

OZ KIDS IN PRINT



May 2013

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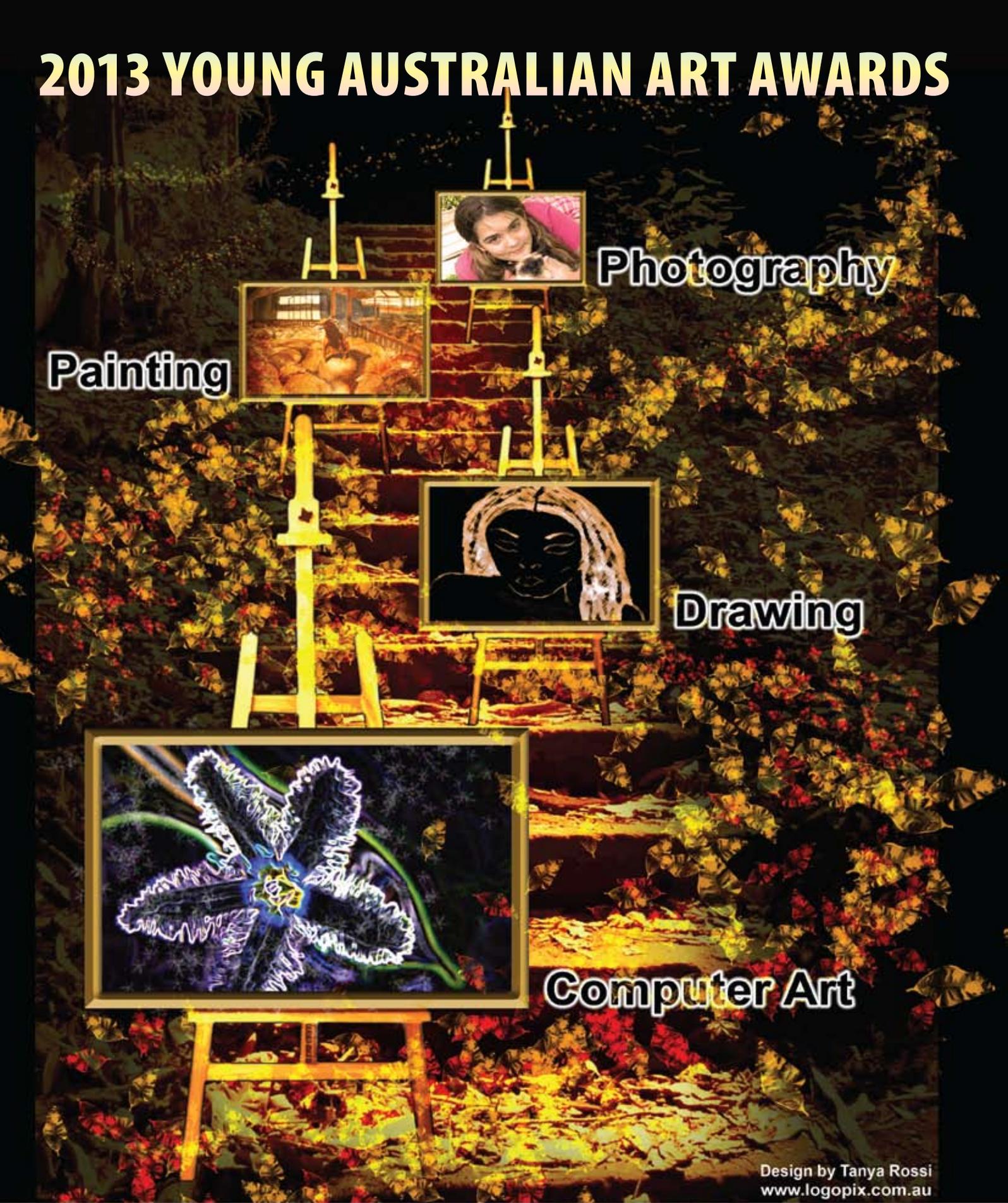
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FREE ENTRY

**TO STUDENTS IN PRIMARY OR
SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Proudly supported by the Australian Government

2013 YOUNG AUSTRALIAN ART AWARDS



Painting

Photography

Drawing

Computer Art

Design by Tanya Rossi
www.logopix.com.au

www.YoungAtArt.com.au

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

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

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

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The year is flying. The on-line entries close on 1st October at 5pm. But don't leave it until the last minute to enter.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE make sure your document has proper punctuation and please use common Arial or Times Roman as the font. The website converts the text, and sometimes the " and ' are converted to strange boxes instead of what they are meant to be. Please use capitals where required as well. This is a WRITING competition which includes punctuation etc.

ENTER ON-LINE at
www.ozkids.com.au



KEEP ON WRITING (TYPING)!

Carol Dick
Managing Editor

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BOOK REVIEW

Gracie and Josh

by Susanne Gervay & Serena Geddes

Ford Street Publishing

PB & HB—5+ Price (AUD): HC \$26.95, PB \$16.95

ISBN: HC 9781921665844, PB 9781921665851

Reviewer: Jenny Mounfield

'My name is Gracie. Today, I'm a squiggly black spider.

My brother Josh helps me make my spider legs. They look like fat sausages.

Josh gives me his woolly black beanie. His favourite one has green stripes.'

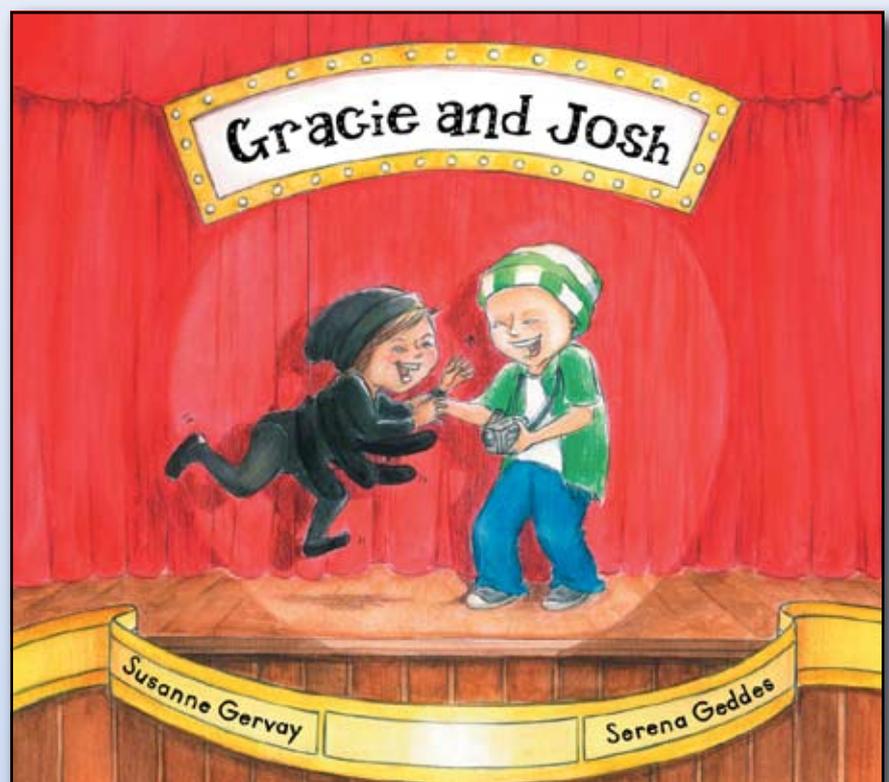
Josh is going to be a famous movie-maker. Dressed in her spider costume, Gracie is starring in her brother's first film. The only thing to mar this perfect picture of childhood is Josh's cancer.

It isn't often—if ever—that a picture book has the power to bring a lump to my throat. This one did it for me. Endorsed by Variety the children's charity, *Gracie and Josh* is not a story about fighting a life-threatening disease; it's a story about

life and living—and milking every drop from every minute we have been given. This is a profound lesson for us all. Sadly, the world is filled with children like Gracie and Josh. Every one of them is undoubtedly a hero.

Susanne Gervay's best-selling books include: *I Am Jack*, *That's Why I Wrote This Song* and *Ships in the Field*. She was awarded the Lady Cutler Award for Distinguished Service to Children's Literature and an Order of Australia OAM.

Serena Geddes began her career as an illustrator for Walt Disney Australia. Since 2009 she has illustrated 14 titles including: picture book, *Samuel's Kisses* and junior fiction, *Totally Twins*.



I Am The One, The One With It All

They serve our country, proud and fearless,
Diseases and amputees, spread throughout the hospital,
Begging and crying, brings me down, but thankful that they still have their life.

As I watch them laying there, it hurts me.
At night, it's dark and dreary,
The fevered beds surrounding me.

With loving care, they get better each day,
Guiding the survivors through their night of pain,
Wishing there was someone for me, to get me through the night.
Not being able to sleep, waking up with the haunting images,

Why can't there be someone for me?

The unkind sickness that the soldiers deal with,
Trying to stay happy, being cheerful bringing the soldiers' spirits up.
When they leave, a loving thank you always makes me a bit teary, but I pull through,
For the next patient that has to have my full attention for their survival.

Running out of morphine, the screams and the scenes,
When a poor innocent soldier is getting a leg or an arm cut off.
Only one word can describe it... horrific.
The blood stains on my hands, it never washes off,
Scrubbing and scrubbing, still no change, red raw, my blood mixing with theirs.

Blood pouring out,
Running out of bandages the only thing left is bed sheets.
As I tear off a strip, wrapping it around the patient's amputated leg,
The screams continue.

The long days mesh into one, extending months or years, it's all the same.
Getting through the pain, the tears, the screams,
The blood stains, the horrific scenes,
The wounds, the diseases,
The worst of them all,
Death...

The deaths of the ones we love the most.
The death of my own beloved, rocking him to his eternal sleep.

The spirit that these brave men bring to the world reminds me of my home town,
Helping each other through everything, our brothers, our families.
They fight for our safety, our lives, our country.
The light in their eyes,
Makes my world brighter,
I now know we will all get through the pain and the suffering.
We will get through this.
The Anzac spirit will get us through to the future.

By Sara Williams

Year 10

Sacred Heart College, VIC.

The String Movement

Following from the anti-bullying article from the last edition we have been sent information from Jade at Mansfield State High School in Queensland and how their school is working towards stamping out bullying.

Jade's message accompanies this article.

I hope other students and their schools can use this information and 'tie a string' and work together on anti-bullying.

My name is Jade and I am currently a year 11 student at Mansfield State High School in Queensland.

In your last issue I saw that there was a segment on bullying. With the help of some others from my school I am currently working on launching The String Movement in my school. The String Movement (<http://thestringmovement.com>) is an anti-bullying movement. To be part of The String Movement one must simply tie a piece of string around their wrist to show that they are against bullying.

The motto of The String Movement is 'Tie it! Tell it! Yell it!'. The idea behind this is that you tie the string to show you are against bullying, to create awareness, and to show that you are a refuge for those who have been bullied, to show them they aren't alone. 'Tell it' and 'Yell it' are all creating more awareness, spreading it through social media, social groups and schools.

Anyone who wishes to start this in their school can simply download a toolkit off The String Movement's website to help them get started. There are several helpful things in this toolkit including a sample letter to principal, posters, facts about bullying and much more.

Anyway the point of telling you about this is that I was hoping that maybe you could publish a segment about The String Movement. It is something I am really passionate about and I would love to see it spread further. If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to email me back or even visit The String Movement's website.

Bullying is something that can happen to everyone and not everyone realises what bullying actually is. People these days often don't realise what they are doing until it's too late.

I would love to hear back from you about this and hope we can work together to do something.

Thanks,
Jade

Dedicated to Mum

Mother's Day 2013

Mum, you are my golden star
You have no idea how special you are.

On this special Mother's Day
I want to kiss you and hug you and shout hooray!

You teach me, you play with me, you help me to learn
And on this Mother's Day, it is my turn
To thank you for all that you can do
And let you know that I love you too.

You are my best friend
And I hope that our friendship never comes to an end.

So as we forward to the 12th of May
I hope you have a wonderful Mother's Day!

By **Brigette Lill**
Year 4, Loreto Kirribilli
KIRRIBILLI - NSW





THE JOURNEY

AS SOON as I commenced my journey I knew it was going to be difficult.

Once, when the sky still seemed blue, and the sun still gave light to the jungle of tomorrow, I had life. It still shocks me how quickly one's self can come apart, but now, the journey over, the sun has risen over the golden meadow, life is sweet again.

I still remember, clear, as though it were yesterday. The fight. The knife. Nothing can make me forget.

The gentle thud of an empty glass upon a bench. Darkness closing in. A few precious hours where I no longer had to live with myself. No ale, however strong, could make me forget. I killed a man.

The blood purges my dreams of their once childish innocence. The life fading from those grey eyes.

The lights flashed... blue, white, blue, white. The slam of an iron door. The click of a lock... Drowning in a cold cage of despair. Two years of steel, grey light coming through the barred windows. Two years in the company of the man I despised more than any other. The man I was.

The gates open, light floods in, yet the sky is grey, its light sheds no warmth. Freedom, for the first time in years, but can freedom really exist under the enslavement of Satan's amber nectar?

Respect is not something that just happens. It is always pre-empted by a singular, unearned act of kindness.

Imagine.

Walking up to me. A homeless drunk.

"I can help you."

A bed. Clean clothes. Compassion. It was not easy for either of us. He is a man I respect infinitely more than myself. The journey had begun. The mid-winter sun pushed through the clouds. The clouds I had created.

Every day, my clothes were clean. Every day, I had food. Every day the sun rose a little higher in its celestial dance. No battle is more difficult than the one with yourself.

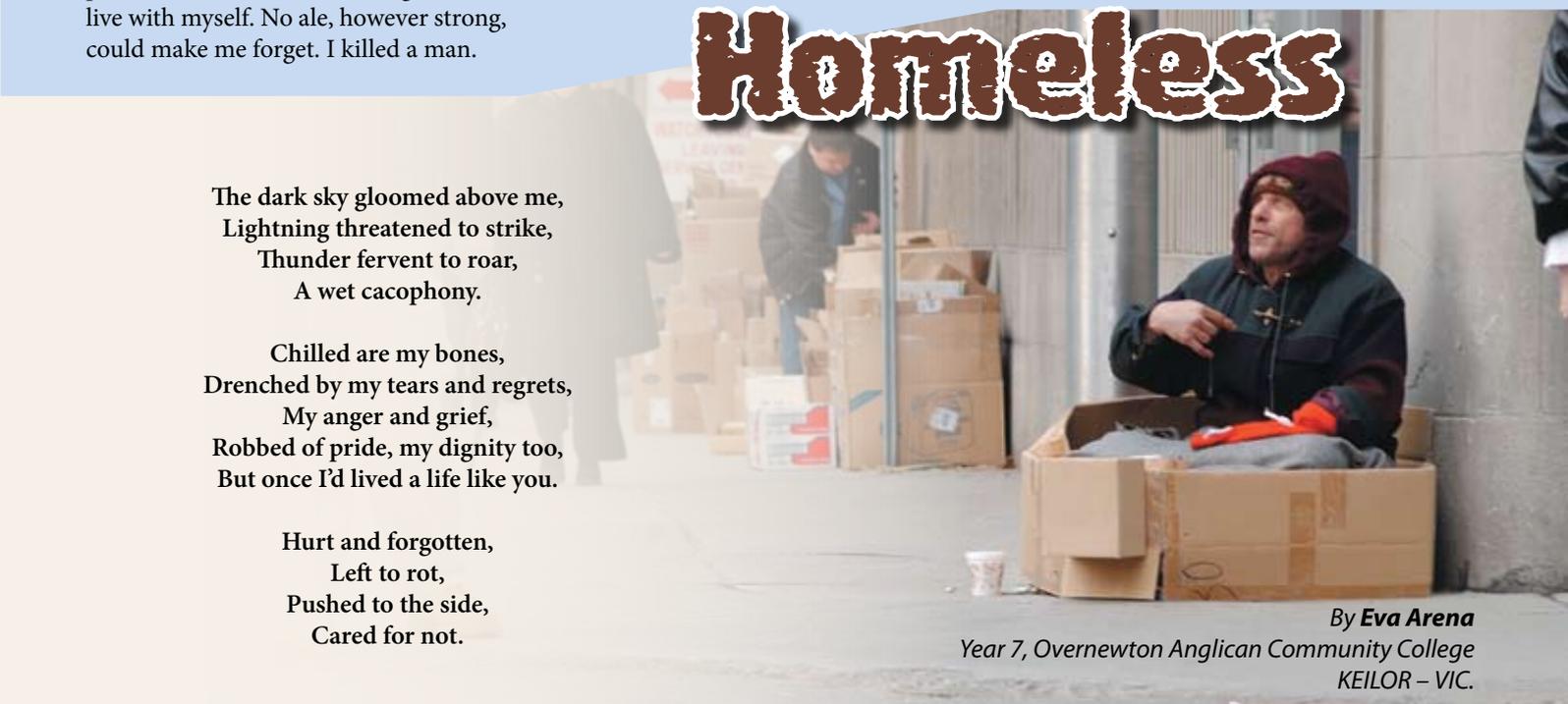
The mist began to clear, the warmth of compassion reached out and touched my crippled soul. As God's touch made Adam, so it made me. I may never forget what I did, but while a feeble sun peeks through the blanketing cloud, while my children still play, I can live.

This is my Journey.

*"Who must do the hard things?
He who can" – Confucius.*

By **Timothy Oslington**
Age 14, Sydney Grammar School
DARLINGHURST – NSW

Homeless



The dark sky gloomed above me,
Lightning threatened to strike,
Thunder fervent to roar,
A wet cacophony.

Chilled are my bones,
Drenched by my tears and regrets,
My anger and grief,
Robbed of pride, my dignity too,
But once I'd lived a life like you.

Hurt and forgotten,
Left to rot,
Pushed to the side,
Cared for not.

By **Eva Arena**
Year 7, Overnewton Anglican Community College
KEILOR – VIC.

Cruel Awakening

CREPT out into the silence, into the unknown, surrounded only by darkness. I noticed every crunch under my feet in the dry grass. I wished that my steps could become lighter, wished I could move silently and be unheard. I'd been in this valley many times before, but there was something different. Whether it be the gun I gripped in my hands or the full moon that stalked my every move, I was not sure, all I knew was that fear was not going to overtake me.

As I clambered into the rocky valley I held my father's gun close to my chest. It pressed against me with every breath; it was my protector and I was its hunter. It gave me power and made me into the man that my father was. He was man of great wisdom, one of respect and proud of every one of his achievements. Yet my father was not proud of me and all I hoped for was to gain his respect. I had taken his treasured gun, removed it from its podium and away from his prize. Without it the wall was bare, except for the decaying antlers of an ancient Fallow stag, my father's first kill, and soon it would be replaced with mine.

Twigs caught my legs as I danced among fireflies through the thorn bushes. Their light illuminated the gateway that loomed before me and I realised my insignificance in this wall of trees. As I stood there I almost expected to be asked for a password, for a bellowing voice to grant me entry into the fortress that towered over me. I felt like I needed permission to walk among the beech trees, to make my imprint in the soil. I looked back over my shoulder to relish in the accomplishment of my journey, but there was only the darkness of the night behind me. The damp smell of built up leaves was pungent to my nose, not repelling me but drawing me into the forest. No light reached the ground here, as if it was sucked into the sparsely toothed leaves above. I was in darkness; the moon was no longer my observer. I was on my own. As I wandered deeper into the deciduous trees, I had become smaller in the great supremacy that they held.

