

OZ KIDS IN PRINT

May 2016

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*A great tool to
improve literacy
in schools!*

Cover design by
Naika Wasaga
(2015 Beach Energy Indigenous Art Award)

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FREE ENTRY

**TO STUDENTS IN PRIMARY OR
SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Proudly supported by the Australian Government



Matteo, 8 years old
"ALIEN BUSTER"



Lia, 9 years old
"SUPER DOCTOR"



Théo, 7 years old
"AIRLINE PILOT"



**SMALL HANDS
WILL DO BIG THINGS**



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Contents

From the Editor's Desk 4	Toy Shop Magic!22 <i>Grace D'Amico, Korowa Anglican Girls School, Glen Iris, Vic.</i>	Riverbed24 <i>Blake Lovely, Manly Selective Campus, North Curl Curl, NSW</i>	
The Story in Your Own Backyard 5	Shark Cage Diving22 <i>Anna Rynes, Eynesbury Senior College, Adelaide, SA</i>	Gone25 <i>Amy Naylor, Daylesford Secondary College, Daylesford, Vic.</i>	
Book Reviews18	Storm!27 <i>Elise Prendergast, Sacré Cœur, Glen Iris, Vic.</i>	Springtime Explodes!25 <i>Isabelle Koivu, Crescent Head Public School, Crescent Head, NSW</i>	
Ambassadors23	Spring Is Here28 <i>Jasmeen Kaur, Kingswood Public School, Penrith, NSW</i>	Midnight Days26 <i>Annabelle Glover, Korowa AGS, Glen Iris, Vic.</i>	
RFDS Adventures – George Ivanoff23	The Indigenous Perspective37 <i>Charlie Sheehan, Nambour Christian College, Woombye, Qld.</i>	The Adventures of Jeff Stanley: Dimension Drama27 <i>Sinthujan Ahilaeswaran, St. Luke's Primary School, Lalor, Vic.</i>	
AWARDS FOR POETRY			
Snow 4 <i>Anna Sophia Rynes, Eynesbury Senior College, Adelaide, SA</i>	In Celebration of 125 Years of Schooling, Greenslopes State School38 <i>Odette Chellew-Halford, Greenslopes State School, Greenslopes, Qld.</i>	Grand Performance28 <i>Daniel Iera, St. Joan of Arc, Brighton, Vic.</i>	
Drought 4 <i>Veronica Perez-Torres, Ruyton Girls' School, Kew, Vic.</i>	AWARDS FOR SHORT STORIES		
Who Stole the Night? 7 <i>Luca Garcia-Kytola, Crescent Head Public School, Crescent Head, NSW</i>	Inner Mould 6 <i>Ali Godden, Ivanhoe Grammar School Plenty Campus, Mernda, Vic.</i>	The Unpleasant Surprise30 <i>Sebastian Hall, Homeschooled, Horsham, Vic.</i>	
Volcano10 <i>Rose Mascione, Eynesbury Senior College, Adelaide, SA</i>	Father 8 <i>Blake Lovely, Manly Selective Campus, North Curl Curl, NSW</i>	The Never Ending Slide31 <i>Grace D'Amico, Korowa Anglican Girls' School, Glen Iris, Vic.</i>	
The Amazing Amazon Rainforest15 <i>Gurleen Kaur Viridi, Middle Swan, WA</i>	Butey and Stella10 <i>Xuanwei Chen, Canberra Girls' Grammar School, Deakin, ACT</i>	The Water Cycle33 <i>Dev Sheth, Hale School, Wembley Downs, WA</i>	
Starry Night15 <i>Chantal Grace Hamblin, Mentone Girls' Secondary College, Mentone, Vic.</i>	For Good Luck12 <i>Morgaine Delahoy, Casterton Secondary College, Casterton, Vic.</i>	The Lighthouse34 <i>Odette Chellew-Halford, Greenslopes State School, Greenslopes, Qld.</i>	
Freedom15 <i>Miranda Plowman, Distance Education Community Victoria, Thornbury, Vic.</i>	Kiptoo13 <i>Adrian Garro, Marymede Catholic College, South Morang, Vic.</i>	Bethany Bishop's Diary36 <i>Des'Ree Adelaja, Home Schooled, Clyde North, Vic.</i>	
Apocalypse16 <i>Kade Silverthorne, Homeschooled, North Balgowlah, NSW</i>	Come On In14 <i>Cordelia King, Carey Baptist Grammar School, Kew, Vic.</i>	At the End of the Rainbow38 <i>Zali Williams, Marymount Primary School, Burleigh Heads, Qld.</i>	
The Battle Grounds17 <i>Fraser Simms, Siena Catholic Primary, Sippy Downs, Qld.</i>	A Night by the Beach16 <i>Jordan Varghese, Casula, NSW</i>	Front cover image by Naika Wasaga	
What a Mess!17 <i>Luella Robinson, Crescent Head Public School, Crescent Head, NSW</i>	Bobby the Bubblegum22 <i>Chloe Davies, Huntingtower School, Mt. Waverley, Vic.</i>	Photo credits – 'A Digger's Journey', p. 20: Graham Bould via Wikimedia Commons. 'Midnight Days', p. 26: Designed by Freepik. 'The Never Ending Slide', p. 31: Lance Townsend, http://nobacks.com . 'Starry Night', p. 15; 'A Night by the Beach', p. 16; 'Spring Is Here', p. 28; 'The Unpleasant Surprise', p. 30; 'The Lighthouse', p. 34: Frank Jones, Desktop Dynamics, Geelong.	
A Digger's Journey20 <i>Olivia Mellowes, Nambour Christian College, Woombye, Qld.</i>			

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

We have had some great entries so far this year. Please don't leave it until the last day to send your entry through. Last year we had over four hundred entries in the last week. It was a hard decision on which ones went through and the ones we had to leave out.

Our Authors have been busy writing books and some are now available on the store bookshelves. George Ivanoff has been busy writing books for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The *RFDS Adventures* are exciting stories set in remote parts of Australia. They are a great read for primary school students. Anna Ciddor has a new book just released. *The Family with Two Front Doors* is a book based on her family. I hope it inspires you, the reader, to ask your parents and grandparents about their family history. Then you can write your family history down for future generations to enjoy.

ENTER ON-LINE at
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KEEP ON WRITING (TYPING)!

Carol Dick
Managing Editor

Find us on 

Snow

I am snow, the image of winter,
my gentle flakes drift from above
and create a wonderland of fog.
I am fun – I love holidays, snowballs, angels!
I am drizzle dancing through branches,
falling on the tips of dog noses
giving them a frozen kiss.
I form crystals and sparkle
like a shattered mirror in rays of light.
I can be threatening like thunder,
cause havoc, bring blinding blizzards,
but my enemy is the warmth of spring,
and as I disappear and forget another year,
I face a slow, agonising death.

By **Anna Sophia Rynes**
Year 10, Eynesbury Senior College
ADELAIDE – SA
Teacher: Shelda Rathmann

DROUGHT

When the wind blows
It brings dust in its wake,
It spreads dryness around
and makes everything bake.

Nothing to do, nothing to see,
just the hard, hard earth and a small dead tree.
There is no water to go around,
nothing for the animals, let them die on the ground.

It is only us humans, who know how to live,
the ones that less struggle, the lives that we keep.
But even if we are the ones that survive
things are not easy, and things do not thrive.

The crops are just dying and the cattle are dead,
'cause of the bloody, dry drought that's taking our head.
The one that keeps going, the one with no bend.
If only it rained, it would come to an end.

By **Veronica Perez-Torres**
Year 8, Ruyton Girls' School
KEW – VIC.
Teacher: Dr. Harvey



The Story in Your Own Backyard

by Anna Ciddor

Nana Nomi had eight brothers and sisters and they had to rent two apartments to fit them all in. They lived in Lublin, Poland, in the 1920s and their father was a rabbi, a religious leader of the Jewish community. As my grandmother talked about her childhood she gave me glimpses of an extraordinary world full of colour and ritual and happiness...

I put the notes from the interview in my 'ideas' drawer, and when my grandmother passed away in 2002 they were still there, buried under a growing pile of papers. It was not until 2011, sorting through that drawer, that I came across the interview again, and instantly, all the old fascination and excitement surged up. This time I was ready to write.

She told me about Thursday afternoons when the front doors were thrown open

However, when I began to write I discovered there were missing pieces. What was the name of the boy Adina married? What was the family's address in Lublin? By this time Nana was no longer around, so I began a quest to find the answers, never dreaming when I set out that it would take four years, and carry me fifteen thousand kilometres away to Lublin and Warsaw in Poland.

HAVE you ever thought that your own life and your own family would be too boring to write about? Do you look for weird and wonderful subjects instead?

Well, when I first started as an author, that's what I did. When I began my writing and illustrating career in 1987, I researched and wrote about the way people lived a long time ago, people I had never met – the first settlers in Australia, the gold diggers during the gold rush, the Vikings, and Irish druids.

Even though I was fascinated by the past, it never crossed my mind to research and write about my own family. My parents and grandparents hardly ever mentioned their own pasts and I never pushed them to tell me. I knew they had lived through terrible times in the Second World War and had memories that were too painful to recount. Anyway, they were my own family. How could they be interesting to write about?

But then, in 1991, when my Nana was nearing the end of her life, my husband told me I should ask for her story before it was too late.

'She doesn't like to talk about her past,' I argued. 'It makes her sad.' (Really, I wasn't very interested.)

'Don't ask about the war, ask about her childhood before the war.'

So, reluctantly, I did. And suddenly a whole fascinating world I had never known about opened up!

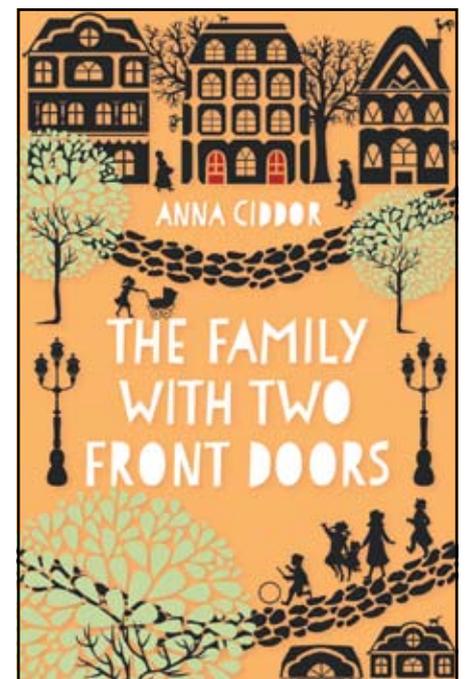


and all the beggars of the neighbourhood were invited inside for a bite to eat, about her mischievous little brother who sneaked off to watch the blacksmith instead of learning his prayers, about making loaves of plaited bread for Friday nights, and about her older sister Adina getting married – at the age of fifteen – to someone she had never met!

Luckily, I managed to find most of the answers, and now that the book is written I can tell you that it is 90% true – all the characters, the setting and the things that happen to them.

When you read the book I hope you will agree with me that *The Family with Two Front Doors*, the story about my family – about my own 'back yard' – was worth writing! And I hope you will be inspired to ask your own grandparents and parents about their lives as children, and maybe turn those into stories too!

The more Nana talked, the more I knew that one day I would have to write her story, but it was early in my writing career, and the task seemed too daunting. Anyway, I was busy writing other books.



Inner Moul

MEET Mr and Mrs Collector. Mr Collector is a garbage collector and Mrs Collector, who prefers to be called Maureen, collects the kids.

One lovely autumn morning, when the few leaves there were, rustled along with the light morning breeze, Mr Collector took a trip to see how his employees were working around his yard.

Bang! Smack! Ping! The pieces of rubbish slammed noisily onto the ground.

Whack! Smack! Plop! What was THAT? This sound caught Mr Collector's sharp ears. A game had landed right in front of his mucky shoes.

"'Inner moul!' Weird name for a game", he thought.

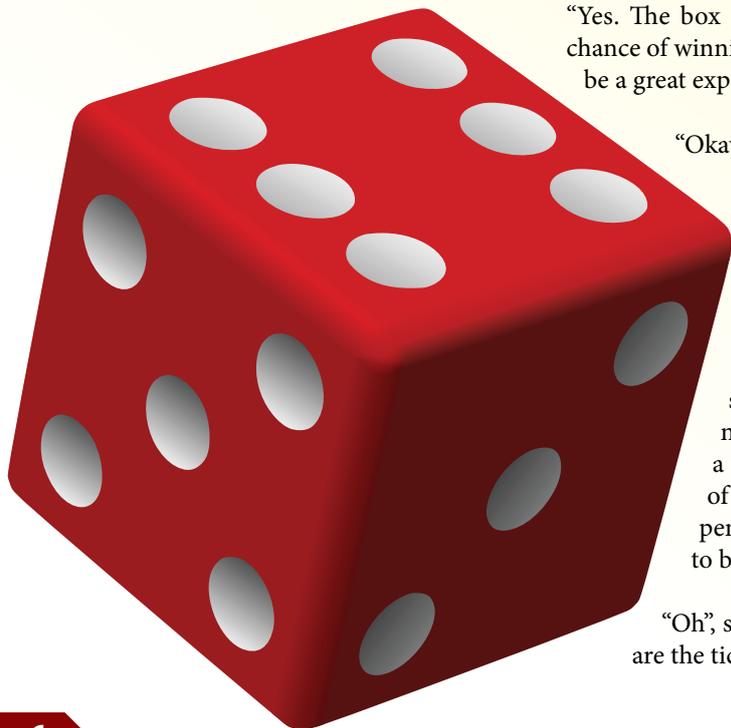
He picked up the game and read the words on the box. They were written in big red letters that could have been written in blood they were so red.

**IF YOU LIKE A RACE AGAINST
TIME**

AND TO HAVE LOTS OF FUN

THEN THIS IS THE GAME FOR YOU

**(PLUS A 5 in 5 CHANCE OF
WINNING A HOT HOLIDAY)**



"A five in five chance of winning a hot holiday. The tickets might still be in there."

Meanwhile, Maureen collected the kids from school. When Jolly and Bolly got into the car, they told her all about the Chinese festival they had been to at school.

During mid-conversation Bolly gave something to Maureen. "It's a fortune cookie."

Maureen was very pleased with her present and put it in her pocket for after tea.

Later, when the kids were in bed, Maureen went into their bedroom to check on them. Bolly was sleeping peacefully but Jolly was snoring his head off. Maureen was always surprised that Bolly didn't wake up.

When Maureen sat down to eat her tea, Mr Collector said "I've got a present for you".

"I'm so lucky", said Maureen, "Two presents in one day".

Then she noticed the smell.

"What's that dreadful smell? Please tell me your present's a nose-plug."

"No, it's a game."

"A game?" said Maureen.

"Yes. The box says there's a five in five chance of winning a hot holiday. It would be a great experience for the kids."

"Okay, let's play."

They opened the box. The board was slightly mouldy. It was brown and flaky. Inside were the board pieces, a miniature bottle of sunscreen, a small bottle of water, a mini pair of sunglasses and a pair of bathers the size of an eraser on the top of a pencil. All the pieces seemed to be there.

"Oh", said Mr Collector, "Where are the tickets for the hot holiday?"

"Maybe they're hidden in the game", said Maureen. "I'll go first."

Maureen threw the die, a six! Then Mr Collector threw a six.

Suddenly the lights dimmed, the wind blew and BANG, Maureen and Mr Collector disappeared.

The noise woke Jolly and Bolly. They stomped out of their bedroom.

"Keep the noise down", roared Jolly. "Mum, Dad... MUM, DAD? Where are you? Look, they've been playing a game. Bolly, I challenge you to a game."

"Sure", said Bolly.

Jolly threw a six and then Bolly threw a six. Suddenly the lights dimmed, the wind blew and BANG went that familiar sound. The floor gave way and they felt themselves plummeting down into the molten inner core of the earth. Bang went that familiar sound for the third time. They landed in a grey steel cell with blanketed floors. In the cell too, were their mum and dad.

"How did you get here?" Maureen asked.

"We found a game on the bench so we played it", said Jolly. "We both threw sixes. Suddenly the lights dimmed, the wind blew and BANG, we fell through the floor. Where are we?"

"We think we're in the centre of the earth, stuck in a prison cell", said Maureen.

Maureen sat next to Bolly to give her a cuddle. As she sat down a crunching noise sounded. She felt in her pocket and brought out the fortune cookie. "Anybody hungry?"

