

Imagination Creation

Western Union Young Writers



Imagine A Place

Stories and Poetry

2015

Imagination Creation, 2015

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Imagination Creation

Western Union Young Writers

WRITING COMPETITION 2015

Sponsored by

Western Union Writers Wyndham City Council
Wyndham Community and Education Centre
Kirpal Singh Chauli Margaret Campbell

15-18 Poetry

1st: Jennifer Wen, Peshurst NSW

2nd: Leila Barry, Bruce NSW

Highly Commended: Emily McMann, Westerway Tas

Age 15 – 18 Story

1st: Mary Jo Alegam, Tarneit, Vic

2nd: Skye Moore, Werribee Vic

Age 11 – 14 Poetry

1st: Alejandra Camacho, Eynesbury Vic

2nd: Emily Slee, Wyndham Vale Vic

Highly Commended: Marquise Plowman, Ivanhoe Vic

Highly Commended: Matilda Adlam, Torquay Vic

Age 11 – 14 Story

1st: Emily Jinu, Tarneit Vic

2nd: Miranda Plowman, Ivanhoe, Vic

Highly Commended: Libby Knights, Tarneit Vic

10 and under Poetry

1st: Kian Miguel, Werribee Vic

2nd: Jacinta Cormie, NSW

Highly Commended: Suhani Poddar, Truganina Vic

10 and under Story

1st: Adit Sivakumar, Point Cook Vic

2nd: Jasmine Dyson, Wyndham Vale Vic

Commended: Sophie Smythe, WA

Commended: Anita Choubey, Seabrook Vic

Wyndham City Council Local Awards

Emily Jinu Jacinta Cormie

Emily Slee Kian Miguel

Mary Jo Alegam Jasmine Dyson

Skye Moore Adit Sivakumar

Sherryl Clark Award

Jennifer Wen, Peshurst NSW

Illustrated Story Award

Highly Commended: Matthew Lee, Hoppers Crossing Vic

Highly Commended: Jimmy White, Hoppers Crossing Vic

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This is My World

By Matilda Adlam

Sounds only I can hear
things only I can see,
a place to which only I hold the key.

The journey is short and transports me
from reality to my own little world.
I am instantly surrounded
by my thoughts, feelings and my over active imagination.

I can see wonderful and crazy things.
Puppies with wings,
magic powers
things only real to me.

Going behind my locked door takes me
somewhere where I may be free.
Free from a world where everything is set
where everything must be explained
I can go somewhere I can bask in the sweet light of contented uncertainty.

I like this place so much because it's secret
Private.
A place in the world especially for me.

Not to say it's always peaceful
Sometimes it can be loud and distracting
at the worst of times
Sometimes the thoughts and feelings are scary

And sad
They shout names and hit me
But I am the master
I go in there and hit them back.
Even though they can be powerful
I shove them into a corner in my head
where I keep all the bad thoughts until they have learnt their lesson.

This place is where I am creative
Once one seed is planted an entire garden starts to grow
Beautiful flowers, trees, plants grow everywhere
Combining colours and aromas to create one, wonderful, bursting scenery

Flowers will die from time to time, but more will always grow

Sometimes there is a whirlwind of ideas
Bumbling, running and crashing into each other.
They are loud but quieten down once they ran out of energy

When possible I can simply relax in my world
Take a deep breath
and just think
let my thoughts envelope me in their warmth and comfort

I board the train of thought and it takes me to places I have never seen before, or
sometimes a familiar place I visit often.

It is a place of freedom, a place of uniqueness
A place of dips and turns only I may encounter.

This is my world.

Crosswords

By Skye Moore

Brianna Burke was three when she solved her first crossword.

It was a Saturday in June. The sun was shining brightly and the sky was the delicate blue of a duck's egg. Brianna's parents were eating breakfast; eggs, bacon and toast with marmalade. Mr Burke had put down the newspaper to better focus on his bacon when Brianna first saw the chequered puzzle. Attracted by the contrasting squares, she reached out with a chubby hand and dragged the paper closer.

Picking up the pencil next to it, Brianna studied the page, occasionally tapping her chin as she'd seen her dad do. The parents chuckled into their orange juice, amused at their daughter scribbling in the blank squares. They paid it no mind when Brianna wandered off five minutes later, leaving the paper on the table and went back to their conversation about their neighbours' party the previous night.