The gleam of a moon ray caught a beechnut, lighting it like a diamond. It was magical. I had a childlike instinct to collect every one that I saw as if they were precious coins and someone would take them from me. I filled my pockets with them and began dropping one with every few steps in the heavy soil of this worn path to mark out my voyage. There was little undergrowth from the beech trees and the journeys of those who walked before me could still be seen. They remained untouched as if the forest wanted to tell tales of who had stepped among it and created paths in this ancient citadel. The scuffed soil wove between the marked trees, and carvings of friends and lovers' names were graffitied in

their delicate bark. I became immersed in my surroundings, and every tree seemed to read, "You will not grow up to be a man, you will never be me". My father's words were ingrained into the silver coating of each tree. As I walked along, I could hear his voice echoing through the treetops. It repeated those same words, each time burrowing deeper into my skin.

I made my way to where the fresh shoots of the beech trees grew, to where the light shone in this cold, dark place. There it stood grazing in front of me, captured in a spotlight as the moon's rays beamed down into the clearing. The white mottles were illuminated against its chestnut coat. It did not possess the dominance of a stag, but the beauty of a Fallow doe. Her head remained bowed when I positioned myself on the edge of the dark surrounding holly, and she refused to look up into my fixated eyes. She was nothing but an innocent creature of the night. Yet the more I looked at her, the more my hands rose, the more they brought up this weapon of might. I was mesmerised. My hands shook like the wavering canopy above. My mind was empty. A shot rang through the air. Then silence became deafening.

I just stood there staring, staring at what I had done. I wished it away. There lay this creature, no longer the stunning beauty of this forest, but a victim of cold death. She was imprinted into the carpeted foliage of the woods that I had invaded. Her glass eyes looked into me, not with hatred but with purity, reflecting the night sky above. She was not a trophy of a kill, nor did I deserve respect. I could run now and tell my father of my actions, but I did not feel proud. I had murdered her, along with the man that I wanted to become.

As I left, my father's words were no longer heard, but instead the disheartening folk ballad of *The Three Ravens*, "Downe there comes a Fallow doe, as great with young as she may goe". The moon no longer followed me when I made my way out of the woods and back across the valley. It was hidden behind the clouds as if it were ashamed of me and so it should be.

By **Ellen Thomas**

Year 12, Eynesbury Senior College
ADELAIDE – SA

Journey

I'm eight years old.
The sun's just streaming through the leaves of the trees,
Down there, in front of the fence.
Lots of people go there.
But not this time.
There's no one here but me.
The trees greet me as an old friend.
The wooden stumps, too.
The wood chip heap.
And I sit against one of the trees
And stare, up, into the sky.
A journey, the clouds sing, your journey.
Your journey...

I'm ten years old.
The rain's just falling through the leaves of the trees,
Down there, near the basketball court.
Lots of people go there.
But not this time.
There's no one here but me.
The trees greet me as an old friend,
Moreton Bay, Sycamore,
Willow, Wattle.
And I lean against the Moreton Bay tree
And stare, up, into the sky.
A journey, the rain says, your journey.
Your journey...

I'm twelve years old.
The wind's just flying through the leaves of the trees,
Down there, beside the canteen.
Lots of people go there.
But not this time.
There's no one here but me.
The trees greet me as an old friend.
The uneven lawn,
The flowering bushes.
And I stand beside the trees
And stare, up, into the sky.
A journey, the wind whispers, your journey.
My journey...

By **Ophilia Kong**
Year 7, SCEGGS
DARLINGHURST – NSW

For The Kids

This one is for those kids at school,
The freaks, the nerds, the jerks, the tools.
This goes out to the kids that are down,
Laughed at by the other kids in the town.

This is for the ones who have anxiety attacks,
Who find it hard to sit down and relax.
This goes out to the kids who drink their sorrows,
Who think about now and not tomorrow.

This one is for the kids on the street,
Whose homes are now the cold concrete.
This is for the kids who grew up too fast,
Who can't look back on a childish past.

This one goes out to the kids who get straight A's,
Who live in a world of pressure and dismay.
This one goes out to the kids who simply dismiss,
The cuts and scars that cover their wrists.

This one is for those kids who hide,
Being themselves isn't something they've tried.
This is one for those kids who cry,
Who wake up in the morning with blood shot eyes.

This goes out to the kids who pretend,
Who can't tell the truth to their closest friend.
This is for the kids that don't understand,
Whose mind and thoughts are getting out of hand.

This is for the kids contemplating suicide,
Who think things would've been better if they had died.
This goes out to every single person,
Whether things are getting better or beginning to worsen.

But most importantly, this one goes out to you,
No matter if you're broken or happy or angry or blue.

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

Paradise

Raisin toast at dawn with a lingering scent
or waves rolling in just kissing the shore
anything, absolutely anything whether it be less or more
time spent in your paradise is time well spent
It may be crowded city streets or rolling hills you see
it may be the highest peak or the lowest lake you can find
paradise is in the heart, it's in the soul, it's in the mind
paradise is nothing more than where you're longing to be
Finding it is easy, getting there is hard
not everything goes your way when you open your eyes
people will put themselves in harm, coming out bruised and scarred
much too often that serenity turns out to be nothing but lies
But as we lie here watching the flicker of that tiny star
I am certain that paradise is wherever you are

By Caitlyn Lawson
Year 9, Mount Gambier High School
MT. GAMBIER – SA

Empty Hopes

A light from afar I do see,
Like a lone lighthouse shining amidst a raging sea,
A bright shining star of truth and fidelity,
So close to my heart, yet aeons from reality,
How can anyone resist for so long,
A heart's desire that is forever strong.

Greed, hope, hope and greed,
Each hungry mind eager to feed,
On hope's fledgling seed,
Restraint is a word that they will not heed,
When they see that light from afar,
They seek their own heart's shining star.

Some will grab that star with both hands,
Giving in to their heart's incessant demands,
Yet they find that the ones who never reached their star,
Are happier and more content by far,
For they still nurture hope's seed,
Growing a tree, feeding on yearning and need.

In the dark despair of the night the stars shine brighter,
Not until dawn does the temptation grow lighter,
And once our hopes become reality we see,
They aren't all what we thought they would be,
So we move onto new dreams, new desires,
And over the ashes of empty hopes we light new fires.

By Matthew Harper-Gomm
Year 9, Kambrya College
BERWICK – VIC.

Creative Net



Dear Literacy Educator

Take a look at Creative Net. We have authors and illustrators who you won't find on other speakers' agency sites. Better still, Creative Net is the only speakers' agency in Australia that doesn't charge a booking fee. Our services to you are completely free.

We also organise literary events for schools. Students pay \$20 + GST and we provide the MC, authors and illustrators for a day which includes three workshops from each of the presenters, a launch, book signings, etc – everything you would expect from a festival, plus free show bags each containing a Ford Street book and merchandise (worth around \$20).

Ask us about our PD seminars for TLs/educators, too. (We organised the two highly successful Keeping Books Alive seminars at the RACV Club.)

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ISLAND OF THE UNDEAD

THE soldiers, all well-built but lean and fit, stood at attention in the army base. They were dressed in camouflage and anticipated their new mission with excitement! The weather outside was horrible, turning the tracks into slush and mud. “Here is your mission”, instructed General Whiskey, as he handed the paper to the team leader, Frost.

“Accepted”, replied Frost.

He marched over to the helicopter and his team followed – there were three other men in his team: Chemo, the heavy weapons specialist; Sandrio, the best shot with a sniper; and The Rookie, who was an all-rounder. As the team entered the helicopter, Chemo asked the General, “Aren’t these the co-ords that were used by this helicopter that went missing a few months back?”

“Aye”, replied Whiskey, as the helicopter took off. It thumped and hammered through the air and the men gazed out through the window as they saw the land slowly get smaller until there was nothing but deep blue ocean beneath them.

“So, where the heck are we going?”, asked Sandrio.

“To an...”, Frost was cut off by a scream from the pilot. The helicopter started to ferociously spin in circles and it fell into a spiral as it dived toward the ocean. Frost woke dazed and confused on a sandy beach. He sat up and dusted sand and seaweed from his body. He saw a strange blurry figure walking towards him, and soon realised that it was the injured pilot. He had a nasty wound on his hand. Just as Frost stood up, he heard a loud bang

and the pilot fell right on top of him. He realised that the pilot had been shot in the back! Frost quickly took his side arm from the holster and saw a barely human creature, with its limbs seemingly hanging by sinews and bone, with eyes falling out of their sockets – a terrifying zombie-like creature – which was holding a knife. It instantly charged him with no care for its own safety. Frost fired his side arm once and the zombie’s head flew right off in an explosion of blood and gore.

“What was that?”, Frost questioned himself. His thinking was suddenly interrupted by a burst of automatic weapons fire. Frost dashed along the beach in the direction of the noise and saw another one of those creatures attacking Sandrio. This one had its head barely stable on top of the neck dangling hideously from side to side. Frost crept up behind the creature, like a Ninja, and drew his knife. In one quick blow the monster’s head was no more. The body shuddered and seemed to continue, but finally fell and lay still.

“Thanks”, said Sandrio, as Frost helped him up from the ground.

“Do you know what that thing was?”, asked Sandrio.

“No idea”, replied Frost, “but whatever it is, it wants us dead.”

Frost looked around and saw a sheer cliff leading up to a dense jungle. It became apparent that they had crash landed on a zombie infested, deserted island.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the island, The Rookie was experiencing some difficulties of his own. He had swum in a different direction to the other two, and wound up on the jungle side of the island. He only had three rounds for his side arm, and there was a swarm of horrifying zombies heading his way. At first he couldn’t make out what or who they were, but as they approached he heard moaning and saw the advanced state of decomposition of most of their bodies. They were the walking dead, their bodies missing limbs and fingers and eyes and pieces of skull. He found the strength to shoot one of them down but two more quickly took its place, lurching towards him.

He collapsed to the ground and hit his head on something hard. He turned to see what caused the discomfort and saw Chemo was hiding behind a bush and pointing at something near him. His vision was foggy but he could easily work out that there was a frag grenade lying right next to him. He picked it up, bit off the pin, and threw it at the advancing creatures which all the energy he had. There was an ear piercing sound as the zombies screamed in horror as the nade detonated right on top of them. Bits of zombie scattered into the air like fireworks.

“Good to see you”, said Chemo, as The Rookie stood up and brushed himself



off. "So, what now?" asked The Rookie with a slightly sour voice. "Find the Commander", replied Chemo. Frost and Sandrio scampered across the beach, looking for the crash site of the helicopter; but to no avail.

"What the heck!", exclaimed Sandrio as they returned back to the dead zombie on the beach,

"Where could it be?"

"I have no idea", said Frost, as he sat down to take a break. A few minutes later they set out looking for a way off the beach and found a strangely shaped cave with a small piece of helicopter blade sitting

at the entrance. They proceeded with caution into the cave. While they were moving deeper into the cave, they were ambushed by a swarm of zombies but managed to take them out with another grenade. They continued down a narrow tunnel until, to their surprise, they found their helicopter in the corner of a large cavern. They quickly grabbed the radio out of the cabin, with a couple of frags for security, and they started towards the surface. As they were leaving the cave, a massive swarm of zombies flushed out of the side tunnels, surrounding Frost and Sandrio. They threw all the frags they had, but more kept coming. Just as the zombies were upon them, Chemo and The Rookie came out of nowhere and opened fire. The

zombies, who were caught off guard by this manoeuvre, were blasted into a ball of flesh and bone, until they were no more.

"Where did you get all that ordnance?" asked Frost, as he saw Chemo firing an RPG at the remaining zombies.

"Let's just say that this island wasn't deserted", replied Chemo, as he signalled for the base to come and collect them, via the radio he had taken from Frost.

THE END

By **Jay Eckermann**
Year 5, The Essington School
DARWIN – NT

Circle of Life

As an infant, I looked around the play equipment.

Jordan sat with his Tonka trucks.

Lily played with Barbie dolls.

The other kids learnt how to tie their shoe laces.

Their clothes were too big, most of them hand me downs from older siblings.

Everyone was smiling.

As a child, I looked around the school yard.

Jordan sat alone because kids thought that he was weird for preferring Barbie dolls to Tonka trucks.

Lily still played with Barbie dolls because they make her popular.

The other kids learnt how to gossip.

They started to grow into their clothes.

Everyone still smiled.

As a teenager, I looked around the quadrangle.

Jordan still sat alone because last year he came out and said that he actually did prefer Barbie dolls to Tonka trucks and that it shouldn't matter. But it still did.

Lily started to look like a Barbie doll and she was still popular, especially with the boys but for all the wrong reasons.

The other kids learnt how to start rumours.

They grew out of their clothes but that didn't stop them from wearing them.

Everyone appeared to be smiling.

As an adult, I look around the university campus.

Jordan lives on the street because his parents kicked him out.

Lily smokes every illegal substance known to man and works her post at Kings Cross every night.

The other kids go to uni, applied for jobs, have grown up and become adults.

They have swapped school uniforms for suits and ties.

Everyone fakes a smile, but no one is happy.

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



My Visit in the Past

A narrative based on a visit to the McCrae Homestead

PSST! I've got a secret to tell! At McCrae Homestead, when we finished lunch, Mrs Darling said, "Come on, go on and have a play!". One of my friends brought a ball and it got stuck up a tree. I went to get it so I climbed up the tree. Just when I reached up to get it and I slipped. I fell to the ground with a big thud and fell unconscious. The last thing I remembered was the echoes of my friends calling my name...

I woke up and saw that everyone had disappeared. "Oh darn!" I muttered as all the buildings around also disappeared. Was this a trick? Then, a girl dressed in a frilly dress saw me and grinned. She ran towards me and grabbed my hand. She dragged me into her room and started introducing herself. "Hello, my name is Margaret Martha McCrae, but you can call me Margaret!"

"Hi, I'm Abby!" I replied. Margaret chuckled in an enthusiastic way and pointed at my pants. "Are you disguised as a boy?" she laughed, "Only boys wear trousers!". I blushed. Then her face turned serious. "Where did you come from anyway?" Margaret asked curiously. I really didn't know how to reply. "From the future", I answered.

Her eyes widened in shock. This was embarrassing. "That must explain the funny clothes then!" she laughed. Luckily for me, she was a positive thinker. My stomach growled and Margaret chuckled. "You

must be hungry!" she exclaimed. I nodded. We snuck into the kitchen and grabbed some bread and some snacks. One the way I noticed there were barrels everywhere. There was also this strange box with legs standing in cups. It had holes in the sides and a door. I asked "What's that thingy?" and pointed to the strange object. "It's a cool chest", Margaret said. "It keeps our food cold. Those cups drown the ants so the ants can't ruin the food." She explained. Then I told her we had fridges. Margaret was impressed. "I wish I could come visit your world," she sighed. "I really want to use a toilet!" she laughed. Then we had a feast! I asked her for a tour around the house. She agreed.

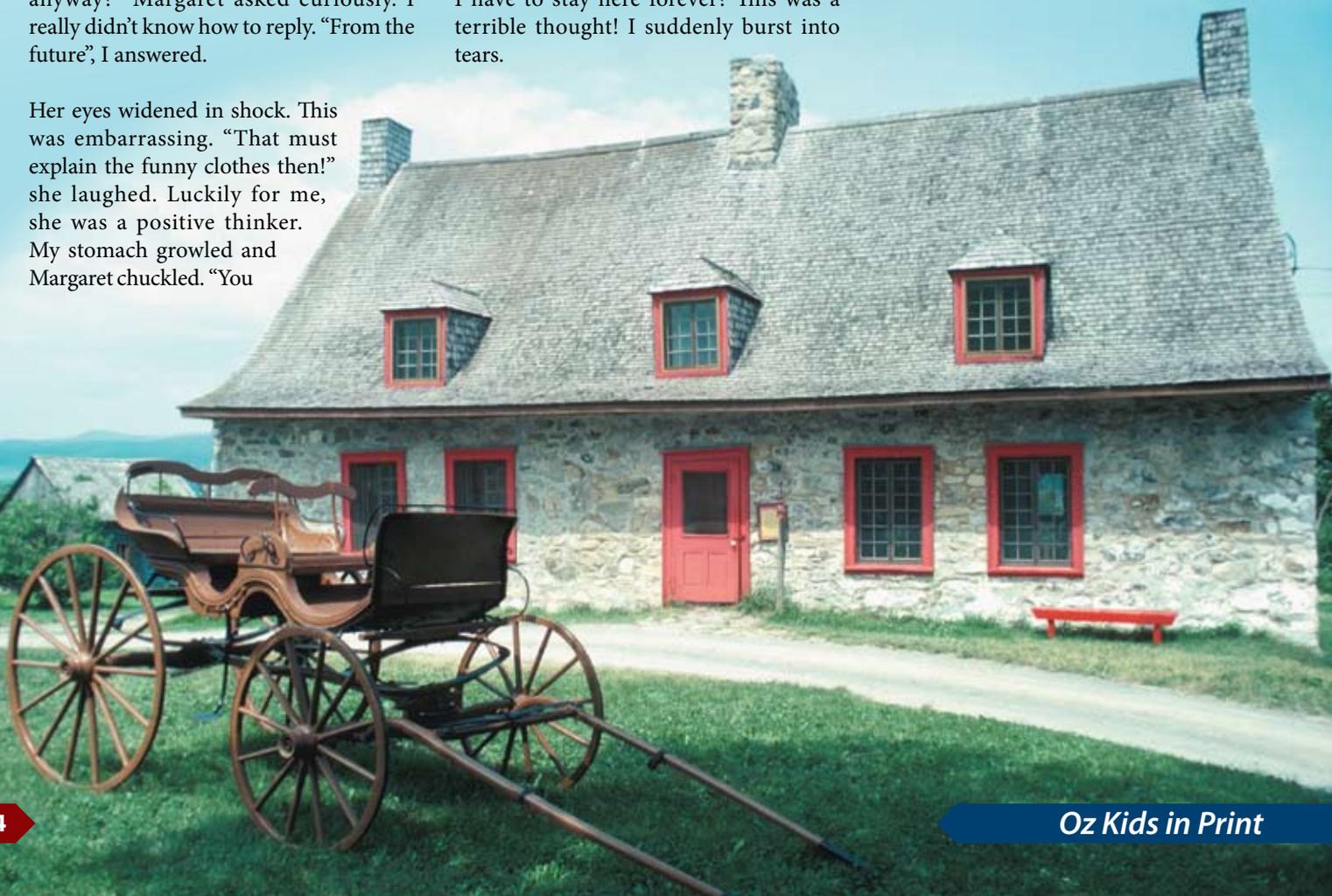
In the lounge there was a piano where the McCraes would gather in the evening and listen to Georgiana play. Normally in the evening we would watch television. I imagined myself playing the piano in front of my family. I'd rate the place ten stars if there was a toilet. Just when Margaret showed me her mother's paintings, I suddenly froze. What am I doing here? Shouldn't I be on the bus? Are mum and dad fine? What if I can't go back? Will I have to stay here forever? This was a terrible thought! I suddenly burst into tears.

"I need to go home!" I cried. "I want to go home!" "Don't cry! It is fine, I'll help you..." Margaret assured me. "How are you supposed to know?" I asked. "I don't, but George should know!" Margaret ran off calling over and over "George!". Then a tall boy came holding Margaret's hand. "Good afternoon, I'm George Gordon McCrae. Call me George, Margaret says you come from the future. "How?" the boy said. So, I explained how I got there, again.

