

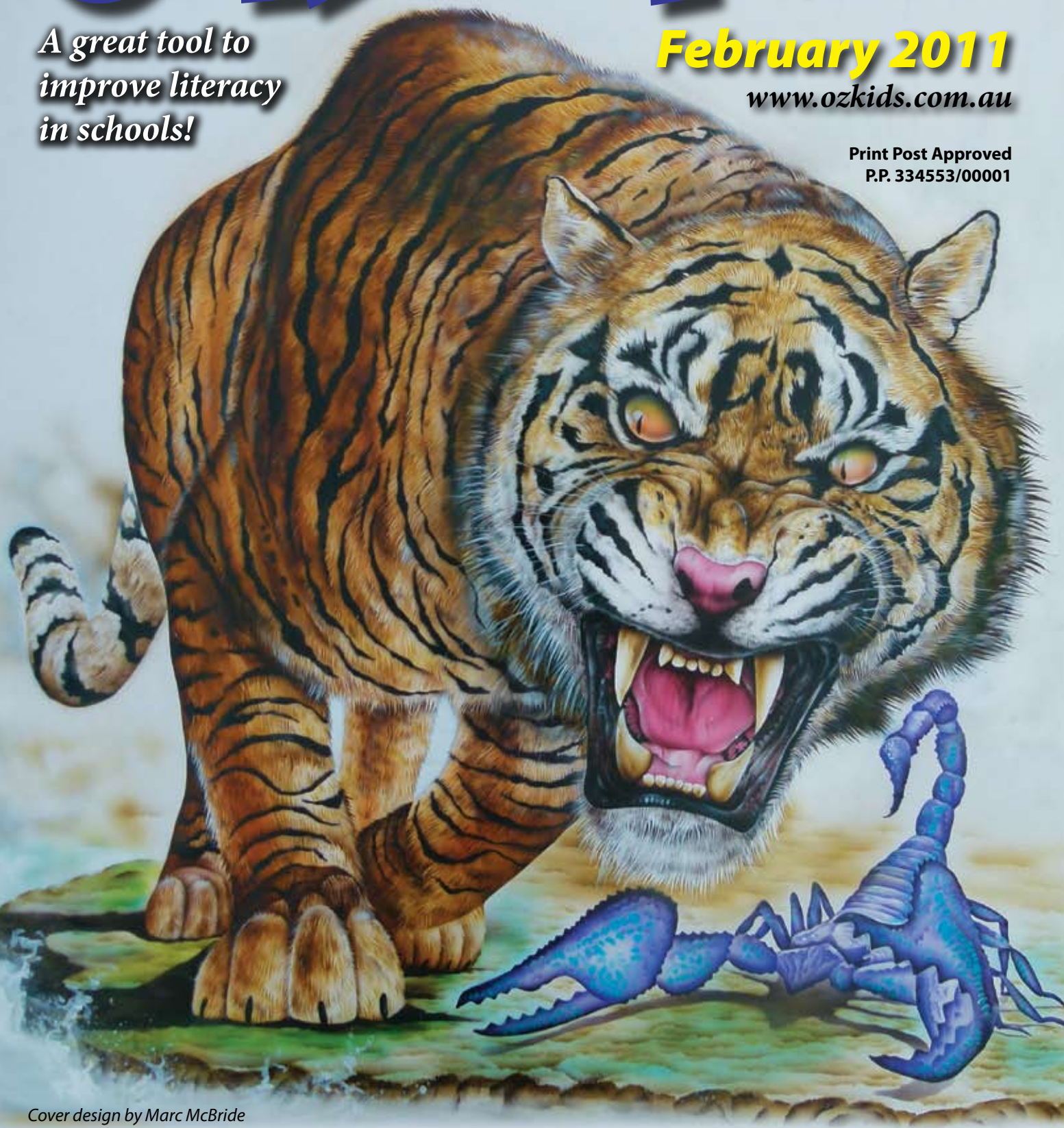
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improve literacy
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February 2011

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**TO STUDENTS IN PRIMARY OR
SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

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COMPUTER ART



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PHOTOGRAPHY



PAINTING



2011

On the Young Australian Art Awards website you can browse the entries from all over Australia, and consider entering artwork yourself. It's free.

All entrants must be no older than 18 years of age or attending either a primary or secondary college. There are four categories: painting, drawing, photography or computer art. To enter, check out our website www.youngatart.com.au and request an entry form, then submit a digital copy of your artwork online. If you do not have access to digital imaging you may send your artwork to ACLB Ltd., P.O. Box 267 Lara, Victoria 3212. Further information available online.

Young Australian ART awards



www.YoungAtArt.com.au

OZ KIDS IN PRINT

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Front cover image
by
Marc McBride

Published by:

Australian Children's Literary Board
(an initiative of the Children's Charity Network)
ABN 58 109 336 245
Phone: (03) 5282 8950 Fax: (03) 5282 8950
170 Forest Road, Lara, Victoria 3212
Postal Address: PO Box 267, Lara, Victoria 3212

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Layout/Pre-press: Desktop Dynamics, Geelong
Website Production: The Media Warehouse
www.mediawarehouse.com.au

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Happy New Year to all! This is how the Editor's Page would normally start.

When I started this Editor's Page, Queensland had just suffered the worst floods in history. Then it was Victoria's turn. But the one positive that came from Victoria's floods was that the mouth of the Murray River has now received water for the first time in a decade, giving fishermen their livelihoods back. A couple of weeks later Queensland yet again was hit by disaster. One of the largest cyclones in Australian history, Yasi was felt all the way down the Central East. While Western Australia missed out on the deluge they were to have the other evil – Fire! Over sixty homes were destroyed.

To all of you who have been affected by these disasters, our thoughts are with you. We think of you while you rebuild your homes and your lives. One of the best ways to deal with hardship is to write about it. You are not alone.

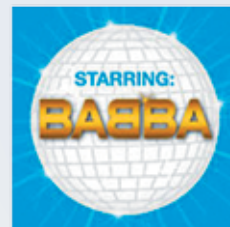
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**KEEP ON WRITING
(TYPING)!**

Carol Dick
Managing Editor

DISCOVERY DAY 2011



Dame Elisabeth Murdoch hosts party for child health

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch AC DBE will open her gardens at Cruden Farm for a family day on Sunday, 6 March 2011, to raise money for the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

It will be a fun filled day of free entertainment and activities, including a special family show from BABBA, plus The Kazoos, Ice Events DJ, Magician Luigi Zucchini and Dancing Queen Parties, Anaconda rock climbing wall, Fizz Kids, Healthy Aussie Kids, Ready Steady Go, SOCCERWISE®, Cool School Australia tent, Bodycare Group massage tent, Bunnings activities tent, Spotlight craft tent, animal farm, pony rides, jumping castles, mini jeeps, stilt walkers, farmers' market and much more.

Families can bring their own picnic or enjoy the sausage sizzle and many treats on offer. Alternatively, you can pre-order gourmet adult and kids picnic hampers from Ed Dixon Food Design, and cheese hampers from Farmgate Cheese.

All proceeds go towards research into common childhood conditions including allergies, cancer, diabetes and premature birth.

Event: Discovery Day 2011

Date/time: Sunday 6 March, 10am–3pm

Location: Cruden Farm, Langwarrin (enter from Cranhaven Road)

Melway reference 103 G6

Tickets: Adults \$45, children free.

Tickets bought at the gate on the day will be \$50 per adult.



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Look for **Children's Charity Network**,
where you will find photos from the previous Awards Nights.



**CHILDREN'S CHARITY NETWORK
SUPPORTS CHARITIES
AND ORGANISATIONS WHO SUPPORT US!**

Dangling up above on strings of red,
Preventing nightmares entering my head.

Dark brown frame with feathers hanging low,
It brings sweet dreams as into sleep I go.

Cicadas chirp and bats fly overhead,
While I am sleeping soundly in my bed.

The clock strikes midnight – twelve chimes on the hour,
But I am under the Dream Catcher's power.

I do not stir, nor from my slumber wake,
No sound, nor sigh my resting mouth will make.

As dawn draws near, the birds begin to sing,
But sleep prevails – consciousness cannot win.

When finally the sun shows its face,
The Dream Catcher loosens its embrace.

When I wake I look above my head,
And see it hanging there on strings of red.

Dream Catcher

By **Hannah Nugent**

Age 13

Fairholme College

TOOWOOMBA – QLD.

TINA was walking home, her boots clattering on the dappled grey cobblestone path. Her footsteps were like claps of thunder searing the frigid silence. The sun streaked the sky in hues of crimson and peach, yet barely any of the warm light caressed this dank musty place cowering under the grandeur and elegance of London.

Tina began to walk faster. The echo of her footsteps seemed louder and more resounding now, as if someone had harnessed the sound and amplified it, sending the noise ricocheting off the looming walls.

Tina frowned. She could sense a presence behind her, watching her with piercing eyes. She turned abruptly, her eyes flickering surreptitiously. The bleak empty streets glared dully back at her enquiring gaze. Fingers of unease began to creep up her spine, like shards of frost embedding suspicion and fear into her mind. Tina quickened her pace, wanting to arrive home as soon as possible, before the stifling shroud of night cloaked this sinister shortcut.

FOOTSTEPS

Tina turned again. A flash of grey vanished just as her mind registered its existence. Tina shivered and broke into a jog. The footsteps were penetrating her mind now, and she could hear stealthy steps pursuing her. Panicking, Tina turned into a crooked alleyway and with her breath rasping and her heart hammering in her chest, she ran. Dilapidated walls closed in around her and she turned, sprinting from the ominous shadow that easily kept up with her. Her mind was wild with terrified fear, and she was focused on one objective – escape.

A breath of cool air tickled her neck and with a shriek she slipped, falling against the hard wall. Tina shrank against the brick trembling. Her hands were bleeding. Her mind was incapable of thinking from the overwhelming terror of the run, and her legs were weak. She was petrified, so scared, that when nothing happened, she began to

cry, sobs racking her body, the crystal tears darkening the jagged ground.

Tina stood, wiping tears away from her face rather shamefully. She had been running from figments of her imagination, shadows from her nightmares. There was nothing there. She took a deep breath, and looked around. Fear began to stroke her spine again. Frantically, Tina peered through the maze of alleyways, but didn't recognise her surroundings. She had been too scared, too desperate to notice her surroundings previously. Now, with nothing to accompany her except her echoing, hollow footsteps, and her flickering shadow, she felt like collapsing onto the harsh grey ground and crying again.

Tina was lost.

By **Grace Wong**

Year 7

Ravenswood School for Girls

GORDON – NSW

Teacher: Sharon Shapiro



Trapped!

Trapped in a waterlogged town,
We couldn't get out!
Roar of engines
Bogged trucks
Muddy roads,
Camping at a truck stop –
nowhere to go
Will we ever get out?
Will the road ever open?
Sloshy mud
Smell of diesel
Anxious,
excited,
frustrated,
tired,
annoyed.
Worried friends,
What could we do but sit
and wait?

The concern of drivers
The playful cheer from kids
At the truck stop we wait...
The loud roar from graders
as they plough up the road
the night stars twinkle
as the morning comes near
trucks roar

as the time goes by.
What could we do but sit
and wait?

Trucks get ready
As the sign starts to change
Hearing the squeal of yabbies
As they cook over the flame
The car gets washed
as we pack up the tent.
The roar of a truck as it goes slowly by.
We start to leave.
As we cross floodway after floodway
the car rumbles on
The road starts to change
from mud
to dirt
to tar.
What could we do but sit
and wait
and drive home?

By **Jack Stewart**

Year 5

Oxley College

CHIRNSIDE PARK – VIC.

Teacher: Sharon Sandison

This poem was sent in November 2010 for this year's submissions.

This poem is based on my family's experiences of being trapped by floods in Innamincka, which is in Outback South Australia.

I'm Sorry Dad

The girl's mum went away,
So she decided to play,
She painted her brothers red and blue,
"I'm sorry Dad,
but they asked me to".

Her dog got a haircut.
She knew it was wrong.
"I'm sorry Dad,
but his hair was too long."

She stole her brother's lollies.
"I'm sorry but I was feeling hungry."

It was her cousin's birthday,
She stole her palace.
"I'm sorry Dad,
I was extremely jealous."

There was water everywhere,
the bath overflowed.
"I'm sorry Dad,
The swimming pool was closed."

For breakfast she took
chocolate off the shelf.
"Dad you slept in,
So I helped myself."

She wouldn't let her Dad
Put her PJs over her head.
"I'm sorry Dad,
I just wasn't ready for bed."

She was feeling bored,
In the middle of the night.
So she decided to have a pillow fight.

"Sorry Dad, if I gave you a fright,
Now I will make everything right."