And that was the way the morning passed.

Indeed, it wasn't until evening that Mr and Mrs Burke noticed anything odd.

With the purpose of reviewing yesterday's scores, Mr Burke had gone to retrieve the newspaper where it lay on the kitchen counter. He shook it out, glanced briefly at the page, went to turn it then did a double take.

Mr Burke was not a very bright man. He worked in a large office full of large men, typing up large documents day after day. There was no way he could have completed a crossword and, besides, he *knew* he couldn't have solved this one, having given up this very morning after looking at the first clue.

Mrs Burke, on the other hand, was considerably brighter than her husband. However, Mr Burke knew *she* couldn't have done the crossword as she simply refused to read any newspaper, claiming it gave her a frightful headache to read about such tragedies in the morning.

It was therefore with growing alarm Mr Burke looked at the completed crossword puzzle. Eyes scanning the squares, he had no idea if the answers were correct. They looked correct, though, each blank square filled with a perfectly formed letter.

Thinking back to the morning, a thought began to grow in Mr Burke's head. As quickly as it formed, he shook it out again. It was impossible, preposterous.

And yet...

Brianna, at that time, was sitting on her mother's lap in the lounge. Mrs Burke was plaiting her hair ready for bed. Together they hummed a song, neither knowing what song it was exactly but humming along faithfully just the same. Mrs Burke was just tying the last ribbon in Brianna's hair when Mr Burke burst into the room in what some might call a frenzy.

'Dear? Whatever's the matter?' Mrs Burke asked, quite alarmed at the state her husband had got himself into.

'Darling!' Mr Burke gasped, looked around the room for a moment in bewilderment to find himself there, then fixed his wild gaze on his wife and child. 'Did you...did-did you do the crossword?'

Mrs Burke took in her husband's appearance. His tie was crooked, he had one shoe on and his hair was in disarray. In one hand he clutched this morning's newspaper.

'Nooo?' she said slowly, glancing down at her daughter who was surveying the scene with a faint air of interest 'why?'

Keeping his eyes fixed on his daughter, Mr Burke thrust the newspaper towards his wife.

With some trepidation, Mrs Burke took it. She straightened it out, looked at it with growing alarm and then up to her husband. 'Then...you did it?'

'No'

'But you must have done! Who else could've?'

'Look at number seven down: a synonym for ambiguous. I don't even know what ambiguous means!'

'Then who?'

Mr Burke looked at Brianna. Mrs Burke followed his gaze.

'Oh no. No! Come on, *Brianna?* She's three!'

Mr Burke knelt down so he was eye level with Brianna. Ignoring his wife's flabbergasted expression, Mr Burke asked his daughter a very simple question that would go on to change their lives forever.

'Brianna? Did you do the crossword?'

'Yes, daddy. It was quite easy, but I must admit seven down stumped me for a bit too, so don't feel bad.'

Silence.

'Do you mean to say, sweetie, that you filled in this crossword? This morning? At breakfast? In five minutes?'

'Yes, mummy.'

Silence.

Then, 'Are they all correct?' to the husband.

'How am I supposed to know?' came the rather short reply. 'I doubt I've ever done a crossword in my life.'

Silence.

'I suppose...we should wait for tomorrow's newspaper before doing anything else. Then we will know. For now, let's all get some sleep.' said Mrs Burke.

Mr Burke nodded.

And that's what they did.

The next day dawned with great anticipation.

All three Burkes rose a lot earlier than they usually would've done on a Sunday. The silence at the table was only broken by Brianna pouring herself some cereal. A dull thud came from the hallway. Mr and Mrs Burke jumped.

'I'll get it,' Mr Burke said.

Mrs Burke watched her daughter eat. She had told her husband that Brianna was going to be special. 'I feel it in my bones,' she had said the day before the baby was born. And now, looking at Brianna, Mrs Burke was proven right.

Just then, Mr Burke all but exploded into the room clutching a newspaper in each hand.

'They're all right!' he shouted, waving his arms around like a mad man possessed by a windmill.

Brianna looked up from her bowl.

'They are?' Mrs Burke asked, clutching her heart.

'Nice,' Brianna nodded.

'D'you think she can do anything else?' Mr Burke wondered, peering at his daughter.
'Ow!'