"So you fell off a tree?" George asked. "Yes, that tree!" I pointed to the big tree. "That settles it!" he declared. So then I climbed up that tree and slipped on purpose. I waved goodbye as the wind blew in my face and suddenly I was on that same tree reaching out for the ball. This time instead of slipping, I jumped off, landing on my feet. I'm sure my friends will never guess where I'd been and what I had been up to!

By Abby Poon

*Year 3, Huntingtower School
MT. WAVERLEY – VIC.*



ONE day there was a baby called Bernie who lived in the Amazon jungle.

One night he was gazing up at the moon and thought it was made out of banana.

In fact the biggest banana in the world!

He wanted it so much he would do anything for it. So, he tried as many ways as he could think of.

And you know, it depends on the tide for the moon. It could be a quarter moon, a half moon and what I know as a full moon.

One night it was half a moon but Bernie did not know that because he's just a baby!

So, Bernie thought some of it broke off and landed on land. He went looking everywhere for it.



It wasn't going so well.

He couldn't find it anywhere!

Soon, he gave up. So he went to the museum.

He found a competition advertisement.

'Who could fit the most bananas in their mouth at once...?'

Some people fitted five or six bananas but Bernie could fit 1,000 bananas in his mouth!

He could swallow them too! He was the winner!

He got a trophy shaped as a banana.

Because it was shaped as a banana he ate it!

So, whenever he found a medal or a trophy he would gobble it all up.

Soon he said, 'They taste so great, I will eat nothing but bananas!'

One day he ate a rotten banana. It was disgusting! He never ate a full brown banana ever, ever, ever, ever, again.

The end

By **Juliet Bond**

Year 3, St. Cecilia's Primary School
GLEN IRIS – VIC.

Australia

Australia is old to some people and new to other people.

It is great to live here.

We are happy and it is a fun place.

It is good to live here.

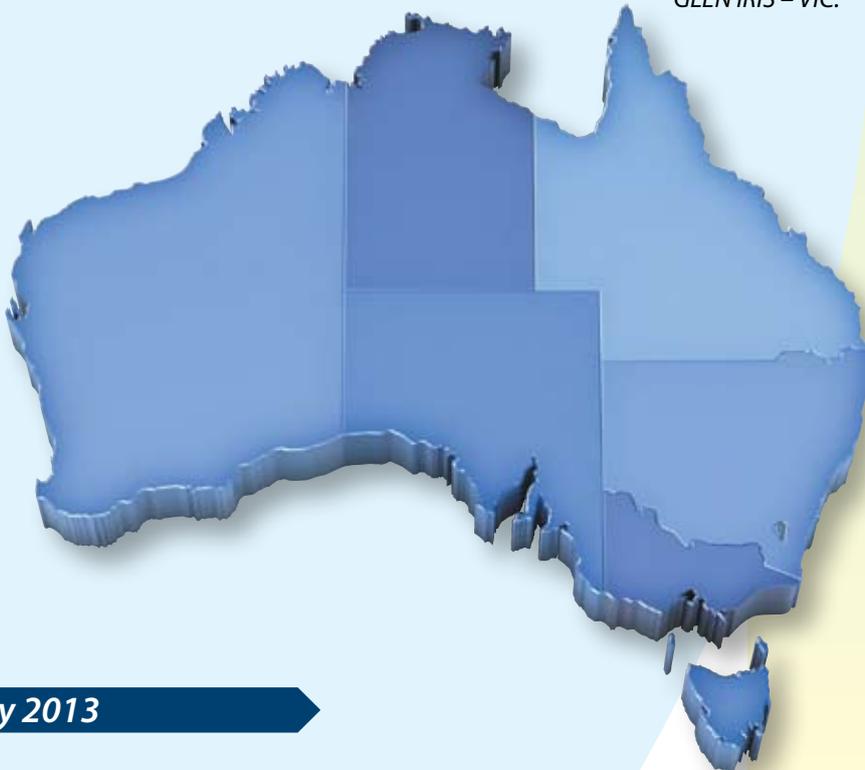
We work hard and it is safe.

Australia is a great place because not too many people live here

It is good because there is a lot of space.

By **Patrick Bright**

Year 3, St. Cecilia's Primary School
GLEN IRIS – VIC.



Love a Sunburnt Country

(inspired by Dorothea McKellar)

"I love a sunburnt country"

A land of waters blue,
A place of lavish wonders,
There for me and you,
Creatures of all kinds,
Great variety and range,
Rustling trees and shrubs,
With habitats so strange,

A federated country,
A land of open minds,
Harmoniously living,
With skins of different kinds,
A water bordered country,
Where raging rivers run,
Over jagged rocks,
Shimmering in the sun.

By **Eva Arena**

Year 7
Overnewton Anglican Community College
KEILOR – VIC.

Shine

(Written For A School Science Project – Using Fairytale Characters)



So she never leaves.

Every day, the nurse came up to the tower and handed Rapunzel her food. Sometimes she brought salad, sometimes meat, once she even brought fish and chips.

Rapunzel stares at the food with disgust. How could she be expected to eat that?

In her head she begins counting: twelve calories in every fifty grams of fish, along with the seventy calories with every fifty grams of batter, not to mention the fifty calories per chip. She'll turn into a balloon if she eats a single one of those. How can she be expected to eat those? She stares down at the flab on her arms.

Disgusting. Even Tiana looks better than she did and she's spent the last year thinking she was a frog, so God knows she never did any exercise.

It wasn't fair. Rapunzel never stopped moving – squats by her bedside, leg lifts under the table, star jumps and arm holds using the weights she had hidden under her wardrobe. She counted her carbs, she weighed herself in the morning and night (the nurses never really searched the room hard enough to find half the things they weren't allowed. The girls here were cunning. Cinderella had her bleach, Ajax and razor blades in the mattress, and if that wasn't desperate then Rapunzel didn't know what was), and she never, ever cut her hair. Not when it was the only good thing going for her.

It was falling out on its own, anyway.

It had started two months before she was taken to the tower. She had awoken to find long, golden strands littered around her pillow. When she'd had a shower, more had fallen through her fingers. Her hair started losing its shine, and no matter how many products she bought, it never really came back.

The doctors told her, in no uncertain terms, that her beautiful, gleaming hair

wouldn't shine again until she started getting nutrients back into her body.

So Rapunzel had started taking her iron and mineral pills religiously, craving for the shine to come back.

But it wouldn't.

★ ★ ★

She only had one friend outside the tower. He had faith in her, that she could reach perfection, that she was strong enough not to listen to the doctors and nurses who didn't know a single thing about how she was feeling. He would never touch her, not even a hug, but gave her the promise –

'When you're perfect, I'll marry you, and then you can have me all to yourself'. When she first started living in the tower, he would come every night, calling softly –

*'Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
Let down your golden hair.'*

Once, a nurse had come round to do a late night bed-check, when she had walked in to find Rapunzel talking to him. He had jumped out of the window, leaving Rapunzel to explain his appearance to the startled nurse.

The next night, she had been given a yellow tablet, and was told it would help with her hair. She had taken it gratefully, hoping her golden hair would return. It didn't, and neither did he.

After a few weeks of taking the pills, and him not returning, she woke up with a raging fever. After two nights out of the tower, they stopped giving her the yellow pill, and gave her a white one instead. That night, she tongued her pill, not wanting to be forced out of the tower again.

And he came back.

At midnight, Rapunzel woke to hear a soft voice call –

*'Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
Let down your golden hair.'*

ONCE upon a time, in a land far, far away, there lived a young girl called Rapunzel.

Rapunzel wasn't like most girls.

For one, her hair was the shade of the sun, and longer than one could imagine.

Most people would say that she was beautiful.

The doctors would bring out photos of her from before, and tell her how gorgeous she was, how healthy she looked.

How she could have had any man she wanted, anything she wanted, if she were to go back outside.

But she would never leave her tower.

Not when she looks like that.

People would point and stare and laugh at her. They'd mock her and stuff pillows into their shirts to try and replicate the disgusting monster that was walking in front of them. Look at the whale, they'd say. How can she even look in the mirror in the morning? How can she bear to walk out the door? How can she even breathe when she knows she's wasting the world's oxygen?

She smiled softly, walking over to the window. He had come.

She unfastened her braid and let her hair down the tower, feeling the familiar tug of his lithe weight as she pulled it back up again. He stood in the window, eyebrow raised. She sighed contentedly, knowing that the nurses were asleep, and no one would find out.

‘You’ve let yourself go, haven’t you?’

Rapunzel froze.

‘What?’

He smirked, giving her another once over.

‘I swear you’ve put on weight since I last came,’ he sneered. ‘And your hair was much softer last time, too. Have you no self-restraint?’ Rapunzel felt tears coming to her eyes.

‘I’m doing as you say!’ she sobbed. ‘I’m doing squats, an—and I haven’t eaten anything more than a small salad in three days!’ He looked down at her, bored.

‘Did the salad have dressing?’ he asked.

Oh.

Dressing. How could she be so stupid?

‘How do you expect to be perfect if you can’t even count properly?’ he spat, scathing. ‘I can’t bring home

a monster like you to meet my parents – no matter how kind and lovely you are on the inside, how can they see past that great lump of fat standing in front of them? They’ll be repulsed!’ Rapunzel stood, frozen, as he sighed. ‘I can’t believe you expect me to keep coming if you’re never going to improve.’ And he turned and jumped out of the window.

The next night, Rapunzel took the pill. He didn’t come again.

★ ★ ★

It was almost a month later it happened.

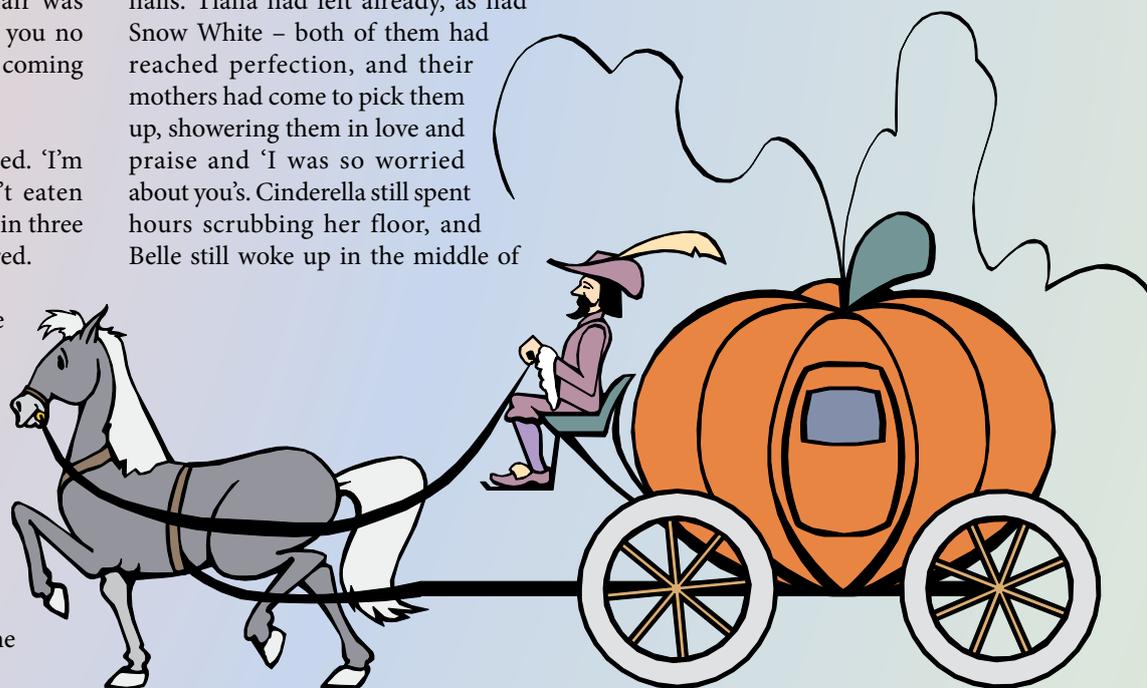
A month of trying, and failing to lose weight. A month of congratulations from the doctors – ‘Two pounds! Great job!’ – a month of hair loss and broken nails. Tiana had left already, as had Snow White – both of them had reached perfection, and their mothers had come to pick them up, showering them in love and praise and ‘I was so worried about you’s. Cinderella still spent hours scrubbing her floor, and Belle still woke up in the middle of

the night, screaming about pots and kettles and beasts with roses, reaching out for her needle. Sleeping Beauty was still in a coma, Alice spent hours talking about caterpillars and card games, and Megera was still as self-obsessed as ever.

When Rapunzel started to feel dizzy, she put it off as hunger, weakness. When she started to get stabbing pains in her chest, she went as sat in the window for some fresh air. And when she started falling, all she could think was –

Happy
Ever
After

By **Imogen Whittaker**
Year 11, Methodist Ladies’ College
KEW – VIC.



Character	Mental Illness	Description
<i>Cinderella</i>	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	Obsessive cleaning; need to order
<i>Tiana (Frog Princess)</i>	Schizotypal Personality Disorder	Trouble with relationships; using hallucinations to replace relationships
<i>Snow White</i>	Bulimia	Eating disorder; purging after eating (can result in the inability to swallow, hence apple)
<i>Belle (Beauty and the Beast)</i>	Heroin Abuse	Drug addiction; results in hallucinations and potential brain damage
<i>Megara (Hercules)</i>	Narcissistic Personality Disorder	Excessive preoccupation with personal issues
<i>Alice (Alice in Wonderland)</i>	Todd’s Syndrome	Comes from use of marijuana, results in optical disillusionment, size distortion, great disorientation
<i>Sleeping Beauty</i>	Narcolepsy	Falls suddenly asleep without notice, long periods of sleep with no awakening



A Glimpse Of Him

LEAN my head against the bus window. The glass is cool on my skin. Francesca sits beside me in silence, and I know that she too is thinking about the basketball game today. It was a disaster; we were humiliated in front of the entire school. I know that Francesca thinks that it is her fault the boys were so vicious, but really, the blame must be shared. We were naïve to think that a “friendly” basketball game would suddenly convince them to show us the respect we deserve.

Most of the Sebastian’s students are talking about the game. They laugh at how miserably we played and shoot snide glances at us as they snigger; amused at how we never even stood a chance against the boys, who had made it their goal to crush us. I can’t bear to listen to them make fun of us any longer, so I try to tune them out, returning to my own musings.

I rest my chin in my hand. The plastic windowsill is cold and hard beneath my arm. I stare blankly out the window, resigning myself to dejection. The bus slows and pulls to a halt in front of a stop. Half a dozen young St Stella’s girls stand and begin to make their way towards the doors, stumbling over feet and the various bags and hats strewn across the aisle. As I turn back towards the window, I catch a glimpse of a figure in my peripheral

vision. I turn, trying to get a better look. The figure wears a Sydney Boys’ High uniform, and even without his instrument, I can tell that it is Tuba Guy. The regular tick of my heart begins to race, and I feel my hands become clammy. My face grows red and hot, but safely hidden behind the tinted bus windows, I can gaze at him unashamedly.

He walks with a kind of confident grace; his strides are long and relaxed, with his head held high and arms gently swinging. I notice the way his muscles ripple as he walks, and how his biceps bulge from lugging his tuba around. As he walks closer, I can begin to make out his features: big brown eyes, fair skin and a mop of tousled brown hair. His mouth tips up at the corners, making it seem as if he is perpetually smiling at some private joke.

Just as he draws level with me, the last of the Stella’s girls steps off the bus. The doors slam shut and we begin to move again. Tuba Guy slips from my view and I sigh, watching as the street beyond the window turns once more into an artist’s palette of colours and blurred shapes, and the road becomes liquid beneath the wheels.

By Hannah Nugent
Age 15, Fairholme College
TOOWOOMBA – QLD.

I am now in a boat because of my terrible deeds,
Most of the convicts have a serious disease.
While the sea is tossing and turning,
My stomach feels ill and is churning.

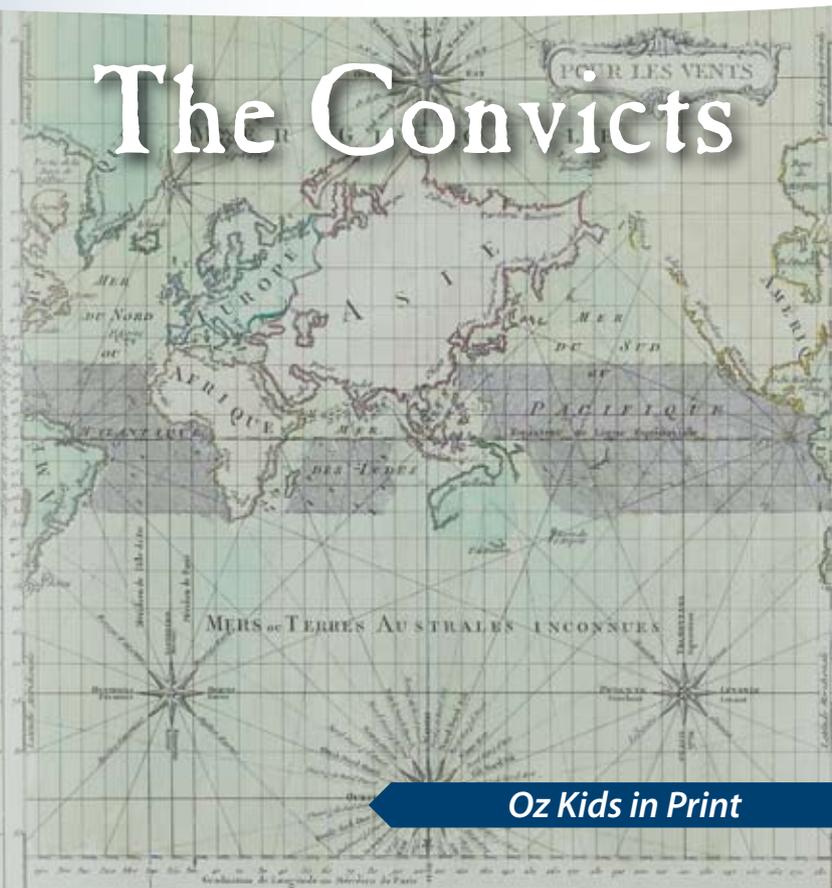
All of us convicts are wet and damp,
in our open rooms we only have one lamp.
I’m sad and worried about Marty my boy,
and I’m worried also about my wife Joy.

At least my mate is on board with me,
going on board he injured his knee.
Our meals each day are rotten cheese,
also we have to eat revolting dried peas.

We are nearly there but I am nervous,
I guess all of this is for a purpose.
The people there are black as black,
apparently they saw us because they ran to attack.

By Katelyn Gill
Year 4, Nambour Christian College, NAMBOUR – QLD.

The Convicts



A Lighter Shade of Grey

I sat alone upon the shore line of a new sorrow so deep the
oceans could weep with jealousy.
I could not scream as the darkness came to greet me through punches to my gut,
nor could I cry as it dragged me down to my madness by my feet.
I am naked in the dark I feel nothing yet I experience everything,
I am remote yet I am right here.
I try to kick and scream my way out of this void but it is useless.
It cuts me with its stain until only darkness remains.
As groping hands tighten around my mind and squeeze all the joy of life out of me,
leaving only the empty husk of what once was love.
I wish to hang my sorrows and leave it all behind,
but I am scared so instead I cut,
I cut deep and hard till my soul is cloven in two and my mind is utterly spent,
leaving faint scars to tell what was once my fate.
And then...
what next a sliver of light,
I try to reach,
I try to surface from this vicious turmoil that is my hell,
but the hold it has on me is too strong,
and so the light fades away never I thought to be seen again.
Until there comes a voice I've known it all my life and before it.
She is calm as she helps loosen the hold the darkness has on me,
soothing my aching mind with cool words
and she sews my soul back as one.
Is she an angel I wonder?
She knows I'll never be the same,
her daughter who always laughed at the smallest of things,
and never understood anyone else,
caught up in her own world.
She offers me protection and reality,
sometime I may dislike her
but I could never hate the woman who saved my soul
turning the dark to a lighter shade of grey.

