from the President of the United States who had heard about the Silly Olympics and thought it was a great idea. He confessed that he had always had a secret desire to be silly but his job prevented him from doing so. He asked the silly trio if they could come to the Oval Office and indulge him in a night of silliness. They agreed.

The President served up garlic snails for entrées, followed by worm pie with warm

the President became the most popular President of all time. As for Rose, Pickles and Metro, they all lived ridiculously ever after.

By **Cosmo Batley Barton**

Year 6, Beaconsfield PS

BEACONSFIELD – WA

Teacher: Ms Butson

# Silly Olympics

"And poke your eye out with a toothpick!" shouted Pickles.

"No, Pickles", said Rose gravely, "that would be incredibly stupid".

So they set a date, made up posters and put out the word that the Inaugural Silly Olympics would be taking place. Rose's mother generously offered to bake spaghetti cookies and Pickles' Dad said he would make his special energy drink from nails, eggshells and concrete. Everyone was terribly excited.

The big day arrived and Mr Popadopolis began the event by blowing a bubble as

cockatoo salad. They all agreed it was disgusting and chucked it at each other instead. The President had built a mini version of Mt Everest in his backyard and they climbed up, then bounced backwards onto the biggest trampoline they had ever seen. And it was hot pink. Then they rolled around on soft cushions, tickled each other mercilessly and laughed and laughed. They all agreed it was the best night ever.

The President said the world needed more people like Metro, Rose and Pickles and decided he would give them money to start up an International Silly Olympics. The Silly Olympics became even more popular than the Serious Olympics, and



# Do You Know This Teacher?

- They're the one who's recognised the child has significant learning difficulties and done something about it.
- They're the one who's opened the door of learning to that special child.
- They're the one who's made the difference.
- Tell us their story.



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**Bright Kids** – *helping children  
with learning difficulties*



# THE RACE

It's a race against myself,  
I'm puffing out of breath,  
I slow down,  
I trip over some smooth pebbles,  
Then I relax to a walking pace,  
I stumble,  
And now I'm only riding the fresh breeze,  
I'm gliding like a dove in the wind  
And falling  
down  
down  
down the waterfall.  
I've changed from a river into a lake.

By **Kylie O'Brien**  
Year 5  
Oxley College  
CHIRNSIDE PARK – VIC.  
Teacher: Sharon Sandison

# I am...

I am the sea  
Running up and down the beaches  
I am the breeze  
Being swept through the sky  
I am the night  
Blacking out the sky  
I am the rain  
Falling down down  
I am the earth  
Controlling the elements  
I am, who I am.

By **Sarah Parker**  
Year 5  
Heany Park Primary School  
ROWVILLE – VIC.  
Teacher: Mrs Marie Baxter

People assume and think they're always right.  
But really they haven't a clue what animals truly like.

Lions don't like raw meat; they'd rather something grilled.  
Sloths are not all lazy. They really are quite skilled.

Cheetahs only run fast to get away from you.  
Cats hate the taste of fish; you don't have a clue.

Dolphins dislike water. It's something they really hate.  
There should be something else to use instead of worms as bait.

Dogs are quite sick of that rubbish you call food,  
Thinking monkeys like bananas is nothing less than rude.

Why is it a camel's job to carry you round all day?  
As well as those poor horses who are not too fond of hay.

Cows don't enjoy being cut and sliced for steak  
Elephants liking peanuts? Oh give us a break!

Why do you tease hyenas about their funny laughs?  
And wear all us animals as boots and coats and scarves?

It really isn't fair; you've got us completely wrong  
You need to think of our feelings; you've hurt them all along.

So before you speak about us in that patronising way  
I'll remind you we'd be more than glad to eat you any day.

By **Courtney Broussard**  
Year 9, Mount Lilydale Mercy College  
LILYDALE – VIC.  
Teacher: Pauline Hosking

# WE REALLY DON'T LIKE IT



# DRAGON'S SHADOW

I OPENED the door and walked into the chamber. I could hear the sounds of the battle raging in the distance, but I didn't think about that. I had a job to do and needed to concentrate. For the tenth time since I entered the tower, I checked to make sure I had my sword. It was still there, safely in its sheath.