Mrs Burke raised her arm to hit him again. But Brianna looked thoughtful. *Could* she do anything else? It was possible, of course. Anything was possible after all. Closing her eyes, Brianna emptied her mind. She was searching, searching for something deep inside her. She was aiming for a feeling, but anything would do.

Then she found it. It was deep down, somewhere to the left of her stomach. It was so small Brianna almost overlooked it. It felt like an itch, a small tickle, like an ant had somehow found its way inside her.

Brianna reached out with her mind and grasped the itch. She brought it close.
And she was gone.

While Brianna had been on this inner journey, her parents were arguing.

'Don't ask questions like that!'

'Why not? She could be a superhero!'

'Superheroes don't exist'

'Well, then, think of the money we could make!'

'I can't believe you just said that! Selling your three year old daughter!'

'I didn't say *sell* her-'

It was then Brianna disappeared.

One second she was at the dining table and the next she was gone.

Understandably, Mr and Mrs Burke panicked. Mr Burke yelled and jumped to his feet. Mrs Burke screamed and reached towards where Brianna had been only moments before.

But before they could completely lose their heads, Brianna was back.

She was sitting in her chair, picked up her spoon and ate the rest of her cereal.

Mr and Mrs Burke could not believe their eyes.

'Brianna, sweetheart, did you just disappear?'

'Yes, mummy.'

Silence.

'Well, where did you go?'

Brianna turned to smile at her parents.

‘Well, it’s rather a long story. It was a rather unfortunate beginning, I must say, when I landed in the middle of a pack of wolves...’

The Clown

By Alejandra Camacho

The crowd starts to quiet,
the lights go dim.
Spotlight ready,
the clown stumbles in.

He skips, and trips,
and swings, and sways,
but can't tame the lion,
to the children's dismay!

He honks his nose,
and squirts his flower.
Attempts to dive,
off of a tower!

Surely something so
happy and fun,
could never frighten you,
make you run.

But under the makeup,
the painted smile,
could there be something,
a little more vile?

The crossed out eyes,
the way they stare,
surely you're getting,
a bit of a scare!

Eyebrows arched
in fake surprise.
Really such a
strange disguise.

Look at that face.
Isn't it scary?
Surely you're getting,
a little wary...

Made you laugh,
or made you cry.
Creepy, or cute?
You decide.

One Small Hand

By Jasmine Dyson

The wind was howling madly as the waves crashed and rattled against the shore of Parling Beach. A storm was brewing in the dark clouds that hung over the sea and the beach was in danger.

“My, oh my!” cried Sally Seagull fluffing her feathers. “What a storm, I must warn everyone!” Soon every animal on the beach knew about the storm and were preparing themselves for the weather.

That night the usual loud clink of champagne glasses from the cliff top city could barely be heard over the thunderous roar of wind and hail. Rain was whipping at windows, battering trees and worst of all ripping the beach animal’s homes to pieces. By morning, the beach was full of waterlogged wreckage.

Although the storm was gone and the waves were shimmering with innocence, the animals were chaotic. “My beautiful house!” Madam Starfish screamed. “Where are my children?” Mr. Turtle cried. Even Sharp Tooth Shark and his gang of grizzly friends were breaking down.

It was the same in the city, adults and children alike were frantic. Their homes were now a rubbish heap of loved possessions and treasured memories. People had just started looking at the beach, the only place to take refuge, but their hopes were not met.

To add to the animals mourning, a whale was stranded on the shore and his only hope was the city people, who were trying to lift him back into the sea.

Meanwhile in the city a mother and son were arguing. “I’m going to help with the whale, so you must too!” the mother exclaimed. But the boy refused – “I don’t care about animals!”

The people tried to heave the whale into the sea all afternoon, but he was too heavy.

The next day the boy refused again – “I told you mum, I don’t CARE about animals!” Meanwhile the people at the beach grew helpless.

Finally the next day the boy agreed to go and help the whale as his Xbox was broken. His one small hand and the combined efforts of caring others lifted that whale into the sea.

At the same time the boy felt warmth well up in his heart to see the beauty of a free animal happily frolicking around in the sea.

That whale was never happier, I can tell you personally – as that whale was me.

Imperium

By Libby Knights

I had the dream again last night. The one about my birth. But this time I could see it clearer. It started with me as I was born and all I could feel was blood trickling down my face. Without warning a big cloth swept across my face and wrapped around my body. Carried to a woman lying in bed, her arms outstretched. She held me so close that I could feel her warmth and hear her heart beating. I am uncertain if this is a dream or a memory.