The little girl's Mum went away.
And this Oh boy! this,
Was bad news for her Dad.

By **Amber Lower**

Year 3, Age 9

WATSONIA – VIC.



The Cursed Tale

D.

Bernborough

THE wind runs through your veins. Use it well! My mother's voice trails through my head as I stand in my stall, waiting.

I am at the Doomben Ten Thousand of 1946. I wait restlessly, pacing and whinnying. Every other horse I have seen today is entered in the race. I search my manger, but it has long been empty. The straw tickles my fetlocks as I stamp. I remember my mother, Bern Maid. My birth place, the small Queensland town of Oakey. My other races. How I, the seventeen hand chestnut, with a huge stride, outran the others.

I hear a voice. My ears prick. Neck arches and tail swishes. My owner must be impressed. I prance on all fours, letting him rub between my eyes. The other horses look on jealously. They have no affection for their trainers and little for their owners. Mine are different. He is proud of me, even if I lose, because he knows I would gallop to the death for him. It is never my fault that I lose. He is also proud because my name is incense for hope among the people, who have survived the Depression. 'Sprung from ruins' he says. Then he leaves, an entourage of colleagues following his every action. I whinny after him, but he waves goodbye and continues the bookies' crowded, jostling stands.

Soon afterwards, I am led out, and my gut hardens with adrenaline. My brightly

coloured jockey – Athol Mulley – leaps up on my back, onto the saddle that I can only feel because of the ten stone and five pounds that I carry for this race. I circle round him who leads me, jittery. I am led to the mounting yard, circled again and announced. There is a cheer as my bronze sheen glides through the gate to my racing barrier. The faster in, the faster out. I have already learned never to argue about this process.

I look ahead. The turf is grass, fresh and springy. The jockey crouches. I tense. And I am off. I settle well back in the field, galloping. Not at my fastest yet. The whip is like a horse-fly sting as some of the other twenty-five horses tear ahead of me. Soon we leave the half-way post in a blur of churned up grass and mud behind us. I push off my hind quarters and streak past the others. Wind screaming in my ears, I pound down the flat, out-pacing the slower horses steadily. Six... four... three... two... one. I lead. I gallop on down the home straight, turf flying underneath my hooves.

I whirl past the post and under the wire, and pull against the now restraining grip that my jockey has on the reins. But I am spent, and my breath thumps in and out of my heaving body. Sweat streaks my flanks and wells from every pore in my hide, as I summon the little energy I have left. I roar my victory and rear up, towering over the steward's horse. Hats are

being thrown in the air, and bookies are looking grim. Then my owner races over the barrier fence, and I drag myself over to him. Rubbing my bridle on his chest, he laughs at my antics and then slaps my rump. I snort and prance, my tail mincing from side to side.

I have won. And not just the race. A glittering feeling of pride too. I am Bernborough, son of Emborough and Bern Maid, winner of the 1946 Doomben Ten Thousand.

By **Ella Paine**

Age 13

Daintree Station
WINTON – QLD.



Bernborough, one of Australia's greatest racehorses.

SNAKE!

"AUGH!" That was Sam's sister, Beth, screaming at the large, hairy spider on her wall.

"Don't squash it! Don't squash it!"

That was Sam, defending the large, hairy spider that she had put on the wall.

Sam was a tom-boy. She loved to run, climb trees and discover new places. Most of all, she loved to scare her sister. Spiders, rats, bugs... you name it, she'd done it.

Sam never got scared. Except for once, when she went to the zoo and saw the snakes. Except she'd never admit that. Never, ever.

One day, Beth came sprinting in to Sam's room, talking quickly.

"Guess what? Mum and Dad bought us some of our very own pets! Coz you know how you wanted a rabbit? Well, you've got one! And guess what I've got? Guess, guess, guess!"

A snake! A SNAKE!"

Sam's heart froze. It couldn't be! No, not a snake! The animal she had feared her whole life! This had to be a dream, it had to be! She could picture the scary eyes and the sharp fangs...

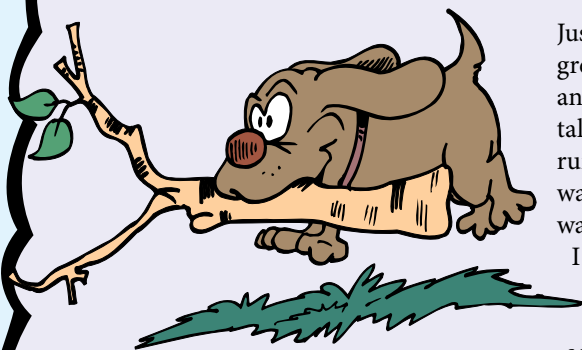
"Come on! They're in the lounge room", continued Beth, as she walked off.

After what seemed like hours, Sam managed to drag herself into the lounge room. Time for the moment of horror. She was too scared to meet the snake, so instead she walked straight towards her Mum, who was holding the rabbit. Sam carefully took it out of her hands.



A FEW days ago I had a vision. No, I had a dream. No, a memory. I can't decide which one it is. I think it was a dream. No, a vision, Oh whatever. Anyway back to the story. Let's just call it a dream.

In my dream I was in the countryside. There was an Indian child with a dog. I heard him yell, "Collect the stick, Buster". Was he talking to the dog or me? I decided



to collect the stick. I was closer to the stick. I went to pick it up. My hand went right through the stick on the ground! I couldn't believe it. I tried to pick the stick up again. The same thing happened. My hand went straight through again. The dog picked up the stick or should I say it scooped up the stick with its mouth. Within thirty seconds the stick was in the dog's mouth then it was in the owner's hand.

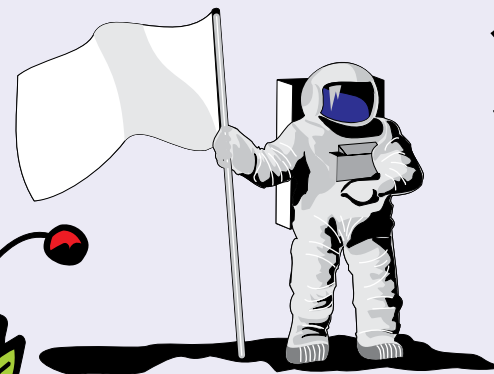
I called out to the Indian boy. He didn't seem to notice me. It was like I was

invisible. There was a car passing. The car looked very familiar. It was my family car! I tried to catch the car. I was fast enough but I went straight through the car. I saw a bed behind the trees. I hoped that I could touch it. I lay on it. It transported me to the moon! I think I was transported back in time! I thought of that because I thought I saw Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin. They landed on the moon on the 20th of July in 1969. I learnt that in History Class.

Just then I thought I saw an alien. It was green with 5 googly red eyes. It had 18 legs and 14 arms. It was huge! It was 6 metres tall! I couldn't believe my eyes. I started to run, but then I realised. I was invisible to him, I was imagining things.

I stopped running. However the alien didn't seem to notice that I'd stopped. I saw a bed on the other side of the moon. I ran as fast as I could to the bed.

Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were doing some experiments and getting some samples of ground from the moon. Neil heard a noise and turned



I didn't see the rest as I fell on the bed. I dreamt of my home. Instantly I was home. I was relieved to see my mum hassling me to wake up. This is my story.

THE END

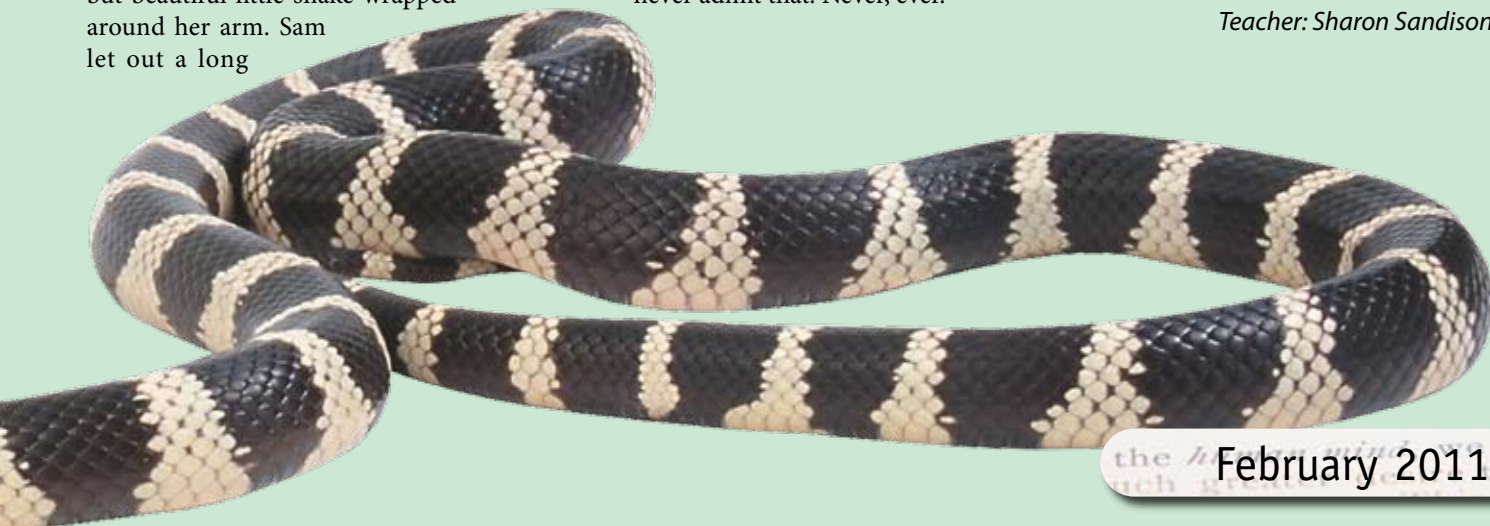
By **Jason Teoh**
Grade 6 – Age 11
& **Kimberley Teoh**
Grade 4 – Age 9
GREENSBOROUGH – VIC.

A Vision, a Dream or a Memory

Slowly, she turned around, her heart pounding and legs quivering. Sure enough, there was her sister, with a not hideous, but beautiful little snake wrapped around her arm. Sam let out a long

sigh of relief. Then she giggled. The snake was absolutely beautiful and she had thought she would be scared of it! But she'd never admit that. Never, ever.

By **Gabrielle Wilson-Gardner**
Year 5
Oxley College
CHIRNSIDE PARK – VIC.
Teacher: Sharon Sandison



CRICKET WARS

OUR family usually runs with the sport that's on TV. For example, if it's footy season all my brothers will want to do is play it nonstop. As I would often disagree to partake in their seemingly pointless contests, I was forced to play cricket when the season came around. What goes around comes around, I guess.

This morning was one of those typical times, when "a couple of balls" became a full on life-or-death experience. It started with my little brother, Sam, when he innocently asked me if I could do a little bowling for him. As we live in the country, there's a big space (maybe twenty metres wide) between our house and the work shed. This space is very originally called "The Flat". We use it for lots of things, for example cricket, motorbike rides, horse rides and so on. It is covered in gravel (perfect for cricket, Sam says).

Anyway, on with the game. After about a minute on the front path, we "happily" moved the game onto the flat. A few milliseconds later, Darcy (my other brother) came out of the house. Enter Sam (again), politely insisting that he (Darcy) be second batsman. He is also a cricket fanatic, so obviously he jumped at the chance to show Sam what he was made of.

As Sam is only seven he is... well... NOT the best bowler. The first few balls were rolling by the time they reached my feet. Darcy then suggested that he bowl, trying to shield his impatience. He is good compared to Sam, but also excels at bowling wide balls. After a few runs had been scored Sam's way, he got out. The ball was a bouncer-roller-thingywhatsit that just went straight through his legs to bang the drum we were using as wickets. He didn't throw the usual spak attack, just

walked down the pitch to swap places with Darcy. Obviously, this was a very un-Sam-like thing to do.

Darcy began his second innings grinning like a Cheshire cat. His smile was soon wiped off when he missed every ball in the first over. But, unforeseen change was just around the corner. He got a few singles, putting me on strike. The first ball was given a hearty ol' reverse swing (I think), landing in the mud from the rain the night before. I was pretty happy, as it gave me a well deserved four runs. Sam wasn't though, because in our family, the bowler is also the fielder.

At this point in time, Ella (my big sister) had arrived to become our unofficial, temporary umpire. If I know Ella, I could practically hear her planning out how many times I would be unfairly dismissed.