I crossed the chamber to where the entrance was. I put both hands on the wall and said the spell that the Elves had taught me. A door appeared and I went through before it faded away again. I was in a dark cavern and completely blinded. I commanded orbs of light in my palms to guide my way. I continued on.

I started to find a small trail of gold coins and knew I was getting close. Still I kept going until I saw light at the end of the tunnel. I let my only light source fade away. I wouldn't need it any more. I pulled my sword out ready before going around the bend.

I came out onto a ledge, about 50 feet above the ground. And there, asleep on a mountain of gold with a snowy layer on top which had come through the open ceiling of the cave, was the end of my quest. Thorn. The giant 80 foot high, fire red, dragon. I climbed down quietly using magic. I was over half way when I heard a noise behind me. I was too busy concentrating to pay too much attention, so I just assumed that it was Thorn moving in his sleep. I was partly right. It was Thorn, and he was moving, but he was no longer asleep. He was right behind me, blowing smoke rings at me to get my attention.

Without even thinking, the first thing I knew I had to do was to put up a shield around myself. But to do that, I had to let go of the cliff and fall the rest of the way without magic. The snow below me would soften my landing, so I did it quickly before I lost my nerve. My sudden falling out of sight must have stunned Thorn for a moment, which was long enough for me to keep my life and put up my shield. I steadied my sword and held it ready. Thorn came down to attack. I dodged him and ran around the mountain of treasure that was more than big enough to conceal me, the snow masking my footsteps. I stayed hidden, waiting. Finally Thorn's head and long neck came around the treasure, searching. I jumped out and caught him by surprise. I got my sword and pulled myself up and onto his head. I held on as he threw his

head around, trying to hurl me to my death, but I was dwarfed by his size and in comparison barely bigger than a large fly; a fly that Thorn dearly wanted to swat.

With my sword, I tried to cut through his head, but his scales were too strong. The only way to defeat him would be to slice under his neck, where his scales were softer and most vulnerable. I grabbed onto Thorn's head and swung down to get a clear shot at his neck. I got my sword ready and dug the blade in deep. Blood spurted from the wound I had made and Thorn roared and thrashed his head around, still making a terrible sound, before falling and crashing into the snow. I had to be careful not to be crushed by his enormous weight.

I climbed back up the cliff exhausted, and made it back outside to the battle unharmed, for there was no danger left. Standing on a ledge overlooking the battle I yelled "Thorn is dead!" for everyone to hear. Instantly, the battle was over. All of the living dark side vanished into thin air, leaving nothing but the King's people and the wounded and deceased behind.

I looked up at the full moon above the battle. The blood seeped deep in the snow below me where the men lay, silent and unmoving. My body flooded with the feelings of triumph and accomplishment. The pain would come later, because for now I was the hero everyone had said I couldn't be. Tonight we would celebrate. But tomorrow will be a new day. For the battle was won, but the darkness not yet defeated.

By **Ashley Marks**

Year 12

Assumption College

KILMORE – VIC.

Teacher Librarian – Anne Fraser

# ANZAC DAY

## To Me

To me,  
It seems to be  
A time when men remember when  
They went to war with Aussie pride.  
Out they were put in the front line,  
Terrible and horrible things they saw.  
Many there just led to a slaughter.  
Families left without fathers and sons.  
All because of horrible guns.  
Someone must have shouted,  
"Attack!"  
And that is why there is  
The ANZAC.

By **Liam Kaleto**

## Anzacs landing at Gallipoli

Anzacs landing at Gallipoli  
Shouting, running, overflowing with fighting spirit.  
Looking left, right, up and down  
Checking the scenery for Turkish troops.  
Climbing, scaling the big tall cliffs.  
Silence.  
Bullets blaring, roaring, raging.  
Soldiers screaming, mourning, climbing quicker.  
Running, shooting through the massive landscape.  
Building, resting playing '2 Up' in the trenches.  
Fighting, fighting, fighting.  
Never-ending battling.  
Silent retreating,  
Stumbling to safety.  
Returning to Australia and New Zealand.  
A great sight to see.