Is this a dream or my memory playing tricks on me? My dreams are so powerful, reality and memories seem to fade into one. I dream of a woman's face, a face I have never seen in this life. Her face is full of powerful emotions. Is this what love looks like? Is this the desire to find my mother or a desire to escape the life I lead?

My official name is 720 and I live in a building with no windows and no contact with the outside world. It is the year 2487. Society is dominated by the social media website, Imperium. The art of conversation is officially dead and all communication is strictly controlled by the government. And this is why I'm here. Genetic testing at birth verified my super intelligence. The firewall that we, the chosen ones, have developed and maintained daily, ensures that social media was fiercely protected and censored.

I have never found a door that leads outside yet, but if I ever find it I will use it. My only knowledge of the outside world is through my computer screen, controlled by Imperium. I often question how much the government are controlling.

When night falls and work shifts have ended, you can sometimes hear the whispers in the dark. Rumours have been passed down through the years, rumours of an outside world, of fresh air, the warmth from the sun and the sound of nature. Sometimes we allow ourselves to imagine escaping from this isolation. And in my darkest moments, I close my eyes and imagine that woman with outstretched arms, her warmth and I know I can hear her heart beating.

Suddenly my ears feel as if they are bursting! A loud, piercing alarm echoes down the hallway. Panic rises and everyone runs in the same direction. Where are we running to? Has someone found an open door?

I see my friend 697 ahead of me. "697, 697!" I shout through the crowd of people. She stops abruptly, looking back as I catch up to her.

"What's going on?" I question.

"459 said that there is a door open and it leads outside!"

Thoughts ran through my mind. Is this it, are we going to be free and let into the outside world?

But it is too late.

As I reach the end of the hallway armed guards stand tall, blocking our path. Suddenly strong arms are wrapped around me and I am pulled into a dark room. I hear the door lock. I see a light flicker and as I look around I see a tall man. He opens his mouth and whispers, "We need your help!"

"W-what?" I question, my uncertainty evident in my trembling voice.

A woman comes out from the shadow and says "We want to get out of here and live a real life. We need your help to create a virus to put into the main frame. A virus that is able to shut everything down."

"This will set everyone free not just us. Don't you want to be free?" the man asks convincingly.

"So what you want me to do is help create a virus that can shut everything down and put it into the main frame so everyone can be free?"

"Yes!"

Thousands of thoughts run through my mind. Thousands upon thousands. I know that I need to do this despite the possible consequences that will occur if I get caught.

I take deep a breath and bravely, yet quietly say, "I'm in!"

"Meet us tonight in the computer room and we can make the virus then!" he whispers.

He opens the door and I quickly sneak out into the crowd. All I have got to do now is wait for night time. Then I can walk the path to freedom. The path to a life.

As darkness approaches I make my way down the long corridor towards the computer room. Hiding in the shadows, my heart beating so loudly, I am sure I am going to get caught.

Slowly turning the door handle, I make my way into the room. Silence. Is there anyone here? I hear something that makes my head turn and my eyes slowly adjust. The

man from earlier is huddled around a table with several other people. Some I recognise, others I do not. The man gestures me over. And so we begin to create the virus. The atmosphere in the room is electric. Likeminded people with the same goal. Ideas surrounded the room. I am scared as I know that if someone opens that door we are all in big trouble! Maybe we will get caught? Maybe we won't? The computer screen is full of numbers and codes. I don't know what to say. I turn to look at the door and I go to turn back to the group noticing that they were all staring at me. I am stunned. Did I do something wrong? What do they want? I look to the outstretched hand of one of the men. It is the USB with the virus on it. As I hold it in my hand and I can tell what I am meant to do. Tomorrow I am plugging it into the mainframe.

I couldn't really sleep during the night as I was so worried that I was going to get caught. My shift will start in five minutes and as I turn the corner I can feel the sweat pour down my face. I see my Keeper up ahead so I head towards him. I reach him with the virus in my pocket.

"You're early 720!" He mumbles.

Oh no!! Does he expect I am up to no good? What do I say?

"Um... just ready to work today!" I quickly replied before he suspects anything.

"Well there is always a first for everything!"