"I am", exclaimed Bolly. Maureen broke the cookie in half but something dropped into Maureen's hands as she gave some cookie to Bolly.

"A key", she cried. "It might open the prison door."

She rushed over and jammed the key into the lock. "IT WORKS, no wait, it doesn't."

They were all thoroughly disappointed.

“Let’s get some rest”, said Mr Collector.

As Jolly lay down on the blanketed floor, he felt something hard. Pulling off the blankets he found another lock.

“Hey, try this lock”, he shouted.

Maureen did. HEY PRESTO it worked, a secret trap door opened.

Then the lights dimmed, the wind blew and BANG they fell from their prison cell only to find themselves in... another prison cell.

“What do we do now?” asked Bolly.

“Well, if throwing a six landed us here, maybe throwing a one will get us out. Anyone got the die?” said Maureen.

“I have”, said Bolly.

Bolly threw the die. A one. WHOOSH, she disappeared.

“I hope she’s gone home. Look, the die’s in my hand now”, said Jolly.

“You roll it then”, said Maureen.

Jolly did, but he rolled a two, he flipped over, he rolled a three, he fell face down, he rolled a one and WHOOSH he disappeared like a puff of smoke.

Then the die appeared in Maureen’s hand.

“Wish me luck”, she said to Mr Collector. She rolled the die. A one! She vanished, leaving Mr Collector all alone. But now he had the die.

He rolled. A two, he flipped over, he rolled a four, and the walls start closing in on him. Hurriedly he re-rolled. A nine? What, a nine, with one die? Spikes appeared on the walls. He rolled an eight, the ground suddenly caught fire. Desperately he kept rolling the die until finally, he rolled a one. WHOOSH! Mr Collector vanished like the rest of his family.

Sun streamed through the windows. Mr Collector sat up on his bed with his family.

“We’re all home”, he cried.

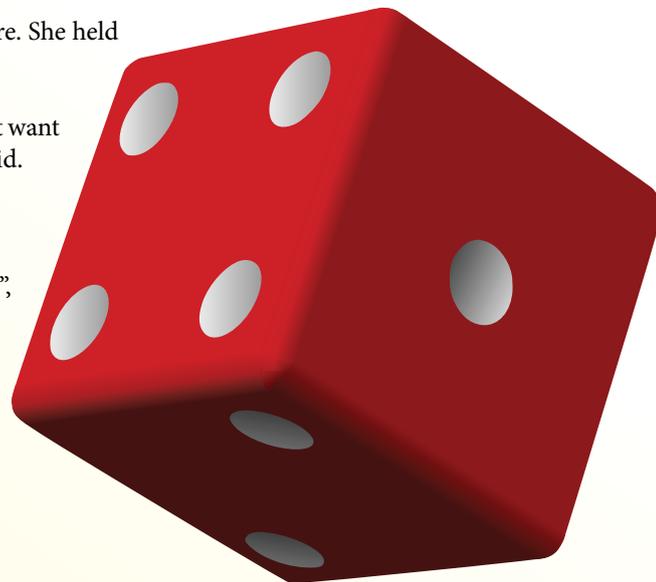
Maureen rushed over to the fire. She held the game in her hands.

“Let’s chuck it in the fire; I don’t want any more hot holidays”, she said.

The fire greedily ate it up.

“I knew it stank from the start”, puns Maureen. But nobody laughed.

By Ali Godden
Grade 5,
Ivanhoe Grammar School
Plenty Campus
MERNDA – VIC.
Teacher: Mr Wilisoni



Who Stole the Night?

I wonder how, I wonder bright
How on earth you stole the night
Was it magic? Was it right?
How did you do it?
Out of sight!
By torch? By lantern?
Or perhaps by candle light...
You took it away... you stole the night!

By Luca Garcia-Kytola
Year 4, Crescent Head Public School
CRESCENT HEAD – NSW
Teacher: Mrs Black

FATHER



1st December 1969

A sea of colourless numbered marbles eddied and swirled within the transparent barrel.

Mechanical helicopter rotors whirred distantly.

A warning. An alarm. A foreshadowment.

A wrinkled hand submerged into the ominous ball pit, the orbs scratching and clinking against each other unnaturally.

Then, silence.

A monotone voice echoed through the 21K1 Motorola television screen.

“Conscripted birth date: September 14th.”

★ ★ ★

24th April 1970

The emerald savanna grasslands of South East Vietnam extended infinitely. A dense network of tunnels dug hastily by Vietcong Communist guerillas snaked through the dense bamboo canopy. A sea of green, billowing beneath the wings of metallic military planes that projected deafening shocks of motorised noise into the tropical foliage.

Then, silence.

A cloudy vapour slowly gushed from the underside of the aircraft, staining the humid atmosphere an unmistakable shade of bright orange.

From the nearby Nha Trang village, children began to yell with joy, believing the cascading auburn mist as a symbol to mark the beginning of the annual Asian ‘Hanoi Holi’ Colour Festival.

“Hoan hô! Sự hạnh phúc! Hooray! Joy and happiness has arrived!”

The haze slowly descended, burning through the rainforest.

Crumbling, decomposing, disintegrating.

As the lethally acidic moisture continued to fall, putrefying the now rapidly swelling emerald ocean, a horrifying sight began to unveil.

Camouflaged Vietnamese men.

Writhing on the ground like worms.

Scratching frantically at their fluorescently red skin as it peeled freely off in pieces.

From the B-29 Superfortress plane as it skimmed over the blazing jungle, US Senior Airman Blandy Samuel crossed himself tersely, glaring unblinkingly, horrified, repulsed.

The native Vietnamese’ muddied jade ao bà ba clothing seemed to disappear amongst the tropical lowlands. As if they were just another fragment of the landscape.

As if they didn’t exist.

★ ★ ★

30th December 1969

The sheet of paper lay nestled beneath the sculpture of Christ; the crucifix’s shadow jaggedly blackening the document, exposing segregated words.

Department of Labor and National Service. Requisition. No exemption.

Hugh Samuel stood shaking with anger, his lips tightened into a contorted grimace. His officious figure blocking the stone cross resting upon the wooden mantelpiece.

Chewing feverishly on his tongue, Blandy’s head remained bowed, stifling a pained yelp as the metallic taste of blood filled his mouth.

Silence.

“Father”, Blandy muttered, breathing rapidly. “I will not violate the Lord’s oath.”

Almost instantaneously, Samuel’s hard fist struck Blandy’s stomach, transforming his pale skin an unnaturally mottled purple.

His father pointed around the room incredulously, at uncreased khaki military uniforms and framed awards boasting embossed honours.

World War II Distinguished Service Cross.

United States Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal.

He appeared to sniff at Blandy, like the pamphlets he distributed every week.

'Sniff out a Red!'

Blandy wondered if there really was a commie smell? Did the Rosenbergs have a distinguishing odour?

"My son! A 'conchie'! You will serve your country as I have done!" his father hoarsely shouted, lowering his head to whisper to himself inaudibly. He would not rest until he knew that America, the nation of freedom, was safe from the poisonous spread of Communism.

Blandy could feel the Lord's eyes upon him. He knew that at any moment retribution might hit. Striking him down.

Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not kill.

He had thought of every possible way to escape conscription.

Applying for a student deferment.

Forging an alternate birth certificate.

Even attempting to deliberately make himself medically unfit for duty.

'Triggers'. That's what they called the index fingers used for shooting.

Wrapping a rag around his forearm he had sat for hours, watching his veins dilate and bulge as he clenched a breadknife between his trembling fingers.

He feared his father. The prospect of murder. Of sin. But most of all he feared God's wrath. Nobody could hide from Him.

Blandy closed his eyes as Samuel's next blow came, silently begging for mercy, for redemption.

The pain in his abdomen intensified, punishing him, an embodiment of his looming sacrilege.

★ ★ ★

24th April 1970

Blandy sat silently within the aircraft, heeding the wailing of the injured below.

His face expressionless, fingers quivering, knuckles white.

A dazzling display of explosions and fire exposed a violent land-assault taking

place, masked by swelling black smoke that fiendishly curled its way through the charcoaled trees and into the orange sky.

Blandy pulled jarringly on the steering controls, increasing altitude and propelling the plane north. His eyelids twitching as he wiped a thin layer of sweat from his forehead with his khaki US Air Force uniform, saturating the embroidered insignia sewn into his sleeve: WE AS AMERICANS MUST STRIVE TO PRESERVE PEACE, FREEDOM, UNITY.

On the forest floor, swollen and mutilated Vietnamese bodies lay scattered throughout the smoldering destruction.

Masses of weevils slowly swarmed over the acidifying skin, bubbling and fermenting spasmodically.

The remaining residue of the auburn vapour reached the earth with finality, settling upon a torn cloth, partially buried beneath dirt and rubble.

The gas burnt through the red and blue fabric, mingling with the yellow star symbol until it dissolved into the scorched soil beneath.

★ ★ ★

31st December 1969

Samuel shoved open the wooden door, thrusting copious piles of folders onto the glass table in the centre of the dimmed room. He stared down impassively at the *USA Today* newspaper crumpled above the heap, with emboldened text reading "Nixon Tells Parliament: TROOPS TO VIETNAM".

Distantly, helicopter propellers droned rhythmically.

As Blandy entered, Samuel glanced down at the bound pile coldly, his knuckles clenched.

Silence.

Then, Blandy's voice pierced the stale air.

"Father. I am leaving the countr—"

Cutting him off, Samuel's fist crashed down upon the table, shattering the glass surface as shards of crystal ricocheted to the stone floor.

As trickles of blood spilt from his clenched hand, the heap of papers teetered precariously before spilling to the ground at Blandy's feet noiselessly.

Crouching slowly to retrieve one of the open folders, his eyes skimmed rapidly over the official print.

Selective Draft Act Legislation Pub.L. Stat. 76.

United States Supreme Court Selective Service System.

50 U.S.C. War and National Defense.

Drafted by Brigadier General Hugh S. Samuel.

Hugh S. Samuel.

Father.

Blandy fought for control over his emotions, over his mind.

He compelled himself to speak.

To make sense.

A lifetime.

A sentence.

A single word.

"Father?"

A pounding on the door answered his question.

Staring blankly, Samuel smeared the remaining blood over his khaki pants, escorting several US Army Officials toward his hunched son.

As Blandy's convulsing body was dragged from the room, he wailed raspily to his father.

To God.

To anyone who would listen.

Faintly, helicopter rotors whirred ominously.

He had nowhere to go.

By Blake Lovely

*Year 12, Manly Selective Campus
NORTH CURL CURL – NSW
Teacher: Ms Marisa Carolan*

Butey and Stella

BUTEY and Stella were best friends. Butey was a cat and Stella was a princess. They lived near a castle and wore crowns.

'I... um I want you to eat your lunch please... Butey,' said Stella, smiling.

'Miow, Miow!' Butey answered.

'Bip, Bip!' announced the fire alarm.

'Oh, my... come with me and I will get your food!' Stella screamed.

'Miow!' squeaked Butey.

Butey and Stella got all the food and water; then ran in the car.

'Hurry, Butey!' Stella announced, 'How are you going?'

'Miow!' said Butey.

After five minutes, the castle alarm announced, 'Bip, Bip, Bip!'. Stella and Butey



didn't notice that there was a fire in the castle.

'Come on Butey!' Stella said.

'Miow, Mi!' answered Butey. Butey was peeking through the car window. Stella saw a fire starting in the castle window. The fire alarm went louder and louder and louder. Finally the door opened but no one came out.

'Miow?' asked Butey.

'Oh, that's because the fire alarm is soooo loud that it had opened the door,' Stella said. The car went faster and faster than ever. The car seemed to fall.

'Slow down!' Stella cried. The car soon slowed and all was calm with no sound at all.

'Huh?' Stella said. After a while, Stella and Butey reached a lake with grass around it and a tree house next to the lake.



'Let's live here,' Stella said.

'Miow!' Butey answered trying to mean yes. They started to climb in the tree house and at last they reached a balcony on the tree house where the beds were.

'Oh... how nice...' When Stella was just about to finish her word, she found something interesting that there are curtains near the windows.

'Look, Butey, there are... Curtains!' Stella said.

'Mi, Miow!' Butey smiled to Stella.

'Oh, That's a good idea, Butey!' Stella said amazed.

'Miow, Mi!' thanked Butey.

'No thanks!' Stella said politely.

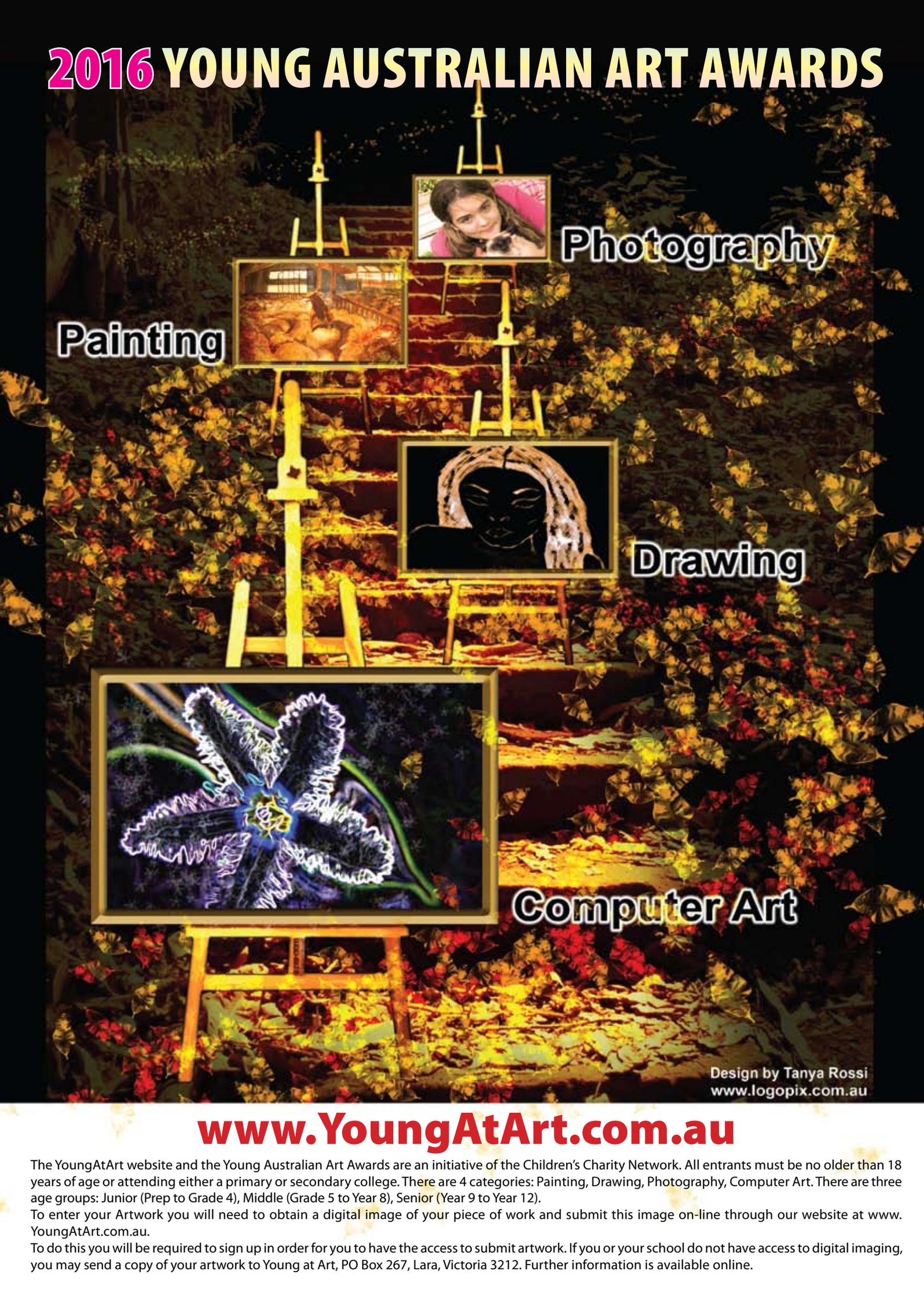
*By Xuanwei Chen
Year 3, Canberra Girls'
Grammar School
DEAKIN – ACT
Teacher: Mrs Jennifer
Worthington*

Volcano

I am
a volcano,
quiet and dormant
for a long time, but oh so
sudden with an unexpected fight.
Everybody screams and shouts, the rumbles
of terror echoing about. Some come out to see the once
peaceful sight erupt to spit hot rocks and lava, they flee in fright.
I can be a nightmare, sending hot red liquid down a slope.
I can run, I can destroy, those who decide to get in my way
are eliminated, incinerated to nothing. But once the era of terror is over,
I am yet again quiet for a long, long time
sitting in silence

*By Rose Mascione
Year 10, Eynesbury Senior College
ADELAIDE – SA
Teacher: Shelda Rathmann*

2016 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.