By **Thomas Hoy**

## Bright Red Poppies

Bright red poppies thrown in the blue sky.  
Golden names engraved on the polished  
marble wall.  
The memory of those who fought at war.  
Anzac Day is just one of those days.  
For those who fought at war  
Brave and thoughtful to our country.  
Sorry for those who lost a family member.  
Lest we forget.

By **Liam Mooratoff**

## Lest We Forget

I walk  
He marches  
I watch  
He guards  
I wear pink  
He wears camouflage  
I see clear blue sky  
He sees smoky grey  
I hear silence  
He hears gunshots  
I sleep peacefully  
He doesn't sleep  
I lift my pencil...  
He lifts his gun  
I begin to write  
He begins to shoot  
I run with my friends  
He runs with his comrades  
I am a girl  
He is a soldier  
I will not forget  
He will never forget  
We should not forget  
Lest we forget

By **Lauren Judge**

## To Dearest Mum

To Dearest Mum  
As dawn lay upon us,  
Frightful nerves struck.  
I jumped off the ship  
Feeling the air wasn't friendly.  
Running as fast as I could I approached a hill,  
A rocky dusty path was in front.  
I began hiking up this monstrous hill  
Spying Turks perched on the top  
Wounded people tumbling around me  
Dodging bullets....  
Finally the next battlefield was upon us,  
Trenches were set up as 'The Last Post' trumpeted.  
Dusk had arrived  
That night sleeping was difficult  
Many men had been lost  
Thinking of families kept us all going....  
Thinking of you,

**Alfred Pankhurst**

By **Amy Candrick**

**Year 6T**  
**Curl Curl North Primary School**  
**NORTH CURL CURL – NSW**  
Teacher: **Mai-lin Travers**

# Daemon

**D**awn was approaching fast. The darkness slowly giving way to the light of the sun.

However, the people of this growing town wandered the streets looking for the source of their awoken slumber.

The sounds that caused this had been raging on for hours and drew people near to watch and listen to what was happening.

"Suckers" Daemon yawned as he crouched low in the shadows high above the street. Daemon was a very unusual person, if you could call him that. He didn't. He was trained at the age of two and a half to catch, kill or change spirits that wondered the earth causing trouble. While he was at home, he would watch silently, as TV show hosts on ghost shows were tormented by the horrors that the "supernatural" afflicted

upon them. This was nothing compared to what Daemon saw a month at a time.

"Ah well, better get stuck into it, that image and sound isn't going to hold for very long."

He stood up, brushed his pale blond hair from his green blue eyes and stepped lightly of the tip of the roof. Not making a single sound as he landed and proceeded through the front door.

After entering Daemon closed the door behind him softly and looked around. The house he had entered was bare with only a few couches sitting in front of the television. The front door led straight to the lounge room.

"Where are you, you little sod?"

A smash answered his question.

Daemon raised an eyebrow. "Oh goody, I have to deal with a smasher", Daemon thought to himself, rolling his eyes. This was going to be a pain in the backside.

He swept his gaze around the lounge room and found nothing. Another smash gave away the spirit's location. Daemon grinned, his cocky half grin and whispered "There you are".

He took steady long strides into the kitchen and knelt down within the shadows. The kitchen had the predictable chequered tiled floor and pleasant orange walls. The roof was black.

The spirit, not very smart, and even uglier, was happily standing near a cupboard smashing plates near her feet.

"Deep breaths are all I need at the moment." Daemon could remember his master screaming at him to breathe deep and calm. And shut up.

He moved in a little more and watched his prey.

After ten or so minutes of watching, Daemon finally got irritated by the smashing plates and the happy laughter from the spirit and whistled the high note that his previous master and mentor taught him.

The spirit turned instantly. Its features were ugly beyond comparison and the apparent age it held was 12 to 15. The creature opened its mouth and screamed all of the foulest things its tiny brain could come up with.

"C'mon then, come here little spirit, spirit, spirit" grinned Daemon.

Spirits hate being called little.

The shadow leapt forward. Its target was Daemon, however he was another 5 feet away from where the spirit landed, head first.

Daemon walked over to the thrashing shadow and picked it up and hauled it across his shoulder. All the while rolling his eyes and scowling. What a waste of time.

The spirit however had different feelings about being picked up.

It slunk out of his hands and backed up a few metres, pulling the energy around it into her.