By **Tanisha Matthews-Gunn**
Year 10, Assumption College
KILMORE – VIC.
Teacher: Ms Fraser

Love

It sees where we are,
But yet it is blind.
It solves confusing puzzles,
But yet, it has no mind.
Love.
It shows,
But yet it is invisible.
You won't know you're in it,
Until it's untwistable.
Love.
It knows when you're in it,
But doesn't speak a word.
It knows when you're in the zone,
As your words become all slurred.
Love.
It's simple, it is,
Only four letters long.
And when things start getting tough,
It comforts you with a calm, sweet song.
Love.

By **Carmen Umbers**
Year 6, Lauriston Girls' School
ARMADALE – VIC.



Collingwood Land

Collingwood Land is a place where only Collingwood fans can live.

The laws are that you have to have a tattoo and you have to wear Collingwood clothes at all times.

There are one zillion people in Collingwood Land. The most people at the training oval are 200,000 people – that's a world record!

Each year 100,000 people get a tattoo. The biggest line to get a tattoo is 1000 people.

The players sign 500,000 jumpers each year.

30,000 banners are made each year and 50,000 make the banners.

There are also 900,000 footys sold a year.

That's even better than bad Hawthorn country.

They only sell 800,550 footys a year.

Every single transport is black and white.

The government is Eddie McGuire. He is the best! The coach is Nathan Buckley. He was a star in the olden days.

The old coach was Mick Madhouse. He's mad all right!!!

Collingwood has fifteen premierships cups.

I've only been to two, literally one because it was a draw so we had to do a grand final rematch.

Boy it was good!!!

It was the first time I saw Mick Madhouse smile! I was so happy.

There were infinity people. I couldn't see an empty seat from the top level.

The roads are black and white.

The traffic lights are black and white.

But my favourite thing is the grass.

It is awesome white and awesome black.

BUT the very best, best thing is the black and white houses.

They look awesome, awesome, awesome!!!

The best thing about them is the black and white chimneys.



By **Nicholas Francis**
Year 2, St. Cecilia's Primary School
GLEN IRIS – VIC.

A Beautiful Experience

ONCE, there was a sheep named Shaun. He was smart and lived by himself. Sometimes, he felt a bit down living alone and wanted to have friends.

In a rainy windy day, after all that hard work he wanted to get some fresh air and explore the world outside his farm. He took a large umbrella to make sure that he doesn't get wet. No sooner, he opened his umbrella; he started flying in the air. He went higher and higher. He was a bit scared in the beginning but then he started feeling better as then he was up in the sky. The rain had stopped by then and he was enjoying the lovely scenery from the sky even in the wind. He could see so many things. He could see the river, the big chocolate factory and the beautiful farms. He held his umbrella tight so that he didn't fall.

The wind grew stronger and pulled Shaun far to the west. He was in an unknown land and thought that he was heading straight for Africa. He was excited but also a bit scared of what would happen next.

He saw two sheep caught in the wind and were flying crying in the sky. He thought that were unlucky and wanted to help them. He steered his umbrella and helped them by bringing them on board. He was happy and he had friends to share. On the other hand the other two sheep were equally happy. As they were passing through the unknown land, their eyes were full of amusement as they saw an amazing park for animals called "ANIMAL CITY". Shaun steered the umbrella once again towards the park. They landed safely and the three friends went straight to the running area to play together. Afterwards, they went to the party shop to eat and have fun. In the end they took their picture in the shop and got it enlarged. Later, they saved the picture on the desktop to make their experience memorable.

I thought of writing this story the way I saw it in my dream.

By **Tanushka Singh**
Age 9
ASHFIELD – NSW



Ambassadors

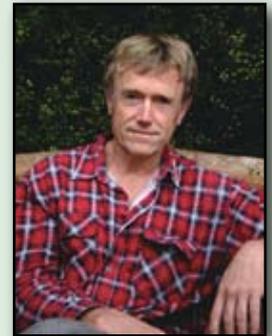


☺ **Krista Bell** is an award-winning author of twenty-one books for young readers. Krista has been professionally involved in children's literature for over thirty years, as well as being the mother of three sons, all of whom are good readers and writers! Krista's middle son, Damien, is the illustrator 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

Sarah and the Enchanted Wood

ONE day, a girl called Sarah was playing in her back yard, when suddenly she saw a tiny hole in the fence. She got closer and closer to the tiny hole and was surprised to see a little bottle on the ground. On the bottle it said, 'DRINK ME!'

Sarah paused for a second. 'Should I drink this?' she thought to herself. 'I think I will,' she said. Then she drank it.

She felt herself getting smaller and smaller. She was so small that she could fit through the tiny hole. She walked through the hole and saw an enchanted wood with flowers, trees, colourful birds and beautiful buttercups.

Sarah spotted a tiny little fairy. 'Hi,' said the fairy. 'I'm Crystle, the Garden Fairy.'

'Hi I'm Sarah.'

'Nice to meet you. I'll give you a tour if you like?' said Crystle.

'OK!' said Sarah.

'That's great. Follow me,' said Crystle. 'First there is the Crystle Lake.' Sarah was amazed how it shimmered and glowed. 'To the left there is the Sugar-Plum Hall.'

Just before they were about to walk into the Sugar-Plum Hall they heard the sound of music and laughter. 'What's that?' asked Sarah. 'Oh, that's probably the Fun Fair,' said Crystle.

'A FUN FAIR!' Sarah shouted. 'I LOVE Fun Fairs!'

'We can go to it if you like.'

'Yes please!' Sarah said excitedly.

It only took two minutes. Sarah and Crystle spent hours at the Fun Fair. They went on the Dodgem Cars together. They had so much fun. Then they went on the Chair-O swing. The man that was in charge started it. When it started, Sarah forgot to put her seat belt on so she went flying into the air and landed on the ground. 'I think I've broken my leg,' Sarah said in pain.

'It looks like you have,' said Crystle.

'I think I need to go to the hospital,' said Sarah.

'A hospital! What's a hospital?' asked Crystle.

'A hospital is a place where they help you to get better,' said Sarah.

'Oh, we don't have any hospitals.'

'Why don't you have any hospitals?' asked Sarah.

'We don't have any hospitals because no one ever gets sick or gets hurt. But I can take you to the Magic Wizard. He will know what to do!'

So Crystle and Sarah travelled through the icy cold winds, the steamy hot deserts and tropical forests. Finally they got to the Wizard's castle. As they rang the door bell they heard a giant noise of the bell. 'DING! DONG!' Two minutes later they could see an old wise man with a pointy hat through the glass door. Can you guess who it is? YES, it's the Magic Wizard!

'WHO DARES TO COME INTO MY CASTLE?' asked the Wizard in a deep voice.

'It's only me, Crystle and my new friend Sarah,' said Crystle in a small voice.

'Oh,' said the Wizard, 'Come in and make yourself at home!' he said in a kind voice. 'So, how can I help you girls?'

'Well,' started Crystle. 'Sarah went on the Chair-O swing at the Fun Fair and broke her leg. We were hoping you could fix it.'

'Well, you've come to the right place,' said the Wizard. 'I will use some special powers that will fix your leg in two seconds.'

'That's great!' said Sarah with excitement.

'Are you ready?' asked the Wizard.

'I'm as ready as I'll ever be.'

'3-2-1!!!' The Wizard put magical powers on Sarah's leg. Sparkles went everywhere!!!

'It's all done now!' The Wizard told Sarah. 'Why don't you try and walk?'

Sarah got up and she could walk again. 'Thank you so much!' said Sarah. 'I have to go now. Bye!'

So they travelled back through the tropical forests, back through the steamy hot deserts and through the icy winds, and back to the Enchanted Wood.

Sarah didn't want to leave because she loved the Enchanted Wood. So she decided to stayed there forever.

By **Isabella Ronchi**

Year 3, St. Cecilia's Primary School
GLEN IRIS – VIC.



Thoughts of a Great Heart

I'm sitting here, alone, in the middle of a red sea
Day after day, I do nothing, nothing at all

Parts of me are breaking, slipping away from me
I'm slowly crumbling away into dust.

People used to live in me, with me
I was their home.
I sheltered them from nature's cruelty.

Children no longer paint the walls of my caves
That was the past, this is the present.

All I am now is a tourist attraction
But I am still special to my people.
The people that painted the walls of my caves,
The people I sheltered.

I am and always will be, Uluru

By **Charlotte Caldow**
Age 10, St. Joseph's Primary School
BRUNSWICK WEST – VIC.

Australia (Acrostic poem)

AMAZING LANDSCAPES TO SEE

ULURU IS THE FAMOUS LANDMARK OF AUSTRALIA

SYDNEY IS THE BIGGEST CAPITAL CITY IN AUSTRALIA

THE RED KANGAROO IS THE FAUNAL EMBLEM

RELAX AT THE BEACHES

A MOMENTUM FOR ALL TOURISTS

LOVELY SUNSETS FOR YOU AND ME

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ARE OUR FRIENDS

ALWAYS RESPECT OUR NATIVES AND NATURE

By **Arati Nair**
Age 9

What Life Is Like at Uluru

In the morning sun is red, all is quiet, nothing said.
Kookaburra sings his song, platypus swims in the Billabong.
Then numbat starts to raise his head and wombat stirs from his bed.
Cicadas buzzing through the bush, kingfisher dives with a WHOOSH!!
Day has started so let's go, kangaroo jumps away from home.
Wallaby is grazing now but still no sign of barking owl.
In evening our sun is pink, as the orb begins to sink.
All our friends go back home and a whole new bunch come out to roam.
Quoll is hunting in the trees and barking owl comes out to feed.
Fruit bats fly across the sky and tawny frogmouths and oh my!
Here is bettong for the night, don't forget potoroo, that's right.
Night is now in full swing, a scrape of claws, a flap of wings.
Echidna sniffs the cool night air and hears a roar from koala bear.
Then snake slithers through the warming air, as the day begins to flare.
Now it's time for morning dew as day starts again at Uluru!

By **Eve Hill**
Year 5, Methodist Ladies' College
KEW – VIC.

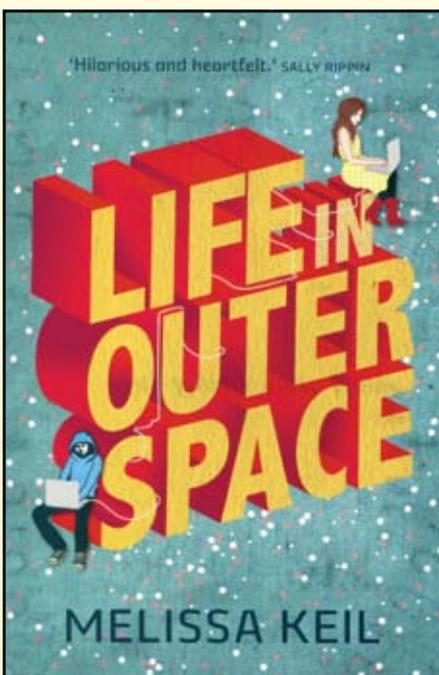
BOOK REVIEWS



Life in Outer Space

Melissa Keil (Hardie Grant Egmont)

Life in Outer Space is an amazing novel about a boy named Sam Kinnison, a complete nerd who loves horror movies. He has no social life, except for his nerd friends, and spends his lunchtimes in the school IT office playing *World of Warcraft*. Sam knows that his life could be better, but he doesn't really mind. Sam is one for consistency, which is why his world is flipped upside down when a new student, the cool Camille, arrives at Bowen Lakes Secondary School.



Life in Outer Space is an enthralling book, set in a school in Melbourne. This book is aimed at teenagers from 13–16 and I think it fits into that category very well. It is well written and has an interesting plotline.

Rating: 10/10 ★★★★★★★★
Fionnbarr Russell

When We Wake

Karen Healey (Allen & Unwin)

Tegan Oglietti is a 16 year old who is loving life. The first chapter sets the story in the year 2027, with Tegan and her friend, Alex,



and boyfriend Dalmar, attending a protest to save the world. Little does Tegan know that a failed assassination attempt may just end her happiness.

When Tegan wakes up 100 years later in a military facility she is very confused. Her doctor, Marie Carmen, explains to her that she is the first successful revival of a cryonically frozen body. All Tegan wants in this strange world is to have the semblance of a life. Yet no one seems content to let her have it.

This book is definitely an adventure story and would be suitable for ages 13+. I really enjoyed it and quite liked the way that the future was portrayed. The book progressed reasonably quickly and would be perfect for bookworms who like futuristic or contemporary reads.

Rating: 9/10 ★★★★★★★★☆
Eleanor Russell

Vietnam Diary

Mark Wilson (Hachette)

Vietnam Diary is a hardback picture book which follows two brothers – Aussies through and through with sport in their veins and best of mates to the core, but divided by the Vietnam War. When one of the brothers, Jason, is called up to fight, Leigh, who is strongly against the war, is furious. Eventually, as Jason goes through the fighting, including the battle of Long

Meet our book reviewers –
 Eleanor, Noah, Michaela,
 Matilda, Maya and
 Fionnbarr,
 from Princes Hill
 Secondary College,
 Victoria.

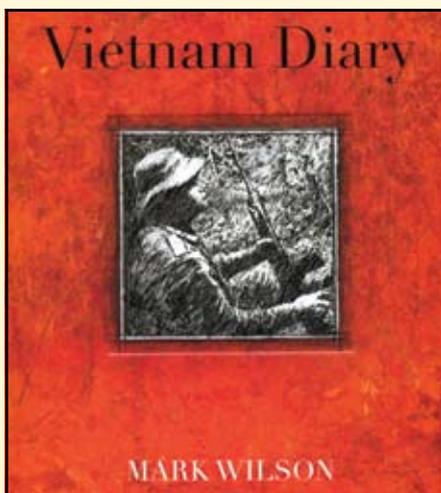
Reviews Coordinators:
 Meredith Costain
 and Pam Saunders



Tan, they are reconciled. The brothers are your standard 'Aussie' kids. They dream of playing for Australia in cricket and they're always looking out for one another. The book deals with the powerful bonds of brothers and the difficulty of different views.

This is a book aimed at younger children and thus it does present a sanitised view of war and the standard conventions of the Anzac Myth – a view which is so prevalent today. The pictures in the book are excellent and really add to the immersion as they give a taste of the conditions of war. In the night and rain we see a tussle of blacks and whites and during artillery bombardments the hues of red and purple dominate the page.

Rating: 8/10 ★★★★★★☆☆
 Noah Ellis

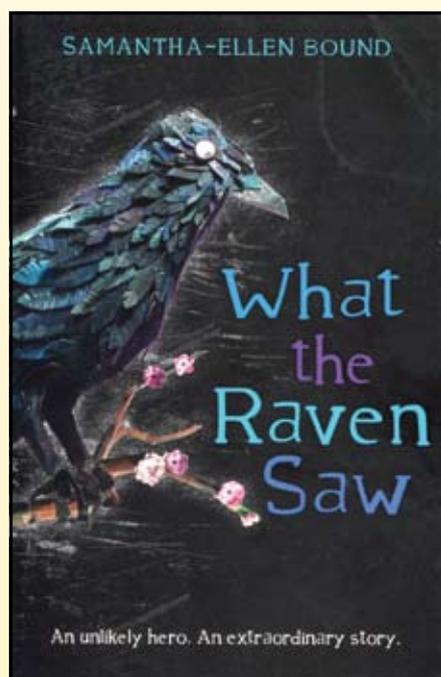


What the Raven Saw

Samantha-Ellen Bound (Random House)

What the Raven Saw is a book about loneliness, friendship and trust, but most of all, this book is about belonging.

Raven is an arrogant, self-obsessed bird with the ability to speak to humans as well as the dead. Living in the abandoned belltower of an old churchyard he likes to call his own, Raven watches with great admiration of the church's choir, and becomes friends with the parish priest Father Cadman, who believes that the bird is the voice of God. Their friendship blossoms in the time that



the two spend singing hymns together, but it doesn't last.

Raven catches a donation collector stealing from the church, and when he reports this to Father Cadman, the much too kind-hearted priest refuses to accept that the kind man he knew was being accused of such an act. His feelings towards the bird are betrayed, and Raven is left feeling unbalanced and with no real sense of belonging.

There is only one thing left to do. Raven has to learn to co-operate, and alongside some willing friends including an annoying pigeon, a love-sick scarecrow, a just dead ghost and his grieving sister, the group must bring the thief to justice. Will Raven earn the priest's trust and restore his place in the church community?

One of the main reasons I enjoyed this book was the way the characters were so well thought up and had their own very distinctive personalities. The title suggests a book that is a fairly easy read but I would recommend it to older, more confident readers aged 12+ who are looking for something a bit different or a challenge.

What the Raven Saw is a quirky and beautiful book unlike anything I've ever read before.

Rating: 8/10 ★★★★★★☆☆
 Matilda Pungitore

Cont'd on page 26

BOOK REVIEWS

Greylands

Isobelle Carmody (Ford St Publishing)

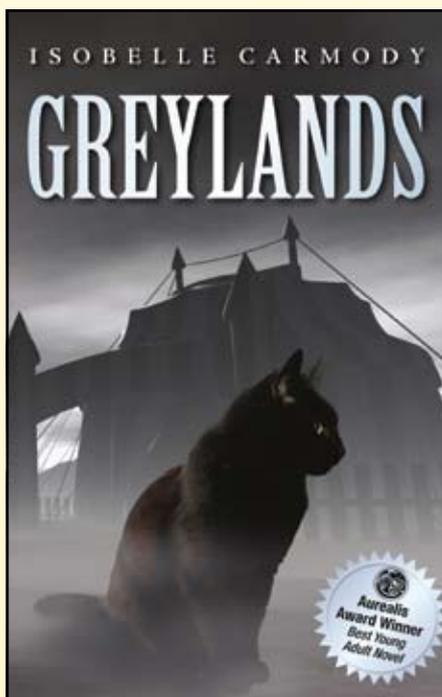
Greylands is about a boy called Jack, who is dealing with the death of his mother and the withdrawal of his father. One night, he enters a world devoid of colour and scent. In this world, he meets Alice, a strange girl with a secret. Jack has to escape the Greylands before the terrifying wolvers find him, or he could be trapped in the colourless world forever.

I really enjoyed this book. I liked the way that at the beginning, nothing really made much sense in the storyline, but at the end, suddenly everything was made clear. There is good character development, and the wolvers are genuinely scary. The only real fault I saw with this book was that sometimes the storyline became very confusing and hard to follow, which made it drag on a little bit.

The genre is mystery but the book also deals with grief. This book is for those who like complex storylines and a slower paced novel. All in all it is a very good book for readers aged 13+.

Rating: 9/10 ★★★★★★★☆

Michaela Harden



New Guinea Moon

Kate Constable (Allen & Unwin)

If you like reading issue-based fiction, this book is perfect for you. Are you 13+ and a mature reader? If so, you should try reading this book. It is based in New Guinea in the 1970s during the Australian presence. The author actually grew up in New Guinea and has shared some of her real life experiences.