Darcy's run receiving tirade just kept going up (and up... and up). Finally he hit a single, letting me go on strike. Soon enough, I got another single and had to let Darcy replace me. Soon enough, one of his deals popped up. He said "I'll get me half century than retire hurt, ay sis?". One half century later, the deal popped up again, this time the offer raised by ten runs, meaning stopping on sixty. That was when I began to dig my heels in. We had a quick exchange of views, then resumed playing the "great" game. Once again, the deal was raised by ten runs. When he got to eighty-five, I really got cross. The cricket match ended with me on twenty-three, Darcy on ninety-three and Sam whinging that he wanted a bat. Ah well, such is life...

By Lydia Paine

*Age 9, Daintree Station
WINTON - QLD.*

Tolerance and Love

WITH my eyes wide open I swoop through the trees burnt in the racist, violent war. One of my white as snow feathers is blackened. It isn't easy being a bird of peace when people don't get along.

I keep going, as this is the day that changed my dove life forever. It started with the horrible war in Afghanistan caused by oppression of part of the population by a religious sect called the Taliban.

Gliding as softly as the wind I heard the faintest cry, I swooped and found a little girl aged 4 with big wounds and broken bones. I sat on her shoulder waiting for her to calm down, chirping sweetly till she responded in a voice as soft as an angel, "My father died, my mother is in jail and my brother is in hospital". She said her name was Sofia and that she couldn't move because of her wounds. "I need help, bird of peace, to stop the fighting. We must find a way", she said.

I answered "Tolerance and Love, Sofia". We must tolerate each other's beliefs and thoughts even when we don't agree with them, only then can we have true world peace.

By Lucy Strauss

Year 5

*Lauriston Girls' School
ARMADALE - VIC.*

Teacher: Celeste McMillan



Bright Kids is about helping parents and teachers empower children with learning difficulties

At Bright Kids, our focus is on those Aussie children who have been left behind for two or more years at school. We understand the hardships faced by these Bright Kids and their well-being is our primary concern. We know that unless their specific educational needs are addressed, they inevitably slip through the cracks and this can affect them for their entire lives. We also know that it doesn't have to be this way. Bright Kids offers hope to those caught up in this all-too-common scenario.

The Inaugural 2010 Bright Kids Teachers Award

The Inaugural 2010 Bright Kids Teachers Award was created for those teachers who recognised a child has significant learning difficulties and did something about it. They made that extra effort and opened the door of learning for that special child. Too often, they are unsung heroes. We don't believe they should be. We congratulate:

**Mr. Matt Green,
St. Bede's College,
Mentone, VIC**

As the Winner of the Inaugural 2010 Bright Kids Teachers Award

Our mission is to reduce the number of children with learning delays

Effective solutions to learning difficulties need to be implemented. We will provide objective, reliable information and connections to valuable educational resources.

We want to help them unlock their unlimited potential

The children we deal with all have normal or above normal intelligence. To that end, we are developing a bank of literacy and numeracy resources to access via the web. We're also establishing a network of parents and teachers who are willing to share their positive experiences, inspiring and empowering other parents and teachers to do the same.

We invite you to visit our website and become a member

If you're the parent or teacher of a child in need of our help, are interested in more information about us, or becoming a Bright Kids member, we invite you to visit our website: www.brightkids.org.au

SNOOPY



The Biggest Dog in the Town

SNOOPY was a little dog. He always dreamed of being a big dog.

His brother Max and his sister Molly always teased him.

He felt sad.

One day Snoopy went off into the bush.

He stayed in the bush for about three months.

When he came back from the bush he met a lizard. Her name was Louisa. She was brown with red spots.

She said "What is your name?"

"My name is Snoopy", I said.

"My name is Louisa", she said.

Five months had gone...

Snoopy wanted to go home.

"Do you want to learn some jokes?", Louisa said.

"OK", he said.

"What is a house called, if it had one hundred doors and six hundred windows?"

"I don't know", he said.

"Two streets", she said.

Oh! he thought that was a great joke even when I got the answer wrong. It's OK to try your best.

After a year he had grown up. He went home. His mum and dad said, "Oh! you have grown so much. You are three years old and your brother and sister are only one year olds and you are bigger than them".

So then Snoopy started to tease them.

He lived happily ever after.

THE END

By **Jessica Mills**

Age 7, Green Point Christian School
GREEN POINT – NSW

Down by the Water

A man is sitting by the water
Feeding the ducks,
Enjoying the sunshine
And the freedom
Of life.
He sits alone
Day after day,
Night after night.

Through the darkness of storms
Through the heat of a summer's day
Through abuse and kindness
Through disgust and general disinterest
He sits
Alone

Years go by and still he sits
Alone
Children grow up,
People die
But he sits forever.
Alone

In his mind he has many a friend
Those who care for him and never offend
Who leave him be
To dream his dreams,
Alone

Finally one day he is not by the water
No one notices,
No one cares
He never returns
To feed the ducks
By the water.

By **Emily Byrnes-Muchow**

Year 9

Melbourne's Rudolf Steiner School
WARRANWOOD – VIC.



All was well.

Snap.

A pair of golden-yellow eyes flashed open, their pupils dilated. Amidst the darkest, murkiest depths of the vast ocean, something stirred. Shifting an ancient tentacle, the creature glanced around, returning to reality after a centuries-long slumber. Yet he was waiting, always waiting, marking his time for an opportunity to arise.

A young girl with bright eyes ran along the seaside, revelling in the soft caress of the golden sand beneath her bare feet. Flying her purple homemade kite high in the air, she laughs, living a carefree and naive life devoid of darkness and stress. Her chestnut brown hair drifted in the gentle ocean breeze, gleaming under the rays of golden sunlight as they reached out to stroke it.

Biding his time, the creature longs for the past, for times long gone by, but a fear of detection had precluded him for so long, from doing what he wanted, no, needed to do. In the past, his carelessness had led humans to occasionally snatch a glance of him, rising out of the water, but he knew better now. Rumours spread like wildfire, and if a picture was taken then all was lost. So the creature remained hidden, concealed under the safe, comforting blanket of water that surrounded him.

Ruffling in the gentle ocean breeze, the frilly lemon sundress perfectly suited the girl with the bright eyes. Tiring from running around, she takes down her kite, and kneels on the beach scrounging in the sand for pretty seashells, meticulously arranging them to form her name. LUCY. Totally engrossed in her work, she was oblivious to what lay behind her in the blue jewel of a sea.

Finally glimpsing his chance, the creature roused from his thoughts and spurred into action. His target: the girl with the bright eyes. His opportunity had arisen, and the time had come at last.

Suddenly, a piercing scream sliced through the tranquil morning air, as a slippery black tentacle whipped out from within the azure sea and coiled itself around the girl's ankle. Struggling in vain, she attempts to run, to escape, but the black coil around her ankle pulls her to the ground. Clawing desperately at the sand, the young girl tries to find something to hold onto, something to detain her from slipping into the great sapphire abyss. But her struggles were fruitless, as the might of the creature overpowered her, and dragged her into the waiting arms of the ocean. Bubbles float to the surface of the water; the girl with the bright eyes is no more.

Contented at last, the monster settled himself down for another long wait, his hunger finally sated.

In the distance, someone looked up after hearing a soft echo of a scream. That someone thought she must be hearing things, and went back to cooking her family's next meal: Spaghetti Bolognese. It was her daughter's favourite dish. She set the steaming plate of pasta on the table, ready for Lucy's return.

All is well.

By **Jennifer Chen**

Year 8

St. George Girls' High School
KOGARAH – NSW

My Bookshelf

I run my excited fingers over their spines
the stories flow out with
my faceless friends
I am never alone here,
the pages rush by,
my imagination runs wild
My head in my hand
My mind in my books
My heart on the page

By **Tessa Price-Brooks**

Year 10, Eynesbury Senior College

ADELAIDE – SA

Teacher: Shelda Rathmann



Innocent Loss

The Uncharted Isle

IT WAS dark. I crept out of my room having heard last night that my parents were planning to live in Australia. And they were going to take me with them. I had heard stories of this desert land. And they were scary.

I had heard of the man-eating kangaroos, and the mutant platypuses that looked like bright green ducks, attacking you from behind when you least expect it. And the laughing kookaburras that pointed and cackled as you walk past. But most of all the savage Australian homo sapiens that were hell-bent on wiping out the whole population of wild bunny-rabbits. I didn't want to go. I still didn't. So now I tiptoed out the door, into the fresh English air.

I inched over to the shed, clutching my teddy bear, trying hard not to wake up my parents. Opening the little green door, I went in. I picked up what I thought I might need: a hatchet, some rope, and a Swiss army knife.

I ran out the gate, thinking about my parents. I remember that they would say that Germany had invaded Poland and now we had to help, every time the soldiers paraded past our home. Soon I saw a darker patch up ahead, with a few trees. I thought it must have been some sort of park. But my thoughts were soon doubted as I ran into water. This unexpected encounter sent me head over heels, into the deep, dark sea.

I woke up, blinking from the bright sunlight. My tummy groaned, and then I realised that I hadn't brought any food with me. Suddenly, there was a rumbling sound, and the Earth shook violently.

A little piece of mainland broke off before my eyes. I looked around me. It

suddenly came to me that I couldn't swim. The army knife was left behind. Soon it was just me on this new uncharted island and the scary, wide stretch of sea.

There were just two trees here. I decided to cut one down with the hatchet and pile the pieces up. While I was blaming myself for running away, a fish flew into me. Well what luck, I thought. I started rubbing two sticks together and somehow started a little camp fire. I roasted the fish and ate it. Soon after I fell asleep, holding my teddy just like I was a few days ago, not quite sure why I was tired. When I woke up, it was raining heavily, so I opened my mouth wide to drink some water. It didn't take so long to quench my thirst. But I kept drinking. I mostly sat around doing nothing that day. That evening I ate another fish.

The third day the hurricane came. I tied myself to the surviving tree with the rope. My throat was parched. I still went over the worries I had over and over again. I am afraid I shall have to stay here for a long time...

By **Katherine Rozycki**

Year 7

Huntingtower High School
MT. WAVERLEY – VIC.



A Sad, Sad Tale

A poem, a poem
A weary drone
A paragraph that's all alone.

A sad, sad tale
Has no friend
On this page its life did spend.

In the dark how did it last?
As events fly by fast.

In the dark
Never found
In this prison it is bound.

To find the 'delete' button it prays
To rid itself of its dying days.

Out of existence it shall fall
Something significant tiny and small.

For ever and ever it shall sail
The darkness of a sad, sad tale.

A sorry way for a rhyme
Eternity is a very long time.

By **Andrew Armstrong**

Year 7

Kuyper Christian School
NORTH RICHMOND – NSW



THE NEW HOUSE

Reckless driver
Music blasting
Revving at lights
"Wanna drag?"
Light turns green
Silent take off
Flying down the road
Neck and neck
Lose control
Pole hit
Shattered windows
Tyre-stained road
Bouquet of flowers
Years pass by
No more flowers
No more stains
A distant memory

By **Jana Cenzato**
Year 10, Eynesbury Senior College
ADELAIDE – SA
Teacher: Shelda Rathmann

ONCE Jack and his parents moved into a new house for sale.

Jack clicked his seat belt on and they went. They drove for what seemed like hours before they finally arrived at the house. It was late in the afternoon.

The house looked dark and gloomy from the outside but Jack spotted a dim light shining from the window upstairs.

It suddenly blinked off. What??? thought Jack.

"Mum! Mum!" he called out.

"YES?" replied his Mum.

"I just saw the light go off" gently whispered Jack.

"Don't try to play tricks on me" laughed Mum. "That light was never on!"

"I must have imagined it", thought Jack. But inside, Jack knew that his Mum was wrong.

Then, they entered the house. Jack first unpacked their bags and guess what they saw! There were spider-webs everywhere and it was like spiders were famous. (They were everywhere.) There were also a few rats around!!!

"Woooooooo! Hoooooooo!" went something spooky. "Yikes!!" screamed Jack so loudly that no one could hear him.

"Hoo hoo hoo!" it went again.

"D-d-did you hear that?", Jack asked his Mum and Dad.

"Hear what?" they asked at the same time.

"That spooky noise", Jack said.

"Pwehhhhh", they both sighed.

"You need to stop telling stories", Dad said.

"But—", Jack whispered.

"No buts", yelled Jack's Dad.

"I-I-I'm not telling stories" sobbed Jack and he ran to his bedroom crying.

Later, Jack's parents came in and saw Jack crying on the pillow, trying to keep quiet.

Then his parents came in. They were scared out of their wits!

"L-I-let's m-move" they shook as they packed up and drove away as fast as they could.

After a few weeks, Jack's Dad found a house. They moved in and lived happily ever after.