"Well that's new" said Daemon, sighing and preparing for a fight.

The now grinning shadow was almost glowing in power. Everything around it turned very cold and dead looking, even the chairs on the other side of the room looked sick.

Daemon scanned the room and then closed the door which was behind him.

"All right show us what you got" sighed Daemon as he stretched out his arms and legs, not taking his eyes away from his opponent. All he needed to do is say those words that meant the most to him. It was a trick that he learned for himself one day while shooting at cans. All he had to do is say anything that made him feel stronger and faster and it would come true. He would become lighting fast and hold the strength of a god.

"GIVE ME FUEL, GIVE ME FIRE, GIVE ALL THAT I DESIRE!" was what Daemon almost sung as he clicked his fingers.

There was a massive rumble and quake as the ground exploded underneath him and fire consumed him.

The burns on his arms turned into muscle and horns shot out of his head, all the while the pain was unbearable.

This only took seconds, but it seemed like years to Daemon.

The room was misty after the transformation and Daemon stood up, no longer looking anything like a human boy, he was now what he liked to call, the devil himself.

The mist and steam evaporated, which only left the spirit and Daemon standing facing each other.

"Where has the little boy gone, brother!?" screamed the spirit.

"First of all, I'm not your brother, second of all I am right here and lastly you're the little one" Daemon grinned and brought a flame to life in his palm.

"YOU!!!" was all the spirit could scream before burning into ash and dust. Fireballs were the easy way to kill spirits.

"All right you have had your fun, time to go away" and with a snap of his fingers, the muscle and horns fell off Daemon's skin. He didn't even need to turn into "the devil himself". Daemon couldn't help showing off. Even to his opponent. He smiled slightly then remembered something which turned his smile to a deep frown.

"Great, now I have to do homework" sighed Daemon as he walked towards the back and out the door.

"I would rather fight a hundred trolls then do homework". He pushed on the door and headed back home in the cold of the early morning.

By **Connor Duke**

Year 11, Guildford Grammar School

GUILDFORD – WA

Teacher: Miss Mankowski

## *The Angel of Love*

Many moons ago beneath the light of the stars,  
A child was born into a world of hate,  
He observed the disputes from the clouds of afar,  
And the sorrow the beings did create,  
The child had been christened with a heavenly name,  
The beautiful, passionate Cupid,  
The Gods sent fire, flood and plague,  
All observed by the passionate Cupid,

One day he arose and spoke of his mind,  
"What be of love and care?"  
The gods watched the world from the clouds far behind,  
"Mortals be fools though prosperous and fair"  
The passionate Cupid was both intrigued and concerned,  
His mind commanding reason and instinct,  
Though deep within his heart a fire burned,  
And with hesitation he began to think,

The world was covered by a blackened veil,  
The blood of the oppressed running free,  
Thus the passionate Cupid hoisted his sail,  
And cast his tears into the sea,  
Upon the tears he swore an unbreakable oath,  
His cries ringing toward the above,  
"This be not a hoax and I swear and I quote;  
'I shall become the Angel of Love'".

By **Robert Coburn**

Year 10

Assumption College

KILMORE – VIC.

Teacher: Anne Fraser (Teacher Librarian)

# WHY?

**I** STARE out over the railing as the sun begins to set. Watching as the sky changes colours, from a bright blue to gold, red, then purple, to indigo and then black, reminding me that the world constantly revolves not caring that tiny things are asking it to stop, to stop for just one second so we might be able to save the memory in our minds. To spend more time in that perfect moment.

But the earth never stops moving. Things keep changing.

I feel like I am standing still in the awful moment, watching as my friends start moving on and falling in love, whilst I am left behind, standing here on my own, growing constantly lonelier.

I watch as my friends start pulling away because the moments we spend together are becoming awkward. I am becoming the third wheel.

Sometimes I find myself crying myself to sleep, hoping the next day will be better than the last, hoping someone will be there if I fall. I sing of my loneliness hoping someone will hear my plea out in the night.

But as I pull myself up onto the railing and stand tall watching as each of the stars brighten, I know that day is never going to come.

I lean forward and start to fall.

I feel something catch me around the middle. I scream "Let go – let me fall!"