After 16-year-old Julie has a fight with her mother she heads to New Guinea to meet the father she hasn't seen since she was three. Julie's mum is a feminist and has brought Julie up to be independent and spirited. Julie is forced to call on all her resilience to learn how to live this new life, despite the kindness of those she meets, and the support and attention of two very different guys.

After I read this book I thought, 'Wow, I want to read it again,' because I enjoyed the meaningful plot about a strong young woman and how she treats people in the face of discrimination.

You'll LOVE it!!

Rating: 9/10 ★★★★★★★☆

Maya Wilson



Not To Know



Lying on my back,
I watch my soul drift away,
Lifting up my head,
I see my heart in decay,
Opening my mouth,
But there's nothing to say,
Raising my hand,
But you just walk away.

My face against the cold concrete,
Rain begins to fall from above,
Filling up my empty chest,
But no substitute for my love,
I was blinded by your light,
And you led me elsewhere,
I didn't ask for this,
But they say all in war is fair.

The ground swallows my body,
The air swallows my essence,
Soon there is nothing left,
When now I sense your presence,
You pull my body from the ground,
Grab my essence from the air,
Drag my soul from the sky,
Light my heart into a flare.

Forgiveness overwhelms,
So you didn't leave me behind,
I go to ask you why,
Wondering what I might find,
But your lips are firmly shut,
No emotion you will show,
Maybe you have another use for me,
But I guess I am not to know.

By **Adrian Harper-Gomm**
Year 11, Kambrya College
BERWICK – VIC.

He's just a small boy sitting by the window there.
He wrote a poem to the girl with the long red hair.
He named it her, because it was about her and nothing more.
He got flowers from the girl next door.

He's just a small boy, sitting at the front of class,
the girl with the red curls laughs when he passes.
The girl next door, just moved away,
his parents urging him to stay.
So he sat by the window and just watched the streets
as it filled with people he hoped to never meet.

He's just a small boy, almost a man.
The girl with the red curls never read his poems again,
so he stopped writing them and just began to write,
but all he did his parents didn't like.
He just looked at the pages reflecting his days,
with a parent's deep longing for a change in his strange ways.

He was just a boy, really a man.
He wrote his last poem on the palm of his hand.
He laced each wrist with the tip of a knife.
His parents read his last poem.
The one he called life.

By **Myki Baillie**
Age 15

Beautiful Lady of Mine

Roses are red
Violets are blue
I waited my whole life
Now, I've finally met you

When I look at you, I wonder
How can a girl be so beautiful
I want nothing more from my life
Just a girl like you is plentiful

When I'm with you
The world's filled with grace.
When those red lips smile (at me)
This man's heart starts to race

Those soft and cute cheeks
And that happy and cheerful laugh
That sweet little beanie on your head
And that pretty and colourful scarf

Every second spent with you is memorable
Listening to your soft and cute voice
And talking to you for even a few minutes
Fills me with a memory to preserve and a moment of joyce

When you're gone I feel so alone.
I wait at home for a call on my phone.
But it never comes and I'll forever wait;
For that very miraculous day and date

You don't talk much
So its very hard to know
What your feelings are towards this man
But your smile tells everything, that this heart needs to know

I need you to myself and can't seem to share.
You going back and forth has become hard to bear.
I need to know what your decision will be.
I can only pray that it will be me.

There is one last thing I want to say...

Roses are red
Violets are blue
Give me your love
I'll give mine to you

By **Aditya Raj Gureja**
Year 8, Crestwood High School
BAULKHAM HILLS – NSW

Electrifying

THE body lay there in the dank corner of the warehouse, its foul stench spreading through the darkness. It couldn't be called human, for the corpse was fried beyond recognition, burnt more ferociously than the fiercest bolt of lightning in its heavenly glory.

The crates around it weren't harmed in any way, but if anything it made the scene even more sinister.

The other body sat across from it. Slowly, incredibly, it crawled to its feet, its horrifically distorted feet, its toes even now waxing away. If it had still had its eyes, someone might've seen it looking at the terrible armament of its butchering.

Someone would have to pay. And it wasn't going to be him.

★ ★ ★

It stood in the room, a much different one than its death site.

Cream curtains, embroidered with a deep, shimmering blue, hung around the windows. A rich, purple carpet adorned the floor. Expensive mahogany furniture was all around the bedroom. The bedroom would've been beautiful, if it wasn't for the three, charred, steaming corpses in the centre of the room.

If its face hadn't been so disfigured, so hideously disfigured, someone might've recognised a smile.

Someone had to pay. They would all have to pay.

★ ★ ★

Erik Swift walked up the stairs of the hotel. He knew. He knew about the three horrific murders in the penthouse bedroom. He was head of the most efficient police force in the world, and he had been waiting for them to show up for a long time. Not the corpses, that is, but a crime so violent that it couldn't be human. A crime so demonic that something else was involved. He had been searching for the living dead for so long, and he had finally found it.

★ ★ ★

Erik paced, back and forth, back and forth, searching for some evidence, anything at all. He had always thought that there would be stockpiles of evidence for something like this, but there was nothing, nothing apart from the terrible corpses. There they lay, butchered. You could see the gaping holes in their chests where the cattle prod-like instrument had been stabbed so forcefully. They would've died just from the wounds, but then whatever had been their butcher had taken the time to electrify them, charring them beyond recognition.

The gentle wind soothed Erik's overheated self, relieving him from the hotel's stuffy atmosphere.

The wind? Erik whipped around.

The fire was still burning merrily away, so why would someone open a window to cool themselves... if not to escape?

The barrel of the Desert Eagle, Erik's weapon of choice for the paranormal, slid out easily, rubbing against the silken lining of the long coat and the rough texture of the bulletproof vest.

★ ★ ★

Swiftly but without a sound, Erik climbed through the window onto the roof. He had taken the precaution of leaving his shoes behind, for fear of alerting his quarry of his presence.

Taking care not to step onto the razor-sharp gutter, he climbed the angled ascent, keeping his gun ahead of him at all times. Finally, he reached the top to find...

...nothing.

Nothing was there!

How could have it escaped? He turned around, and walked right into it.

★ ★ ★

It just stood there. Not moving, not breathing, not doing anything.

Erik began to back up, the Desert Eagle straight on target. He kept moving back, now firing as he went. Black, charred skin peeled under the sharp lead.

It was then it moved. Not backwards, but forwards.

Erik fired, faster, faster, until his magazine was empty.

It still advanced. He jumped at the beast, knocking it, and him, clean off of the roof. It grabbed the cattle prod-like instrument, its hunger for revenge fuelling its inhuman strength, its savage stabbing laying deep, ghastly wounds. Then it let loose with the electricity.

KRAAAK!

The two bodies slammed into the ground, leaving a massive cracked patch of pavement. The two lay there for a while, the forgotten 19.5 calibre Desert Eagle shattered on the pavement beside them.

Then, slowly, impossibly, one rose. A terrible, charred mess of a being, so mutilated it could be hardly called human.

Erik Swift, or at least his body, picked up the cattle prod-like instrument, the weapon of his termination, taking it from the clawed, flaking hands of a monster, once his quarry.

The curse had been passed on.

Someone would have to pay for the crimes committed against him. The world would have to pay.

By **Zachary Dalton**
Year 8, Blackfriars Priory School
PROSPECT – SA



From Me To You



3 AM. You feel that same way you always do at this time. It's just another night, just another whisper, just another deep breath after another. Nothing has felt okay in so long. You're done, right? You are so over waking up every morning wishing you hadn't and going to bed the same way when you even sleep at all. Dry throat, sore eyes, a cold neck, you don't remember what being okay is, do you? You can't remember the last time you ate three meals in a day or you didn't tremble whenever you had to walk through a group of people and you could feel eyes burning through your skin. All you remember is repeating over and over again, "I'm fine". You haven't been able to cry in weeks, you haven't realised how crap you even feel because it's becoming normal and that terrifies you, yes? You can't close your eyes, the voices just get louder and louder until you're shaking and gripping the sheets in agony without being in pain.

4 am. The thoughts are just getting deeper and deeper, swallowing your entire being, you're drowning while you watch everyone else floating along and, the worst part is, you go more peacefully downwards than a feather in a summer breeze. You just want it all to stop. You want to be at peace. You need to be released by these demons, these thoughts, these nightmares that don't stop when you open your eyes; they never stop. It's overwhelming I know, when your walls

go up so no one can get in and realising you're stopped yourself from getting out. You've killed any chance of ever letting someone save you. You do not want to die. You want someone to give a damn that you're good as dead already. You want to be rescued. You are not a coward. You are stronger than most people for holding on and I am proud of you.

5 am. The same words are going through your mind until you can feel them gouging their way onto your body, "They do not care. No one cares. Your family doesn't care. Your friends do not care. No one you meet will ever care. Give up." You tell yourself it's true but you know it's not. That's why you're still here, right? Because you know that losing you would hurt people, you put others before yourself because you couldn't imagine anyone ever feeling as lousy as you.

6 am. The sun is rising, the sky getting lighter with your breaths. You've made it through another night and as the beautiful shades spread ever so lightly across the border of your window, make sure you remember what you've just seen because life is exactly like time. The night

will always be darkest just before dawn, and I can promise you that dawn will always come. I love you. I am so proud of you.

This is not a short story, but young people need to stop cutting their own stories short.

By **Caitlyn Lawson**
Year 9, Mount Gambier High School
MT. GAMBIER – SA

Colours of the Sea

Glistening water,
Gentle waves gliding across the shore,
Silhouette of an albatross,
Soars in front of the sun,
Colourful coral reefs,
Protect precious treasures held under the warm water,
Sun getting hotter,
Waves getting stronger,
Push me farther in,
In the distance rumbles of thunder,
Bellow beneath grey rain clouds,
White strikes of lightning brighter than the sun.

By **Eva Arena**
Year 7, Overnewton Anglican Community College
KEILOR – VIC.





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THE wind was blowing peacefully and the waves lapped gently and silently on the beach. Sundancer was flying gracefully around his favourite field. He landed and his beautiful glossy white wings closed. His white coat shimmered in the golden sunlight and his mane was glowing bronze. The lush green grass was soft under his feet.

Just then two unicorns with matching silver horns and pink coats, yelled 'Sundancer!'. One of them was galloping fast and the other cantering smoothly by. Sundancer yelled 'Willow!' to the faster one and 'Cornflake!' to the other. Willow replied, 'It's bed time'. Sundancer sighed loudly, 'Another day of camp gone'.

They left to their rooms. Sundancer got to his and looked around, majestic head held high. The walls were faint silver. His stable was shimmering gold. He thought of her fun school camp he went to every year for five weeks, he had already been there for a week and couldn't believe how fast the time was going.

In the morning, he was getting ready for an incredible game called Lost Tracks. The one Pegasus and four unicorns set off, this was a game that they loved, they were competitive and they all wanted to win. The aim of the game was to find a hidden track that led to the greatest prize they could ever imagine. Willow was talking nonstop while her twin Cornflake looked nervous. They started setting up camp as it had taken all day to reach their destination.

Then they split up to search for the lost track. They reached a clearing and Sundancer saw a piece of wood sticking out from behind some bushes. As he went to investigate he heard Willow's terrified scream which rang in his sensitive ears. Then there was dead silence. Sundancer galloped back to the group and told them what he'd heard. Cornflake wanted to go search for her twin desperately, but nobody else wanted to go except Sundancer. Sundancer and Cornflake galloped towards where the scream had come from. Just before they reached the end of the forest there was a river they knew that another step towards that direction and they would be in human territory. They examined the area and found human footprints that were fresh, their outlines clear in the soft dirt track. There were also some long pink hairs on a branch that blew in the gentle breeze as it clung to the branch.

A Pegasus Adventure

They spoke nervously about whether to cross the barrier between both worlds. They decided that they had to continue on their long and tiring journey. They had to find Willow, no matter what. They reached a white house decorated with animal souvenirs. Sundancer was about to look in the window but a sharp thorn got stuck in her beautiful, glossy white leg. He screamed in pain. Cornflake rushed over and whispered a spell that instantly stopped the bleeding. Then they quietly walked off, but Sundancer was limping and his leg ached.

They came to a second house. It was blood red and the window was painted orange. Cornflake looked nervously through the window, she gasped quietly but Sundancer heard. He limped over. He peered through



and saw Willow! A man had her tied up with long thick ropes. He had a short silver knife in his ugly hand. Sundancer and Cornflake whispered earnestly, they had to help Willow and they had to do it quickly.

They finally agreed on a plan. Sundancer knocked on the door then hid. The terribly ugly man came out and as he poked his head around the corner, Sundancer ran along the bushes and yelled taunts. The man was full of rage and chased after the taunts, thinking it was some of the neighbourhood kids. Cornflake opened the door and went in. She used a really hard spell to undo the ropes. Just as they were about to escape, the man came back into the house mumbling about silly voices. He stopped when he saw the ropes were lying on the dirty floor. Cornflake had heard him coming and hid in a cupboard.

It was dark. Through a little crack, she saw Sundancer nervously galloping in and came to a complete halt when he saw the man back in the lounge room. Sundancer

had started talking as the man held his knife tightly. Willow and Cornflake couldn't hear what they were saying. The man shook his head angrily. Cornflake understood what he was trying to do. The man finally nodded his head.

Sundancer had given himself up in exchange for Willow. He let Willow go free and took Sundancer by the mane and went outside. Cornflake crept out as quiet as a mouse. Willow was outside watching Sundancer take off with the evil man on his back. They knew what Sundancer was up to, so they hastily walked back towards the rocky cliff. Sundancer could be seen flying gently above them with the man still on his back. Sundancer started to swoop and go fast trying to buck and get the man off him. When Sundancer noticed the man was still on his back gripping tightly, the struggle got crazier. He bucked and reared until the human couldn't hold on and fell from such a height that Willow and Cornflake only heard a faintest splash.

They galloped to the clearing where the other unicorns were still searching frantically on their quest for the lost track. The others saw Willow and Cornflake galloping over and stopped searching. As they gathered around, Sundancer landed swiftly next to them. The group ate yummy fruit to celebrate, then Sundancer remembered the piece of wood that he had seen behind the bushes. He told the others. They had an excited discussion about the wood. When they were finished talking they galloped over to the bushes and approached it nervously.

Sundancer pulled the bush apart and stared. Behind the bush was a door, an old wooden door! He opened it and saw a sandy track. They had found the track! The group went through one by one and started to gallop. They reached the camp in less than an hour. The camp director came up to them slowly and as he congratulated them, he saw Sundancer's wound. He told Sundancer that his wound needed to be treated. He finally announced that their prize for finding the lost track was five more weeks at camp. They were all overjoyed and would not go to bed that night. Instead they had a midnight party! Nine weeks later they went back to school and lived happily ever after.

By **Veronique Winter**
Year 4, The Essington School
DARWIN – NT

AN AUSSIE DREAM

What turned into reality,
Had started as a dream.
Fighting for mighty country
Had only been a gleam.

While struggling for life as I was,
I still had the Aussie pride.
Even fighting for our nation,
Wasn't always a down-side.
From camp to camp,
From trench to trench.

The nasty smell dead body stench.
I caught a glimpse of the donkey,
He and Simpson were well known.
We were lucky they were here,
Otherwise the wounded would be alone.
Many men were dead,
We knew there'd be more.

Those shrapnels were deadly,
We knew that for sure.
When supplies were low,
Ammunition down,
We knew what we were in for,
That caused a frown.

The Turkish were persistent,
We never stopped.
But day by day, one by one,
Our numbers just dropped.
Saddest of all, I had to watch my mates die.
One by one and two by two,
They'd drop like a fly.

January ninth, It was a remarkable day.
All the fighting
Seemed to just float away.
Something saddened my thought,
It was the thought of my mates.
Together we'd fought strong,
Until those horrific dates.

I was the one keeping track,
Which mate's dead and which mate's not.
Telling their families is the thing
That I had dreaded a lot.

The thought of seeing my family,
Had raised my spirits a fair bit.
I was so excited,
I couldn't even sit.

As I paced back and forth,
Waiting at the station,
I waited for my family
With a surge of anticipation.
Running to me,
I spotted my wife.
She couldn't believe
I still had my life.

Very excited,
Were my little twin boys.
They jumped into my arms,
Dropping all of their toys.

I hugged all my family,
As dearly as could be.
This was where I belonged,
This was my family.

Many years later,
I remember the months at war.
Fighting for Australia.
I could never ask for more!

Every Aussie should be proud!
Every citizen should smile!
For we are all Aussies,
Who, for our country,
would go a mile!

By **Grace Molchanoff**
Year 7
The Pines Primary School



MAGIC MONKEY

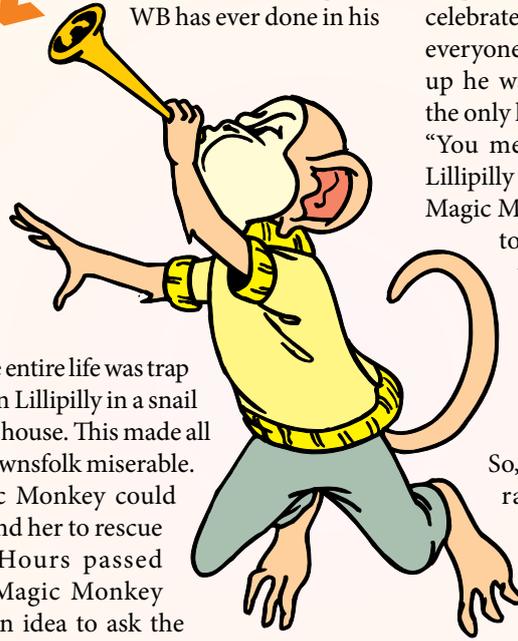
ONCE upon a time there lived a monkey called Magic Monkey. He owned a house and a company. The company was called HOUSE 'O' VINES. It's a big building, the biggest one in the town actually. It is really thin at the bottom and then it gets thicker at the top and at the very top is a picture of long dangly vines. Next to HOUSE 'O' VINES is another company called WB and CO. The guy that owns the company is called WB that stands for Wobbly Bum.

In this town cars are bread and butterflies that transport passengers around the city with pollen for their fuel. The people in this town are not your everyday townsfolk. They have had a touch of magic to their life; by you guessed it, Magic Monkey. For example, some birds have top hats and talk like you and I. Other birds wear big chief Indian feather hats. Magic Monkey makes people happy. WB makes people sad. WB has had lots of experience with making people sad. He is wicked by nature. When WB goes around being mean, for example making children's ice creams fall to the

ground or bursting their balloons, Magic Monkey does his magic so that people will forget what made them sad.

The wickedest thing that WB has ever done in his

whole entire life was trap Queen Lillipilly in a snail horse house. This made all the townsfolk miserable. Magic Monkey could not find her to rescue her. Hours passed and Magic Monkey had an idea to ask the trees to tell him if they saw anything and to his amazement the blossoms started to talk. "WB trapped queen Lillipilly," a



blossom whispered. "In the shell of Snail Horse", adds another blossom. "You need to act quickly, get the bread and butterflies to lead you to him", the blossoms suggest.

Magic Monkey rescued Queen Lillipilly. To celebrate the queen hosted a big party and everyone was invited. When WB turned up he was really miserable. "Why am I the only human? It's not fair", WB whined. "You mean you just kidnapped Queen Lillipilly because you were sad!?!?!?" asked Magic Monkey. "Um... yep, I just wanted to be an animal", WB said. "Well why didn't you say so? I can make you into whatever animal you like", Magic Monkey said. "Could I please, be a brown rabbit with a top hat?" WB pleaded.

So, if you ever happen to see a brown rabbit with a top hat bouncing around in your garden, it is probably WB.