THE END

By **Jordan O'Brien**
Year 3, The Essington School – Darwin
NIGHTCLIFF – NT
Teacher: Mrs Fletcher



Forgotten **P** Plater

February 2011

The Story of the Southern Cross

December 1854

Down by the Creek The Diggings

Dear Nancy,

Something very strange is happening at the moment. Cedric, my Papa, has not been home for some while now and Mary, my Mama, is quite worried. She seems to be getting ill. She is very weak and doesn't have a strong appetite. I must do more chores now that Mama is ill. She has lost her job at the dress store because she has been unable to attend her place of work.

Papa and Percy, my sixteen year old brother, came home last night and told us that they had joined the Ballarat Reform League. Noel, a friend that we met on the trip to the goldfields, Lin Wou, a nephew of the Chinese Emperors son, and lots of other miners met last night on Bakery Hill. A flag was been up on Bakery Hill; it is blue and white with stars and represents the Southern Cross. I must go now and fetch the Doctor for Mama.

Later...

The Doctor has just left our tent. He said that Mama has drunk some polluted creek water and she shall be fine in a few days. Percy, Papa, Lin Wou, Adam, the local farrier and Edward, a young man who earned a small fortune digging for gold but wasted it on drinking and gambling, have joined a company with Noel as their leader. Captain Ross and Peter Lalor are the main leaders of the miners. Mama is calling me now so I must see what is wrong with her.

Later...

Mama wanted me to go down to the stockade where Papa and Percy are and bring them some food. I walked over to the stockade and saw Papa, Percy, Noel, Lin Wou and many other angry miners inside the flimsy stockade armed with their weapons, marching around, staying prepared just in case there is an attack. Most of their weapons consist of broom sticks and tree branches but luckily Papa has a gun to protect himself.

The stockade is made of sharp splintering planks of wood and dangerous barbed wire. Some miners go home to sleep while others guard the stockade at night.

It is Friday, 1st of December today and it is very quiet because no one is working. Whilst I was leaving the stockade, troopers rode up on their horses and told all the men to go home. So Papa is now at the back of our tent deep in whispered conversation with Mama.

Mama does not seem to be getting any better. She is coughing a lot and has a high fever.

Father Pat has asked Commissioner Reid to stop the licence hunts but he said no. Father Pat also went down to the miners while they were on duty and told them all to go home or it would cause a horrific battle. I must go now because Tilly, Noel's daughter, and Polly, a skinny little orphan who Lin Wou and his wife look after, are here.

Monday evening...

Something terrible has happened, something extremely terrible, Nancy. I am an orphan, just like poor little Polly. I shall tell you the tale from the start.

On Saturday evening, most of the diggers went home, as well as Papa. Saturday was very quiet and Mama didn't seem to be getting better. She was very pale and could not get out of bed.

It was 12 o'clock at night when I heard Papa leave the tent and make his way up to the stockade. It was about half an hour later when Percy followed him.

Mama started moaning cries of distress at 2.30am. I got up to her and she was wheezing and she said that she felt weak. I felt her heart and it was slowing down. She started trembling as I tried everything I could.

About one hour later, Mabel woke up and started crying once she saw Mama. I felt like crying too but knew I couldn't

because I was meant to be the strong one. I felt Mama's pulse again but it was slowing immensely. Tears, which I was holding in, trickled down my face, as well as Mama's as we embraced one another. Mama and I both knew that Mama was going to die.

Forty-five minutes passed and nothing had improved. I knew that she only had a few minutes left. I was talking to Mama but she was not replying.

She lay there with her eyes wide open. "Please do your best to take care of everyone. I love you Laura" she whispered. Then her eyes slowly closed, her heart stopped and she slipped into God's peaceful arms. Silent tears rolled down my cheeks as I stared in disbelief.

I then put Mabel back to sleep, wrapped myself in a brown blanket and slipped on my brown, leather, muddy boots. I walked out across the bumpy land towards the stockade to find Papa and tell him the unfortunate news about Mama. I reached the stockade and looked around for Papa or Percy.

All of a sudden, loud shouting and horse shoes were heard afar. It was obvious that they were troopers, ready to attack. Gun shots were heard a mile away. Before I knew it, cries and groans filled the night air, which contained the Southern Cross, which was strangely dull tonight.

The muddy, brown clothes of the angry miners mixed with the smart, red and white uniforms of the determined soldiers clashed immensely as if they were never meant to be together. The dry, dusty ground now had small pools of blood on it in certain places. Troopers and miners attacked in every way possible.

I looked frantically for Papa or Percy, once I took in my surroundings. I couldn't see Percy anywhere and I thought for a moment that he may have died but I quickly shook that thought out of my head.

Soldiers and miners fought for what they wanted.

I spotted Papa standing in a corner, trying not to get involved. I ran up to him and tried my hardest to explain what had happened with Mama. He shouted at me to go back home and then pushed me behind the stockade out of sight.

I peeped cautiously through the stockade fence and watched the horrific battle. I suddenly saw a soldier fire a bullet, straight at Peter Lalor. It hit him in the arm and two diggers rushed him to safety.

I saw Papa fighting with a soldier. Papa shot his gun but missed. All of a sudden, the soldier shot and hit Papa in the chest.

A hot feeling rushed over me as more silent tears rolled down my cheeks. My Papa and my Mama had both died and I knew then I was an orphan.

I suddenly saw Captain Ross get shot underneath the Southern Cross flag. Two soldiers came along and tore down the flag. I felt like they had torn down my whole world.

The battle raged on for what seemed like an eternity, but truly, it was only 15 minutes.

Percy and I returned to the tent as the troopers rode off in glee. They knew that they had won the battle. I am too sad to write any more now.

Your friend, Laura.

★ ★ ★

Dear Nancy,

I am now living a new life on the diggings as an orphan. My new family is very nice. I have a Mama called Rose and a Papa called Adam. I have 6 new sisters and 4 new brothers as well as Percy and Mabel. Caroline, Matilda, Ann, Elizabeth, Barbara and Lucy are my new sisters and Charlie, Richard, Jack and Harry are my new brothers.

Lin Wou, his wife and Polly moved back to China after the battle. Tilly, Noel and Pam, Noel's wife, moved to Melbourne but came to visit in December.

I have been enrolled in Red Hill National School with my sisters. I have met a girl named Alice at the school. She has midnight black hair and ice blue eyes.

I do still miss my own Mama and Papa very much and there is no keeping those awful events of December 3rd out of my head.

I live a peaceful life now but I wish that I could undo a lot of things that have happened in the past but I know that is not the way of life.

From your friend,

~ Laura

By **Sarah Parker**

Year 5

Heany Park Primary School
ROWVILLE – VIC.



I STOOD behind the curtain glimpsing as the darkness flooded the atmosphere. A bead of sweat slowly slid down my temple. Fear... the darkness came bounding towards my isolated house like a hungry dog. I couldn't watch myself be found, I needed to go NOW!

I ran to my cupboard, grabbed a jacket and bolted outside. I could almost glimpse the hungry look on the darkness's face, if it had one... the air was like piercing daggers scratching along my face. Was there a whiff of anxiety in the air? No, maybe it was just me.

I ran towards the trees running like my life depended on it, only this time it did. The darkness was here. I had to go and tell the members of the 'Light' council. 'Oh no,' I thought, my brother. I had left my brother and gotten away.

I looked back to see the shadows of the black earth about a hundred yards away from my house. Maybe I could make it.

I bolted across the patchy grass like lightning racing the shadows that seemed to glow when it saw its next victim. Putting on a stern face I kept on going.

I finally reached my house and crashed the door open. There was an awkward silence as well as the creaks and groans of the old

house. Where was he? I skimmed through the rooms to find no soul in sight. That's when I heard the soft moaning of a child. There he was! I had found him, I ran to him and quickly embraced him.

I carried him outside to see the darkness no less than ten yards away. I ran but this time slower because of my brother's weight. I could hear my house being crushed and eaten away.

A tear rolled down my cheek brother started fidgeting. When I finally reached the gate, I stopped. My brother wasn't allowed to go through here. Only some humans could, only the ones that could see the abnormal things a normal human's naked eye couldn't.

I couldn't just leave him! I needed to take him with me. That's when I heard some leaves crackle behind me. I whizzed around to see George, a member of the light council. I sighed with relief.

"George, George, George", I started "It's here, it's eaten my house!" I said exasperated. He looked at me grimly. No emotion, nothing came out of his impassive face.

"You've got to stop, girly" he said. I frowned, annoyed as well as frustrated. "You need to find your courage then you

can beat it" he said with an impassive voice. "What do ya mean?" I said, fuming with anger. George still kept a straight face.

"You have to face your biggest fear, and then you're ready to be a member of the light council! Every single member of the light council had to face the darkness. But the darkness is full of evil and hatred and can take form of what you fear the most", he said softly. I gasped. "Now go before you lose your chance and all is lost! I shall take care of your brother", he continued.

I stood there for a while not knowing what to do. I quickly ran to my brother and cuddled him with great passion. (Just in case.)

I turned around and George gave me a wink then I ran and ran until I reached 'it'. It came towards me like a coiling snake, ready to bite. What was my biggest fear?

Before I knew it the shadows were upon me. I was trapped! The darkness had surrounded me while I was too busy thinking. What was I going to do?...

By **Sneha Joseph**
Year 6

Westmead Public School
WESTMEAD – NSW
Teacher: Jodie Pearce

FOUND...

Ambassadors



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

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

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

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



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

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

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. ➡



📍 **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

The Young Australian Writers' Awards 2010

The BIC Australia
Young Writer of the Year Award



JAMES LAWLER

Blackfriars Priory School, Prospect, SA



◀ **Lions Club Literary Award**

Short Story – Secondary

PHOEBE CONWAY

Eynesbury Senior College, SA

Dymocks Literary Award ▶

Short Story – Primary

CHANG JIAN LI

Pascoe Vale South PS, Vic.

DYMOCKS
FOR BOOKLOVERS



◀ **Shane Warne Literary Award**

Poetry – Secondary

DANIELLE BROOKS

Eynesbury Senior College, SA

Tupperware Literary Award ▶

Poetry – Primary

VIVIENNE BEAR

Huntingtower School, Vic.



Tupperware®





◀ **ASG Short Story Award**

JASMINE PARIS SCRIVEN

Nailsworth, SA



**Australian
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ASG Poetry Award ▶

DEN L. SCHEER

St. Hilda's College, WA



◀ **Helen Handbury Achievement Award**

ASHLEY MARKS

Assumption College, Kilmore, Vic.

Helen Handbury Literary Award ▶

TALIA WALKER

Cerdon College, NSW



*(Above) Proud Art Award winners at the Awards Night,
20 November 2010.*

*(Left) Matt Green is presented with the
Bright Kids Teachers Award.*

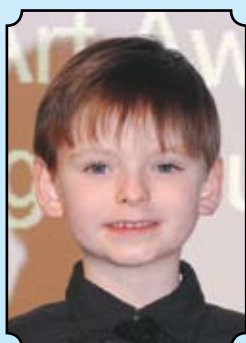
All photos Carol Dick, Frank Jones



**Lions Club Art Award
Painting – Senior**
DEN L SCHEER
St. Hilda's College, WA



**Sentinel Foundation Art Award
Painting – Middle**
LILLIAN MA
Meriden, NSW



**ASG Art Award
Painting – Junior**
SCOTT GATEHOUSE
St. Augustine's College, Qld.



**Train Trak Art Award
Computer Art – Middle**
DAISY GOODWIN
Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School, NSW



**Marc McBride Art Award
Drawing – Middle**
YASMIN SMITS
Catholic Regional College, Vic.



**Percy Baxter Trust Art Award
Computer Art – Junior**
DOMINIC DOUGLAS
St. Mary's PS, Greensborough, Vic.



**ASG Art Award
Drawing – Junior**
BRYAN H LEE
Essex Heights PS, Vic.



**Avon Art Award
Photography – Senior**
SUSANNAH SMITH
Jubilee Christian College, Qld.



**Bic Australia Art Award
Drawing – Senior**
FLORENCE YUAN
(Joint Winner)
Riversdale Girls' HS, NSW



**Bic Australia Art Award
Drawing – Senior**
LYN LIN
(Joint Winner)
Glenunga International HS, SA



**Trust Company Art Award
Computer Art – Senior**
AIDEN MORSE
Reece High School, Tas.



**SocietyRestaurant.com Art
Award: Photography – Middle**
MOLLY REYNOLDS
St. Scholastica's College, NSW

2010

**Young
Australian Art Awards**



DAISY GOODWIN
*Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School,
Terranora NSW*



**Classic Picture Framers Art
Award: Photography – Junior**

LIBBY MIELL

Tintinara Area School, SA



**Judge's Encouragement
Award: Craig Smith**

RACHEL ANNA GIDDENS

St. Rita's College, SA



**Judge's Encouragement
Award: Marjory Gardner**

KEN HUI SAW

Greythorn PS, Vic.