Someone pulls me back from the edge, back to solid ground. I hit them to make them let me pull away. "I want it to end! I want to be free!" Instead they pull me closer and hold me tight against their chest. It is then I look up and see who has rescued me.

One of my friends has pulled me back. I see tears in their eyes looking down at me, asking Why?

By **Olivia Goss**

Year 10

Mount Lilydale Mercy College

LILYDALE – VIC.

Teacher: Pauline Hosking

## Poetry

Like a bird in the sky  
Like a silent angel's cry  
Like a storm building up  
Like a heart suddenly shut  
Like a tear rolling down  
Like a mask hiding my frown  
Like a sleeping weeping willow  
Like a puddle in my pillow  
Like a blue sky suddenly grey  
Like someone too afraid to say  
Like an envelope always closed  
Like a garden never hosed  
Like a fish so desperate to speak  
Like a tap that never leaks  
Like a jar of feelings building up  
Like an angel just smashing a cup  
Like a clown all hidden away  
Like a cocky with so much to say  
Like a kite that just won't fly  
Like a tree that everyone walks by  
Like a bird that has feathers  
Like a sudden change in the weather  
Like a wave once calm at sea  
Like a hail storm crashing down on me

By **Sissy-Amelia Austin**

Year 10

Ballarat and Clarendon College

BALLARAT – VIC.

Teacher: Mr McClugidge

## The School Bully

**T**HERE I was standing in front of the school bully ready to cause damage when a donut came flying across the playground and went splat on his face. Even though I didn't throw it he was still mad at me but suddenly the bell rang. Thank God I got away untouched.

By **Nicholas Marino**

Year 5

St. Cecilia's

Primary School

GLEN IRIS – VIC.

Teacher: Mr. Bill King



Three things have happened so far in his life that he would never forget. Firstly – meeting his future wife for the first time. Secondly – the birth of his first kid. Thirdly – the moment when his name was read out of the raffle at the Sydney International Boat Show. He couldn't believe it – he had won a brand-new Anglapro Bandit 444 Pro. He wasn't sure it had even been released to the markets yet. He ran up to the podium, and grabbed the keys for his beloved new vessel.

The next day, before the sun had even risen, he attached the boat's trailer to his car, and drove to the docks. It could hardly contain his excitement as the car finally reached the docks and the beloved smell of sea water entered through his open window and filled his nose. There were quite a few other people on the docks, even though it was early. Every fisher knew that the best catch happened in the morning.

An hour later, his new pride and joy was cutting through the waves of the open waters off Sydney. He didn't mind the cold, and the spray that burst over the boat and onto him when he went through a wave just added to the thrill. He pushed the throttle and the boat sped up, the nose pointing high into the air. He had his old rod in the back of the boat and he planned to go fishing when he got to a good spot. Hopefully he could land a blue marlin by the end of the day. He had often seen fishermen return with the huge fish in their boats, and he had always longed to motor into harbour with the huge fish in tow. So strong had his desire been to catch one of the huge fish that he had spent most of his adult life researching the best places and ways to catch them, and today he felt lucky. But the thrill of his new boat was so much that he chose to keep going, rather than stop at the first likely spot of deep water, he kept going.

Eventually however, he managed to turn off the engine. The boat rocked in the waves, but he was used to it and strolled to the back of the boat to get his fishing rod out. He baited up some artificial lures, and threw his line some distance from the boat, into the water. For a while he sat, enjoying the rocking of the waves on his new boat. Then, suddenly, the line was pulled hard, and he jumped out of the deck chair he was sitting in. He grabbed the line and started to pull the catch in. Not a blue marlin, but a much smaller bonito. Nevertheless he was happy. A bonito was the perfect bait for a blue marlin. He reached into his tackle box and pulled out a pair of pliers, which he used to extract the hook from the bonito's mouth. He then put the fish down in the boat, so that he could have two hands free to change the hooks over. He swapped the small hook that he used for the bonito for a larger hook that he was going to use to hopefully catch a blue marlin. Then, without the any trace of pity for the fish, he poked the hook through the top of the bonito's eye. He then threw the fish back into the water, where it swam away until it got to the

end of the line. The man then set out for a long wait, but barely a minute had gone past when the line started to be pulled from the reel with gusto, and the rod nearly fell out of the holder in the boat and into the dark water below. He jumped to his feet and grabbed the rod.