"Um... Sir is anyone inside watching the mainframe, if not I would be happy to do it!"

I smile like a kid wanting to ride a roller-coaster!

"Well no. If you really want to I would be happy for you to do so!"

"Thank you Sir! I will watch over it like a hawk!" I walk over to the door and open it. Inside the mainframe flashed with colours, as if they were dancing. The mainframe is so tall and there are buttons all over it! Hearing voices in the distance, I know what I have to do. I quickly insert the USB and watch as the virus sweeps over the mainframe. Excitement and fear, my heart increasing in speed, I watch in amazement. Suddenly all power goes out and I hear screaming in the darkness! Running for my life, I dodge the Keeper and my colleagues and escape from the room. I stop to turn back. "RUN EVERYBODY! BE FREE!" I scream.

I hear people's footsteps come towards me. Are they running to catch me or to follow me? As I sprint out into the hall, I see it swarming with my colleagues, guards and

Keepers. Guards are running past me towards the mainframe and colleagues are taking advantage of the commotion, pushing through the crowd trying to find the exit. With the flow of the crowd, I am pushed into an unfamiliar room full with boxes. Behind the boxes a glimmer of light catches my eye and, as I push past the boxes, I see a door. A door I have never noticed in my life before. I move the last box and step closer to open the door. My shaking hand holds onto the handle and, with all my strength, I pull it down and push. I shelter my delicate eyes as I am temporarily blinded by the sunshine, my eyes so used to artificial light. Suddenly I feel warmth on my skin which makes me tingle. As my eyes refocus I know where I am. I am outside! I am free. Fresh air!! Oh it is more than I imagined.

As my eyes focus and become accustomed to the strong sunlight, I can see in the distance people venturing out of their homes, shading their eyes from the sun. When was the last time they were free of their computers? I hear people question what has happened. One man shouts "Hey, what happened? I was on Imperium!"

This is my home! All that is left to do now is find my mum! But where do I begin?

Marley the Mental-Case

By Jacinta Cormie

She barked a little, scratched a lot, she chew too much
So we tried dog classes.
New food, new collar, new lead
We even tried exhausting her at the park
– we tried everything! Even introducing friends.

Now we have three dogs. The little ones feel no shame,
The big leads the way.
They play together all day,
Just not always in our yard.
By the time we find out that they're gone
– sometimes they're half way across the world!

We've put on yellow fluoro clothes so the cars will stop for her,
Now the ducks see her coming!
We've given up classes and gone back to her old food
She doesn't bark too much now, or scratch as much
But she definitely does chew
We've stopped buying stuff for her to destroy.

She's not quite as nutty as she was,
A little calmer but definitely, the nice nutcase remains.
She may be all of this but she's my mental-case
And I love her.

Blame

By Leila Barry

i sit in the silence
where she was vibrant
and the paint had leaked to the seat
and the paint had leaked onto me
grey
no colour that my eye could see
she told me it was bright
obviously too bright for me
silent
yet screaming
quiet
with meaning
pale as her eyes
and white as the lies
spoken from cherry red lips
volume turned down
trying to turn it back up
but it's stuck
the silence is gripping
and the quiet is pricking
at the skin of my arms
as the silence is broken
and dull words are spoken
i love you
she says it all the time
and i can't find the meaning
in words that are uttered
more than just once

with fleeting pain
and short lived feeling
when the stars fall
and the words can't describe
the way which they burst
and spark light in the night sky
that no longer exists
because she said the words
i love you
she says them all the time
when the breath from her lips
is exhaled like a deep mist
from the sea
as it comes up to flee
and to see
the world which covers it like a blanket
and which shields it from the truth
but to shield means to protect
and no one should be protected from the truth
especially when the headlights are fading
and the road seems to be complaining
that the tyres are wearing it out
and the silence is wearing them thin
and the song that she wrote
is playing its lowest note
and it's all that i hear
it's echoing in my ear
and the colours i can see
are now right in front of me
they feel like poison in the rain
and like words that inflict pain
and the city lights are flashing

and the wind's leaving me gasping
and her hand is a stain on my thigh
as i swear the sky starts to cry
as she says the words
i love you
she says them all the time
and i can't find their meaning
or the passion that should be aflame
but i can see it in her eyes
after it all
there's blame.