**Judge's Encouragement
Award: Elise Hurst**

SARAH ROBERTS

Lovella Catholic College, Vic.

If I'm to succeed,
I must try, try, try.
If I'm to succeed,
I must aim high.

But much before that,
I must believe in myself.
To work hard and keep going,
to the top of the shelf.

First of all,
I must have dreams,
and tell myself,
'I CAN SUCCEED!'

So you see,
I must start a dream.
To believe is next,
And finally I'll SUCCEED!

By Nicola Barrett,

Age 10

Address Unknown

DREAM, BELIEVE, SUCCEED

Photo: F. Jones



Moments, memories made,
The tears have been shed,
You I only see,
Whilst dreaming in my head.
Oh so many years,
I awoke to your face,
You're my asylum,
You're my special place.
Now you are gone,
Somewhere I cannot be,
No longer on this Earth,
You're not with me.
My time is almost up,
I'm not young like before,
I will see you seen,
We'll be together once more.

By Erica Musgrove

Year 8, Irymple Secondary College

IRYMPLE – VIC.

Teacher: Miss Tonzing

WIDOWED

THE WAR OF TWO WORLDS

THE bugle sounded. A deep sweet call it made, a sound that would lead us onward. We

started marching, marching, marching across the countryside of Ancient Greece and in everyone's heart there was the feeling of war.

I am Alana, daughter of Athena, the Ancient Greek goddess of war. I have come to this story to tell you a thrilling tale. It started on Mount Olympus. The Debate. The god of the underworld, the almighty Hades had demanded a share of Zeus's wealth and power. The gods decided against it for they knew if they gave Hades a place among them, basking in the awe of all mortals, he would become greedy and maybe even attempt mutiny. The eleven Olympians had told him no, but he began raving. He said if they didn't let him be an equal in two months time he would start a war, using his... Army of the Undead. I was outside the throne room at the time.

Listening to the shouting with my fellow dryad maids huddled around me. The gods would stick to their rules, I knew that, but that would mean war. Was it the right decision? I was yet to know.

Over the next few weeks we heard rumours about Hades' army. Our centaur watchmen told us the stories. We heard that the warriors were so big they would crush two trees with their big toes and they could lift sixty full grown men and not tire and that they were so ugly, ladies dropped dead at the very sight of them. They were just rumours, we did not believe them but they gave me a growing feeling of dread. What were we going to do? We had no notion on how to defeat Hades.

Mother stopped coming to the schoolroom to teach me but retired to the throne room to talk to Zeus about battle plans, so I had to continue my lessons with Aphrodite, who was a bore. The feeling of war hurt. It made us stressed. The great Olympians did not stride anymore, they scurried. Days passed unchecked. But one month after Hades polluted the minds of my uncles and aunts we found something that gave us hope. A recipe. I listened as Zeus read it out, my hands clasped. It was a potion that when applied to the eyes of the Gorgan Medusa could kill anything, even immortals. I had been told that even after Medusa was dead, her eyes could still petrify. It was a chance we had to take.

For the next few weeks the great Olympians were rarely seen. They rushed about on quests, battling monsters, to get the ingredients. My mother went with them. I was glad to see her return bearing the head of Medusa which she had been sent to collect from the rocky wastelands near the underworld. She and Apollo stewed in the apothecary room when all the ingredients were collected, making the potion. The ingredients were enough to make your stomach turn, the blood of the Minotaur, claw of a Harpy, lips of a Siren, spleen of a Sphinx. Pungent smells chased us down the corridors for days afterwards, but

a week later Athena and Apollo gathered in the throne room and told the gods that the head was ready. We could start preparing for battle.

So, there we were, marching, marching, marching, over rocks and over plains. I was with the gods now for I had offered to carry Medusa's head, her eyes now doused in potion. I could feel her in my shoulder bag, bumping against my hip. I did not feel proud and ready to fight for my lords. I felt small and insignificant. Fear grabbed my heart and held it still, refusing to let go.

Hades had said we would fight in the valley next to the mountain of Atlas, a good place for a battle. At last we came to the hill that overlooked the site. Our Great Lord Zeus sent Lord Hermes on ahead. He returned with the news. 'The army of the undead aren't there' he said, 'The valley is empty'. We all charged up the hill and looked down into the wide expanse of green. But then the valley unleashed its terrible secret. There was something down there, not rocks nor weirdly shaped bushes. The truth was far more sinister.

They were bodies. Dead bodies littered about like rubbish. They were all men. Some had missing arms and legs and their faces were twisted in agony. It made my heart hurt to look at them. It looked like the army of the undead had already passed through the valley killing anyone that dare to cross its path. These people, local soldiers perhaps, could not have been dead for more than a few minutes.

Then a voice rang out, deep, cold and unforgiving. It was the voice of a man. His words made my heart freeze inside my chest from fear. 'Army of the Undead, AWAKE!' Suddenly the dead bodies, ever-so-slightly began to twitch. They stiffly began to raise themselves up and started to walk towards us. They were living dead. As these terrible warriors walked towards us I saw that they looked worse close up. Some had missing eyes, that left them with empty bleeding sockets and some had missing teeth that left them with crooked gaps in their mouths. Some warriors' hair had fallen out, leaving them with ugly discoloured scalps and some had their muscles ripped off leaving puppets that worked with strings. Noses and ears were missing; blood and pus oozed out of their wounds and intestines, hearts and other organs fell out of them as they walked. It was as if parts of their bodies had suddenly

got tired of them and were leaving them as I spoke.

One warrior lunged towards me, a sword clasped in his only hand. I screamed but then felt arms around my waist and I was jerked into the air with Hermes' feet below me. His winged sandal propelled us towards a nearby cliff. He dropped me off and went to join his brothers. I looked down, watching the battle. I saw all eleven gods fighting expertly. I saw Zeus, Poseidon, Ares and Hephaestus all swinging hammer blows. Hera, Mother, Demeter, Apollo and Aphrodite were displaying expert sword stils and Artemis, armed with only a bow, was still a great shot, felling warriors with a flurry of arrows. The strange thing was none of the warriors were going down. Whenever they lost an arm or a leg a new one would sprout out of their body and they would keep on coming. There were thousands of them. The eleven gods were desperately outnumbered, but I stopped looking and tensed. I had heard laughter behind me, mocking laughter. It was the same voice that had called the army of the undead from its deep sleep. I slowly turned round but I knew who it was already.

It was Hades himself. Even though I had never seen him or viewed a picture of him, I knew it was him. I could tell by his face, the sunken skin, the colourless eyes, the greasy black hair that fell to his shoulders. He was dressed entirely in black with gold armour. There was a crossbow tied to his back, a knife at his side and a sword in his hand. Even an old blind maid would know who he was, for the air had gone cold and stale when Hades appeared. He reeked of death and that was the worst thing about him.

'Who are you, girl?' he snarled, pressing his sword against my throat. I saw droplets of blood, as red as rubies, fall at my feet. My blood seemed to make Hades hungry. He licked his lips and his black eyes flashed into scarlet pupils. 'Did those Olympian low lives bring you along? To see them loose perhaps?' He caught sight of a few strands of Medusa's snakes hanging from my shoulder bag. He laughed again, mocking me. 'You think a simple Gorgon head will kill me? That is your best weapon?' Another evil chuckle. 'Do you want to hear why my army isn't dying, before I throw you off this cliff?' he snarled. I said nothing; I did not want to waste my speech on this despicable immortal. 'They

are already dead. You cannot kill corpses. Their souls are linked to me. If I were to die they would become vulnerable and easy to slaughter. But this information will never get past this cliff. I leave you to the mercy of my army. Goodbye immortal brat.' He raised his sword above his head. I was rooted to the spot with terror. When he shoved me off this cliff I would fall straight into a thrashing, roaring army of corpses. I would not be killed but they could still kidnap me. They would make me Hades' slave... or worse. But I still had hope. I knew something he didn't. I put my hand inside the bag and clutched at Medusa's head. 'It's not just a simple Gorgon head', I said, my voice a jewel in the bloodthirsty atmosphere. Hades' sword paused in its descent, that gave me courage. 'And my mother is NOT a lowlife' I shouted. I shut my eyes, prayed to Zeus that this would work and pulled the head out of the bag.

I heard a scream. I opened my eyes. Hades was slowly turning to stone. Only his legs were stone but this granite plague was creeping up his body, slowly immobilising him. His sword was still moving but his arm was turned to rock before it struck me. I stowed the head away then looked at his face, a mask of pure terror. I turned to watch the battle but then had a better idea. I turned and began to heave Hades towards the cliff edge. Then with all the strength I could muster I gave him an almighty push. He wobbled then fell off the cliff, crushing several of his men below. I turned and saw mother's sword rip into the stomach of a warrior. It fell, blood spurting. I saw another go down, then another, then another then five more. They were becoming vulnerable. The gods realised what had happened then went on fighting with new found relish. Every time a corpse was felled I saw a little cloud of maggots leaving it. I waited a good five minutes until none of Hades' Army was left, then ran down some stone steps etched into the cliff face. Mother was waiting for me at the bottom, her arms outstretched. 'You did it Alana' she cried clasping me to her chest, 'You did it.' 'No' I said, looking at our victorious army singing and rejoicing with happiness, 'We did it.'

By Rachel Denham-White

Year 6

*Helena College Junior School
DARLINGTON – WA*



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Mulmulum's Tears

(A traditional tale)

LONG ago before white man came in the time of 'Taim Bipo', a woman was sitting high up in the ragged mountain ranges of Papua New Guinea. The woman was sitting in 'seiza', kneeling on the ground whilst folding her legs underneath her thighs. Her smooth creamy cocoa skin shone in the moonlight and the whirling of the air ruffled her short, curly jet black hair. Her almond shaped eyes framed two sparkling, dark brown agate pupils. They were like the embers of a fire with the flame dying off as the night grew darker.

Perching next to her was a Kapul Eagle but little did she know that it was an ominous, evil Masalai who had come to mislead her. She had been wandering around in the wild looking for food because her tribe had hardly anything to eat as a drought had just fallen upon them. Her name was Mulmulum and for as long as she did not return, there would be great sorrow in the tribe.

At dawn, a flock of vivid red, yellow and blue birds of paradise flew across the sky, chattering to announce the arrival of the sun. Even with her eyes barely open, in the breaking light, Mulmulum could see her country all in dull shades of grey:

granite grey, stone grey, slate grey. All greys with no lush green rainforests, streams or wildlife.

Just then, she saw an ancient track grimed with dirt that led deeper into the mountains. Mulmulum began trudging before reaching a fork. One trail ascended towards the peak but she took the downward spiral route instead. She then travelled across the crooked and narrow track until she heard the soft, peaceful trickling of a stream. Mulmulum was delighted as she was thirsty!

Afterward, through a jumble of rocks, she saw a cave just like a mouth of a creature calling out in an inviting voice. It said, "Come in and take refuge from the harsh sun!". She did. Alas, it was the ancient grotto! The most sacred place in her land guarded by the fearsome spirit! Even when Mulmulum was still an infant, her mother had warned her never to set foot in the spirit's grotto!

The spirit was furious! The cantankerous one was not demure with his outburst! He threw a frightening tantrum! In his anger, he howled and yelled! He blew ferociously and released a tempest!! Mulmulum was terrified and distressed! She ran. She

skipped and limped as her feet ran across the hard stones and she came dangerously close to losing her footing at a gorge of unknown depth. She was faltering but kept running.

When the tempest ceased, Mulmulum collapsed. The Masalai Kapul Eagle squawked in devious delight! Presently, she saw the wreath of ashes. She was back where she was last night. Weary Mulmulum was lost! She wept. She was sorry. Her tears dribbled down onto the ashes and beyond. Each drop carried her wish to bring food home and to be with her people.

The next day, green shoots sprouted out from the ashes. In a few days, the mountain ranges were dotted with slender young trees in green foliage. This is how the lush, relentless green of the rainforest of Papua New Guinea came to be.

Mulmulum never returned to her tribe. Some said she perished. Others said her spirit lived on in the mountains.

By Yohan Schmutz-Leong
Year 6, Kelvin Grove State College
KELVIN GROVE – QLD.
Teacher: Mrs Carole Kamholtz

Photo: F. Jones

FOR many people, the European experience is something to be desired. Many of us would agree that visiting Rome or Paris during the months of winter is an experience of both relaxation and enjoyment. Of course, there is no better way to relax than to ease into one's seat beside the piazza, braving the cool touch of winter whilst we clutch a piping hot cup of the latest blend of coffee, yes? Or perhaps the ideal European holiday is one that resides in the hottest clubs of each city, where we drink and dance each hour of the night away. The city centres are the heart of the youthful night-life; each street, café and club buzzing and pulsing with the energy of the youth. Surely, this must be the general idea of fun or relaxation in Europe? I respectfully disagree, for the European experience to me, is something so much more than that.