Despite the fact that his lifelong dream had caused him to gather a huge amount of knowledge on blue marlins, he forgot all of it in the thrill of feeling his line grow hard. He tried to reel the marlin in, but the rod – which was never designed for such a strong fish – simply snapped. The broken rod was pulled from his hands into the dark water, following the marlin. All the man received for his failed attempt was a glimpse of the marlin, as it jumped out of the water in what could only be triumph.

The man stared after the marlin for a few seconds, not believing how close he came to catching his prize. He would come back out tomorrow, he thought, with a new rod, and better equipment. Tomorrow he would catch a marlin. The man went back to his controls and turned the key in the ignition. The engine struggled, and died. He tried the key a few more times, but then realised that he had no fuel. When he had won the boat, the people at the Sydney International Boat Show only put a quarter of a tank of fuel in the boat. Now he was stranded out here. His heart sank as he realised the immensity of his situation. He hadn't packed any food, and now his line was broken he couldn't catch anything either. He didn't have any water either, only a few beers. He had left before his wife had woken. She would assume he went a small way out, before turning in and going to the pub. His heart sank even lower when he realised that he had been planning to go to the footy game that afternoon, so his wife probably wouldn't have realised anything was wrong until he hadn't returned until the next day, as he so often stayed at a mate's house after a game – too drunk to drive. The heat of the day was just setting in, and he was suddenly aware of how exposed he was, there being no overhead cover on the boat. He was also suddenly very thirsty. The quick but brutal battle with the marlin had drained him of energy and the realisation of his situation more so. He sat down on the chair on the passengers' side of the boat, his mind blank. After a while he couldn't hold himself up any longer, and he collapsed onto the floor. He lay there for a few seconds, his cheek against the hot floor of the boat, his bare back burning in the sun, before everything went black. And eventually, one by one his other senses joined his eyes in surrendering to the elements, and by the time the sun had died, so had he.

By **Daniel Farrelly**

Year 10

Kenmore State High School  
KENMORE – QLD.

# BLUE MARLIN

# THUNDERSTORM

A sudden gush of wind blew over the street

The sky turned black in less than a minute

Windows rattled as lightning shot down

Leaves blew everywhere leaving only branches to remain

The hail was as big as golf balls and the thunder was as angry as someone shaking the bars of a prison

As the storm passed over, the damage was indescribable.

By **Sarah Parker**

Year 5

Heany Park Primary School

ROWVILLE – VIC.

Teacher: Mrs Marie Baxter

# GREEN

Green is special,

Green is grand,

Green is the colour of our land.

Green is the grass in my yard,

Green is a dress brightly starred.

Green is the frog before the prince,

Green is your hand before you rinse.

Green is my best friend's hair in chlorine,

Green is a colour everyone has seen.

Green is a colour bright and great,

Green is a colour I can't bring myself to hate.

By **Jessica Gillson**

Year 5

Lauriston Girls' School

ARMADALE – VIC.

# My Dragon

One day a dragon burnt down my house.

Dad got his rifle and tried to kill the dragon. The dragon burnt up all the bullets. So my dad got his net-gun and he shot it at the dragon's head. It went over his mouth so he couldn't breathe.

My dad and I wanted to bury the dragon deep in a hole until it was HOT as. My dad said "The dragon will die soon". So we chucked it in the hole which we dug with the help of an excavator.

When we got back to the burnt house I was sad because I really liked my bed there and there was a lot of backyard. So we decided to live in the dragon's house.

When I peeked around the corner of the baby room, I screamed! Dad came running. We saw a baby dragon. So we kept it.

I fetched food for us to eat.

In the meantime, Dad looked after the baby dragon.

By **Aaron Eckermann**

Year 2, Age 7

Wilson Primary School

WILSON – WA

# THE ESCAPED TIGER

**Y**ESTERDAY it was a nice, sunny day, but unfortunately I had to go to school. When I got to school, it was the usual work, work, work. I wish my mum had believed me when I pretended to be sick that morning. I managed to survive the day with the thought in my head that I would go to one of my favourite places, the zoo, straight after school. Immediately after I got home, I changed out of my uniform and headed for the zoo. But, as I walked into the zoo, everybody was running around and screaming. I asked a little boy what was going on.