The Human Connection

By Miranda Plowman

It may be hard to believe *but* I actually live the life I'm about to describe. My ancestors had a wonderful lifestyle in their homeland Africa. They don't belong in the cold Melbourne climate and they didn't come here out of choice. Over the years, they've enjoyed what would seem a privileged life.

My family estate sits on 20 acres, close to the CBD. Because we come from a self-sufficient nomadic background, we live *a plain simple life*. I live in a small village setting, full of aunts and uncles who look after each other, everyone having a role to play.

We are a contented warm family with my Dad, head of the house. The young ones in my family know he is the boss, as he wears the silver coat; it's a symbol of power and pride. Don't be fooled, he may appear unpolished and built for physical confrontation but he is extremely gentle - the peace keeper. The women in my family are shy, and rarely make eye contact with the males. But don't worry, their voices are still heard by my uncles and each other.

I am very proud of my Dad; he has made our fields very profitable; we are now able to gather enough food from our land to feed our entire clan. And personally, I like it that way.

You may wonder why I choose to sign. There's nothing wrong with my hearing. It's my voice that's the problem. I can't speak very well. Aunt JJ taught me to sign. I'm a home schooler like she was. JJ's grandmother taught her after someone taught her. Imagine learning in the natural environment, in a quiet place, maybe up a tree. Well, that's me!

I'm a carefree curious learner who avoids wearing shoes, loves the colour black and roams around our grounds experiencing life through *natural play*. My days are filled with observations, amazing and sad discoveries, strange and humorous '*goings on*'.

Where shall I start? To be politically correct, let's just say we need a lot of different people to make the world go around and my town has its fair share of them! We have people who just stare at our house and make strange hand gestures at us all day long. I keep telling them we are not royalty and politely turn my back.

Oops, I nearly forget to mention the people who just stare at us, hiding their eyes behind big dark sunglasses, wearing large hats and shuffling away from other onlookers. Possibly, they are in witness protection for bravely reporting a crime against '*nature*'.

Then there are the phone fanatics. Dad told me about the evils of phones, they destroy family time. The phone fanatics are always pacing up and down, chasing the next call while their littlies pick up bad behaviours from our lovable but crazy Aunt JJ. She is teaching them to master the arts of nose picking and bottom scratching. It's a social experiment to encourage the parents to pay attention.

As I stated earlier on, Dad is an unassuming fellow but when '*the human connection*' becomes too strong, he uses brute intimidation and good old scare tactics to move people on.

I have left the best to last. There is this kid who is '*different*' – an endangered species, someone who craves our old ways. She wants to be adopted by our family. The girl visits regularly, remaining non-disturbing and quiet. We don't buy into modern technology but I know about cameras and she has one. She hides behind the lens, taking snapshots of us. Dad feels sorry for her, being in that world outside where families don't have time for each other, where people are physically present but absent in mind.

I've named the girl '*Kibibi*' meaning '*little lady*'. She has an unboastful presence and such caring soulful eyes, showing an undeniable intelligence which would fit right in with our gorilla troop. Well, that's if Dad gets the inter-species adoption application approved. It will be the first time *in history*, that a *Giant Silverback Gorilla* takes custody of a *human child*.

Epilogue

The thoughts of a human girl:

A Gorilla Chose Me

A giant gorilla came to see
me, He knocked at my
window- His presence was
known.

Through telling eyes, he told me his name- Otana he said, displaying his silver coat,
A symbol of pride.

With his chest puffed out and his bum perched high, he silently decides to shuffle sideways,
ignoring
my questions.

“Observe,” he gestured, “that's all you need, at least for today.”

A friendship was formed that very day,
fragile yet strong, that's what I would say.

Too early to tell what it will
become. Wanting to know, wanting
to learn.

Wanting to step through the glass,
into
the unknown.

To understand his world, his life.

I say to myself, respect your ancestors.

They hold your past and call on you to for their future.

Beware, I am told from serious eyes,
Patience is needed, you mustn't forget.
If family connections is want you yearn, you
need to earn my trust.
Learn my ways, know my bluff, and
Only then will my family meet your eyes.

A gorilla chose me, gave me hope and walked away.

The Princess and the Key

By Anita Choubey

Once there was a princess named Abatha. She was from a country called Aribia. She lived in a very huge and beautiful palace with her parents, the king and the queen of Aribia. But Abatha had no friends, and no brothers or sisters. Thus, she used to get bored quickly as she had no one to play with.