Rewind three years back, and I find myself walking along a dusty, rock-strewn path, the summer heat beating down on my back. Rusted out train tracks run along beside me, the only remnants of the railway system they once supported. It was perhaps the third or fourth time I had been in the historical country of Croatia, and the feeling of awe was always with me. Never before was this feeling of awe stronger however, than when I turned a bend in the path and stood before an opening to

the largest and thickest forest I had ever seen. I took my first tentative steps into the work of art, and found myself amazed at my surroundings. Every single part of the forest seemed alive, with greens, browns and every colour in between seemingly painting the landscape. Lush, green leaves matted the floor of the forest, as the low and sometimes high pitched buzzing of nearby insects gave even more life to this magical place. Rays of light pierced the shell of the forest canopy, and lit a nearby collection of stumps like a spotlight lighting a stage. Small bursts of colour adorned the diverse and numerous bushes occupying the forest, flowers like baubles on a Christmas tree. Even the exposed mushrooms protruding from the floor had their place in this bizarre performance of nature; I was simply an out-of-place stagehand who had wandered onto the set, with no idea what he was doing.

I found myself touching each tree, feeling the grain of the wood, picking each flower that caught my attention, feeling the soft petals. The sweet perfume of pine was everywhere, and I gazed up in wonder at the sentient beings surrounding me. Soon, I had reached a wall of sorts. Thick bushels of thorn stood, guards to the inner depths of the forest. Ingrained, unmoving warriors of age. There were moments of silence, where one could simply listen to

the ever present and unimpeded flow of water from the nearby river. It was the definition of tranquillity; this was true peace.

Without warning, Mother Nature had waited long enough, deciding it was time for me to leave. She sent down a barrage of rain, breaking the traditional rules of summer. Soon, the gentle pit-pat could be heard as the rain penetrated the forest canopy and dropped from leaf to leaf. Within moments, what had started as a gentle shower became a thundering torrent, and I backtracked, looking for my exit. I plucked a bright red flower from a nearby bush, a memento of my short-lived serenity.

Just as I leave from where I had entered, the rain eases, and then stops altogether. I smile a bittersweet smile, drenched in Mother Nature's cruel joke. I turned to look behind me, and the forest had become even more vibrant from its latest bathing; it had become an ocean of green. This was my European experience. This was above relaxing with a coffee or raving in the underground.

This was beauty.

By Martin Basic

*Year 11, Blackfriars Priory School
PROSPECT – SA*

An Ocean of Green

Metaphysical Impulse

The fast, heavy breaths of a well-rested soul;
 Nothing better to do
 Yet everything of greater importance to.
 A state of quietness,
 Not quite peaceful, not tired.
 The ache of lethargy takes control
 Stealing priority over paths
 To blissful prospects.
 A state of nothingness;
 Not quite numb, not depressed.
 A mode of intense acuteness
 But nonetheless dumb to
 A natural reality.
 What is apparent to the unresponsive?
 What is the sun
 To creatures of the deep?
 No more,
 Than an ache to tired lids
 That will to be
 Perpetually sealed,
 And dream of a lightning breath.
 A dream to soothe thy
 Perturbed soul.

By **Lucy Chetcuti**
 Year 12
 Camden High School
 CAMDEN – NSW
 Teacher: Robert Kell

Little Angel

I had a vivid dream as a child
 I grew pure white majestic wings
 With huge feathers soft at my touch
 I beat them slowly at first
 Then faster they thrashed
 My little feet lifted slightly and I arched
 I was flying and reached for the sky.
 Looking down at the busy city
 Lights blazing, cars speeding, people shouting
 I gazed up at the heavens, watched in awe.
 Shiny silver stars shone like diamonds
 Wispy clouds travelled with the breeze
 The moon glowed a spectacular white
 It was quiet, calm and peaceful
 A place for my dreams
 For all eternity.

By **Jessica Easton**
 Year 9
 Eynesbury Senior College
 ADELAIDE – SA
 Teacher: Shelda Rathmann

Undeterred

He stands
 proud and unashamed
 facing the altar, praying to his God.
 His daughter
 Slow and innocent
 Prays too loudly, attracting attention
 He knows of the quiet whispers
 And the pitying glances
 But he remains tall and regal
 Grateful for his daughter
 for her life.

By **Giang Nguyen**
 Year 10
 Eynesbury Senior College
 ADELAIDE – SA
 Teacher: Shelda Rathmann

THE LOST LAND

"OH BONDEL!" we squealed, with laughter. My five-year-old brother was running away from my sister Yulki, who was nine, carrying a small spear and shouting "hunt-time! Yum-yum!". Yulki chased after him, scolding, while my best friend Paraweena, and I, looked on in amusement.

Bondel finally stopped running and asked Yulki, "When hunt-time?"

"Later dear" was Yulki's answer, with a motherly tone. She spoke that way because she had to start learning to be like a mother.

Bondel loved to run and swim and would often hunt lizards. I usually played with Paraweena. We went hunting, did paintings and occasionally swam. I also went hunting with beeyung (which is what we call fathers).

The Dreamtime ceremony finally arrived.

This monthly ceremony had a celebration and a re-enactment of our ancestors creating the world, a huge feast and dancing. We also painted each other's bodies in meaningful patterns. I painted Bondel's body and it was the best art I had

done. Mine was done by Paraweena's beeyung and it looked fantastic.

The women of the tribe prepared the feast. Yulki helped with it in between making sure Bondel didn't wash the patterns off his body. Paraweena and I also took him bird hunting.

Anyway, the Dreamtime ceremony was most memorable! The re-enactment was very realistic and exciting. The food was delicious! The elders always eat first at meals, which were mouth-watering, so we waited for them, but in the end it didn't matter. Then there was the dancing. I danced with a few girls, which doesn't normally happen as they come to few ceremonies. Everyone comes to this ceremony, though, because it is so special. The food is a special thing for this occasion and so after the dancing we had more of it and a few stories before it ended.

The day after the Dreamtime ceremony, Woorraddy was initiated! All the men of the tribe came and it was great fun. He is really nice and I am happy for him.

All the children of the tribe went to art lessons after Woorraddy was initiated. They were led by the elders of the tribe. When we came back Mother saw my picture and said it was brilliant and so she hung it up on a tree. Beeyung says I am a natural at it. Maybe I am! Paraweena says he doesn't like his and thinks it looks like a kangaroo mixed in with a possum and human. We both laughed and I told him that it was fine and that it takes practice.

Our second art lesson was held the next day. Paraweena told me he was up for the challenge to draw one thing instead of three. I laughed and he joined in. It's nice to joke with Paraweena. Anyway, it was fun and I did really well and the elders even congratulated me!

The next day, just after I'd left to go hunting, it came. A huge, dark, scary canoe. In it were strange people. White people. People with skin as white as snow, as white as the clouds in the sky above.

Father ran to tell the elders and the rest of the tribe. Soon most of our tribe was

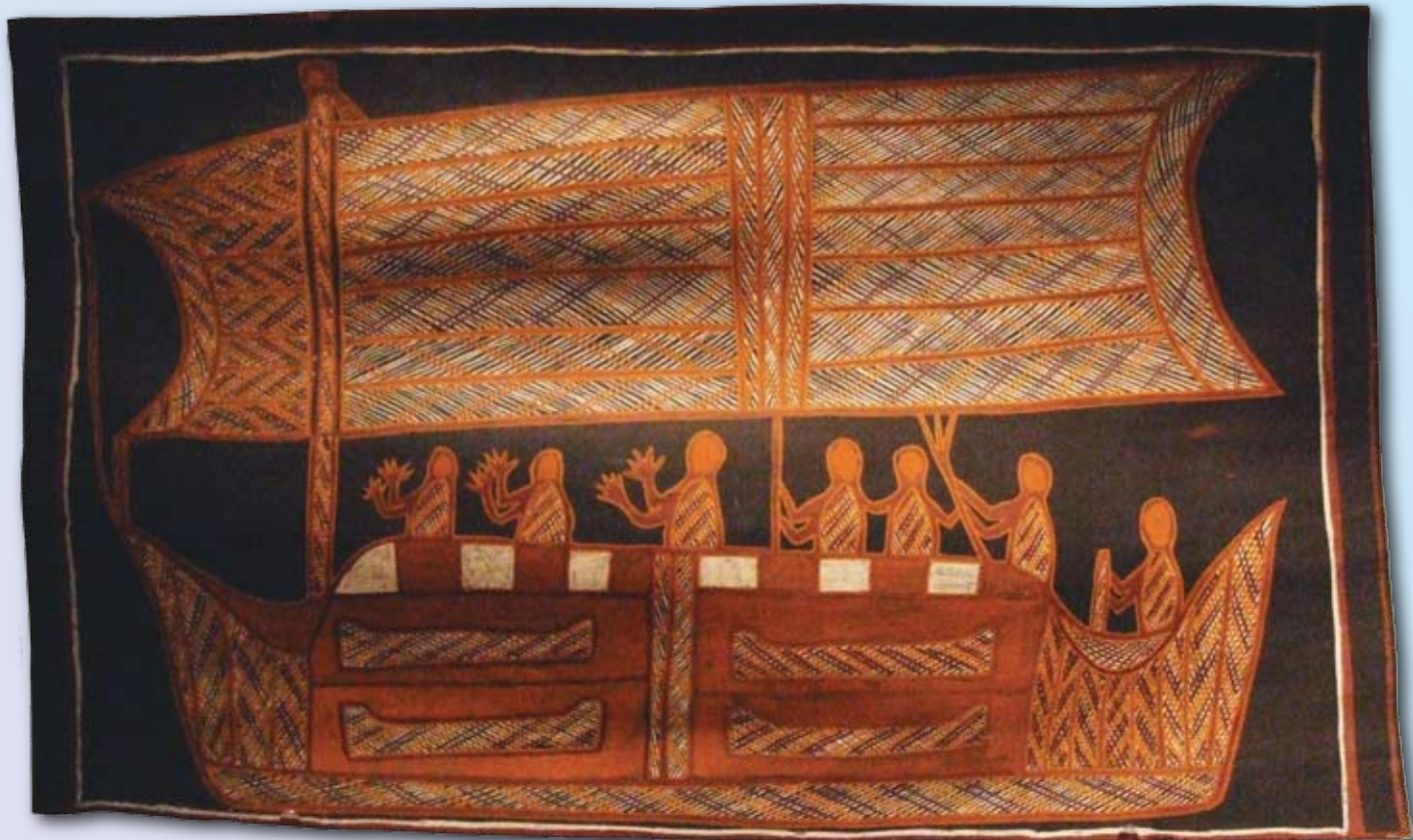
watching the canoe come in, most hiding in the bushes but some (including me) creeping closer to the huge canoe. We went quite close. Then suddenly everyone stepped back. The canoe had pulled up on the beach and the strange people were coming onto the land.

They had funny shaped sticks in their hands. I was very curious about them. I took a step towards one white, but he pushed me back roughly. I ran back, scared. I went over again and touched the stick and again he pushed me, but not as roughly this time. I was only a little scared.

Beeyung and mother called me back but I did not listen. I went over a third time and this time the white did not push me, but turned away and said something to another white in a strange language. Then he turned back to me and lightened his grip on the stick. I touched it and then moved my hand up and down it. There were bumps in some places and in others it was perfectly smooth – it was strange.

Suddenly the man looked me in the eye and said "GUN". That is what the stick was called. He then showed me what it did. It made a BIG... BANG!!! I jumped back in surprise and fright. My stomach lurched. Then I smiled a little. That is what those guns do. Then I realised what else it did; it damaged the trees and an elder!!! When I realized this, I was angry, very angry. I kicked the white, then punched him in the stomach and he fell over, yelping. I punched him in the nose and it started bleeding. I was about to go again when someone behind pulled me back. It was Beeyung. He pushed me behind a bush and shouted "Stay". I had to obey. Beeyung went to help the five left fighting. I saw him pierce a white in the heart.

Things were different from that moment on. Although the whites had gone for a while, they were coming back. The elders called for a meeting with all the men of the tribe. I begged Beeyung to let me go but he would not let me. "No", he said sternly, "not until you are initiated. This problem is too big for a boy like you. You would not understand. Stay home! I don't want to hear any more about it".



"Yes Beeyung", I sighed.

"What can I do now?" I thought. "I really want to but I can't. Unless..."

I made it! I made it to the meeting! After Beeyung left mother went out, so I snuck behind a tree near the meeting area. The meeting went as follows:

"Thank you for coming to this meeting", said an elder, "about the strange people on the beach. We need to stop them from taking over".