By **Emil Klempfner**
Year 4, Geelong Grammar School
GEELONG - VIC.

Love

A whisper through the silver leaves,
A twinkle in the stars,
A song carried gently,
All the way from Mars.

The chuckle of a newborn deer,
Prancing through the plains,
A trickle of a dying stream,
Waiting for the rain.

A symphony of laughter,
Chorus down the street,
A beam of gleaming light,
A cat about to leap.

A rap upon my door,
upon the darkened night,
And there you gave me,
A sharp and sudden fright.

Love can be many things,
Twisted through the seams of life,
I'm certainly glad you showed me,
A piece of that tonight.

By **Sascha Zenari**
Year 6
CHATSWOOD - NSW

The Pixy and the Tree

ONCE upon a time there lived a beautiful pink pixy named Wishler. She lived in a magical water tank and she needed the magical water to change the seasons. Wishler was 10 years old and her water tank was in the forest. She eats fruit and waters the garden every day.

Next to her was a tree. One day the tree grew around the tank and sucked the magic out of it and came alive! It was hungry for more! Wishler quickly changed freezing Winter into boiling hot summer and the tree started to wilt and die!

The water tank got its magic back. Wishler lived happily ever after. (Not the tree!)

The End!

By **Robert Soltermann**
Year 3, Our Lady Of The Way
PETRIE - QLD.

It's always hard, to fit in at a city.
When your body and soul,
Breathes in through the country.
Like it always has.... Until now.

My mum reassures "it's not that bad,
Go for a walk it'll make you feel better."
As I loom through the streets, heart
Shattered in pieces. While skyscrapers stare.

Hey wait a second! It's not so depressing,
The towers are trees, as if in the country.
The automobiles are cattle I'm guessing,
I'm back in my home, oh how I'm glad!

I danced in the 'country', flooded with glee,
My heart filled with helium and hovered.
I saw the beautiful scenery; the sky and the sea,
Like city like country!

*By Jason Weim
Year 6, Hurstville Public School
HURSTVILLE – NSW*

Like City,

Like Country

Our Nightmare Journey

As night overtook us,
Tragedy struck.
Walking head held high into the ghetto,
With my sister and mother, my brother and father.
Acting like we were not afraid,
But we were,
We felt scared and frightened,
We were trapped,
Trapped inside, there was no escape.

Two months on,
Living by a small thread,
My mother, my sister and I were moved.
Moved into cattle cars.
Pushed on like animals,
Feeling the sweat drip off the person next to me,
Suffocating, dying, starving, crying.
Bones showing, as we were fed nothing.
Luck struck.
Our first drink of water in days,
As small drops trundle in through the roof.
Everyone scavenging for life,
A small sight of happiness was found in the air.

We arrived at Auschwitz,
Not knowing what was going to happen.
I saw people trembling with fear,
Mothers crying looking for their loved ones,
Children scared and helpless,
Standing with my mother and sister,
I looked into the distance,
Only seeing ash fill the air.

Getting ordered around,
Hair cut, clothes stripped off,
Standing there, anxious to know what will happen next,
Getting told we are going in for a nice shower,
It's all good from now on, right?
Just a shower...
Wrong.
The shower did not flow with water,
As bodies started to tremble down,
Hitting the ground as hard as they could.
I see my own mother fall,
One by one everyone fell.
I was next,
Then...

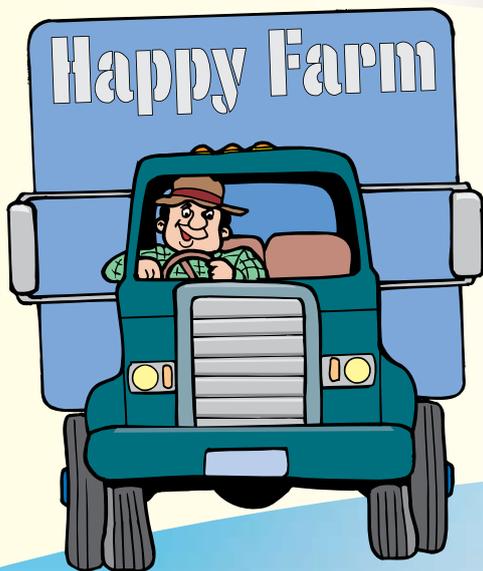
By Sara Williams, Year 10, Sacred Heart College, OAKLEIGH – VIC.



A thousand miles to your first dream,
 Near at first, then further than it may seem,
 Glittering temptation, the light at tunnel's end,
 Thought to please, yet meant to offend,
 Dreams are dashed upon the cold uncaring rocks of forever,
 Dreams were always meant for never,
 A twirling, a prancing, dancing all about,
 Slow enough to be seen, too fast to be caught out,
 In your grasping, heavy, fumbling hands,
 As, like blood from a wound, your plans drain into the sands,
 And try as you might, you will never succeed,
 In picking up every last grain of sand, and every last seed,
 So turn to new dreams and fresh desires,
 Find room in your heart to kindle new fires,
 Warm them on, covet a new dream,
 Because next time it might be closer than it may seem.

By **Matthew Harper-Gomm**
 Year 9, Kambrya College
 BERWICK – VIC.

Dream Again



Happy Farm goes neigh, quack, moo!
 Neigh, quack, moo,
 Neigh, quack, moo,
 Happy farm goes neigh, quack, moo
 All day long!

The horses go neigh, neigh, neigh,
 The ducks go quack, quack, quack,
 The cow goes moo, moo, moo,
 The farmers' truck goes brum, brum, brum,
 All day long!

The farmer's truck goes brum, brum, brum,
 Brum, brum, brum,
 Brum, brum, brum,
 The farmer's truck goes brum, brum, brum,
 All day long!

By **Meevel Mathew**
 Year 1
 CRANBOURNE NORTH – VIC.

In My Heart

I will put in my heart,
 The sweet smell of fresh grass skimming across the soft earth
 Trees swirling in the wind like ballerinas
 Twinkling light shining through the trees.

I will put in my heart,
 His warm hand nudging mine
 Butterflies fluttering inside
 Hugs screaming to last forever.

I will put in my heart,
 The scent of lavender oil kissing the tip of my nose
 A gentle swaying hammock whispering my name
 Mountains climbing to the stars.

And now my heart is made from memories
 From words, from pictures with love in the deep
 I shall dream in my heart as the afternoon sun drifts
 Drifts over the horizon and beyond.

By **Clare Kandybko**
 Year 8, Mount Lilydale Mercy College
 LILYDALE – VIC.



SNAKE BITE

Chapter 1

One breezy afternoon, Emily and Bella were playing tag on rocky hills in long grass.

“Tag! You’re it!” laughed Emily.

“Okay,” said Bella, “Whoa!”

Bella slid down the hill expertly on her feet.

Neither of them said anything for about 5 seconds then they both burst out laughing.

Suddenly Bella gasped and grabbed her ankle. She cried out in pain. Emily rushed up and caught Bella as she collapsed.

Emily rushed to Bella.

“Bella, wake up!” cried Emily. Bella lay motionless.

“Uh oh”, Emily groaned as she saw a shiny snake slithering away, its golden-brown scales glinting in the sun.

Emily took her walkie-talkie out of her pocket.

“Gran?” said Emily into the walkie-talkie.

“Yes? What happened?” Gran replied. She sounded anxious.

“It’s Bella,” Emily blurted out, her words almost lapping over each other. “Ring the hospital and Bella’s mother, she’s been bitten by a snake.”

“Okay, Pop’s coming to carry Bella”, said Gran.

“Okay Gran”, replied Emily, trying to keep calm.

Chapter 2

A few minutes later Pop arrived.

“How’s Bella?” he asked.

“Still out”, Emily replied, looking grim.

So Pop picked up Bella and they went back to the house.

When they finally reached the house, the ambulance was already there.

When they got to the family room, an ambulance lady came up to them.

“I’m Topaz”, she said, “What’s the matter, miss?”

“Bella’s been bitten by a snake”, Emily replied.

“What type?” Topaz asked.

“Dunno,” said Emily. “It was a shiny golden-brown one.”

“Ah, a python. They are very dangerous. Keep well away from them”, Topaz muttered.

“Bella didn’t see it. It was coming up behind her and she was looking at me”, Emily reported.

“Really? Well then, in she goes”, Topaz said.

“Gran, can we follow behind the ambulance?” Emily asked Gran while other ambulance members placed Bella into the van.

“Sure we can!” Gran replied. “Oh, no we can’t! We have Pop’s party this afternoon! Remember?”

“Oh yeah!” Emily cried. “Can we go visit her after?”

“We’ll see”, Gran sighed. “Oh my! I need to get going with that cake. Can you help dear?”

“Okay. Sure”, Emily replied.

While Emily and Gran were making a “Celebration Mousse Torte”, Bella was coming to in the back of the ambulance.

Where am I? she thought. And why am I in the back of a van?

Chapter 3

“Hey Topaz,” a man’s voice called, “The girl’s awake!”

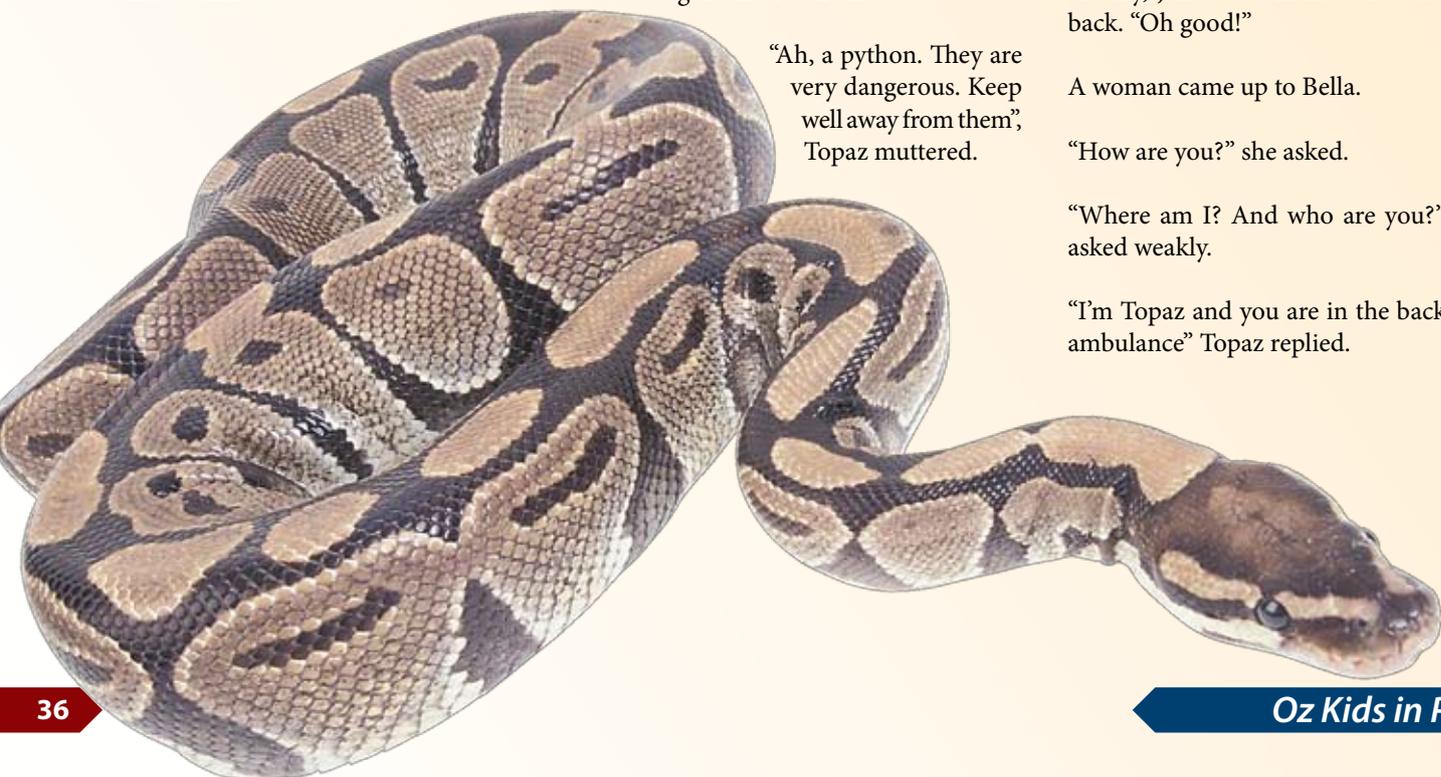
“Really, Jeff?” a woman’s voice answered back. “Oh good!”

A woman came up to Bella.

“How are you?” she asked.

“Where am I? And who are you?” Bella asked weakly.

“I’m Topaz and you are in the back of an ambulance” Topaz replied.



“What happened?” Bella said, completely unaware of the bite. “All I remember doing is playing with Emily. I slid down a rocky hill on my feet because Emily accidentally pushed me. I reached the bottom of the hill and then Emily and I started laughing. Then there was pain and everything went black”, Bella reported weakly.

“Thank you for that information. Now, you have been bitten by a snake”, Topaz went on. “You’ve got a nasty python bite there.”

“Python? What? Are you serious or are you pulling my leg?” Bella said loudly. She was about to scream but she held it in.

“No, I’m serious. Pythons are one of the most dangerous snakes there are”, Topaz answered. “Emily even saw you pass out. She reported the story to us.”

“Emily? Where is she? Did she get bitten by the snake too?” Bella nearly cried. She was trying (and failing) to keep calm.

Chapter 4

When Emily got to school the next day, Caitlyn Marie came up to her with her best friend Kim Stewart.

“Ooh! Whose best friend, AKA, my worst enemy, got bitten by a snake?” Caitlyn sneered quietly.

“Ooh! Who?” Kim repeated.

“Who wants to know?” Emily mumbled.

“Ha. Like I don’t already know. My mother is a friend of Bella’s mother. So she told my mum and she told me”, Caitlyn snickered in her evil talk.

“Whatever.”

“Uh-oh. I need to get to class. Miss Butler gets really mad when people are late. Shouldn’t you be getting to class?” And with that Caitlyn and Kim walked away.

Emily groaned. “I hate them”, she said to herself.

When lunchtime came Emily hung out with her friend Bryda.

“So where’s Bella?” Bryda asked when they got outside.

“In hospital”, Emily replied.

“Why?” Bryda sounded worried now.

“She got bitten by a snake. Even worse, a python.”

“Oh dear. I could look up on the Internet how poisonous they are”, Bryda suggested.

“Thanks. That would be a big help”, Emily smiled.

Chapter 5

Lunchtime ended and soon after that school ended.

Emily walked down the stairs with Bryda and her mother Laura.

“Mum, can I visit Bella in hospital if Emily is going?” Bryda asked Laura after Emily explained about what happened to Bella.

“Okay. If Emily and her...” Laura trailed off.

“Gran. My parents are on business leave, remember?” Emily reminded Laura.

“Oh yeah, that’s right. You can go, Bryda, if Emily and her Gran are going”, Laura said to Bryda.

“Thank you Mum!” Bryda squeezed Laura around the middle.

“Thanks Laura. Gran and I are going, by the way”, Emily informed Laura while Bryda was busy hugging her mother.

“Okay. Thanks for letting Bryda go with you and your Gran”, Laura gasped as Bryda squeezed her even harder around the middle.

“Um... you can let Laura go now, Bryda”, Emily said.

Bryda let go of her mother and Laura went home so Gran, Emily and Bryda went to the hospital.

When they arrived they went inside and Gran asked the desk clerk where Bella’s room was.

“Corridor C room 33”, the clerk replied.

So they went down corridor A, corridor

B then they accidentally went down corridor D!

“Gran, I think we passed it. The sign says we’re on corridor D”, Emily said, looking up at the sign that was hanging from the roof.

“Oh yes, you’re right!” Gran replied, now also looking up at the sign.

And at that, they turned around and they finally reached Bella’s room.

Chapter 6

“Bella? Are you okay?” Emily asked when they got into the room.

“I’m fine. At least, I think I am”, Bella replied simply.

After spending over an hour with Bella, they all got tired.

When Emily and Gran got home, Emily brushed her teeth, got in her PJs and looked through her drawers for something to do.

After looking in her middle drawer, Emily found a dusty, but readable book of ancient cures.

“Wow” Emily breathed. Emily flipped through the pages.

“Weird” said Emily. All the pages were blank except the last page.

Cure For Snake Bites 10 Of 10 Cured

“Wow” Emily breathed again. “10 of 10 cured! I think I might try this. I’ll make it tomorrow and give it to Bella when we next visit her.”

The next day Emily woke up and saw the dusty old book lying on the floor.

“Oh yeah!” Emily said to herself. “I was going to make that potion for Bella today.”

So she got dressed and asked Gran for all the things she needed.

“Whatever for?” she asked Emily.

Continued on page 38

Continued from page 37

“An experiment”, Emily replied simply.

“OK. Just make sure it will be in the shed” Gran said.

“Yes Gran” Emily replied.

While Emily was setting up tables and a chair in the shed, Gran was collecting the ingredients from the pantry and the cutlery from the drawer.

“Here they are, dear”, said Gran, putting a basket full of ingredients on the table.

“Thanks Gran”, Emily replied.

Gran left the shed and Emily got started.

Chapter 7

“Belladonna... arrowroot... lemon juice...” Emily muttered to herself as she put ingredients in the bowl slowly, making sure that the right amounts of the herbs, juices and sprays were going in the bowl.

After two hours Emily looked up at the clock. It was 4:20pm.

She looked at the bottle in which she had put the potion.

“Emily!” Gran called. “Go and get changed. Then we’ll go to visit Bella”.

Well, Emily thought, it’s now or never.

Half an hour later they got to Bella’s room.

When Emily and Gran got in Gran went to the loo.

“Bella, I have something for you”, Emily said quietly.

“What?” Bella replied.

Emily handed Bella the bottle. “Drink this”, she said.

“Why?” Bella asked.

“It’s a healthy drink I brought from home. Just drink it please” Emily replied.

So Bella raised the bottle to her lips and drank.

Emily held her breath.

A few seconds later a small smile came across Bella’s face.

Then something amazing happened. Bella got out of bed and actually, literally walked. Bella and Emily hugged and squealed with delight. Then Bella seemed surprised at herself and lifted up the leg of her track pants. There was no trace of the bite marks to be found! Bella’s snake bite was healed!

Gran got out of the loo and saw Bella dancing with Emily to the music on the radio. Her mouth opened in disbelief as she pressed the button to call the nurse.

Nurse Rosalie came quickly into the room. She too was shocked. She pressed another button on the control panel.

Then manager Patrick came even faster

than Rosalie. He wasn’t shocked but he was surprised.

“Who helped Bella?” he asked.

“I did”, Emily said shyly.

“How?”, Rosalie, Gran and Patrick asked at the same time.

“I gave her a special potion thing. It was out of a book. It also said that 10 of 10 people who had it were cured”, Emily reported.

“Okay then. Well done and thank you. Bella you are free to go home this very moment!” Patrick said with glee. “Excuse me, miss, but could I have a favour?”

“Yes” Emily replied.

“Can you please make more of the potion in separate bottles?” Patrick asked.

“Yes” Emily replied.

“Thanks” Patrick said. “We have a lot of people that have been bitten by snakes of all sorts.”

“Really? Well, I’d be happy to help” said Emily.

“Thanks a bunch”, said Patrick.

So then Bella, Gran and Emily went home. Gran called the news reporters so Emily became famous and all those that got bitten by a snake got healed.

The End!

By **Morgaine Delahoy**
Year 6, Casterton Primary
CASTERTON – VIC.