For Good Luck



ADAM was studying in the library alone when the bell went. He groaned – he was so dead. Exams, exams, and more goddamned exams. He could barely concentrate with the workload that they'd been given. He started packing his books away as the rest of the students started clearing out, chatting away.

Except one.

Adam noticed him as he straightened up and had already started walking out. One boy, sitting alone, with his head in one hand and twirling a pen around the fingers of the other hand, and his foot tapping quickly against the ground – sure signs of stress. Adam wondered why he wasn't leaving, before noticing that he had earphones in. He also faintly recognised him, but it was hard to tell who it was.

Adam walked over to him and tapped him on the shoulder, and he jumped as he turned around. Adam instantly knew who it was – Sean Byrne, the Irish exchange student that had started at his school at the beginning of the year.

He and Adam had gotten along easily from the beginning, even though they had slightly different friend circles. They occasionally sat together during the classes they had together, and Adam really liked the guy – he was funny, charming, cute, everything that Adam had always adored in people. As an out bisexual, he was allowed to think these things.

Sean grinned faintly and shook his head, resting it in his fingers. "Fockin' hell, Adam", he said exasperatedly. "You scared the shit outta me." He reached into his pocket and turned off his music.

Adam smiled apologetically. "Sorry", he said. "I didn't mean to."

Sean's grin grew. "Sure you didn't", he teased, and Adam laughed, Sean joining in. Adam loved the sound of Sean's laugh, of his voice in general. He had always been a sucker for Irish accents. "So what's up?" Sean asked as their laughter died down.

Adam raised his eyebrows. "The bell just went, you realise?"

Sean's eyes widened and he looked at his watch. "F___!" he said loudly, making the librarian look over in distaste. "Sorry", Sean apologised, and Adam could tell he was trying not to roll his eyes. Sean had always blamed his swearing on his Irish-ness ("I was raised with it, it's in me blood!") and while Adam never minded, the teachers always berated him for it.

But now Sean was furiously packing his stuff away, chucking stuff in his pencil case and shoving papers in books and books in folders.

"Thanks for tellin' me, Adam", Sean said. "I would've been shot where I stood if I was late."

Adam grinned – they had the same class next, and their teacher was as strict as strict could possibly get. When Sean said that she'd shoot him, well, he probably wasn't that far off.

"No worries", Adam said, "now let's go before we get detention."

They walked out of the library (Adam mentally grumbling at how Sean was still taller than him) down the hall and towards their class, Adam realising that in Sean's presence he'd forgotten that they would be doing an exam. He groaned again, and Sean looked over at him.

"What's up?" Sean asked. "Exam stress?"

Adam nodded. "I am going to die if I fail this." His ADHD didn't really help his case, either.

Sean chuckled. "Calm down, ye silly", he said. "If I can do it, anyone can, trust me."

Adam sighed, and Sean laughed.

Adam noticed that Sean looked up and down the hallway, and Adam did the

same – there wasn't another person in sight.

Then Sean did something Adam wasn't expecting at all: he grabbed Adam's arm, twisting him around, before leaning down and gently pulling their lips together.

Adam froze in shock for a moment, before leaning into the kiss – it was wonderful, even if it was only a few seconds before Sean pulled away.

Adam raised his eyebrows, and Sean winked. "For good luck", he said, and Adam rolled his eyes.

"Thanks", he said. "But now I'm not going to be able to concentrate at all." He could still feel it, and his lips tingled slightly.

Sean laughed. "I'll take that as a compliment. Now come on, ye goof, before we're too late."

So Adam allowed Sean to take his hand and pull him along to class.

★ ★ ★

Adam didn't see Sean after class, and assumed that he'd just lost him in the crowd. So, as per usual, he packed his bag for the end of the day and started to walk home. But he saw someone leaning up against a tree outside the grounds, listening to music, and he grinned. He knew immediately that that was his favourite Irishman.

So, once again, he went up to him, and tapped him on the shoulder. Sean jumped again and when he saw who it was, he swore loudly.

"For f___'s sake, Adam, would you stop doing that?" he said exasperatedly, running a hand through his hair and turning off his music.

Adam laughed. "Well, it's not my fault you're always facing the other way", he shot back and Sean cracked a crooked grin, which was another thing that Adam liked about him. Once their laughter had settled, Adam asked, "So, what are you doing out here, Sean? You don't usually walk out this way".

Sean's face reddened (adorably) and he looked away, suddenly seeming quite interested in the tree across the road. "Well",

he started uncertainly. "I was waiting for you. Am I allowed to do that?"

Adam smiled gently, his mind set. He reached up and turned Sean's face towards him, put his hand on the back of Sean's neck and pulled him into a kiss again. This time it was Sean's turn to freeze, before responding in kind, gently brushing his fingertips over Adam's cheek.

When they finally broke apart, Adam just

stared into the blue of Sean's eyes, admiring them.

Then he smiled. "If anyone can, you can", he mumbled, and Sean touched their foreheads together.

The exam didn't go too badly after all.

*By Morgaine Delahoy
Year 9, Casterton Secondary College
CASTERTON – VIC.*



I REMEMBERED several years ago, when I first came to Africa, Kenya actually, new to this part of the world and totally unprepared for what was going to happen. Never once had I dreamt that life for me was going to change completely.

My life in Australia had not prepared me for any of these things that yet to take place once I arrived in Kenya.

After completing my studies in medicine, I decided to take up a position treating the less fortunate in the Mount Kenya area.

On my arrival the first thing that hit me was the heat of the sun, it seems to burn everything around me.

I arrived in the village where I was to set up a surgery. At first the people were shy but after gaining confidence they seemed to be happy being treated for their many problems.

It was one day not long after I had arrived that I had this feeling of being watched, although I could not see anything, this feeling persisted. I was told not to wander

too far from camp as this was a dangerous place.

One night, after all was quiet there was an ear splitting scream. All at once people were running everywhere; I was told that Kiptoo had returned.

Kiptoo had been missing from the village for a number of years and everyone had thought he had died. Instead he was stealing food during the night, while people were sleeping.

The next night I had the feeling of being watched again; I went to bed with my gun under my pillow. It must have been in the early hours of the morning when I first heard a noise, I didn't take any notice at first but then it dawned on me that there was someone in my room. I opened my eyes and there he was, big, powerful with great big wide shoulders, his eyes were yellow and his skin shiny like silk. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I was scared as he looked like he could kill me in an instant. As I lay in my bed paralysed by fear I began to realise that he was in pain. I overcame my fear and my medical training took over. I knew he needed help. Carefully as I was not sure if he could understand

me I reached for his shoulders gently and looked at the bullet wound. At first he was wary of me but then I think his pain was too much to bear so he allowed me help.

As soon as I removed the bullet and dressed the wound, Kiptoo quickly and quietly left my room...

The next day I travelled to the next village. I had picked up a little of the language by now and I understood that they were talking about Kiptoo; they were saying that he was seen near our village the night before. The villagers were ready to shoot on sight. I said nothing of our meeting.

On reaching the village we found that Kiptoo had struck again. As I arrived the sight that greeted me was sickening. I tried to do what I could but it was too late; Bashira was beyond my help. I went to comfort her parents; I finally made my way outside. I needed to think; as I sat on a rock behind the village hut I began to again sense that I was not alone. I looked up and there was Kiptoo.

We stared at one another, as I looked into his eyes could see that this was no savage but a very frightened animal trying to survive.

With my hand on my gun Kiptoo seemed to sense this and he just stood there looking at me. The quiet of the night was broken by a single shot. With that I saw a black, proud and powerful jungle cat lying lifeless before me on the ground. It was a villager who saw the danger I was in and killed him. We knew this was the right thing to do for the village as he would strike and kill again.

*By Adrian Garro
Year 9, Marymede Catholic College
SOUTH MORANG – VIC.*



Come On In...

LARA was walking home from work on a cold evening. She couldn't wait to get to her warm house and have a nice hot cuppa. She turned the corner into her street and smiled to herself. She had had a good day at work, and she was feeling quite content. Just as she was fumbling for her keys inside her bag, she noticed a lady sitting on the ground just near her house. She looked dejected and she was shivering, and she didn't have a jumper either. There weren't really many homeless people around these suburbs, Lara thought to herself, and she strolled up the steps to her houses, eager to get out of the cold.

"Hi love, how are you going? Chilly night, isn't it?" Lara spun around. It was the lady sitting on the steps. The lady looked up at Lara with longing. Lara felt bad for her. Really bad. And here she was about to head inside for a nice, hot meal and a warm bed.

"Yes it is pretty cold, but hey, would you like to come inside for some lasagne? I couldn't possibly eat it myself, you see", replied Lara, tentatively.

"Why that would be great, thank you." The stranger walked into the house with Lara, looking around and taking in her surroundings.

"Please, make yourself at home", said Lara as she rushed off to prepare the lasagne that was in the freezer. Whilst she cooked the meal, the stranger stood by the heater of the house, warming up her hands that were pink from the cold. When the dinner was ready, the woman came and sat down at the table. Lara placed the meal in front of the waiting woman, only to find she was

looking at it with a hint of disgust.

"Is something wrong? Are you allergic?" she asked the woman, worriedly.

"Well you see, frozen meals aren't exactly to my liking, and I only eat fresh foods. But I guess I'll have to make an exception", the woman replied, as she started to pick away at the lasagne. Lara started eating her own food, a bit shocked and annoyed that this woman had no gratitude. They ate for a few minutes, until Lara broke the silence.

"Sorry, but I forgot to ask your name..."

"Carol, Carol Jones", she said, with a mouth full of food. "And you are?"

"Lara Jackson."

Carol noisily set down her cutlery on her plate and pushed it away from herself. She stuck her hand up in the air and sniffed her armpits, much to Lara's shock.

"Now if you'll excuse me I'm just going to take a shower", Carol told her as she got up and walked down the hallway to her en-suite. Lara's fists clenched under the table. How rude of her?! Without even asking! Lara heard the shower turn on and a voice singing. Then she imagined herself homeless and sitting on the street. A shower was probably a luxury to Carol, and she probably never got the chance. She unclenched her hands. Maybe she was being too hard on Carol. She didn't have a home, and she was probably desperate for a shower. Lara felt guilty for judging her so quickly, and went to grab some towels for Carol to use.

"Lara dear, do you mind if I use this perfume? And this shampoo? Oooh, and this mascara too?"

"Sure Carol, use anything you want. The towels are just outside the door", she replied. "And why don't you just take my whole house too, while you're at it", she muttered, quietly walking away.

Lara went back to the kitchen and put the kettle on. Nothing better than a chamomile tea to calm stress. She grabbed a mug from the cupboard and turned around. It was at that when she lost it. Carol was standing

in front of her, wearing HER clothes, admiring herself in the hallway mirror.

"I think red is my colour, don't you think Lara? It really brings out my eyes." Lara dropped the mug, and it smashed on the floor. Enough was enough.

"First you insult my cooking, then you use my shower, AND KNOW THIS?! WEARING MY CLOTHES?! WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?! You think that you could show a little gratitude, after all I've done for you!"

Carol had a shocked look on her face, but it quickly disappeared after she glanced up at the clock and saw the time.

"Well would you look at that? I better be going, it's almost 9 o'clock". Carol opened the front door and stepped into the cold. The fierce wind blew into her face, sending shivers into her body. Lara didn't know what to say. She didn't know if she should apologise or continue being angry at this rude woman. She was homeless after all, and she wasn't totally heartless.

"Listen Carol, I'm sorry, you know, I was ju—"

"Don't worry about it love, you've probably just had a big day. Come visit me sometime though", Carol said, dismissively.

"Ahhhhh, OK, are you sure you don't want me to call someone? The Salvation Army maybe? I'm sure they could give you a good home?"

"What? Why would you need to do that?"

"Well they help lots of homeless people—"

"Homeless? I'm not homeless love! I just got locked out of my house; I live around the corner. Anyway, I've got to go; my husband should be home by now. Have a good night!" And with that, Carol walked off down the street, while Lara watched, speechless.

By **Cordelia King**

Year 9, Carey Baptist Grammar School
KEW – VIC.

Teacher: Ms Edmondson

The Amazing Amazon Rainforest

I went on a journey to the amazing Amazon rainforest
The trees were lush and green
I could hear the birds tweeting and the insects chattering
In the amazing Amazon rainforest.

I could feel the wet moist soil beneath my feet and
see spots of sunlight coming down through the trees.
I could see bees busy at work and sloths sleeping in trees
In the amazing Amazon rainforest.

I could smell sweet flowers blooming, the colours filled the ground
The trees were so tall I couldn't see the top
Moss was growing slowly in the cracks of dark moist rocks.
In the amazing Amazon rainforest

There is a little city of plants and animals in the Amazon rainforest,
So when we cut down a tree or hunt an animal,
A lot of animals get affected,
So we need to protect the amazing Amazon rainforest.

By **Gurleen Kaur Viridi**
Age 10
MIDDLE SWAN – WA

Starry Night

Your Entry: Here we all lie,
Both awake and alone,
Our eyes wide open,
But they do not see past the darkness.

But me, I see the smallest of things,
Like the way the stars are beacons of light above the trees.
I see how the sky rolls, like waves of ocean water,
And just how much of the world I see that others can't.

They see the beauty as thick black ink,
They do not see the bright blue eyes that I see when the night blinks.
The people lie, now asleep in their beds,
Neck-deep in dreams of the magnificent sky that only I see.

The stars twitch in the blue,
The moon rises higher,
My eyelids grow heavier,
And the night gets darker.
Now all that is left is for me to lose myself to the land of sleep,
And the next day, forget all the beauty I've seen.

By **Chantal Grace Hamblin**
Year 8, Mentone Girls' Secondary College
MENTONE – VIC.
Teacher: Miss C. Jones

Freedom

Freedom
A precious canvas –
Where thoughts lightly paint ideas.
Where competing colours explode –
Emerging loudly.
Begging to be seen.
Thoughts watch silently among the chaos.
No idea wants to be condemned.
Paralysis creeps in.
The mind is 'The Master'.
Swirling the colours –
Longing for the perfect choice.
Always disappointed.

By **Miranda Plowman**
Year 7,
Distance Education Community Victoria
THORNBURY – VIC.
Teacher: Allira Scott

APOCALYPSE

A barren wasteland lies under a merciless sun,
That blares down on men until they come undone.
No greenery grows here, no life at all,
The humid air is a mean, cruel pall.
The desert is endless, as far as the eye can see,
And the windblown sands are bleak and empty.
A lone dead tree stands withered and broken,
It's an omen of isolation, a token.
The agonising heat makes it difficult to breathe,
Sentient beings have already chosen to leave,
Except for those who weren't so lucky,
Whose bones lie strewn and clothes are bloody.
For they were victims of the wolves and animals,
Or captured and eaten by the wild cannibals.
A lone skull lies waiting, watching, sleeping for all time,
It shows how here, nothing can survive.
This place is empty and cold as space,
This place provides venturers with a gloomy fate.
This place isn't meant for man,
This place truly is a wasteland.
But this wasteland is not one of normality,
For this wasteland is inside of me.
This desert's my broken soul,
Anima mea sterilis mens austero.

By **Kade Silverthorne**
Year 7, Homeschooled
NORTH BALGOWLAH – NSW
Teacher: Sarah Silverthorne

One night, I was sitting by the beach,
Patting the grains of sand, within my reach;
But what if one day, this joy would disappear,
That would surely bring me a tear...

I watch the slow calm waves wet the sand,
Beneath the ground I stand,
Relishing these moments I love.
But I still wonder if one day this joy will vanish,
I would be filled with so much anguish.

By **Jordan Varghese**
Age 11
CASULA – NSW

Then I realise, it is better to be content,
Rather than discontent.
For the future is in God's hands,
No matter, the things I demand.

So now, I stand by the beach,
And my heart feels light,
I sing my favourite song throughout the night,
Waiting for the next day to shine bright.

A Night by the Beach

The Battle Grounds



Marching legs, courageous hearts,
They walked on silently, revising their parts.
The battle ahead, so frighteningly scary,
Made the willing soldiers unimaginably wary.