"How?" questioned a man.

"We will make a plan. All of you will help."

The men started giving ideas, but none were very good. Finally an elder said, "The only option we have left is making a run. Take our children and run into the central part of this land and hide".

"It is not an option people will like, but it seems that it is the only way. We will wait until they come and settle, then we'll move. Does everyone agree?"

Everyone agreed.

"Good. Do not tell your family until necessary."

When I was five, I realised the joys of life. I thought it was fantastic. When the whites started invading I realised it is not so fantastic. I was also confused.

"Why are the whites saying this is their land, when it is everybody's?" I questioned Paraweena.

"I don't know", answered Paraweena, "but I know they must be horrid people to come and take a land that is everybody's".

I agreed. Paraweena is very knowledgeable. It doesn't solve the problem though, and I am very worried because I do not agree with the conclusion the elders came up with.

I told Paraweena about the meeting. He said they were having another one tonight, so we decided to go and listen together. Paraweena also said I was very smart to think of going to the last meeting. That made me go red with pride.

The second meeting time came and Paraweena and I arrived early so we would be quiet when the men came.

"We have called this meet to discuss last night's issue", an elder said gravely. "After discussion, we realised our plan will not solve the problem, as the whites will spread across the whole land!"

Some made some suggestions, but they didn't help the situation.

"We must come to a conclusion", an elder said urgently.

"The only thing we can do is defend ourselves", a man remarked. "Try to keep our place on this land."

Then an elder cried "Yes! We can do that!" but then added soberly, "It will be hard, but it is the only way".

"You must protect your families and make sure nothing happens to them", said another elder. "Now go back to your family and mention nothing of it."

I ran back to my family safely but was not relieved. I couldn't believe the elders thought we could just defend ourselves and hope for the best!!! I guess they knew what they were doing since they were wise.

Things were really crazy in the tribe as we prepared for the landing of the whites. I had to help Beeyung more than ever. The adults decided to not have everything so spread out for two reasons: it was easier to look after everything and when we move on (all tribes do this every few months. It means going somewhere else), we can go quicker.

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Continued from page 31

The whites landed a few days later. The days before were painstaking, but when they came it got worse. They built things called "houses" which they eat, cook, sleep and sit in. They are confusing.

Something really bad happened the day the whites came. Woorraddy was taken by them. He was going out hunting, when a white came out of nowhere. Woorraddy got a big surprise. He went over and asked him to go away. The white did not do anything, so again, Woorraddy told him to go away, but still he would not. Woorraddy became aggravated. He shouted "Go away!". Suddenly the white lunged for Woorraddy, knocked him out and carried him (we think) back to his leader.

Woorraddy was a kind man who helped everyone, so I was very sad. Mother and some others hit themselves with rocks. It was also a worry that if Woorraddy was stolen, others might be too. It is harsh.

Eight people were stolen in the next week. It was ghastly! No-one understood how they could be so horrid. I missed Woorraddy badly and had no idea what to expect.

Paraweena's parents were stolen!!! My parents offered to take care of him. He was depressed and I saw him crying. It must have been hard for him. He seemed to want to be stolen to be with his parents.

The day came. My family and Paraweena were stolen. We had gone a little way out, silently, to collect wood. Suddenly, we heard the noise of a twig being broken, but not by animals, by whites. We stayed still, hoping they would pass us. Then suddenly, before we could do a thing, a group came out of the clearing, grabbed each of us and dragged us off. Beeyung fought, but was easily defeated.

We were taken into a small enclosed area. Coincidentally we were with Paraweena's parents. He was thrilled! Things didn't look too bad and I thought they'd be all right. I was wrong.

The next day, a white came and took me to a place called school. Other children from the tribe were there as well as white children. At school, we learnt to write and speak the whites' language. A white man up the front called teacher tells us what to

do. We also do something called maths.

There is a day the whites call Sunday. Everyone goes to a thing called church. It is held in a big enclosed area and people sit on long seats. During church, songs are sung and people read from a book called the Bible. Then there is a long speech. It is all about God. I do not understand it and probably never will, but I do not really want to anyway.

Everyone dresses nicely for church. All the families sit together and our tribe sits squished at the back because we do not really belong there.

After a week I started realising that whites are not very nice to us. One day, the teacher was a bit upset with me for a reason I don't know, so he called me up to the front of the class and said to me sternly, "Why don't you wash yourself? If you do not, then I will".



Most of the white children started laughing. The teacher pulled a scrubbing brush out of his desk, grabbed my arm and started scrubbing it! Because my skin obviously would not come off, he started scrubbing even harder. It started to hurt a lot. I started whimpering slightly. The white children started laughing. I hated them for that. The teacher was confused that it would not come off. Then, he just laughed. I never wanted to go back to school, especially considering we started farm work.

Paraweena and I walked to school the next day. When we arrived there, Paraweena was told off for being late even though a white came in another five minutes after us.

We were divided into groups of four to work at the farm. I was with two others from the tribe and Paraweena! Only the children from our tribe do the work. When we arrived, our group was sent to the garden. We had to pull out weeds and plant new things. The white children were watching and teasing us.

Beeyung talked to me about his work after school. He said the whites are mean to him.

I am not to follow their ways because they are wrong. Beeyung is treated badly as are the other men from our tribe. They all work very hard on farms. They also have to build things like houses.

Beeyung also said that if they do their job too slow or don't even do it, they get whipped. Whipped is when the Whites uses a rope type thing and hits a man on the back with it. Each hit is called a lash. Beeyung received five lashes, though he says he did not do anything wrong.

Mother also talked to me about her job. She had to work at the leader's house. She cooked their food, cleaned their clothes and house and washed floors. She was treated very badly as well and the cloud ladies laughed and jeered at her.

Mother also talked to me about Yulki's work. She said Yulki did the same thing as she does; only it is not quite so hard.

She also talked to me about their pay. None of our tribe was given what is called money, which, to the white people is everything. Out of meanness for money, they did not give our tribe money, but rations. Rations are small amounts of basic things you need to live. That is all Beeyung and her were given.

Just before Yulki and I went to bed, mother and Beeyung came in. They needed to have a serious talk. When we were settled Beeyung started talking.

"Mother and I have talked, and we have come to the conclusion that you two and Bondel must escape. I know that it will be hard, but it is the only option. You will have to figure out an escape by yourselves because we do not have any more time to talk."

"Why?" asked Yulki. "We are not escaping tonight are we?"

"Of course not", answered Beeyung.

"Then why can't you help us?" I questioned.

Beeyung looked gravely at mother, who shook her head and then she said "Goodnight children" and they both walked out. I couldn't work it out.

The next morning we woke to an unpleasant surprise; Mother and Beeyung had been

taken!!! A white said they are gone forever. We were taken to a place with all the children from our tribe.

Nothing much happened after mother and Beeyung were taken. We went on labouring for the whites, but there was a hole in my heart; a hole which used to be filled by mother and Beeyung.

"I have had enough", was the exclamation I made to Yulki. "I'm leaving!!! I have been whipped, tortured and worked too hard!"

"Are we escaping tonight, then?" questioned Yulki.

"Yes", I answered, "and Bondel and Paraweena are coming too".

We planned the escape. I knew what Beeyung meant when he said that they would not be able to help us. I wanted to escape and I was determined!

The escape plan worked perfectly! Another friend of mine distracted the guards by making them chase after her. She was escaping, only obviously, so we could escape unnoticed. In the end, the guards let her escape as they couldn't catch her.

It's a lovely feeling to be free. I have never known all the freedom I had before, because I had never known of boundaries. Now I know what freedom really is: It is the feeling you get when you have come out of a place or thought you do not like; when a thought has been worrying you and it is fixed. When you have been in a small area and then got out.

Freedom is a sort of emotion and feeling. The reason it is an emotion is because when you are free your emotions are muddled up. You feel happy, sad, angry, scared, excited, worried and amazed all at the same time, so it is really an emotion of its own. The feeling is the knowingness of being out of a terrible place, or out of the

misery, the worrying inside your brain.

The white people invaded our land. They took something away from us. They took our freedom and filled the gap with a longing. In a sense, though, they are giving us a freedom which helps us live.

"We have escaped! We are free! Everything will be all right and the same", were the words which Yulki had told me after we escaped.

"No Yulki", I mumbled sadly.

Nothing will ever be the same. We will never see mother and Beeyung, or the rest of the tribe. We will not get anything back, ever.

By Julia Walter

*Year 6, South Hobart Primary School
SOUTH HOBART – TAS.*

Teacher: Mr. Jeffrey

TRAPPED

PANTING, I ran through the endless maze of nothingness. Fire burned my throat as I sprinted, desperate to find my way out. I came to a fluorescent hexagonal STOP sign. As I was pondering how and why the glowing sign was here, a pile of scorched rubble materialised right in front of my bewildered eyes. Tears dripped down my face as I began to crawl through the endless pile. Suddenly, I was falling. I screeched as I fell into a dark hole that held my death and... I woke up sweating. I ran into the bathroom breathing heavily. Watching the condensation on the mirror calmed my thoughts. I tiptoed back to my shadow lined bedroom and crawled into my soft bed listening for any sign of danger and slowly I drifted off to sleep but before I did I saw the man in the grass again.

I awoke to the sound of kookaburras, sunlight poured in through my window. The dream I had last night was not a new one. This dream had haunted me since I was eight years old. It was a mystery why I was having it. I got out of my bed

and ambled down the stairs. As I slowly started to awaken, my eyes could define the stains of food and liquid running up and down our staircase. My pupils wandered around the room until they froze. I could not get them to move away from the spot I was gazing at. Suddenly, I noticed why I was staring. There at the bottom of my filthy, carpeted staircase was a fluorescent, red, hexagonal sign with the word STOP printed clearly on it. I tripped down in awe. I held my fist out in front of it ready to see if it was an illusion and I had gone mad. I slammed my balled up hand into the sign with all of my might. Everything was a blur. I could feel tears streaming down my face. My palm throbbed with pain. I ran to find my parents but they were not anywhere. My sobbing became more intense. I found myself on my verandah, overlooking a beautiful bush land. I was not the only one in my family with a love for the outdoors, which is why I sprinted to see if my parents were tending the veggie patch. They were not.

I looked desperately but my parents were nowhere to be found. I screamed as I saw a pile of burnt debris in front of me. I knew what I was in for if I went exploring the

massive pile, but I could not stop myself. I went in but found no hole to plummet through. I crawled out and I noticed something... I had no surroundings. I was trapped in a world of nothingness. I fell to the ground exhausted and finally lost consciousness.

I awoke in a bed. My bed. This time I stayed. Too scared to come out.

THE END

By Misha Williamson

*Year 6, Como West Public School
COMO – NSW*

Teacher: Mrs Wilkins





Streets of Melbourne

Photo: F. Jones

THE streets of Melbourne get harder and greyer each day. They give no refuge, they have no life. They are merciless. Graffiti is the only art I see, the only literature I read. Scraps are my cuisine, garbage bind my delicatessen. I am old. I am grey. I blend in with the landscape of Melbourne.

I dread each day. Each day must end with a night. For me, night means a stiff back from a park bench, or if God smiles down on me, a roof. What must people think when they glance at me? Tonight – It is a lucky night. Down the dusty alleyway full of spilt bins with delicious food in them, I can just make out the distant framework of a new house. The place is deserted. My aching legs crawl up the groaning stairs. They creak with every agonising step I take. It is as if they know how I feel. It feels good to know that somebody, something knows how you feel. I trudge into the first doorway. I lay myself down onto the bare ground. I don't even notice the cold. It is at least better than the park bench.

I wake up hours later – I have never been a good sleeper. I still feel slightly drowsy.

Forty years of sleeping in the unknown – the unknown watching you – you trying to understand the unknown. I light a candle clumsily, and rest my head on a joist. The flame dances. Amidst the flames I can see my daughter Angie. Where is she now? Walking the streets of Melbourne like me? No place to go – no reason to go on? I hope not.

Once I had money – however I never had enough. I had a family too – a wife and a daughter. The pawn-broker became our banker. Eventually, we ran out of things to sell.

I'll never forget the last time I saw Angie. A friend and I had been collecting cigarette butts at the railway station; we would roll the tobacco from them into a decent smoke, and then sell them. But we knew we wouldn't get far like that. We only sold two in four days – for ten cents each. While we were gone, Angie would make toast and sell them on the road. It never worked out. Our toaster was broken. Every time toast spat out, it was burnt. One day, Angie had had enough, and she ran away. That time I was still quite fit, but she was

nimble. She cut in and out of the streets until I lost her.

Suddenly, my thoughts were cut off by a man and his family standing at the doorway. "Get out", muttered the father in a firm voice. "Get out!" This time he was mad.