Fire

Fire’s tormented soul searches tirelessly for release,
Craving burning to expel frustration and worry.
Furious fingers flicker frenetically working fiendishly,
Crisp, hissing flames emerge, endlessly engulfing.
Blustering beauty, bursting into a molten menace,
Swiftly swallowing the searing surrounds.
Deliberately lit and demolished, leaving behind only devastation,
As futile as if the sun had fallen to earth, we are helpless to escape its hellish face.
Fire is an unforgiving and unforgiven soul.

By **Alyssa Stein**
Year 5, Ravenswood School for Girls
GORDON – NSW

The Fairy Queen's Diamond Pendant

ELISSA was Queen Elvira's younger sister. She was a beautiful, impulsive, kindhearted fairy, much loved by the pixies and fairy children.

The Queen would often say, "Elissa, you must quieten down. You are a fairy princess, so behave with dignity." Elissa would try to be good for a while, but before she knew it she would be running up the palace staircase again, while the fairy children chasing after her with squeals of laughter.

Because of her high spirits, Elissa was often in trouble, and one day something really awful happened. The Queen was standing before her royal mirror admiring her diamond pendant. The diamond was a rare gem with a star glowing in its heart, given to her by the King to wear to the fairy ball.

Suddenly, Elissa burst into the room. She bumped into the Queen and knocked the pendant to the floor, where it broke into two pieces. "Elissa!" cried the Queen. "How could you be so clumsy! The diamond is ruined!"

The Queen was very upset. Elissa crept around like a mouse and wept. She knew she would not be allowed to attend the ball.

The day of the ball arose and the fairy children came running to find their beloved playmate. "Come to the seashore with us, Elissa", they cried. "The tide is very low today, and we can see gems just waiting for us to pluck them out."

Elissa still felt sad but she was too kindhearted to refuse the children, so together they set off for the seashore. In spite of her sadness, she joined in the search and before long she spotted a magnificent gem. "Oh look!" she cried. It was a diamond with a double-star in its heart, the rarest gem to be found in all of Fairyland! Elissa hurried back to the palace and asked to see the King.

"Your Majesty", said Elissa respectfully, "I have found this gorgeous gem and hope you will take it to my sister in place of the pendant I broke".

The King gasped at the beauty of the stone. "This is the finest jewel I've ever seen", he said. "This certainly makes amends for your clumsiness!"

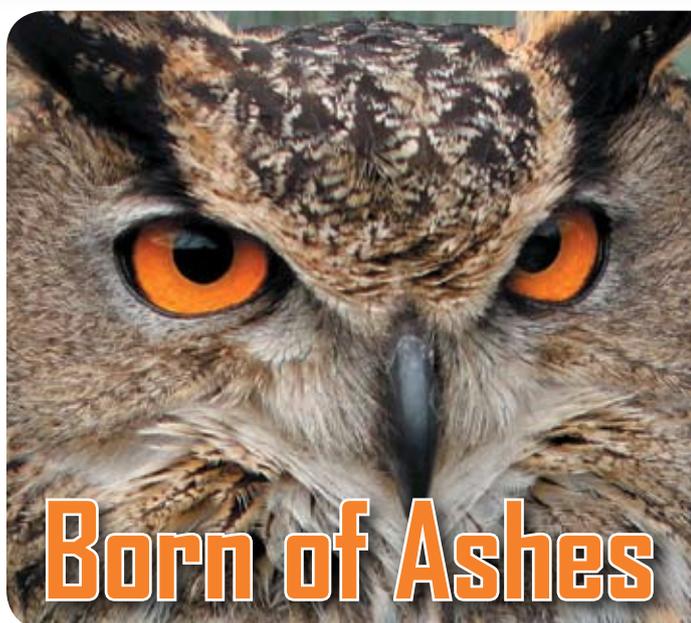
Soon a new glittering double-starred pendant was present to the Queen. The King explained where the beautiful jewel came from.

"Oh, Elissa", cried the Queen. "This is the most beautiful gem! All is forgiven and forgotten – and of course you must come to the ball tonight!"

"Hooray!" shouted Elissa. She rushed out of the room, pursued by the fairy children, and the sound of her feet flying up the staircase could plainly be heard. The King and Queen looked at each other and smiled. Elissa hadn't changed – but maybe they didn't really want her to!

By **Alina Lafsky**

Year 5, Emerald North State School
EMERALD – QLD.



The shrill scream of the night owl pieces through the sky,
As it opens its wings and soars up on high.
The scorched black limbs of the waste rise up,
The amber liquid trickles and smells of blood.
From the ashes those black fingers contort,
Twisting away from those flames that they fought.

Snake tongues of green burst through a ground of white,
A bright contrast to the darkness of night.
And a man walks by – all grim and forlorn.
His expression sagging and his features all worn.
The black limbs grope out towards him – screaming,
But he does not hear their desperate pleading.
What is gone, is gone – and cannot be retrieved.
And he feels able to leave (he knows there's nothing to grieve).

By **Emma Hartley**

Year 10, Abbotsleigh, WAHROONGA – NSW



Trapped in a Book

Boom! A lightning bolt struck Chloe's house. She shrieked as she read, "The dark gloomy cave!" She dropped her

book onto her bedside table with half of it hanging off the side. A spider with prickly legs fell onto her face. She felt a little snuffle run through her nose. Then it started to turn into a sneeze. "Aah aah aahchoo." She felt like her bed was getting bigger and bigger. The whole room was expanding. Either everything was growing or she was shrinking! She got such a shock that she started to wobble. She nearly fell off her bed onto the dusty old wooden floor boards.

BUT !

Chloe had left her book hanging of the side of her bedside table and she fell onto it.

As Chloe was scrambling around trying to sit upright, she realised that she wasn't getting anywhere. Instead of sitting up she was falling down.

BUT ?

She wasn't just falling down. She was sinking.

FAST. DEEP.

Before she knew it Chloe was screaming at the top of her lungs.

She didn't know what to think.

But there was no answer!

Chloe felt a few scratches as she bumped into tall trees.

She was falling down so quickly that she could hardly breathe.

She soon came to a sudden landing.

"OUCH!" she cried.

Chloe did not realise it, but she had landed in front of a cave!

Straight away she jumped up and slowly turned around.

Chloe saw the cave! She nervously walked into the cave. She called out, "Is anyone there?"

But no one answered. She kept on walking and soon approached a little bed. She felt very tired. So she decided to have a rest. I bet that Chloe just wanted to be at

home fast asleep. Chloe felt sick. She was so scared that her tummy was spinning around.

Eventually Chloe calmed down and fell asleep. But not very deep. Suddenly she woke up uncomfortable, remembering she was trapped in a book! "How am I going to escape?" she wondered anxiously.

Just then a gush of wind rushed into the cave. The wind was so strong it swept Chloe off her feet. She flew out of the cave and up past the big tall trees. "Where am I?" she thought, her heart pounding fast. The wind swept her out of the book and finally into her soft big bed. She grew back to her original size. "Is this the end?" she asked herself. Her heart slowed down and she started feeling at home again. She was so tired she fell fast asleep.

The next night, Chloe was reading "The Shipwreck". BOOM! Chloe flinched a little when a lightning bolt struck the house. She was surprised when she felt a little snuffle run through her nose.

But she was sort of used to it for it was the same as when she started last night's big adventure. Where was she going now?!

By **Tiana Whelan**
Year 4, Oxley Christian College
CHIRNSIDE PARK – VIC.

Seize The Night, leave the day,
Except for Winter, it leads the way.
Nighttime beauty makes my path,
Too bad the night just doesn't last.

During the day, I want to cry,
Nighttime, come again, make the day fly by.

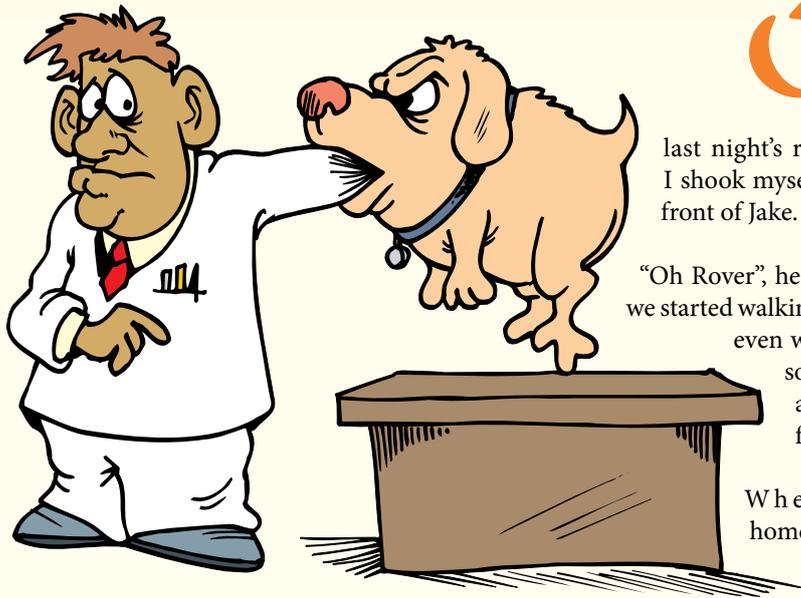
For me, the night is the day,
The pure black horse of night has swept me away.

Once again, night has gone,
Day has come and I can hear the morning song.
The birds have awakened and are saying to me;
"Seize the day with us and sing along merrily!"

Now I am starting to appreciate the day,
But the beauty of night will always lead my way.
The joy of night has always led the way,
So Seize The Night and leave the day.

By **Morgaine Delahoy**
Year 6, Casterton Primary School
CASTERTON – VIC.

Seize The Night



Oh Rover!

last night's rain and then I shook myself off right in front of Jake.

"Oh Rover", he laughed, and we started walking back home, even when Jake was soaking, he had a smile on his face.

When we got home, it was about 4:00, which is my 'lay-down-on-

the-carpet-and-beg-for-my-dinner' time. Jake sat down on the couch while mum cooked dinner and Cindy, well she was doing her hair as always. I don't do much to mine, a shave now and then but a lick and a scratch is pretty much it.

Dad just came in from out of the backyard from doing the poo-patrol and I thanked him with a jump but he said, "Rover, get down".

No-one paid any attention to my pleas for dinner, so I took myself off for a stroll, and wandered into Cindy's room. Now the first thing you see in Cindy's room is pink and the first thing you smell is perfume, I don't like that smell so I stuck my head in her pink bin which was shaped as a love-heart, so whilst it was quite difficult for me to get my huge head into it, I managed. I found a nice smelling tube of something in her bin so I ate it, just like the time I ate Jake's soccer boots, Cindy's Easter eggs, mum's stockings and dad's tie.

"Mmmmmm", I said to myself, licking my lips. "Minty." Then I went out to the backyard to sleep. I didn't feel so good.

The next thing I knew, I was at the vet's! THE VET'S!! NO! I hate the vet's!

"Oh Rover," said Jake, shaking his

head at me, "the vet said toothpaste isn't good for dogs."

Well that explains why I felt so woozy after I ate it.

The vet then stuck a cold thing that went 'beep' into an area where cold things aren't meant to go, gave me a nice tasting tablet and I fell fast asleep again.

When I woke up I was in mum's car pulling into the drive-way.

I felt really weird and nauseous.

First, I whacked my head into the front door because I thought it was open, then I thought a big puddle of mud was my bed, and I bet you know what happened then. I walked into the house and Jake, Cindy, mum and dad all said, "Oh Rover!"

★ ★ ★

By **Lucy Banks**

Year 5, Sylvania Heights Primary School
SYLVANIA HEIGHTS – NSW

"OH ROVER, look at you! Off the carpet. NOW!!" yelled mum. I knew I shouldn't have stepped through the mud to get my bouncy ball.

"Sorry mum" I said, but all that came out was a whine.

I put on my big, brown puppy dog eyes, laid on my white stomach and begged.

Hi, my name is Rover. Some people call me a mutt and that is quite offensive to me. My ancestors were big, so naturally, I am very big too.

Anyway, Cindy and Jake came home from school and I gave them both a big, wet sloppy kiss.

"Ewww", shuddered Cindy.

"Hi buddy," said Jake. "Want to go for a walk?"

If there is one thing that I love more than a ride in the car, that's going for a walk.

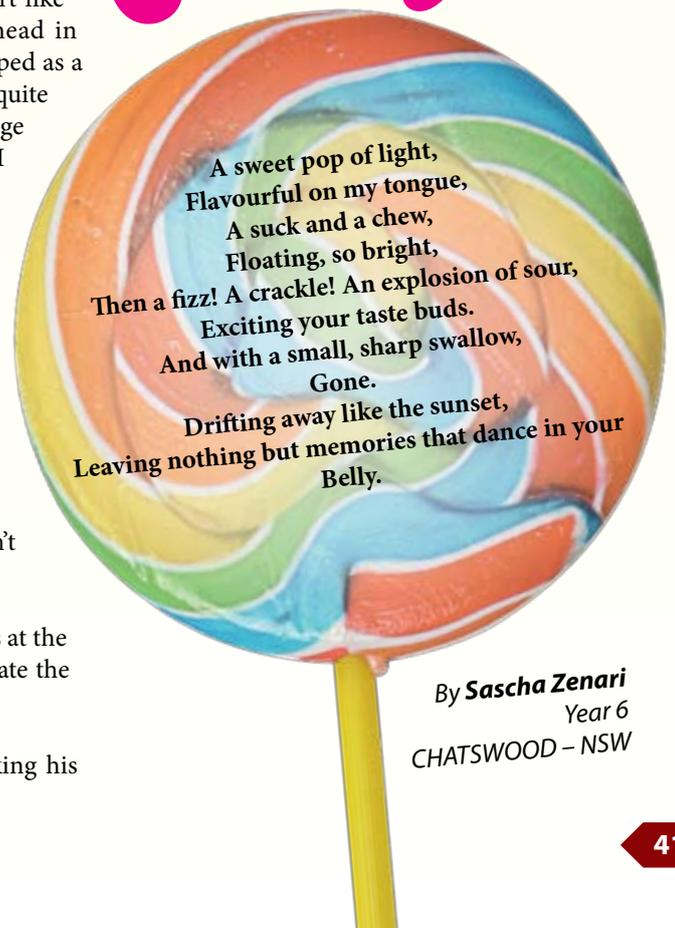
"Sure," I say.

As we got to the soccer oval, I saw a boy playing with a tennis ball, so I ran up to him and stole it. The ball was newer than the ones that we have (had) at home so it tasted rubbery, but that didn't stop me from running around like a maniac.

"Oh Rover", sighed Jake and helped the boy chase me. It was fun.

After a while they got bored so I stopped running and started rolling around in the grass, which was still wet from

Candy



A sweet pop of light,
Flavourful on my tongue,
A suck and a chew,
Floating, so bright,
Then a fizz! A crackle! An explosion of sour,
Exciting your taste buds,
And with a small, sharp swallow,
Gone.
Drifting away like the sunset,
Leaving nothing but memories that dance in your
Belly.

By **Sascha Zenari**
Year 6
CHATSWOOD – NSW

"BUT Mum," yelled my sister Jenny, "I don't like surfing holidays."

"Well, this holiday is for your father and your brother Bill" replied Mum. Meanwhile I was packing my suitcase already in my room. I sprinted downstairs to Mum.

"Mum, I am finished packing!" I panted under my breath. With that Jenny stomped upstairs! "What's wrong with her!?" I wondered in my head.

"Have you made sure you've packed everything?" asked Mum.

I was so excited because I had been practising surfing all spring for this holiday! Twenty minutes later, Jenny came stomping down stairs. It was 7:45 pm now and I was starting to get tired.

We boarded the plane at 12:30pm that night. That plane was called Queensland Air Lines, and it only went to London and Queensland! An hour into the flight, I whispered to Mum, "Look out the window – there's a terrible storm outside!"

"Oh stop telling tales Bill!" replied Mum. Within five more minutes the storm started up. Our plane was shaking, I was trembling with fear and worst of all it felt like we were going to crash! It was like that the rest of the way. (I don't know how I lasted it without vomiting!)

This was the worst flight ever! After two and a half hours we landed in Queensland. All I recognised were the beautiful blue sky, shiny blue sea and a bright yellow hot sun. I skipped happily out the plane, through the airport and into our mini bus. "Isn't it just fantastic," I sighed.

"Oh, won't you be quiet!" complained Jenny.

When we arrived at our hotel I got the keys and sprinted to our room and unlocked the front door. After a small rest my whole family went to the beach. This was the time I had been waiting for all of this year!

We arrived at the beach in less than a minute after we left the hotel cabin. I grabbed my surf board, raced down the sand and dived into the water. There were all sorts of waves: humungous waves as big as a fully grown elephant, all the way down to the tiny waves no bigger than your arm!

THE MYSTERY OF THE RED LIGHT!

I was just warming up on the tricks when I suddenly saw a big, bright, red light.

It hit me directly in the middle of the forehead! I got a tingling feeling as I began to get smaller and smaller and smaller. Luckily my bathing suit shrunk with me! "PHEW!"

I slipped off my surf board as a big wave pushed me under water. Everything went black!

Next thing I found myself at the bottom of the ocean. It was cold, dark and... slimy? I slowly opened up my small, weak eyes, to find myself in a cave lying on a big blue eel!

As slow as the slowest star fish, I crept away from the sleeping eel trying not to disturb it. Just as I arrived at the end of the cave exit, it opened one eye, just in time to see me! It raced out of the cave.

I hid in a small hole in the rocks. It looked around for a while but then slithered back to rest again. I was so relieved! My heart started to pound as I passed the cave again. But luckily it didn't see me as it was too busy sleeping.

This was when the true adventures began...

In the distance there was a big, blue, blurry figure swimming around in a red cloud of krill. "But what is the blue, blurry figure?" I wondered to myself.

As I swam closer and closer, it got clearer that it was a giant humpback whale!

I wanted to get a closer look because I had never ever seen a whale in my life! So I just swam a little closer and that's when it got serious! The whale was hungry and it was feeding on the krill! Suddenly I realised that it had opened its mouth and it was heading right for me! I slowly closed my eyes because I thought it was the end of my life!

I opened my eyes to find myself still alive but inside the whale, buried in fish and krill and its belly was full of water still! I crawled to the top of the fish and krill and looked out the blow hole.

I was only just in time for the whale to spray the water out of its blow hole. All the pressure of the water blew me out of the whale and high into the air! I saw my parents but they didn't see me because I was so small. I fell back down onto the bumpy, rough skinned humpback whale and slid down its side.

"Phew, that was close!" I thought. My heart was pounding and my whole body was shaking. My head was spinning as if I had just been on the craziest roller coaster in the world!

As I slid down the side of the whale, I sunk to the bottom of the ocean once again. I started to swim again to continue my adventure.

A mysterious shape lurked about two kilometres in front of me. I slowly swam over to it. What was it? When I arrived, I was as scared as a kitten of its new owner. I looked closely – it was an old and rusty shipwreck. I wanted to explore but I was too scared. Eventually I decided to anyway. It was really dark, as dark as a pitch black night. I found all sorts of things down in this shipwreck, like treasure chests, small animals and a sword. Hang on... a sword! This must have been a pirate ship!

It was still dark when suddenly a red light hit me again. It hit me directly in the middle of the forehead! I got a tingling feeling as I began to grow larger and larger. I was extremely frightened. Would

I grow into a giant? But I stopped at my usual size.

Everything went black! I was knocked out cold! I woke up to see myself on top of the water. I was back at the beach again, but I had lost my surfboard during

my adventure. My tummy was lurching, from fright and worry about what Mum would say.