The army, formed by these brave men,
Marched on, across the swampy fen.
And as they walked by a fallen chestnut tree,
The mournfully thought about their destiny.

They said their prayers, and looking around,
The army saw it; The Battle Grounds.
An oval stretched on the horizon,
To be full of swords clanging, as the sun was rising.

The soldiers nervously looked at one another,
And thought about their family, father, mother.
And while preparing, the first strike was struck,
On someone, before they could dodge it, sidestep or duck.

The cry of pain went up,
Like the all-of-a-sudden yelp of a pup.
The anger and fierceness in the soldiers' eyes grew,
The shouted, "We Will Avenge The Dead Few!"

And they did, powered by fury,
They won the battle of the century!
And as the cheers arose, ever so loud,
The willing soldiers felt unimaginably proud.

By **Fraser Simms**

Year 5, Siena Catholic Primary, SOPPY DOWNS – QLD.

Teacher: Mrs Kelly

What a Mess!

The little girl with a tidy dress
makes her room look like a mess!
When her mum asks, 'Who made this mess?'
the little girl with the tidy dress
Has to confess
'I made this mess.'

Her Mum says, 'You cause distress
when your room is such a mess.
You look so nice in your little dress,
but... your room's not at its best.
I'm so glad you did confess.
So now my love
Please clean up this mess!'

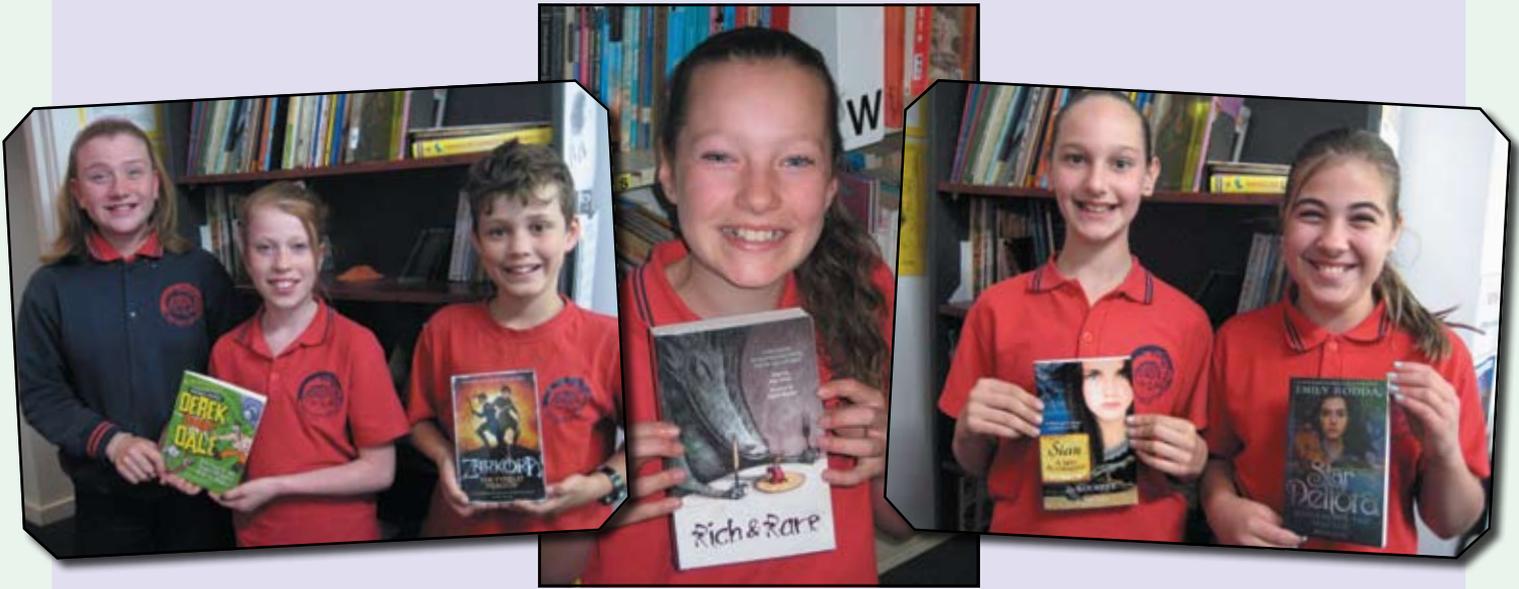


By **Luella Robinson**

Year 3, Crescent Head Public School, CRESCENT HEAD – NSW

Teacher: Mrs Black

BOOK REVIEWS



Meet our book reviewers — Helena, Ella, Stephanie, Emily, Oliver and Chelsea — from Boroondara Park Primary School, Victoria.

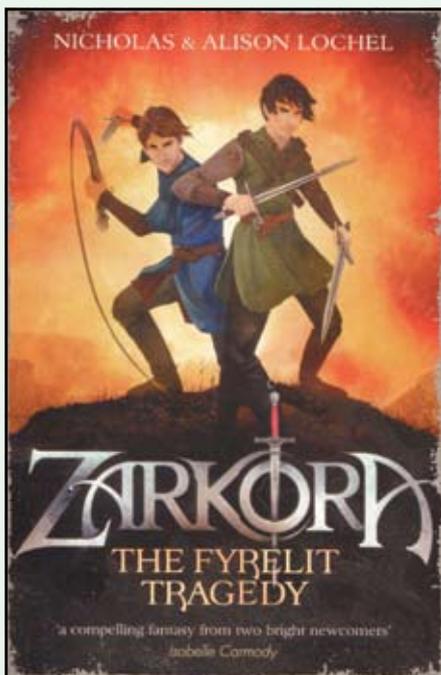
Reviews coordinators: Robyn English and Meredith Costain

Zarkora : The Fyrelit Tragedy

by Nicholas and Alison Lochel (Hachette)

Zarkora is about two brothers, Neleik and Ervine Fyrelit, who embark on a treacherous journey to save their kidnapped sister, Skye. The journey is thought so impossible that kings refuse to help them. While they make

some new friends during their journey, they also encounter many enemies. Their determination and persistent attitude is present throughout the novel and proves to be very inspirational for the reader. As they travel they see things they never would have seen and face things that they never would have faced without such a challenge.



This book was written by Nicholas and Alison Lochel and is the first instalment out of four in the *Zarkora* series, where the genre is fantasy-quest. This book is aimed at people who enjoy reading fantasy and adventure books.

My favourite part of the novel was at a place called Talset when one of the characters told the brothers a secret they never would have known if their parents had been alive. If you like twists and turns then this book is for you. Once you have started to read, it is hard to put down. I recommend that people aged 10 to 12 read this book.

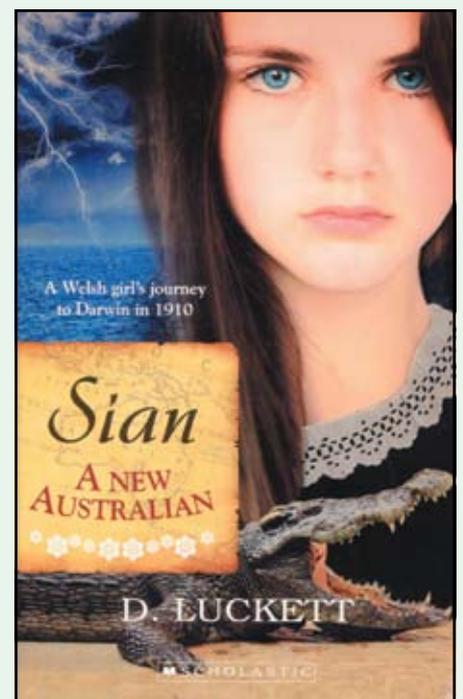
Rating: ★★★★★★★

— Oliver Williams

Sian – A New Australian

by D. Luckett (Scholastic Australia)

This book is amazing! It has a bit of everything, so I'm sure it will suit many readers. It has a true biography storyline with some adventure and mystery. It is about Sian Mary Roberts who is the



unlucky 13th child in a Welsh family. Her life is hard as her mother died when she was born. She spends all of her time picking up coal, going to school, getting teased and being scolded by her strict father. Soon, Olive, Sian's oldest sister, marries Ellis and Sian is looked after by them. Sian finds herself on a ship going to Sydney with Olive and Ellis, who is starting a new life as a carpenter in Australia in 1910.

A tragic accident happens and Sian has to move to Port Darwin. She lives the rest of her life there but ends up liking it much more than her old home. She says, 'Maybe sometime I'll go back home, but only for a visit.' Sian is a really strong character and is easy to like.

I would definitely recommend this book to anyone who is nine to twelve years old. I will now be looking out for the whole New Australian series in our school library.

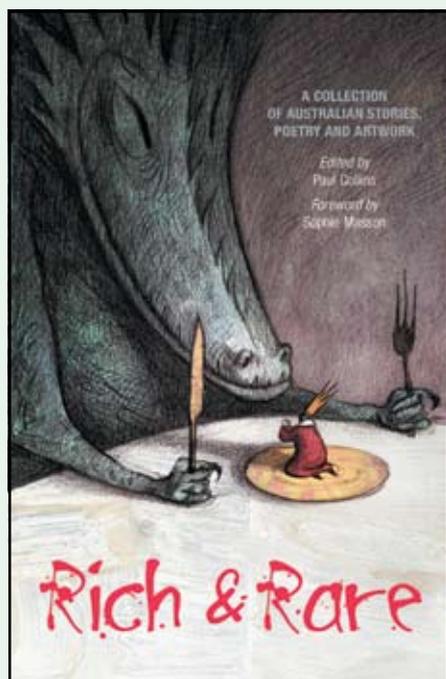
Rating: ★★★★★★★★

— Chelsea Zafirakos

Rich and Rare: A collection of Australian stories, poetry and artwork

Edited by Paul Collins (Ford Street Publishing)

Rich and Rare is an anthology of Australian stories, poems and artwork. It contains many different genres such as thriller, fantasy, crime, adventure, historical,



romance, ghost, science fiction and humour. This book has something for everyone and is guaranteed to be enjoyed by those who read it.

I really enjoyed reading some of the different stories. My favourite was 'You're Dead, Jason Delaney!'. I love this story because the actions that are involved are a bit over the top which I find funny. Each time I picked up the book I thought to myself, 'What type of story am I going to read today?' I thought the concepts and ideas in some of the stories were really deep. You could read them for hours and hours.

Rating: ★★★★★★★★

— Stephanie Smith

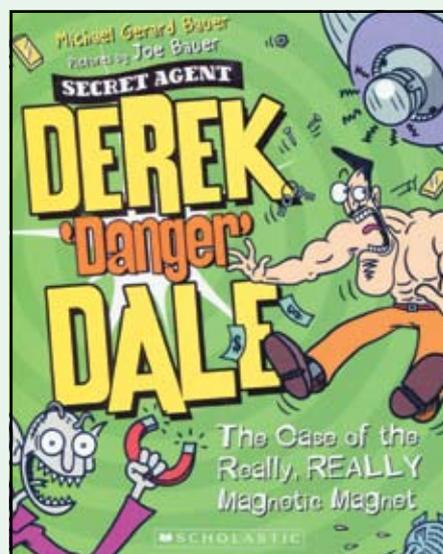
Derek 'Danger' Dale: The Case of the Really, REALLY Magnetic Magnet

by Michael Gerard Bauer, illustrated by Joe Bauer (Scholastic Australia)

Derek is a secret undercover agent who wants to stop Doctor Evil MacEvilness and his horrifying plan to take over the world.

Our favourite part of the book is when Derek gets trapped in an escape proof room with dynamite. What happens then is very unexpected. Some of the problems Derek faces are unrealistic, but he manages to solve them all.

We would recommend this book for people who love humorous comic books or graphic novels, because the layout is similar to those books.



This book is amazing and it has loads of hilarious chapters. Now that we have read this one, we want to read them all.

Rating: ★★★★★★★★

— Helena Arifovic & Ella Scott

Star of Deltora : Shadows of the Master

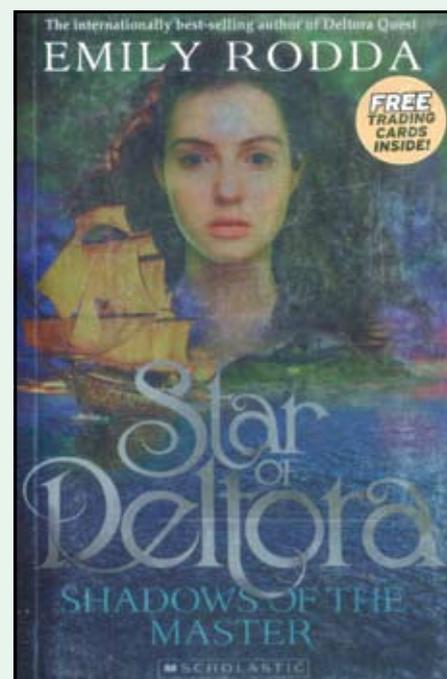
by Emily Rodda (Scholastic Australia)

This is the first book in a new series by Emily Rodda. It introduces Britta, a fiery girl with a very secretive life. She doesn't like it when people try to find out about her. When she enters a traders' apprentice competition, her life takes a wild turn. Her mother doesn't like traders because her father had been a trader before he disappeared in mysterious circumstances. Her sister Margareth is sweet and gentle and worries about Britta.

This book is suited to both boys and girls aged nine to twelve who like quests and adventure. It is set in a land that the author has used in previous books and the style of writing is very similar to the Deltora Quest series. Although this story started off a bit slow and took me a while to get into, it developed into a fantastic story and the end was brilliant. It was very detailed. I now want to read the rest of the series.

Rating: ★★★★★★★★

— Emily Leonidis



A Digger's Journey

I am humble. I feel fear.
But I shall not be afraid, for I know that God is near.
My name is John Green.
I am only nineteen.

Now, walking away from home, I am more afraid than before.
My mother sobbed continuously as I left, which made me feel it even more.
My young sister Bethany felt I would not return.
Her dark thoughts of my death filled me with concern.

The pack on my back was as heavy as lead
But not as heavy as my heart, which was filled with dread.
I thought of the brave soldiers, already fighting in World War I,
I thought of the sacrifices, men dead from the bullets of an enemy's gun.

I walked slowly to the end of my long street,
Towards the bus waiting, full of soldiers I had yet to meet.
I boarded the bus, put my pack under the seat,
After a while, I started sweating, but not from the heat.
Who wouldn't be nervous about going to war?
I certainly hadn't done it before.
As the bus moves off, my worry disappears.
I watch the driver closely as he changes the gears.
Thinking about other things takes my mind off my fate.
But soon we will be at port, which is closer to Gallipoli, closer to heaven's gate.

Gallipoli - Turks

Captain Faik surveyed the bay.
He had been alerted of ships, some kilometres away.
It was two in the morning on a still, quiet night.
The moon was shining brightly, giving him light.
He stood in front of a trench full of men,
If he saw anything, he would tell his advisor, Jeden.
But right at that moment, a cloud passes over the moon.
And although Faik can't see them, he knows that the ANZACs will be here soon...

Gallipoli - ANZACs

We have ninety short minutes to land on the beach,
Success is so close, but it's just out of reach.
I am sitting in landing boat Number 33,
It's dark and cold, and I'm straining my eyes to see,
Which is a good thing, I suppose;
If we can't see, then neither can the Turks, our enemy.

I feel the boats moving, and look out to see,
The warships are pulling the steamboats which are pulling the landing boats,
And inside landing boat Number 33,
Is a shaking, nervous young man; me.

We are only a hundred metres away from shore.
The steamboats have let go,
We grab the oars; we'll have to row.
When we are nearly at the beach,
We tingle all over, success is in reach!

But sparks fly from the funnel of a steamboat,
I feel a shout rising in my dry throat,
I muffle it so as not to be heard,
But it's too late, the incident has already occurred.
A beacon is immediately lit on shore,
Our landing is now much more dangerous than before...

Two Hours Later...

We are nearly a quarter of the way,
Up one of the hills that surround our landing bay
I am climbing up with gunfire firing at me,
The air is so thick with smoke I can barely see.
A bullet fires near me,
I throw myself to the floor
There's no doubt about it; this is war.

I'm nearly there now,
Nearly at the top,
But then I see something that makes me stop.
Behind me, there are no soldiers.
I am now on my own.
All my comrades are wounded or gone.
And that was my mistake.
I wasn't paying attention; I took a short break.
A shot fires at me
And a ripping pain shoots through my leg,
I scream in pain
I shout my disdain
I look to the sky, "God, show me mercy", I beg

My head hits the ground with a smack
And that is when the world goes black...