"I – I just want stay here for one nigh–"

"I said get out, you hag!"

No use dealing with those people, I shuffled out the doorway. As I went past the family, the last member was a small girl. She was crying. She looked familiar. I winked at her. A sad wink.

The streets of Melbourne get harder and greyer each day. Each day, I know my time is drawing to a close. As the streets of Melbourne get harder and greyer, so do I.

By John Zhu

*Year 7, Melbourne Grammar School
MELBOURNE – VIC.
Teacher: Mr Leslie*

The Fire of All Terrors!

THE fire of all terrors! I stare out of the loud, gleaming, red fire brigade, as we speed out of the station, it is the middle of the night! Racing through Collins Street to the Myer Business Building.

A gas leak caused the centre of the building to explode with large amounts of searing hot metal flying through the air. We stop just outside the kilometre mark, where the heavy rescue men have parked and set up. I jump out at a rapid speed pulling the bar on the fire brigade and lifting the shutters.

I passed breathing apparatus to the two other firemen and myself, while the other two firemen unreeled the hoses and switched on the pumps. Once the

pumpmen gave us the heads up, we ran in and covered the door with water.

When the fire on the door was put out we inspected the damage and signalled the helicopter which was preparing for a water drop. When the pilot gave us the OK signal, we switched off the hoses and pulled back. After five minutes a huge gush of water came spitting out of the container straight onto the fire, putting out all the outer levels. The heavy rescue team put out the rest of the fire while we packed up. It was just another day in... the life of a fireman.

By *Nicholas Argiriou*
Year 7, Caulfield Grammar School
CAULFIELD – VIC.
Teacher: Laurette Austin



THE morning bird sings a sorrowful song, and wakes the abandoned kitten resting in the snow from a pillaged sleep the night before.

The kitten will grow accustomed to this order of dawn and dusk as it grows into a strong and handsome tom cat.

This cat will be rough from growing on the streets and may never be loved, the tom knows this.

But one night it will stumble upon a kind young girl who will give it milk and warmth by the fire she sat at.

Thus making the old tom's heart spark and glow like the soft warm glow of the embers in the little girl's fire.

By *Lilli Allan*
Year 6
Vistara Primary School
RICHMOND HILL VIA LISMORE – NSW
Teacher: Tara MacPhail and Leah Bryce

FIRE



Sapphire Falls

'COME on. It's just a little further.' I looked up at Dylan's soft face, his expression adventurous and devilish, his skin shining with sweat. My gaze then travelled down to his left hand, which had been extended out towards me. I considered it and then, reluctantly, took it and let him lead me further. He smiled a perfect smile and squeezed my hand playfully.

As we walked, I observed my surroundings. We were deep inside a beautiful, untouched forest. There were so many gum trees that the sun only just shone through, but just in small patches that resembled spotlights. It was mid-summer and a gentle warm breeze would make the trees sway and their leaves brush my exposed arms. My thin white dress was torn slightly by branches, but I barely noticed. All I could feel was my heart beating in my head, the sweat on my face and his hand on mine, pulling me deeper and deeper into this effortlessly and naturally beautiful place.

I was tired, however, which made it hard to walk. Plus I was mildly scared because I had no idea where he was taking me. He told me I would love it, but if it took that long to get there, I wasn't sure that I would. He had told me that he would take me somewhere special today for my birthday. But what did he think special was?

Eventually, the sun began to set and I was getting nervous. I was just about to say something when he interrupted. 'We're here!' he announced triumphantly. At first I didn't quite understand what he meant by 'here' but then I looked around and realised.

We had arrived at a clearing. It wasn't cluttered with teenagers and tourists though, unlike most other places in this town. It was empty. Well, not entirely empty. In between the sandy, but rocky ground we stood on and a bit of grassy land that stood just outside a wall of gum trees that lay opposite to us, was a stream of fresh flowing water, completely unpolluted and reflecting the few fragments of light that remained in the evening sky. My gaze followed along the stream until it came to the source of the water. A blue-white glittering waterfall cascaded over a small cliff that rose a few metres above us. The water crashed with a kind of violent beauty when it hit the stream and sprayed water onto me, making Dylan shake with laughter and hug me to him, rubbing my arms in a futile attempt to dry them off. He was warm though, so that was enough.

I eventually pulled away from him and ran to the water's edge, peering in to see what I could find. All I found was a faint reflection of a 16 year old girl with long, dark hair that had been tangled by the breeze and an expression that made her appear to be the happiest girl in the world, with a handsome 17 year old boy standing beside her, looking at her with adoration. I turned away from the river to face him and grinned when he pulled me into his arms.

I never forgot that day. 17th of January, 2010. The day I turned 16. The day I discovered Sapphire Falls. The day I danced in the water with Dylan until I was completely drenched. It was the best day of my life.

But, most importantly, it was the day I, Emma Green, fell in love.

By Isobel Benn Vertigan

Year 8

*Springwood High School
SPRINGWOOD – NSW*

A Memory Lost

THE female police officer squeezed my shoulder as she led me out of the barn and into the yard. Joe followed close behind, guarding me like a hawk.

"Try to remember", she told me gently. I squeezed my eyes shut, searching my aching brain, for any clue, any trace, of a memory once lost. The faint smell of hay wafted past and a cool breeze picked my hair up and played with it gently. I had forgotten how quiet the countryside was. Then again, I had forgotten who my parents were. "Try harder", the red haired police officer urged. My eyes snapped open and my nostrils flared, but I kept my patience. Joe, my boyfriend, stroked my hair gently and kissed my head. This stupid copper didn't know how hard this was going to be. I scoured my surroundings, searching for anything that could trigger a memory. The old barn, its paint peeling, the paddocks, the dead grass. Then, suddenly, I saw it. A tyre swing hanging from an old birch tree in the corner of the garden.

My name, so I have been told, is Andrea Bell. I was born at Evandale farm on the fourteenth of April, 1976. I grew up on that farm until I was sixteen; then it happened. I don't actually know what "it" was. That's why I was here, at a tired old farm that I apparently used to live on. After it happened, I was rushed to hospital with trauma, amnesia and head injuries. The police then visited the farm to find the bodies of my parents and my younger sister, Amy Bell, missing. They returned with the bad news, and that was when I met Joe. He came into the hospital, looking for his dying grandma. He saw me, and I think it was.... Well, love at first sight. He came straight to my bed, and he knew my name. I said we had never met and a strange expression crossed his face. Then he stuck out his hand and said cordially "Hello Andrea, my name is Joseph Brown". A mysterious smile crossed his face. "There, we've met." I laughed, and from that day on he visited me in hospital with flowers.

I gasped aloud and the officer spun around to face me.

"Well?" she asked urgently. Joe's arm tightened around my waist. A loud bang sent me whirling backwards. Joe caught

me and held me tight, pinning my arms to my sides.

"What do you see?" the police women asked softly. Blood splattered onto my face and I screamed, clawing at my skin. Joe's grip tightened and he whispered to me soothingly. My dad fell to the ground before my eyes, and the man holding the gun turned the pistol to my mum. He pulled the trigger, and my mother fell backwards into the tyre swing, where her body hung in lifelessly, half out of the tyre, swinging back and forth slowly. A small pool of blood was dripping from her head. Then the man turned, to face me with an insane grin marring his usually handsome features; Joe.

I screamed and wrenched myself from Joe's arms. He sat on the swing and began swaying softly.

"I had to, you see", he said softly. He pulled out a gun and began toying with it. "Your father found out I had been following you. You told him, of course", he said with annoyance. "Anyway, when I turned up that night he was waiting. He told me to stay away, your mother heard the raised voices and came out into the yard." The red head officer had dropped to her knees and was shouting at Joe. I was staring at him, listening to the tale as it all came back to me. "I shot him." I started sobbing uncontrollably. "Then, I shot your mother." He grinned again and I stepped back. The police officer's continuous shouts were deafening, but all I could hear was one question running through my mind.

"What did you do to Amy?" I shouted. "What did you do to my sister?"

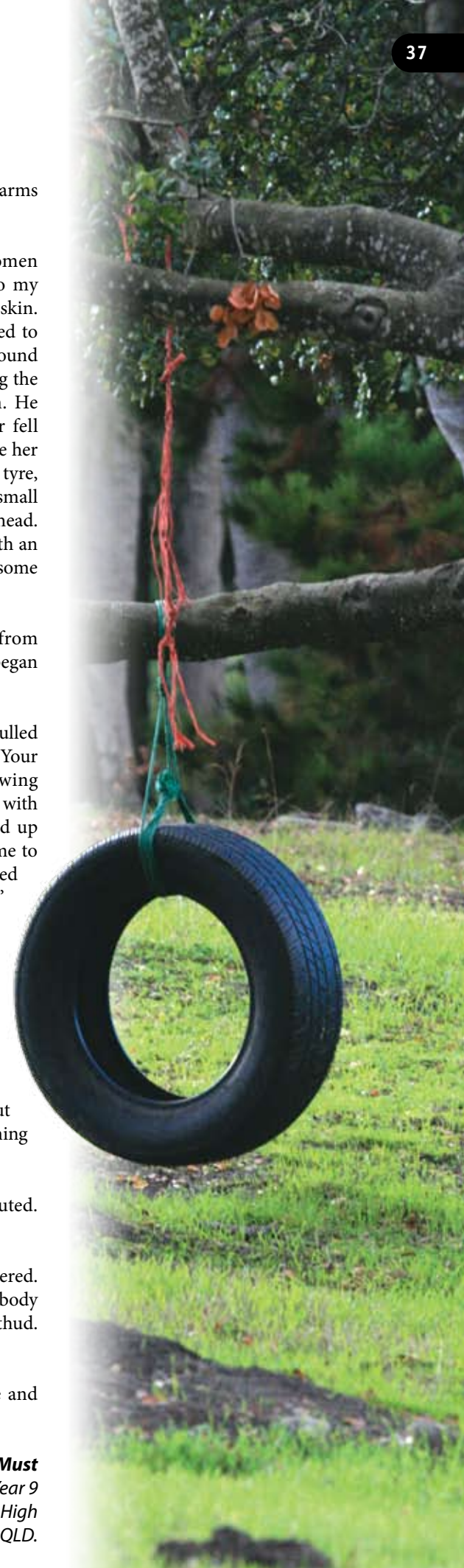
"Wouldn't you like to know", he sneered. He shot the officer beside me, and her body fell to the ground with a sickening thud. Then he turned to me.

Behind him, Amy raised dad's rifle and fired.

By Robyn Must

Year 9

*Southport State High
SOUTHPORT – QLD.*



The Life That Once Was Here

By **Adrian Harper-Gomm**
Year 9, Kambrya College
BERWICK – VIC.
Teacher: Mrs Odile Oliver

The break of dawn paints a soft, pale blue sky
The stars twinkle out in the blink of an eye,
The flowers open up with a welcome embrace
Honeyeaters flutter and dance with such beautiful grace.

The sun reaches its zenith, beating down on a parched landscape
The heat rises in waves resembling ripples through a flowing silk drape,
A geyser froths and gurgles barely containing its furore
With a burst of surging water it blasts an almighty roar.

The afternoon sun casts shadows over rolling sand dunes
Rolling and clearing our minds like sweet, pleasant tunes,
A gentle zephyr whispers through a lush vibrant forest
As the day becomes calm, unsuspecting and modest.

Dusk brings with it dark, dull grey skies
“The calm before the storm” an old sea dog cries,
As beads of raindrops tumble from the heavens up high
The sky opens up with an extraordinary cry.

Thunder reverberates through the wild, thrashing sea
Rumbles through the leaves of an ancient oak tree,
It rocks in a gale, swaying to and fro
As the lightning arouses with a spectacular light show.

Then all too soon the storm comes to a halt
The wind is replaced with a waft of sea salt,
The clouds have parted to reveal the stars so bright
With a dimly lit moon on a gelid winter’s night.

The break of dawn paints a soft, pale blue sky
The stars twinkle out in the blink of an eye,
Our ever changing planet continues on its way
To create a world of wonder from the break of dawn each day.

SHAKING THE SPEARE

When I ponder the development of mankind
I hold my breath with awe and wonder
Wires, mice and remotes I now find
Form becomes picture and I thunder
How could this artless frame be so?
Where my globe is shrunk into a puny capsule
Unable to express highs and lows
Of theatre, my wondrous, beautiful circle
I peer 'round and view the lights
Sound and laughter of families, joyful
Bound together to greater heights
That I had ever seen plentiful
I watch the pixel screen today
And observe from above while my body decays

By **Danika Adamski**
Year 7, Smiths Hill High School
WOLLONGONG – NSW
Teacher: Mr Comans



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