"A tiger has escaped", answered the little boy in a shaking voice.

Then he started running and screaming again. I was terrified, but I didn't start running and screaming. I managed to stay as calm as possible. I reached for my phone, but as I dialled two zeros and was about to dial the last zero, I heard a low, menacing growl behind me.

Shivering with fright, I slowly turned around and there, growling at me was the tiger! I screamed and ran for my life. I ran

as fast as my little legs could carry me, but no matter how fast I ran, the tiger caught up with me and with one big pounce he reached out with his sharp claws and scratched me on the back.

I had three scratches on my back. It really, really hurt, but I kept on running. Eventually, I made my way back to the zoo. The tiger was still chasing me.

I saw the tiger's cage and I suddenly had an idea.

"If I get to the tiger's cage I could lead him inside and I'll get out of the cage before he does and then I'll lock the door."

When I did all that, my mum, who had got my text message, arrived at the zoo and asked me, "What are you doing and what happened to your back?"

"I was chased by this tiger and I caught it when we got all the way back to here", I answered.

"Well", said mum, "You're a hero. This calls for a celebration".

So that night, mum and I had pizza, and that pepperoni and cheese was so yummy that I could have eaten a lot more.

*By Caitlin Dunbar*

*Year 3, Age 8*

*Mountain Creek State School*

*MOUNTAIN CREEK – QLD.*

*Teacher: Doug Larsen*



# A SOLDIER

Teary eyes, warm hugs and three words,  
"I love you." My dear soldier off to war,  
To the unknown, to a strange land  
A soldier off to war.

A phone call, a letter, some lollies.  
Christmas without him just isn't the same.  
An empty bed, an empty place at the table,  
A soldier away from home.

Forgotten mates, life or death,  
Twenty bullets buzzing past, an IED and a  
rocket.  
Thoughts of home and family.  
A soldier at war.

A shout from the sergeant, "If you die,  
you die fighting proudly".  
A mate shot, a war around him.  
The Snake requests the release of the  
Mongoose.  
A soldier ready to die at war.

Foreign children, a thought of family,  
A future unknown.  
A soldier lost in a war.

The plane lands, a surge of happiness,  
A step through the door, applause and  
shouts of, "DAD!"  
A soldier safe at home.

*By Tyarna Brookes*

*St John's College*

*DARWIN – NT*

*Teacher: Ms. O'Connor*

# Book Reviews

## Hazard River

By J.E. Fison

### SHARK FRENZY

Reviewed by Stuart (11)

Jack, Ben, Lachlan and Mimi discover a dead shark washed up on Hazard River. The shark has no fins. When another shark washes up without fins, the friends decide to investigate. Their attempt to uncover what is killing the sharks leads them to a marine park. They discover fishermen killing endangered grey nurse sharks and taking their fins for shark fin soup in Asia.

The Hazard River crew must stop them at all costs!

*Totally awesome reading. I liked the map at the front of the book. Can't wait for more.*

### SNAKE SURPRISE

Tigers are on the verge of extinction. Everyone knows that. So why does Jack Wilde think he's seen a tiger paw in a medicine shop in Chinatown?

To find out the truth Jack and his friends must become junior spies. But they soon realise that their mission is anything but child's play.

*Another great book for kids who like adventure. Loved the action on every page. I couldn't put it down. More Hazard River books please. For all kids who love playing the hero.*



## Pool

By Justin D'ath

Reviewed by Jason (14)

Something strange has happened to the public swimming pool at New Lourdes, Victoria. The water is no longer level and is rumoured to have curative powers. When sixteen-year-old Wolfgang Mulqueen takes a summer job at the pool, he meets Audrey, a blind girl who claims she's nocturnal.

With the discovery of a butterfly unknown to science, and an unusual request from Audrey's father, Wolfgang finds himself drawn into an eighteen-year-old mystery, the tragic resolution of which will change his life forever.

*This book has mystery from beginning to end. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Not many books keep me interested but this book I can't put down.*

*I like this story and so I give it 5/5 for ages 11+.*





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