3 Weeks Later...

I'm hobbling home on my wooden crutches,
I'm lucky to be alive, I just escaped death's clutches,
I look down at my good leg, then to the useless stump
I can't do anything with it, not even jump.
But really I'm grateful,
I'm alive and coming home.
And after the war is over,
The globe I'm free to roam.

As I approach my house,
I see my mother at the door,
I hear her shout to my sister,
"John's home from war!"
A smile spreads quickly across my face
I'm home and safe in my mother's embrace.
But one thing I know for sure,
I absolutely hate war.

By Olivia Mellowes
Year 6, Nambour Christian College
WOOMBYE – QLD.
Teacher: Mrs L. Vaughan and Mrs K. Webster

Toy Shop Magic!

Big sets of lego and other types of toys,
even science kits and action figures for boys.
These are a couple of things inside a toy shop,
as well as bunnies that jump around and hop.

The don't sell spinach, brussels sprouts or even juicy grapes,
but if you look carefully enough you might find some furry apes.

Pretend ones of course,
well I don't know, maybe you'll even find a soft magical horse.

Toy kitchens, cash registers and other types of playsets,
but no dogs, guinea pigs or rabbits because they don't sell pets.

I can find magic sets of all kinds,
but you might have to go to Lincraft to buy some new blinds.

Sadly my poem has come to an end,
but if you want to be flexible read another poem on how to do a back-bend!

By **Grace D'Amico**

Year 5, Korowa Anglican Girls School

GLEN IRIS – VIC.

Teacher: Mrs. Kirsty Alexander



Shark Cage Diving

Adrenaline rushed through me
like a bolt of lightning.

I was surrounded,
intimidated
by blood thirsty beasts
with beady eyes.

Stiff with fear
and paralysed.

I stared ahead
entranced

by the hypnotic creatures,
hunters of the sea.

By **Anna Rynes**

Year 10, Eynesbury Senior College

ADELAIDE – SA

Teacher: Shelda Rathmann

Bobby the Bubblegum

ONE day a little girl called Charlie went to the shops to buy a piece of bubblegum. The one she got was grape flavoured. She took it home and started to unwrap it. Then the phone rang.

She put down the bubblegum and answered the phone. Then the bubblegum moulded itself into a tiny figurine then it jumped up and started dancing around.

The bubblegum decided to give himself a name "Bobby". Bobby jumped off the table and ran out the door. Bobby ran all the way to China in 2 seconds!

A lovely old lady saw Bobby running beside her so she picked him up. Bobby was kicking and wiggling trying to break free. But he just couldn't.

Then the old lady accidentally dropped Bobby. Bobby ran as fast as he could. He ran all the way to New Zealand in 1 second!

Bobby was very tired after all that running so instead of running he decided to just walk along the road when a kiwi came charging at him and ate Bobby all up.

By **Chloe Davies**

Year 4, Huntingtower School

MT WAVERLEY – VIC.

Teacher: Sheryl Ecker

Ambassadors

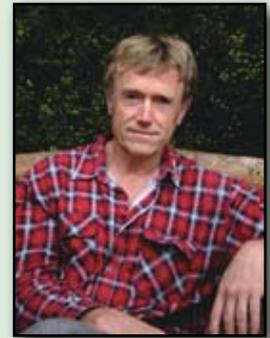


☺ **Krista Bell** is an award-winning author of twenty-six books for young readers. Krista has been professionally involved in children's literature for over thirty years, as well as being the mother of three sons, all of whom are good readers and writers! Krista's middle son, Damien, is the illustrator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

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 transport planner husband next to a railway line so she can quickly catch a train to the MCG to watch a football or cricket 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

RIVERBED

THE howling wind muffles the scream as it undulates and disappears amongst the suffocating cacophony.

As the moon overlays the rising, eddying mass with a lustrous stairway, an insipidly thin body descends silently to the waters floor. Unforgivingly consumed by the organic assassin, the vacillating liquid continues to climb. Submerging into blackness, the ghostly figure noiselessly thuds with finality to the sea floor. She feels safe; whilst above the swirling mass heaves uneasily with greed.

★ ★ ★

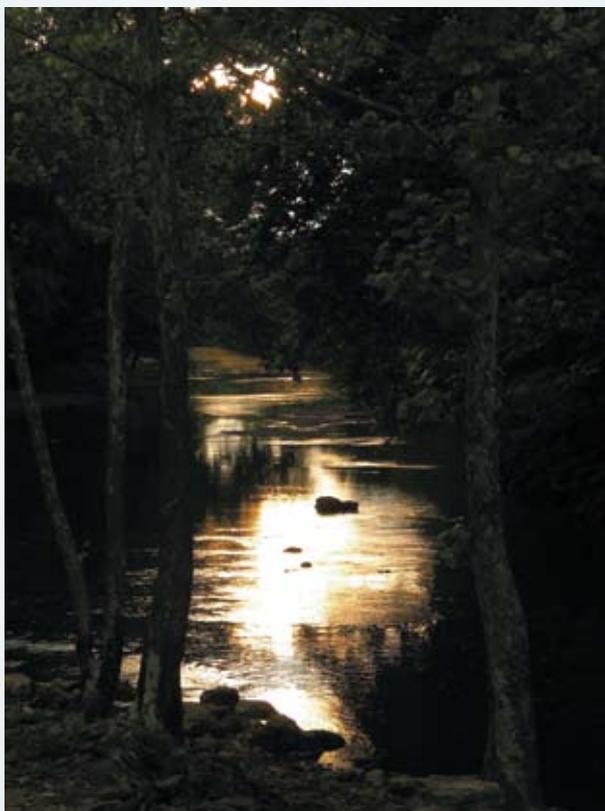
Drumbeats. A climaxing percussion on the small tin roof as Sally Jane's chest rises and falls rhythmically, her withered frame cocooned within the wooden rocking chair. She smiles to herself as the icy sheets of relentless rain form a gentle hum within her head; imagining a boisterous marching band advancing along the rooftop. The reverberation crescendos as her wrinkled face droops, and as her eyelids simultaneously succumb, she slips into an abyss of slumber.

Suddenly she is in the town of Swift River. The blinding sun shines down upon the valley, illuminating a community teeming with life. The church stands erect; emanating the soft glow of pale yellow. Chattering children giggle as they chase a pack of crows with a stick; three elderly folk sit wistfully on the veranda of a nearby home, sipping glasses of white wine.

She peruses the village, gently moving towards the cascading river. Transparent as glass, the golden rays penetrate the rippling fluid, enlightening the mass of flowing aqua. Reminiscently she gazes into its depths, discovering amongst the currents a strangely mirrored face; youthful, innocent. No wrinkles or lines. She begins to drift in thought when impetuously the water transforms to a sickening black. A lunging grey shadow smothers its way over the town; tendrils reach forward and then curl like fingers, as if they are pulling the remainder behind. A sickeningly artificial odour arrests Sally's

nostrils, and as the advancing wall finally claws at her skin, she begins to blister.

Tiny, searing stabs. Instinctively she flees, the misty swartheness lapping at her heels as droplets spring free of the pursuer. They burn, as the pain burrows deeply within the layers of her skin. The left side of her face begins to sag, as if the muscles of her face had collectively died. The lid droops, almost concealing her eye as her mouth twists in an odd angle to the ground. Time and space lose meaning as the fog seems to invade her brain, muddling her thoughts.



Beads of pain pepper her skin as she collapses in a heap to the ground, groaning as her body twitches uncontrollably. The barrage of gloom mutely encroaches, suddenly thickening as if it has pressed against a glass window and forced to condense. Sally squints with horror as the mass is slowly vacuumed into the sky, until not the slightest wisp remains. The abrupt clarity reveals an even more disturbing sight; the cemetery of the town has been uprooted, revealing blanched, dead grass. The houses, which had once stood so tall, have been bulldozed and removed, exposing remnants of rubble strewn amongst the valley. The colourful basin is

now dark and unforgiving. Wind swirls around Sally in a mocking way as she lay paralysed; violent, assaulting whispers.

A flash of blinding lightning; and she finds herself above the valley. Murky, brown water is almost overflowing from the vast cavern. She can't tear her eyes away, they were transfixed, staring, glaring. A damp hand clutches her shoulder. It is her mother, gazing eerily with a hopeless expression. She speaks in a hoarse whisper.

"You have to let go Sally Jane"

She desperately attempts to respond, compelling her mouth to open. Only no noise escapes. Precipitously she is falling, falling into eternal darkness. Her heart pounds unnaturally, threatening to force its way through her chest. Surrounding her are the skeletons of the townsfolk, sinking through the dammed vale. They call to her, emaciated fingers beckoning for her to join. Her heart convulses within her body; it hurts so much, so much.

Her hands begin to wilt, lines increasing in prominence until her eyes drift open. She had promised to herself that she wouldn't dream about the Swift River any more. She knew she couldn't bring back the past, nor change it. It wasn't the same. Shutting her eyelids once more, she can feel herself submerge. Silently thudding with finality to the valley floor. She feels safe, whilst the swirling mass above heaves

uneasily with greed. She compels her eyes to focus, and to her left reemerge familiar houses amidst the ubiquitous liquid. Above the embrace of water she can faintly hear rain falling to the surface. Pit. Pat. Pit. Pat. The liquid's density presses against Sally as her lips curl, forming a crooked smile. It must be another noisy marching band jesting me to sleep, she thinks.

She feels safe.

By Blake Lovely

*Year 12, Manly Selective Campus
NORTH CURL CURL – NSW
Teacher: Ms Marisa Carolan*

Gone



I WILL speak directly to her, like she's still here.

"The first time I saw you was when you stomped up to me in your Doc Martens with a tattered guitar case in hand and asked where the music room was, because, as you put it, 'Don't you have a guitar lesson with me anyway?'

'Yeah. Here, I'll take you.' I glanced at you sideways as we walked down the stairs and across the school yard. There were a few things I noticed about your attire: 1. You weren't actually wearing uniform. 2. I don't think you ever actually wore uniform, but you got away with it somehow.

In music that first day you released your electric blue electric guitar. My poor acoustic paled in comparison. You played a really fast-paced solo. It was fantastic. I remember how the teacher praised you and gave you a Mars bar. I remember how you used to say 'Declan has cheekbones that could cut a hippo in half' and how you were wild, and fun to be around, and

crazy, and hilarious and all the good things people say. And I'm not just saying this because everyone says the good things about dead people. I'm saying it because that's how you were. And even though I got tired hearing about how many mammals my cheekbones could slice through, Imogen Bowen, you were an amazing human being.

You were my best friend.

It was a tragedy when you died, in the true sense of the word. There isn't a single person who knew you and doesn't miss you. Every day."

Deep breath.

"The day we found out was, and probably still is, the worst day of my life. We had planned a road trip. I'd invited you over to my house to discuss details about the trip. At first you were only five minutes late. Then ten. Then twenty. Then an hour and I began to get worried. I assumed you'd been caught up in one of your grand adventures

and forgot about our insignificant little meeting. You were always doing that.

We all know the stories you told: how you broke into an M&M factory and gave the whole school free lollies, and how you were a back-up singer for Adele, and all the other tales we know were true.

The next day I headed over to your house to fill you in on what you missed when you were busy breaking whales out of captivity or jamming with Queen or something.

You weren't there."

I pause.

"And now you're not here either."

That's the end; I can't say any more. She's gone. Not coming back.

By Amy Naylor

Year 10, Daylesford Secondary College

DAYLESFORD – VIC.

Teacher: Michelle Ainley

Springtime Explodes!



SIT ON the veranda and stare at the new world of colour and beauty.

I see a daisy smiling up at the sun... it seems to be conducting the singing of the birds just like my teacher conducts the choir.

I gaze upwards as the clouds swirl; they have just awoken from a long, boring sleep.

I can smell the flower garden as it comes alive and dances with the clouds to the same tune, the bees are humming too.

Ahhh! This is springtime!

By Isabelle Koivu

Year 4, Crescent Head Public School

CRESCENT HEAD – NSW

Teacher: Mrs Black

Midnight Days



TEAH, Siena, Ruby, Amelia and Cleo are sitting, talking in their club house (which is a cubby house they share with their new brothers, Ben and Darren). In fact they are talking about turning the tree in the backyard into the clubhouse. They have asked their new mum, but she doesn't care, neither does their new dad, in fact they don't care what their "children" do, so the 7 children do as they please, but they long for their old mum and dad or if not new parents. But for the moment the girls are fine, they get along as both friends and sisters, same with the boys. But the girls knew that what they wanted the most was a club of their very own, where they could say what they wanted to say, where they could share what they wanted to share, where they could tell all the secrets that have been locked up ever since their family was torn apart.

The girls climbed out of the cubby and opened the shed. They rummaged through the old garden tools and ladders as well as countless boxes of Christmas decorations. Finally they found some long pieces of wood, a few old sheets, some pillows and a box of Christmas tree lights. After that the girls set to work.

By midnight the girls were finished. It had two bedrooms (in case they wanted

to sleep there) and a club room. They dreamed all night long that they were in the grasp of their mothers' body (the old one) and they were longing to be with their father (their old one) but they couldn't help it, it was done.

Over the years, the war had ruined their life. Teah recalled the old days, the days where they had picnics at the park, where they went to musicals and famous buildings, but then the war had jumped into their lives and took away their father, and then their mother couldn't look after them and the next thing they knew was they were in a room with ten beds in one neat row and 30 children at one dinner table. After two years in the Orphanage the girls had been adopted, but Ana had been left behind and their lives had been torn in half. Amelia was thinking the same thing, she didn't know if she loved Ben and Darren, they hadn't always been in their family. She definitely didn't love her new parents, in fact she didn't even consider them "parents".

A week later they were lying on the mound of pillows in the club room. The girls were having a meeting when they heard a rattle from the fence that led to the backyard. Ruby was in the middle of saying something when the ladder to climb up

to the treehouse clattered to the ground. Then there was complete silence.

The intruders were gone, vanished into thin air. "That's amazing", Cleo exclaimed.

"Are they gone?" Siena enquired. They didn't know, but they could only hope that they didn't come back.

The girl's hopes were put off, the gate rattling and ladder clattering continued and the culprit was yet to be found out.

"I think we should do something about this", Ruby said boldly.

"Yes I agree" said Amelia. "How about we build a trap?" and that was what was done.

They put out buckets of slugs and worms, Ruby even got slime from the shop. After they had finished collecting all the supplies they set them out. Cleo tied the buckets of bugs and slime mixed together, then finally they set out nets. Now they just had to wait.

But they didn't have to wait long. Soon enough the intruders came once again. Teah watched them climb over the fence. But then something struck her, these people looked familiar, and the man was wearing army clothes and the woman she... suddenly it all fitted together.

Their parents had come back for them! "MUM, DAD" the girls shouted in unison.

"They actually came back", Cleo thought.

"You girls have to come back with us", their mother said.

"But what about Ben and Darren?" said Siena. "They have to come with us too".

"Ow all right", said their father. "But we have to hurry!"

So that was what happened. The girls went back with their parents, Ben and Darren got new parents and they lived the rest of their lives in peace.

By **Annabelle Glover**

Year 4, Korowa AGS

GLEN IRIS – VIC.

Teacher: Miss Louise Hatton

The Adventures of Jeff Stanley:

3 DIMENSIONAL DRAMA

THE BREEZE was cool and the clouds were grey. Jeff didn't like it this way. He loved it when it was sunny and if it was, he would play sports all day long. But today was different. It felt like it would be the most boring day. It wasn't Jeff's fault that he had a negative attitude. It was just that it was so gloomy! Jeff glanced at his watch. He expected it to be 8:30am but instead it was 8:40am! He couldn't believe his eyes! He would get detention if he was late for school. He sprinted as fast as he could and made it to school just in time.

He ran into his classroom where his teacher, Mr Smith, greeted him. Mr Smith had always been kind to Jeff, but when Jeff messed up, Mr Smith would get him in trouble. As the lesson started Gary Rogers, Jeff's best friend, burst through the door. "Sorry I'm late sir", he said, while trying to catch his breath. Mr Smith nodded to say that it was OK, then got on with the lesson. He started with maths, and explained how to divide fractions. Suddenly, there was a loud knock on the door, and the door burst open. Jeff saw the principal standing in the doorway. He got on with his work because he was scared the principal might scold him for not doing his work. He looked at the ground and saw his cricket bat. He got it out and Gary scrunched a paper ball. Gary threw it to him, while everyone in the class watched, amused. Jeff hit the ball, but instead of hitting it back to Gary, he had accidentally hit Mr Smith!