I quickly swam up to Mum and said, "I shrunk while surfing and... and..." I stopped to take a breath.

Mum sighed and said, "Oh, stop telling tales, Bill!"

By **Zac Jarrott**

Year 4, Oxley Christian College
CHIRNSIDE PARK – VIC.

The Churchyard

I COULD hear the soft click of my heel of my shoes on the cobblestones. The lights were dim and I could not see clearly. There were no people to be seen. The sky was dark; no stars were shining brightly, no stars to comfort me on my journey. Finally, I could see my destination: the oldest church in my town; the entire state for that matter. St. Cuthbert's was a very spooky place indeed. Tales and myths were told about it. As a little girl growing up, I had been told the spookiest story of them all.

This particular legend was about a small isolated grave at the back of the church. Legend had it that whoever could survive walking through the graveyard at midnight on their 22nd birthday would receive a special present. However, if you didn't attempt to cross the grave, something

terrible would happen to you. I'm not always superstitious; it was just something inside that story was ... My thoughts were interrupted by the dinging of the town clock. It was midnight. It was now or never. I slipped quietly through the church gate.

The trees danced in the wind and strange noises were all my ears could hear. Suddenly a huge gust of wind, as strong as an ox, pushed me back and I fell with a thud on to the dirt. Shaken, I picked myself up and ventured further into the churchyard.

"Beware! Dare not venture through, for this is St. Cuthbert's Church, his spirit denies entry to any outsiders. With the power vested in me, I banish thee from the holy church of St. Cuthbert's!" cried out an eerie voice from somewhere near a great oak tree. I was utterly dumbstruck. "Leave, or ELSE!", cried the voice again.

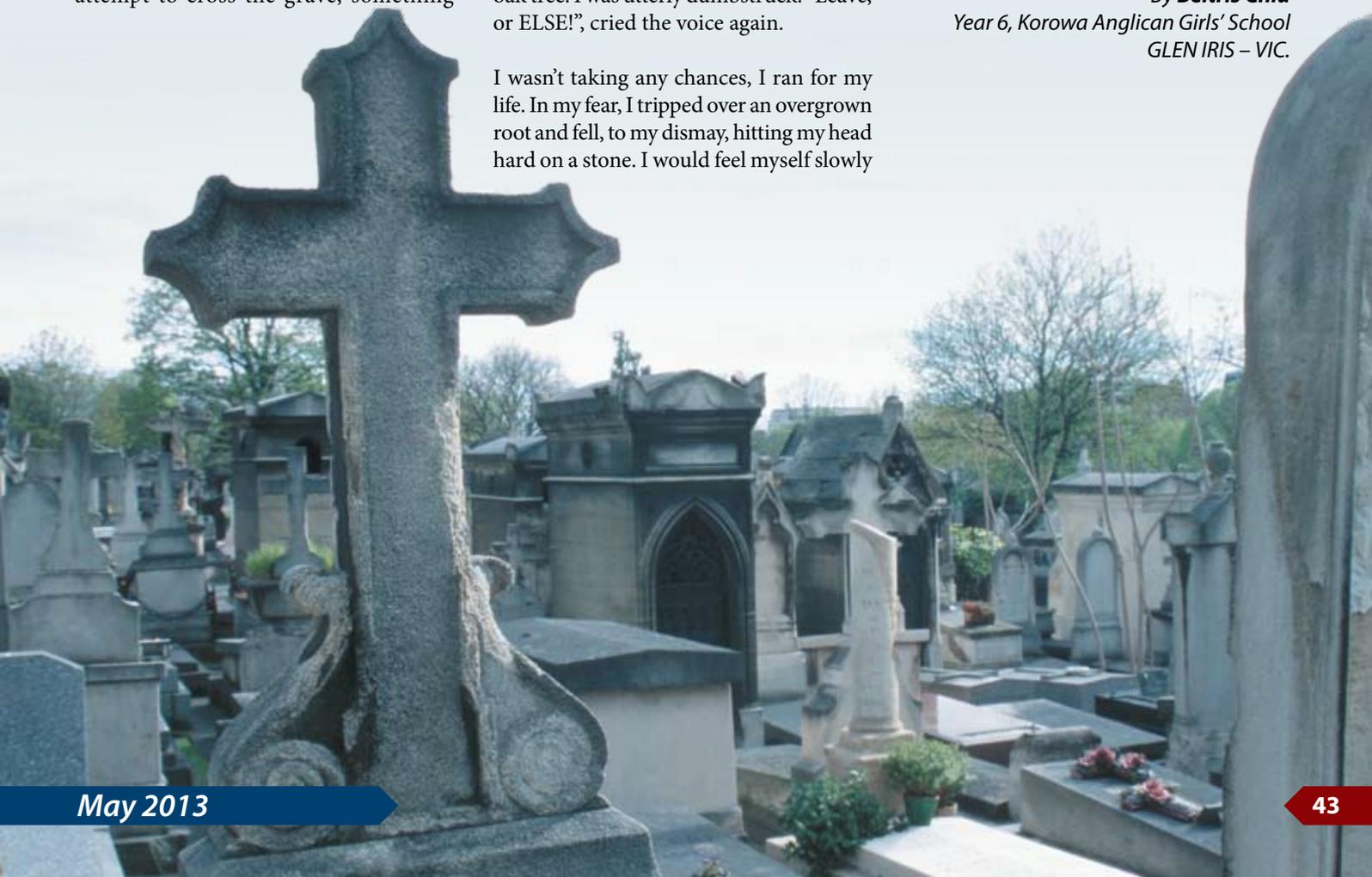
I wasn't taking any chances, I ran for my life. In my fear, I tripped over an overgrown root and fell, to my dismay, hitting my head hard on a stone. I would feel myself slowly

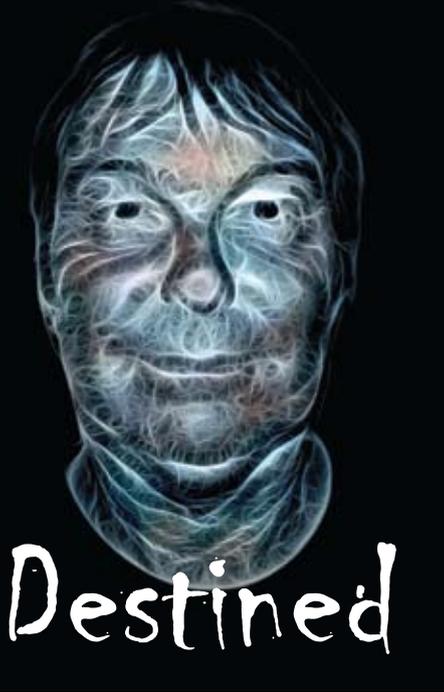
losing consciousness. I could see a small outline of a figure coming closer. Suddenly, there was only darkness.

When I awoke, it was morning; I could smell rich coffee wafting in from a crack in my door. Wait, why am I here? How am I here? My own home! I gingerly felt my head, where I thought I had hit it in the night before in St. Cuthbert's church yard. I got up and looked in the mirror. There was a dark purple bruise. Suddenly, it hit me like a tonne of bricks. I felt the breath catch in my chest and my knees began to buckle. The only way I could be here is if someone... or something... moved me from the graveyard. Suddenly I heard the stairs creak slowly, and then my door was slowly pushed open...

By **Beitris Chiu**

Year 6, Korowa Anglican Girls' School
GLEN IRIS – VIC.





CHAPTER I: The Shadow

THERE once was a land where flowers grew and the breeze smelt dainty like love in warm hands. Children played in the meadow while parents foraged hard to find food. Some with luck and others with not so much luck but everyone there supported each other no matter how much trouble it was until... The Shadow came! The Shadow turned everyone against each other but everyone was still terrified from The Shadow. One, Charlie, went to go see the man they called the Hopeful. The Hopeful was a man in a black coat and a black hood. When Charlie got there he pleaded.

“Is there anything I can do to help my family and the town and defeat The Shadow?”

“Yes there is one thing. Find the man called Bourne. He will give you a spell that will defeat The Shadow and bring back all hope for the town.”

Then BAM! Charlie was gone. He was riding off into the sunset to bring back all good will and kill The Shadow.

CHAPTER II: Night Time

Night fell over the woods. Charlie searched hard to find a place to camp out for the night. As he was trotting around Charlie found a blanket that was ripped and torn so he thought he may as well use it. He plonked off his horse and tied her up to a big tree. He laid out a bed and got some food out. He ate it slowly and thought where was going to go the next day to find Bourne.

“He could live in the hills?” Charlie wondered. “Oh well, we will search tomorrow.” Then Charlie drifted off into a deep sleep waiting for the next day.

CHAPTER III: The Goblins

As Charlie woke up he felt he was moving. Suddenly Charlie realised he was tied up and was carried by two goblins on his side.

“What are you doing with me?”, Charlie yelled.

“Oh nothing much, just going to have you for dinner”, replied Goblin One.

“Yeah HAAAAHA!” chuckled Goblin Two.

“No, you can’t do that!” Charlie screeched.

“Who says so?” Goblin Two said.

“Me”, Charlie said.

“If you don’t shut up then I will slice your tongue off”, Goblin One yelled.

Charlie gulped, not daring to speak again.

CHAPTER IV: At the Castle

When they got to the castle it was gray with broken stones and there were no windows, just holes with barriers on them. They went to go see the Goblin King.

“Master, we will eat great tonight! We have found a boy that looks quite plump”, goblin one stuttered.

“Bring him in. I shall have a look at this boy”, the Goblin King said firmly.

“Yes Master. BRING THE BOY IN!” yelled goblin two.

Charlie was brought into the room.

“So hello boy. What is your name?” the Goblin King asked.

“My name is Charlie and if you don’t mind I’m going to leave now and continue my quest!”, Charlie barked back.

“What is your quest?”

“I’m going to find the man called Bourne

so I can defeat The Shadow that has been ruling my land for many years!”

“Goblins, untie him”, shouted the goblin king.

Charlie rubbed his arms and said, “Thank you”.

“Well you have found him, so now tell me what you need so I can give it to you”, the Goblin King said.

“Well is there any chance you have a spell that will make him disintegrate into dust?” Charlie asked.

“Yes I do, as long as you find me food.”

“Yes you have a deal and you can have one of our cattle. You can pick.”

“Great, now it’s in this box. Here it is, now let’s go, just the two of us”, and off the two went. Charlie was still a little bit uncomfortable!

CHAPTER V: The Spell

When they were there Charlie found The Shadow and said “Oh Shadow, I have something for you”, Charlie lured.

“ROAR”, The Shadow roared, Charlie read out the spell.

You will disintegrate right now, you will screech in pain loud as you go up in flames and nothing but dust will be left of you.

Then after Charlie said that, The Shadow disintegrated with loud roars of pain like getting attacked by lots of bees and getting stung to your death.

POOF, The Shadow was gone and a rain of dust drizzled over the town and the hope was restored. Charlie said to the Goblin King with a sigh of relief, “Would you like a big cow?”

“Yes please!”

Charlie got a cow and gave it to the Goblin King and off he went. The entire town celebrated with a festival in Charlie’s name!

THE END

By **Janice Stevens**

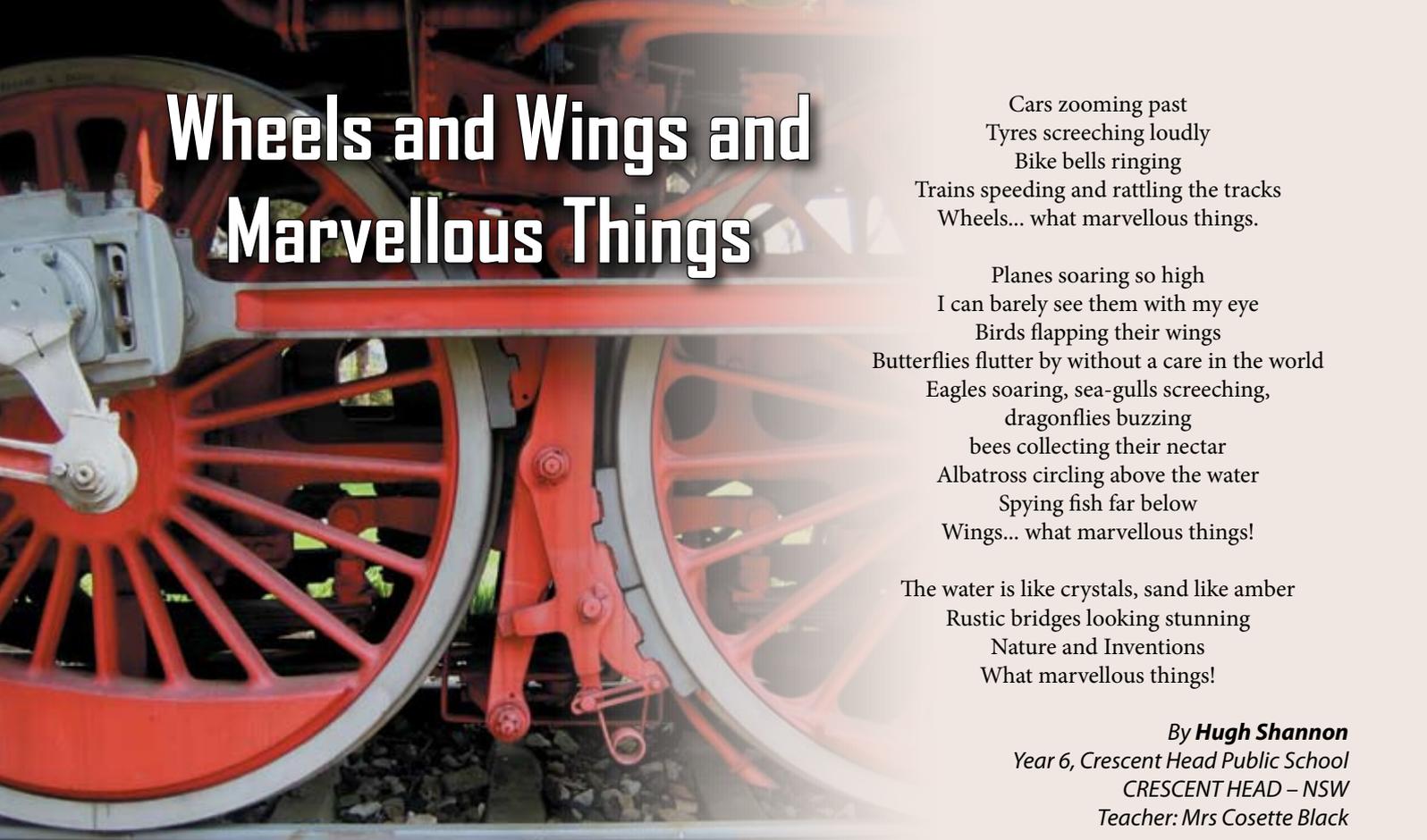
Year 7

EMBLETON – WA

The Lamp Room

I find myself in a room of black,
How I arrived here I do not know,
There are slight, dark shapes swimming amongst the black,
I don't know where I've been, I don't know where I'll go.
I force my rigid arms to reach out in front,
I force my solid legs to move with all my might,
My hand bumps a shape and I freeze with shock,
The shape hits the ground and my eyes explode with light.
I am stunned, blinking furiously to regain my sight,
As my eyes adjust, my surroundings are revealed,
Lamps are spread out across the floor of the room,
The fallen lamp casting shadows across the lamp field.
I move to the nearest lamp and fiddle with the switch.
It is an antique lamp; faded colours and years of wear,
I manage to flick it on as the fallen lamp turns off,
The Lamp Room vanishes, replaced by an old rocking chair.
I am sitting in the chair in an old-style house,
The lamp is on a cabinet, there are children playing in the room,
An elderly woman walks in and the children say goodnight,
She goes to switch off the lamp and I am plunged into gloom.
The Lamp Room returns and my mind is racing,
That room, those people, I feel as if I've been there before,
The antique lamp is no longer shining,
In contrast with my curiosity, I have to know more.
I walk over to the fallen lamp and turn it back on,
I notice the slender white stand before the lamps disappear,
I am lying in a hospital bed; the elderly woman is beside me,
There are tears in my eyes, my vision is unclear,
The woman is clutching my hand, tears streaming down her face,
And now immense pain begins coursing through my veins,
Machines start beeping; a doctor pushes a lamp over my face,
And then the world trickles away like heavy winter rain.
I am sitting with lamps, in the room as dark as night,
Where is the door? Where are the windows? Where is the grass, the moon, the sun?
Now a thought enters my head, maybe I am dead,
Maybe this is a place that exists between one.
I have witnessed my death from when I was alive,
From a time when I had grandchildren and a beautiful wife,
I turn on more lamps and see what they have to offer,
I was born, I got married, visions from my life.
I turn on many lamps, in the never ending room,
They turn off after each experience that they had to offer for me,
But with each one I remember another part of my story,
Reliving my life through the eyes of who I used to be.
Exhausted from the experiences I have seen,
I try to gather my thoughts from the scattered mess in my head,
I think about the lamps and how they work and why they're here,
I think about how I think a lot for someone who is dead.
Every time I use a lamp I experience one memory,
I wonder what will happen if I turn two on together,
For it is always one lamp that is shining at any one time,
So then I turn on two lamps and it is the last thing I remember.

By **Adrian Harper-Gomm**
Year 11, Kambrya College
BERWICK – VIC.



Wheels and Wings and Marvellous Things

Cars zooming past
Tyres screeching loudly
Bike bells ringing
Trains speeding and rattling the tracks
Wheels... what marvellous things.

Planes soaring so high
I can barely see them with my eye
Birds flapping their wings
Butterflies flutter by without a care in the world
Eagles soaring, sea-gulls screeching,
dragonflies buzzing
bees collecting their nectar
Albatross circling above the water
Spying fish far below
Wings... what marvellous things!

The water is like crystals, sand like amber
Rustic bridges looking stunning
Nature and Inventions
What marvellous things!

By **Hugh Shannon**

Year 6, Crescent Head Public School

CRESCENT HEAD – NSW

Teacher: Mrs Cosette Black

The Planet That Hurts

The call of the ocean,
The sea of deep green,
The everlasting land, or so it seems,
The mountains of great height, and
The plains, teeming with life.

A city bustling,
With nothing
But a monstrous mass of humanity,
Animals and nature smothered under this human blanket.

Through eyes of today and those of tomorrow
A planet of life becomes a planet that hurts.

The moan of the ocean,
The sea of jet black,
And land only as far as the eye can see,
The mountains still tall and high,
Plains nurturing only human life,
A city so full no more can fit,
Animals and nature scarcely exist.
All eyes see guilt no longer brilliance.

By **Harriet Veale-Wright**
Grade 8, St. Clare's College
WAVERLEY – NSW



Sonnet

Faint smells lingered along a painted street
Brushed with vibrant tessellations of self-expression
Luminous in the darkness; a garden lay petit
Fluorescent flowers bloomed, daintily in procession
Accustomed fingers strummed, beneath a neon tree
A haunted melody of scarred, fragmented memories
Laughter echoed softly from "Beyond the Sea"
Mystic in the midnight air, a bar for those diseased
A dancer flowed upon its steps, impulsively alive
Vigorous and rhythmic, curving with youthful poise
Resting on a park bench, two star gazers jived
Whispering quietly, mediating, in their turquoise
Softly, slowly, quietly nighttime retired in defeat
As dawn rose silently, above a painted street

By **Olivia Moffatt**
Age 16, Geelong Grammar School
GEELONG – VIC.



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