"Who did that?!" Mr Smith roared, infuriated. Gary and Jeff stood up nervously."

"Lunchtime detention for you two! And don't think you'll be sitting around either. I have plenty of jobs for you!" the furious teacher barked.

Lunchtime rolled by, and the boys did everything the teacher had told them to do. The last thing they did was clean out the storage room, and they dusted boxes and cleaned them. Suddenly, they came across a box that looked very odd and strange. They opened it and they were sucked into it!

The place they were sucked into looked like space, and that was when they met a person, WHO LOOKED EXACTLY LIKE JEFF!! "Do not be afraid! I am just Jeff's twin from another dimension", he said confidently. Still shocked and speechless, Gary and Jeff looked at the boy with eyes as big as pie plates. Eventually, Jeff managed to get a word out.

"Can you help us get out of this place? I mean you are very friendly and it would be a shame to lose such a good friend but we really need to get back to our home. So please help us", they pleaded. The person they had just met (they didn't know his name so for now they're calling him the person or good friend) willingly agreed, and he grinned and said, "Just answer these riddles from Mystery Mayhem and you'll be out of here. Oh, and good luck!". Then their good friend disappeared.

They got started on the riddles, and some of them were hard. Some of them were like: What is the easiest way to double your money? Or what gets wetter as it dries? But they thought outside the box and managed to finish the riddles. Suddenly, WHOOSH! In a split second, they were back on Earth. They jumped with joy and went home to take a rest. It had been a long day.

By **Sinthujan Ahilaeswaran**
St. Luke's Primary School
LALOR – VIC.
Teacher: Stephanie Mariani

STORM!

The clouds cried against the wind.
The tears dripped down the shattered window.
The sound of thunder vibrating gravity.
The lightning reached for the ground.

Screams avoiding the tears.
Humans hiding... plants growing...
Then it stops, stares
And the rainbow takes over.

By **Elise Prendergast**
Year 5, Sacré Cœur
GLEN IRIS – VIC.
Teacher: Toni Parnell



Grand PERFORMANCE

HE LED me onto the stage. The audience applauds, a great chorus of clapping and cheering. I can't help but feel overwhelmed. The man in the hood pulls me forward roughly. The wooden floorboards creak, straining under the weight of yet another performer. I fear that after their many years of service, they may simply collapse. That would be terrible. Absolutely.

I gaze out into the audience. They are all different, yet the same. They are peasants, the rich, the sick, the old, the young. Yet, they all flock to the square on such occasion, to witness the performance. All the same. It's quite nice actually, for once in the busy bustle of London, everyone is equal, they all have the same purpose. To witness my performance, my time to shine.

Amongst the grinning faces, I notice a solemn one. Her lips pressed tightly together, her eyes red, as if she has been

crying. She has not even been bothered to wear nice clothes. My mother. I ignore her, it is best to. You don't want to look in the eyes of a loved one at the end of the performance. It's too hard. You can't focus.

The man in the hood stares at me. I cannot see his face, but I know that his mouth is curved into a malicious grin, his eyes narrowed. I kneel. The audience explodes. Massive cheers and whoops fill the square, echoing off every wall. The clapping is like gunshots, loud and sharp. I feel faint. Stage fright. I place my head into the wooden contraption. Here it is. The grand finale. The man in the hood walks over to the lever. The crowd goes silent. Then, with a dull creak, he pulls it, and the silvery blade of the guillotine comes down...

By **Daniel Iera**
Year 6, St. Joan of Arc
BRIGHTON – VIC.
Teacher: Mrs Matherson

Spring Is Here

The time has come
Sprouting flowers
Spring time has begun
No more winter showers
Spring has come

Buzzing bees
Flying flies
Foxes free
Winter time has now dried
Spring has come

The sun roars
Green grass grows
The rain snores
And birds that kids adore
Spring has come

Boom, went the rain
Disappearing
Lighting up the brain
Children are now cheering
Spring has come

Life is great
Spring will win
It is the fate
I will tell your next of kin
Spring has come

By **Jasmeen Kaur**
Year 6, Kingswood Public School
PENRITH – NSW
Teacher: Ms Napper



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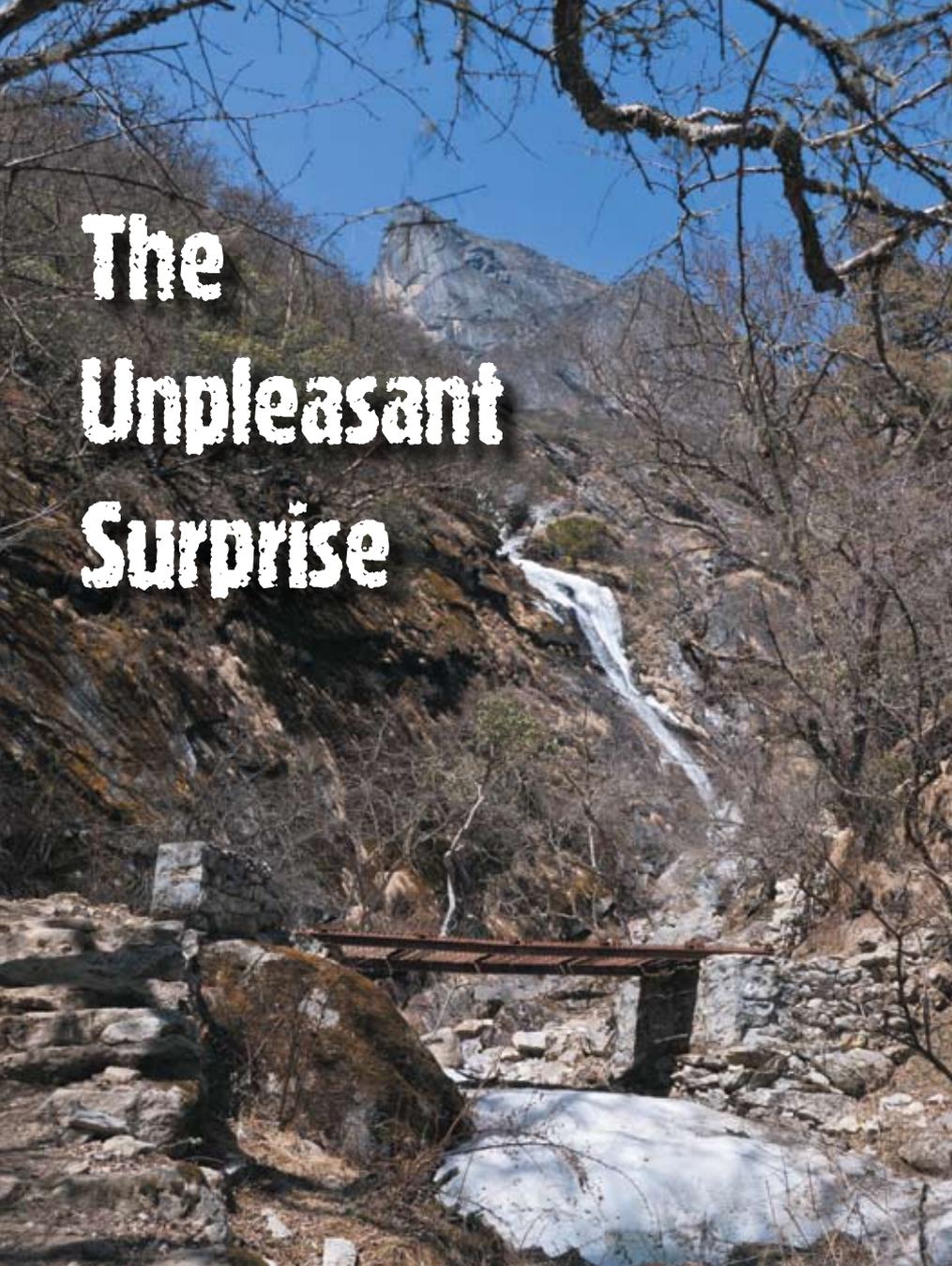
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The Unpleasant Surprise



ONE awfully cold day in the middle of winter, just before I turned thirteen, my best friend and I went exploring a mountain and found something that we would never forget.

I had just returned from a big trip in Australia to visit family and I hadn't seen Erik for a month. I was looking forward to exploring Namsan with him – Namsan is a mountain in the middle of Seoul right near our house. I messaged him to ask if he wanted to explore. Luckily he said yes.

I went up the street to meet Erik at the base of Namsan. As I was heading towards Namsan I heard the “wolf howl” greeting from Erik so I howled back. But because my voice was worn out from talking with dad, it sounded more like a rooster than a wolf. The people on the street looked at me like I was crazy, but I didn't care.

When I messaged him that morning I had suggested going on a long expedition so Erik had brought ginger snap cookies. They looked delicious and made my mouth water, but we agreed that we would save them until we were hungry or absolutely needed them.

We walked up the mountain path and turned left into the woods to explore. Soon our way was blocked by overgrown spiky plants but luckily we had packed our survival tools that included a pocket knife, binoculars, compass and map. But we ended up getting carried away and cut all the spiky plants in our way. Just in case we got lost, I noted which way we were going so we could find our way back to civilisation with our compasses.

Suddenly, we discovered an abandoned sports equipment area. The rusty equipment

had vines growing all over it. It looked like something from a horror novel. I tried to use the exercise machine, but it didn't move an inch.

After sliding down hills, climbing up dirt cliffs and jumping over overgrown drains we found a small frozen river that ran steeply downhill like a frozen tsunami. The ice had lots of bumps and made it look like waves of the ocean. The steepness reminded me of a water park slide.

Erik and I decided that we should eat a little of the cookie to give us some energy. We found a rock that was perfectly shaped for a seat and had an awesome view of the frozen waterfall. I took a bite of my quarter of the ginger snap cookie and it tasted delicious! It was crunchy on the outside and soft on the inside and it tasted like crystallised ginger but not as strong. We skated for a while on the ice, walking up the side of it and sliding down on our butts. Soon we were wet and aching from the bumps on the slide.

Next, we explored up the river doing our version of parkour, jumping from rock to rock and using tree branches to swing over gaps in the rocks like Indiana Jones. Occasionally while we were doing this, the branch would break and we would scrape our hands on the rocks or make us fall on a unstable ice-plate that would give way and get our feet wet in the freezing cold water. We also found some really nice skating spots where we skated for a bit and when we were finished skating we stomped on the ice and smashed through it which got our feet even wetter. At last we got to the top of the river where we discovered that we were near the path and Namsan Tower. We followed the path for a couple of metres and then went back down into the woods. Soon we found our favourite terrain: pine forest with the ground soft from pine needles that smelt like toilet cleaner.

It was then that we noticed something very unusual. Erik said, “Look Seb, there's an old guy over there!”

“Wait. I will just do my shoe laces”, I replied. I did that, looked around and asked, “Erik, where's the old guy?”

“Just there through the bushes”, he said.

We walked slowly and carefully towards the man. I could see he was an old guy wearing a black jacket. “He looks like he's

peeing!” I joked. It is common in Korea to see old men peeing in the street or garden.

Erik said, “Maybe he’s looking at the scenery”. I stomped loudly as I walked towards him to get his attention but he didn’t even twitch.

We went nearer and tried to get his attention. I stomped a little more – still no movement. Quite worriedly I said hello in Korean, “Annyeonghaseyo?”

I expected an answer but there was none. I yelled again, “Annyeonghaseyo!?” Still, no answer. We thought for a minute then we saw an orange rope running from the tree then down around the man’s neck. I pointed at it in horror and said, “I think he might have...” Erik said, “dead...”

The forest suddenly felt dark and I half expected the body to move and become a zombie. We stayed there for 5 minutes, our feet glued to the ground. Erik finally said “We should get help”.

“We should make sure he is dead”, I replied shakily and picked up a stick. Erik took it and threw it gently at the man. It missed him but hit the tree and dust fell on him. He still didn’t move. Erik said very quietly,

“That would be enough to get his attention if he was alive”.

We turned and jogged nervously towards civilization following our compasses. We kept turning our heads and looking at the dead man until we couldn’t see him any more. As I ran, I worried what I would say to the adults we would find.

We came out of the forest into a badminton court where a small group of people were playing. In Korean I said to one of the men “Follow me” and put my hand around my neck. Erik said “Dead”. The guy understood. He told the other people but I don’t think they believed us as they looked too cheerful. The guy called the police. I worried that maybe the corpse would be gone when we got back and we would get in trouble.

Soon the police arrived and we led them through the forest towards the man. I noticed them tripping and falling over behind us and occasionally we had to stop because we were so far ahead of them. Luckily the corpse was still there and once the police had seen him I felt less uneasy. They asked questions in Korean and English like, “What’s your name?”, “How old are you”, “What’s your phone number?” and “How did you discover the corpse?”.

When I told them that we were just exploring the forest, they looked really surprised, and some of them laughed like we were joking.

Finally, they let us leave and we walked back through the forest to my house together. I felt very hungry so we walked to the convenience store for lunch that was just down the hill from my house. After lunch Erik went home and I fell asleep on my bed. When I woke up dinner was ready – my favourite, lentil soup.

Erik and I had planned to have an adventure and even though it was not what we had expected, it’s exactly what we got. That day I realised that we could find almost anything in the forest and sometimes being careful isn’t such a bad thing. Sometimes I wish we never found the corpse but when I tell people and when I see their shocked faces it’s almost worth it. Before I even went to bed that night, I messaged Erik and we agreed to play on Namsan the next day.

*By Sebastian Hall
Year 7, Homeschooled
HORSHAM – VIC.*

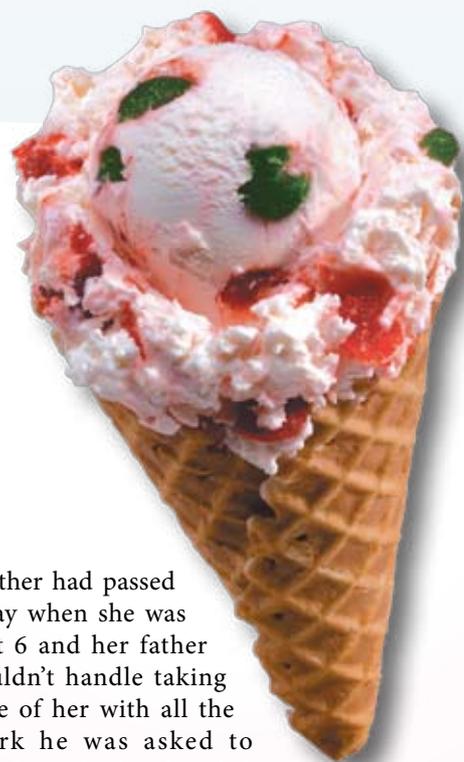
The Never Ending Slide

I WALKED outside, the autumn leaves crunching beneath my feet. I walked along the pebbled pathway, the pathway that always led me into new adventures. Today I promised Sarah I would work a shift at Sugar For Life, her new ice cream parlour. It was the day the new ice cream flavour came out, ‘Ompa Lompa’. The flavour that contained grape infused with broccoli. I don’t believe it will be popular, why anyone would even try it is beyond me, I bet it will be worse than the Bean Boozled challenge.

I peered through the parlour window, pressing my face against the clear glass. The sea blue booth I usually sat in was taken... I pushed open the door, my ears pricked to the sound of screams. Everyone was crowding around the glass cabinet where we store the ice cream. I tugged on one of my golden curls and pushed through to

the front trying to get a glimpse of what all the commotion was about! And I wasn’t shocked with the result, it was all because of the ‘Ompa Lompa’ ice cream flavour. I looked around the gruesome colour of the ice cream oozing out the corners of people’s mouths. Ew! I had to get home or else I would be sick. I’ll ring up Sarah and make up a good excuse to tell her I couldn’t make the shift.

It was so hot today, the humidity made me sweat, and I don’t usually sweat! The frangipani leaves fell from the trees, petal by petal. The air smelt of unicorns dancing on rainbows. My hair fell in the breeze, I looked to the right hand side of me. Two beautiful, old, fragile trees entwined as their leaves swayed in the breeze. They looked happy and pleased with each other, like a mini family, mini... happy family! Lea wished she had one of her own, her



mother had passed away when she was just 6 and her father couldn’t handle taking care of her with all the work he was asked to do. Now she lived with her grandmother, Crystal Leonie Plubber! Weird name right...

*By Grace D’Amico
Year 5, Korowa Anglican Girls’ School
GLEN IRIS – VIC.
Teacher: Mrs. Kirsty Alexander*

RFDS Adventures

By George Ivanoff

A high-octane adventure series for children written in partnership with the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

The RFDS Adventures is a series of exciting stories set in remote parts of Australia. Each story features the activities of Australia's Royal Flying Doctor Service.

These books are aimed at mid to upper primary level. Each book is a stand-alone story. They do not need to be read in any particular order.

The covers and internal illustrations are by Maria Pena.

Book 1: Remote Rescue

An isolated location and a last minute complication put this rescue in danger!

Sam, Dawson and Emma are taking a road trip with their dad. On their way up the long Outback Highway they stop to camp at Farina, an old ghost town. The place is full of crumbling buildings – perfect for a game of chasey. But as they run through the ruins, their dad loses his footing. He falls, seriously injuring his leg and it's up to the kids to find help. Eventually, they manage to call the Royal Flying Doctor Service but the situation is so bad that ten-year-old Dawson has to administer First

Aid to his dad until the bush ambulance arrives.

RFDS 1: Remote Rescue

ISBN: 9780857988768

Published by Random House Australia in February 2016.

Book 2: Emergency Echo

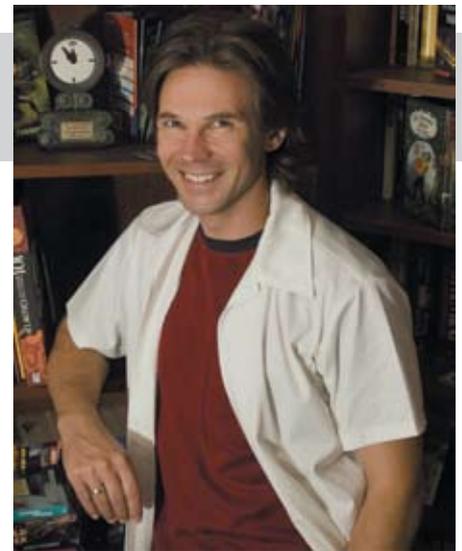
It's a race against time and the destructive forces of nature!

Twelve-year-old Alice lives in the outback mining town of Mount Magnet. One afternoon, she is struck down with acute appendicitis. To make things worse, the nearest hospital is 200 kilometres away and Alice's appendix could rupture at any moment. An urgent call is made to the Royal Flying Doctor Service and a plane is dispatched. But as a massive storm approaches, the pressure is on for the RFDS to get to Alice and transport her to the hospital before it hits.

RFDS 2: Emergency Echo

ISBN: 9780857988782

Published by Random House Australia in February 2016.



Book 3: Medical Mission

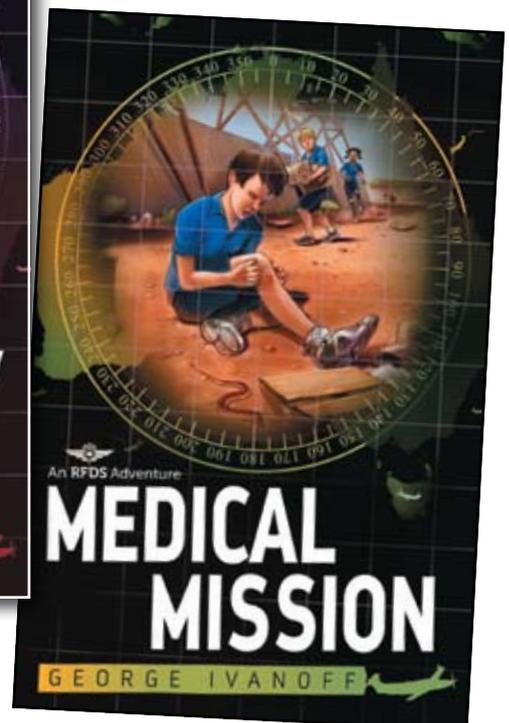
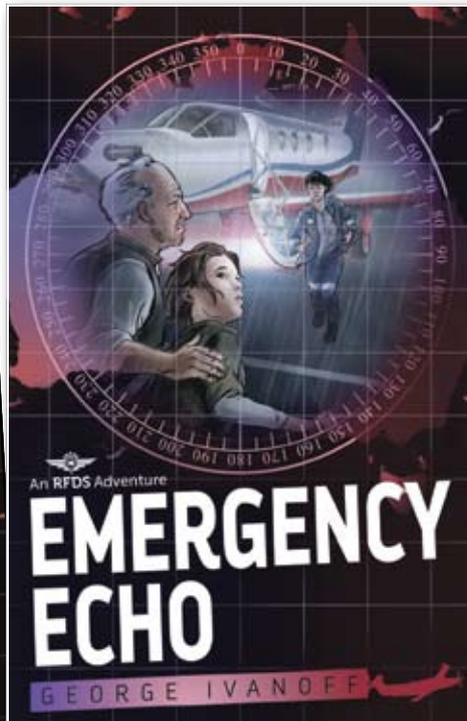
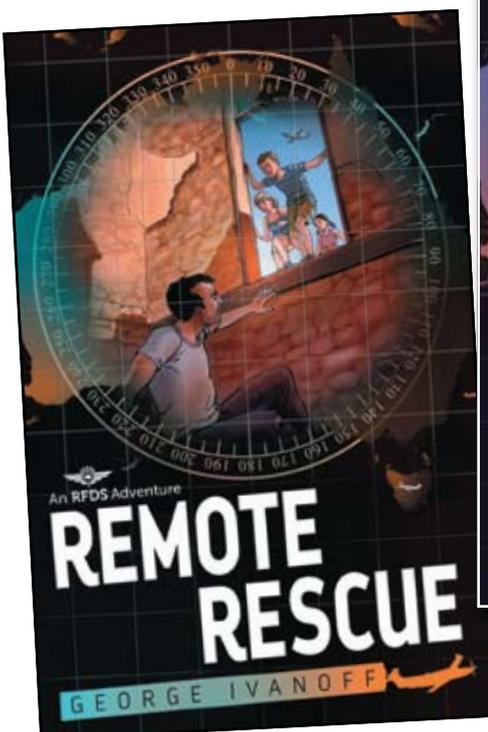
The challenges of outback life create a double mission for the RFDS!

In the middle of the night Josh watches as a Royal Flying Doctor Service plane lands on his family's cattle station, just outside of Coober Pedy. The RFDS are there to help his mother deliver her baby, but after the birth both his mum and the baby need to be taken to hospital. Josh and his dad stay to look after their property and Josh starts organising a fundraiser for the RFDS. His efforts are cut short when he is bitten by a deadly snake – time is now ticking to get Josh the antivenom he needs.

RFDS 3: Medical Mission

ISBN: 9780857988805

Published by Random House Australia in May 2016.



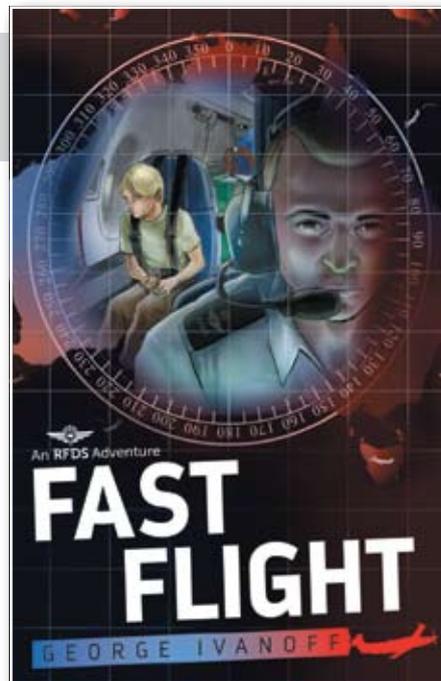
Royal Flying Doctor Service

Book 4: Fast Flight

A chance for a new lease on life means the stakes are high on this flight!

Dillon loves playing cricket and is forever getting in trouble for his messy room. He's just a normal kid – except for the fact that he has a rare genetic disorder and desperately needs a liver transplant.

Finally, the call that Dillon and his family have been waiting for comes. But it's 12.30 am and Dillon needs to get from his home in Adelaide to the hospital in



Melbourne. An urgent flight with the Royal Flying Doctor Service is the only option.

RFDS 4: Fast Flight
ISBN: 9780857988829
Published by Random House Australia in May 2016.

★ ★ ★

See where the 63 Royal Flying Doctor Service national aircraft are in real-time, providing vital services to country Australia.
www.flyingdoctors.org.au/map

THE WATER CYCLE

OH GREAT! It's another moving day... again! I hate moving days. They're ludicrous. They always give me a really substandard feeling. Anyway, as I said, it is moving day again. But today is the worst... Precipitation. No moving day is as sadistic or as jeopardising as Precipitation Day.

I also hate packing up for the moving days. You always have to unpack at the place where you've finally settled down and then you have to move out again. "Two, come on it's time to go", wails out my mum. Oh, by the way, my name is Two. My father's name is Hydrogen and my mother's is Oxygen.

We proceed outside and, whoa... are there a lot of water molecules in this town! All of us are walking to the cars. Some water molecules call it... what was it again? Ah yes, a cloud! But I prefer the word car.

It is a big one this time. Our whole family manages to fit in the car. I would hate to go alone again. All the families choose their cars. We finally fit all our stuff in the boot. And we're off. The car starts heading to the river.

We arrive at the tollbooth about an hour later. "That will be \$7.50 Sir", said the tollbooth officer. "Here you go", said my Dad. "Thank you, Sir, and have a nice day". Aaannnnnnnnnnnd we're off again.

Another hour later we finally arrive near the river bank. Somebody takes the car we're using and drives away. He is probably going to get some helium for it.

Oh no! Now it is time for the run-off. I hate the run-offs. I have been the slowest runner since Pre-Primary. All the other molecules laugh and yell things out. I try to ignore them but they're really annoying.

Anyway, we start to run. As usual I am at the bottom of the pack. Our group is the Evaporation group. A few of the billions of water molecules jump into the plants. They are the Transpiration group. And some water molecules go in to their cars to the helium station to pick up some helium. They are the human civilisation group. They usually end up the sewers.

The end of the run-off is the worst. I am worse at jumping than at running. In the last bit of the run off the water molecules always have to jump into the river. We make it to the end and jump. "Eeeeeeeeeyyyyyyyyyaaaaaaahhhhh!!!" I completely dispossess myself as I jump. "SPLASH!!!". The water makes a huge sound as I leap in.

All of the water molecules walk to their new home. We finally made it! My parents and I go to our rooms and start unpacking. I put up my pictures and things. Phew. Well, we're home again.

The next day:

"Two, Two wake up!!!" yells a voice. My Mum's face is right upon me. "Mum! It's Saturday, I have no school", I say in a half-fatigued, half-miffed voice. "Oh, Two you're hopeless. Did you forget already?" She says in an exasperated voice. "It's Moving day today". Oh no. Not again!

By **Dev Sheth**
Year 7, Hale School
WEMBLEY DOWNS – WA
Teacher: Dr Hindley

THE LIGHTHOUSE

THE ISLAND of Equinox Acre looked like a watermark, spilled out upon the horizon with the storm. For eleven years Megan Washington had lived upon that Island. It was her home. Branches from willow trees, like spindly locks of hair, blew over the whitecaps upon the water and whipped against the hull of Megan's boat. Far away, she watched her only connection with Equinox Acre slip away as the jetty descended into the sea like someone running their hand down a piano. She could not access the island now; the coastal shoal that went a mile couldn't carry the boat. The rain fell upon the boat cabin's roof, and inspired an equal quantity of tears from Megan..

Megan flashed an SOS flare into the air through the storm's eruption but no one from her island home responded. They were all being swept off their feet in nature's ballroom. All alone and drifting far away, she couldn't question her boat's safety or whether to stay aboard. She would never forget the mood of the water before the storm struck. So calm.

Megan's ship was sea worthy, equipped with sails, bilious like theatre curtains and a wooden hull. She may have survived for four years aboard the boat if it had not been for the sun.

Its bright rays filtered through the boat's windows, magnified by the glass. Megan craved light after the eclipsed years on Equinox Acre. So one morning, at dusk, she woke with her eyesight obscured by a white fog.

She tidied her ship as best she could and strung the anchor chain through the cabin and up onto the deck to guide her way.

Another four months may have buried her if she hadn't used the anchor chain otherwise and let the boat float adrift.

One morning she woke in the shadow and cool atmosphere of a high, moss embellished cave. Leave the tired boat, she thought, there's more to offer you in a cave. To this day, you may recognise the skeletal remains of a yacht being castigated by the rock and shingle and lichen.

Her luck accumulated and so did the earth above the cave, doubling over itself, overlapping, making paths and alleys where she could hide from the sea spray. This island was tall like a giant's thumb. On one occasion she found a ledge and stopped to fumble with her coat. The cool breeze strengthened to become a gale as she turned to face a horizon of frothing waves. A scream had been building up inside her, layering every time she met a pitfall in the ground or felt a shadow. Now she let it go.

"Aaaaaaahhh!"

The air was smoky and rain patterns echoed off a distant existence. There was something else on this island. A warm sensation crept through her bowels. As she turned the corner, she felt the heat of the persistent afternoon being eclipsed by

a shadow, very suddenly. She sat there in doubt, and eventually, dark, wondering what was before her. It was then that she felt an eerie probe of light pass over her face from a few metres away. Too big for the singular light of a torch. The light didn't stop, flashing over repeatedly at 7 second intervals. A lighthouse.

She had not yet found the foundations to recover from losing her island home on Equinox Acre, so she took the option like a duck to water. It was the richest of substitute for someone blind and without a home. She pulled stones from beneath the drift wood door and slid under. On the second level, the walls were strong but the lights and internal culverts had been chipped or rusted or served as a seagull's nest.

Megan settled herself in the corner away from the flashing, not wanting her shadow to be cast out on the sea. Within two hours, the depth of her emotions came. For the next six days she cried herself to sleep. Feeling refreshed every morning from the tears that she had shed the night before, she recovered herself and decided to explore her new sanctuary like a small animal, clawing about the headland, her other senses were acute, now that she had lost her eyesight.

Megan always had powerful solutions, resilience and flexibility. They were her only options on the sea.

Now she had a companion too, something familiar. The light house served as a home and as her eyes, with a globe of light to watch the world for her.

By **Odette Chellew-Halford**
Year 6, Greenslopes State School
GREENSLOPES – QLD.
Teacher: Mr Castle





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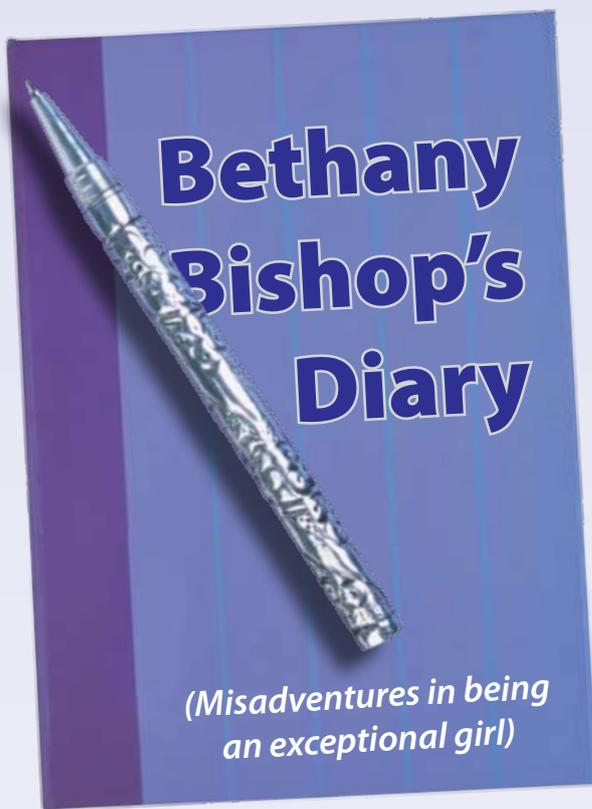
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Tuesday May 8

The writer of the horoscopes who had said Tuesday was supposed to be my lucky day definitely did not know how to read the stars properly.

Lunch time had just began on a Tuesday at my school, Bridgeway Girls Academy, and my friends and I were outside, when Josie decided she would like an ice cream pop from the school tuck shop to cool down from the boiling sun that had her throat parched. As we were only allowed to go to the canteen on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Josie knew she would have to do without one but we decided to dare each other about sneaking off to get one without the teacher on yard duty noticing our absence. As usual, I took the dare to heart.

Without a backwards glance at my friend, I darted off in the direction of the tuck shop. I had managed to get to there without being seen by any teacher, paid for the ice cream pop and turned to be on my way to join my friends when I bumped into a solid figure behind me. It was Mrs. Smithson, the junior school principal. Ice cream and all, she ordered me to her office for detention till the end of lunch time.

That was not my only misadventure of the day!

As I returned to my year 5 class after my stint at the principal's office, I heard, "Please put your writing notebooks into

the purple tubs and take out your maths folders from your desks". This was Ms. Price, our form teacher giving instructions to the class.

Quickly, we all submitted our writing notebooks but I could not find my maths folder. By the time everyone had started completing calculations in their folders, I had emptied the entire content of my desk all over the floor searching for mine, oblivious to the shouts from my seat mates that my books were in their way.

Picking up everything, I decided to inform the teacher that my folder was nowhere to be found. However, Ms. Price was assisting two other girls with a math problem

when I got to her table. While I waited to be attended to, I continuously shifted my weight from one foot to another whistling a song not quite under my breath despite warning stares from the teacher.

I had had enough and could wait no more. I decided to get a new folder from the spares I knew Mrs Price kept in a storage box on top of the 4 feet high shelf at the back of the class. Without a further thought, I had pulled a chair beside the shelf. The box was heavier than I had anticipated but I pulled it with the intention of lifting it down to select a folder. I had almost succeeded when my chair began to wobble. My knees buckled under the weight of the box. Before I could steady myself, the chair toppled over bringing the box with its entire contents and the shelf tumbling down on me.

This was Tuesday's misadventure number two. What a day!

Although furious, Ms. Price assisted me up while she checked me over for bruises and broken bones. Laughter rang out amongst the rest of my class. I was sent to the school office to get an ice pack for the large bump that was now forming on my forehead and told to stay there till my mum came to pick me. Thankfully it was almost the end of the school day.

Wednesday May 12

For the last two weeks, we've been planning this market day activity. I'm lousy at crafts

and whoever said I wanted to be work at Trader Joe's when I grow up. I guess my school felt we need to learn about convincing people in the community to be smart buyers. Ms. Price said the aim of the activity was to teach us about the value of money, profit and loss. But I wonder why they couldn't just make the activity more realistic by teaching us to invest in the stock market, like adults do!

So here I am sitting in my seat completing the boring planning activity involved in the market day when these group of girls next to me start to chat and laugh so loudly. "Ahhh... ahhh... ahhh", my brain is busting from the noise of their laughter and so, I tell them to shut up but they just stared at me like I was a tree with two heads hanging from it. I was livid and repeated my question as nicely as before. However, one of them, Michelle, stood up, asked me to shut up and raised her computer laptop to hit me on the head.

Lucky for me, Ms. Price looked in our direction at that time. She grabbed the laptop from Michelle with a stern look and gave us both an earful. Like that wasn't enough, she sent an email to my mother about the incident.

I just don't get it. What offence had I committed? Is it wrong to tell others to be quiet when I'm working? After all they do it to me all the time.

Thursday May 20

All week Bridgewater Academy has been as calm as the Atlantic before and after Hurricane Katrina hit it. There were no mishaps and mischiefs from me. I was on my best behaviour and was determined to keep it that way. But being me, I know that is totally impossible but I am trying. You see, my mum has promised to buy me an iPhone 6 if I can maintain my grades and have minimal unfavourable report from my teachers.

Friday June 11

Today was no ordinary day in my life.

The birds were chirping loudly outside like machines in the trees. The afternoon sun was a blazing firecracker shining brightly in the sky. There was no sign of rain but the air felt cool due to the easterly winds that had been mildly blowing in the last couple of days. I longed to be outside on such a wonderfully mild summer day running barefoot through the freshly mowed lawns

I could spy through the large glass window next to me.

My mind went to the fun I could have collecting twigs to build a new bird's house and the pebbles I could toss into the brook running behind our class veggie patch.

I began to smile to myself when suddenly, a shadow clouded my line of vision. I thought I heard my full name, Bethany Bishop, called faintly. I felt a slight shudder as someone tapped my shoulder while whispering my pseudo name softly beside me. It was my class teacher.

Used to getting into trouble often and spending recess in the headmistress's office or having my mum called by our class

teacher, I was usually unconcerned about being called 'Bothersome Bethany' by anyone including Miss Price. However, this time I thought to myself as my mind raced in blind panic, "What have I done now? I haven't broken any classroom windows, ran around the halls, disrupted any classes, gotten into fights and my assignments are all up to date".

I couldn't come up with a single thing as I answered sweetly, "Yes, Miss Price?".

Miss Price pointed forward and I followed her gaze. As I did, I noticed several eyes were on me and I thought, "Surely, I'm in big trouble this time".

I heard my full name again and Miss Price nudged me and whispered, "Get up Bethany, smile and make sure your back is straight as you walk".

At my teacher's bidding, I got up, put my most cheerful smile on my face and walked with my back straight, the hearty sounds of clapping ringing in my ears as I did. My full name, Bethany Bishop, was called once again as I reached the stage....

For the third consecutive year, I had won the junior creative visual arts award at my school prize giving day.

*By Des'Ree Adelaja
Year 6, Home Schooled
CLYDE NORTH – VIC.*

The Indigenous Perspective

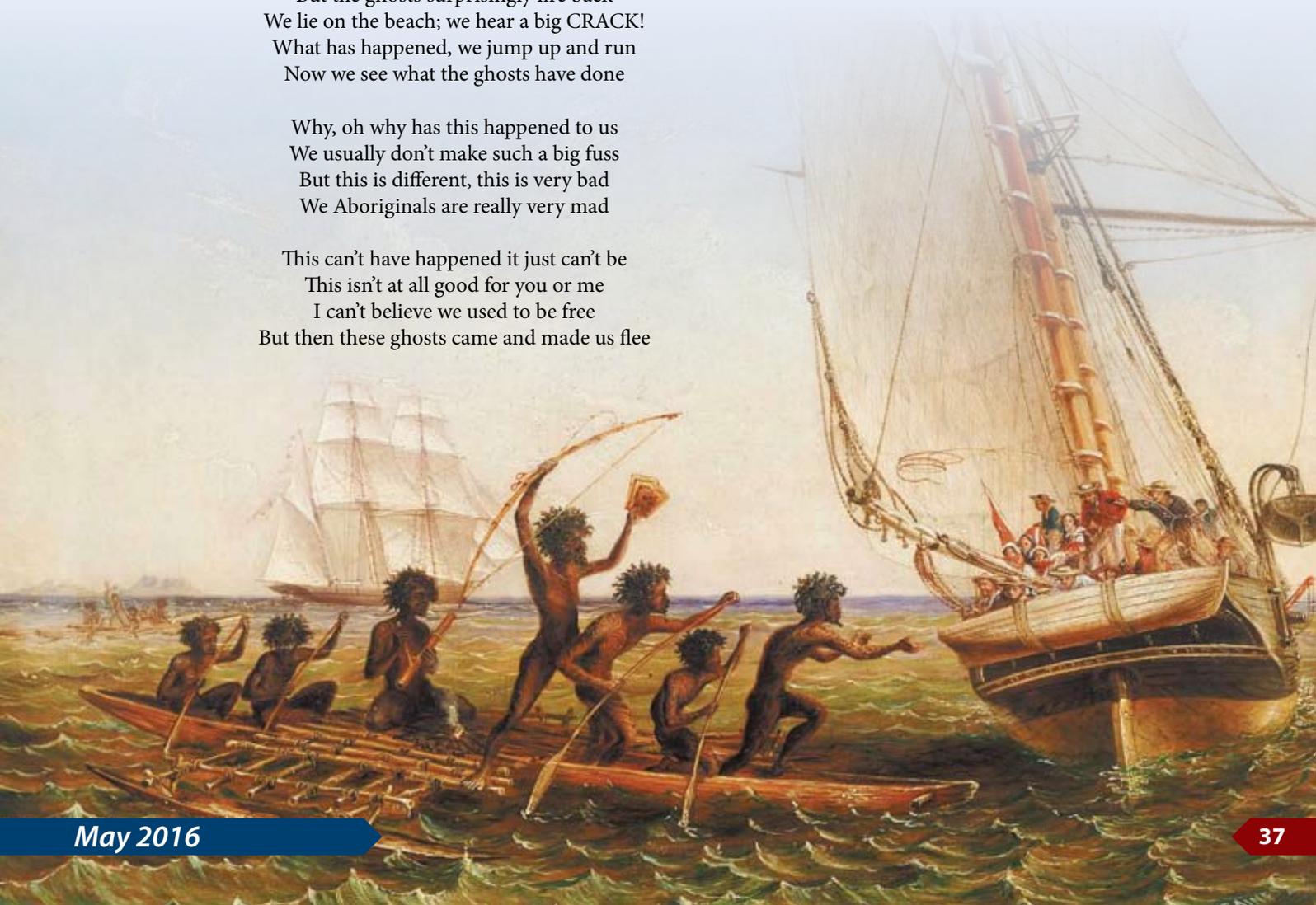
A big log boat turns up on shore
We look at it carefully, we discover more
Then something opens, then ghosts come out
We get our spears, we run at them and shout

But the ghosts surprisingly fire back
We lie on the beach; we hear a big CRACK!
What has happened, we jump up and run
Now we see what the ghosts have done

Why, oh why has this happened to us
We usually don't make such a big fuss
But this is different, this is very bad
We Aboriginals are really very mad

This can't have happened it just can't be
This isn't at all good for you or me
I can't believe we used to be free
But then these ghosts came and made us flee

*By Charlie Sheehan
Year 4, Nambour Christian College
WOOMBYE – QLD.
Teacher: Mrs Eracleous*



At the End of the Rainbow



DO YOU know what is at the end of a rainbow? If your answer is a pot of gold then you are **WRONG!** At the end of a rainbow is a gate that says 'welcome'.

As you walk through the gate you feel a hot breeze rushing through your face as it gets hotter and hotter. All you can see is red.

It starts to cool down a little and the wind is not as hard but it is still quite hot.

The redness has now gone down to an orange.

You are now a nice and warm, not so hot any more but feel really bright and happy. You can't really tell what colour it is now because it's so bright but you can just make out a type of yellow.

It is starting to get a bit chilly but you can still feel warmth going through your body. All around you is the colour green.

Now it's cold and you wouldn't mind wearing a jumper or a pair of mittens. You can see a light blue.

Now it's freezing and you feel very gloomy as all there is, is darkness – a dark blue to be exact. You are in a very unpleasant position.

You are now not so cold still, freezing but not cold. You see purple. You feel a little calmer.

You feel all bright and happy again and you are not too cold or not too warm. You feel perfect. All around you is a light shade of pink.

You can now see another golden gate that says 'thanks for visiting'. As you go through the gate, some mist comes and hits your face gently. You're now where you started.

By **Zali Williams**

Year 5, Marymount Primary School
BURLEIGH HEADS – QLD.

Teacher: Mrs Una Deem

In Celebration of 125 Years of Schooling – Greenslopes State School



On an isolated part of the timeline,
Where the Lords of the wildwood would have dined
Nestled upon the rolling pastures and tree littered forests,
Minstrels of the hills forth came on horses;
They sought a pleasant place to be,
In the wide Australian country
The delights of nature's elements remain to show,
From beginnings 125 years go,
We take in our stride our reputation,
Indulged by the honours; the standing ovation,
Thus, our proof of success is at hand.
all come gather and share this command!
Here we sit in a greed hogging world
The business, the splendour, the victors and earls
Our wings of academia, flanked by the skies
In this sumptuous city, a smaller one thrives
Alas! Look down at the rippling ground, I ponder, we adrift and profound,
How do we fly when others cannot?
Our light weight, this small school, we keep ourselves aloft



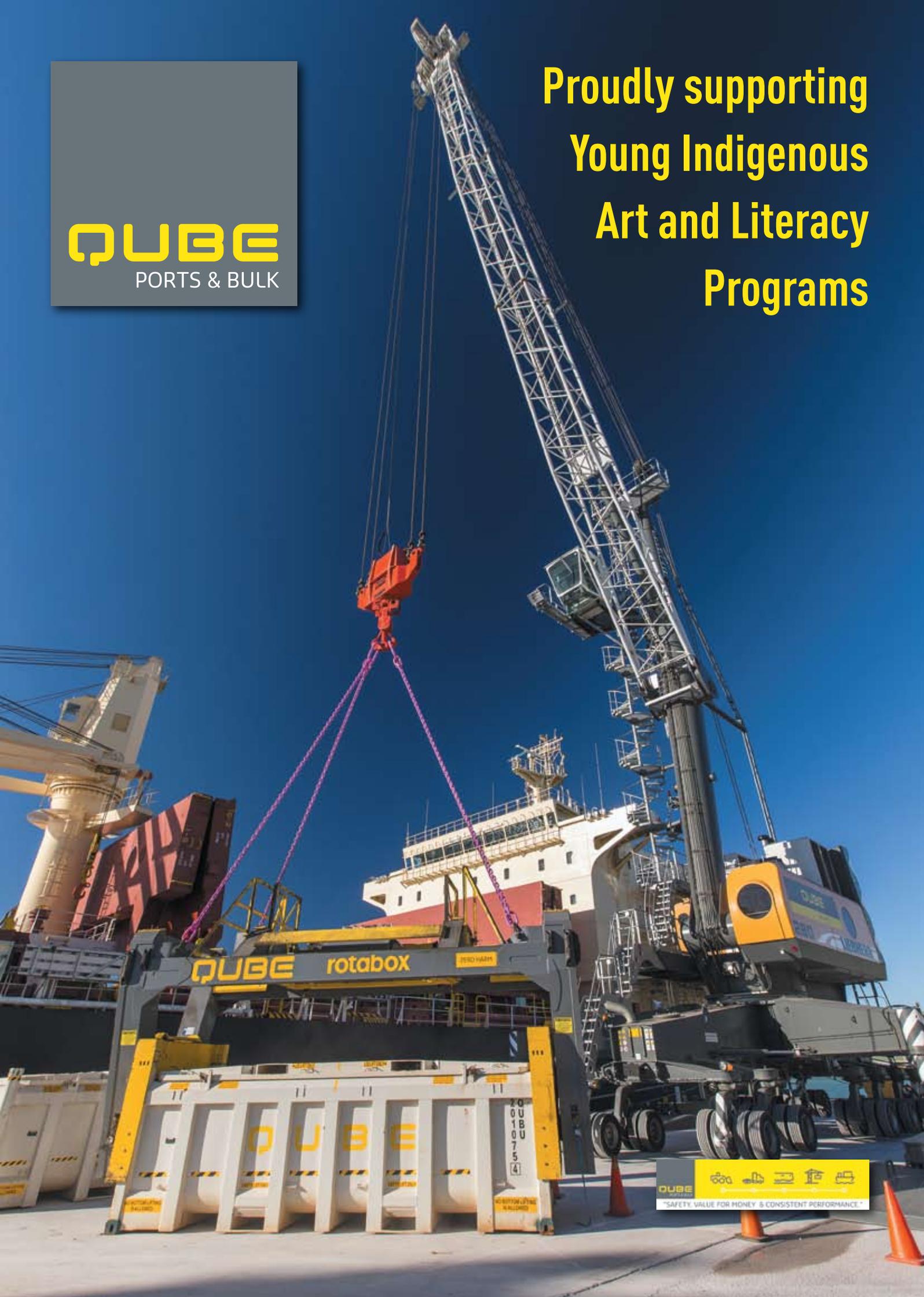
By **Odette Chellev-Halford**

Year 6, Greenslopes State School, GREENSLOPES – QLD.

Teacher: Mr Castle

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Make paying school fees easy with ***School Plan***

Do you want to take the hassle out of paying your child's school fees?

Do you want your child's school fees paid up front and on time?

School Plan pays your child's fees in full, directly to the school when due, while you pay ***School Plan*** in easy-to-manage **monthly** or **fortnightly** instalments.

From as little as 3.95% of the total fees to be funded, ***School Plan*** can pay the following:

- ✓ Tuition fees
- ✓ Boarding fees
- ✓ Camp fees
- ✓ Building fund donations
- ✓ Extra curricular activities

For more information, call **1800 337 419** or visit **www.schoolplan.com.au**