One day, she asked her father if she could go out. Her father said, "Yes as long as you are safe." So Abatha went for a walk. Walking through the palace and parks, soon she entered a forest. Suddenly, she felt somebody was following her. She turned around to see a big, red eyed wolf behind her. Frightened, she ran deeper into the forest. Soon, night fell but the wolf did not stop chasing her. Animals started making noises, scaring the princess more. Seeing a tall tree in front of her, she climbed up the tree to escape from the red eyed wolf.

Suddenly, there was a flutter on the tree. Abatha turned around to see an owl. The sight of the big owl scared her further and she started to cry. The owl said, "I am Quadro. Do not fear me."

Abatha fell silent and said, "I am the princess of Aribia and this red-eyed wolf would not stop chasing me. I want to go home."

Quadro said, "I think I have an idea." Then he gave her a note. Abatha opened it. The note said: Go to Aro, 2km.

Soon, Abatha fell asleep. In the morning when she woke up, Quadro had already left the tree. She looked down and saw the wolf sleeping. Slowly, she climbed down the tree and headed towards Aro. When she reached there, she saw a tornado heading towards her. Suddenly, she heard a growl behind her. She turned around to find the wolf running towards her.

Completely frightened, she looked here and there, when she saw a hut. She ran towards it but found that it was locked. Sensing that the tornado and wolf were fast closing on her, she looked for the key to the hut. At the last moment, she found the key in a flower pot, next to the door. She quickly opened the hut's door.

When she closed the door behind her, Abatha was struck with what she saw inside the hut. Inside, there were lots of fairies, flowers, trees, a waterfall, a mountain and butterflies and so many other beautiful things. She had entered the world of fairies.

The fairies asked her what she needed. Abatha said, "I want to go home." One of the fairies said that it can be done easily. Another fairy said, "I grant you two wishes. Let me know what you want."

The princess said, "If I need someone to play with, I should always be able to come to this place and play with all of you. One of the fairies said, "You can use the key that you have in your hand to get here." The princess thanked her.

Then the fairy said, "What is your second wish?"

Abatha said, "I wish to turn invisible, whenever I want to." The fairies granted her this wish too.

After the wishes were granted, Abatha played with the fairies for a while. After playing, she had a tasty meal. Then, she decided to go back to the palace. When she stepped outside the hut, the wolf was waiting for her. Seeing her, it ran towards her. But the princess decided to be invisible and suddenly she saw the wolf stop. It seemed to be confused as it couldn't see Abatha anymore. Abatha knew that her wish was working. Quietly, she walked past the wolf, through the forest back to Aribia. Her father and mother were overjoyed to see her safe. She told them her story, which they did not believe. Abatha decided to keep her secret to herself.

From that day, whenever she felt like playing, she became invisible and with the key she entered the hut, where she played with the fairies. This way, she became the happiest princess in the whole world.

2014

By Marquise Plowman

It was never my intention to hate you
Or for you to forget who I was to you
But who am I to judge what fragments left
We were just two kids fresh out of school
Nowadays it's not so much what you say to me
It's now more of what you do
So please don't hate me as I write this down
As I only write the truth
A bitter autumn afternoon it was
When your phone call finally came through
But not as bitter as I felt
When I heard "it's not me, it's you"
Well I know we never stood a chance
But how quickly did things change
Once I gave my body all too you
Nothing ever went back to being the same

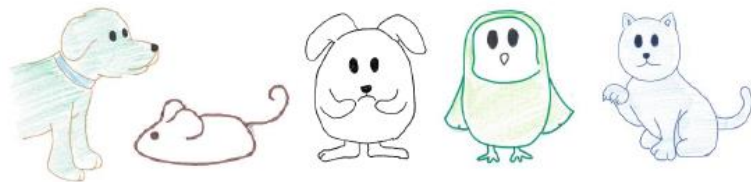
It's strange how I recall now
The summer right after it turned to fall
In December, we heard the fireworks explode
I thought we had it all
So can you remember our New Year's Eve
walking drunk through the neighbourhood
Or when you said you would never leave me
Because you said you never could
I often wonder where you are
What you're doing, who you're with
Have you settled yourself down just yet

Because now we have a kid
And if you had never attended that uni
Or spent an entire summer with me
Would we have still been together just like you said?
Or did I ruin your musical dreams

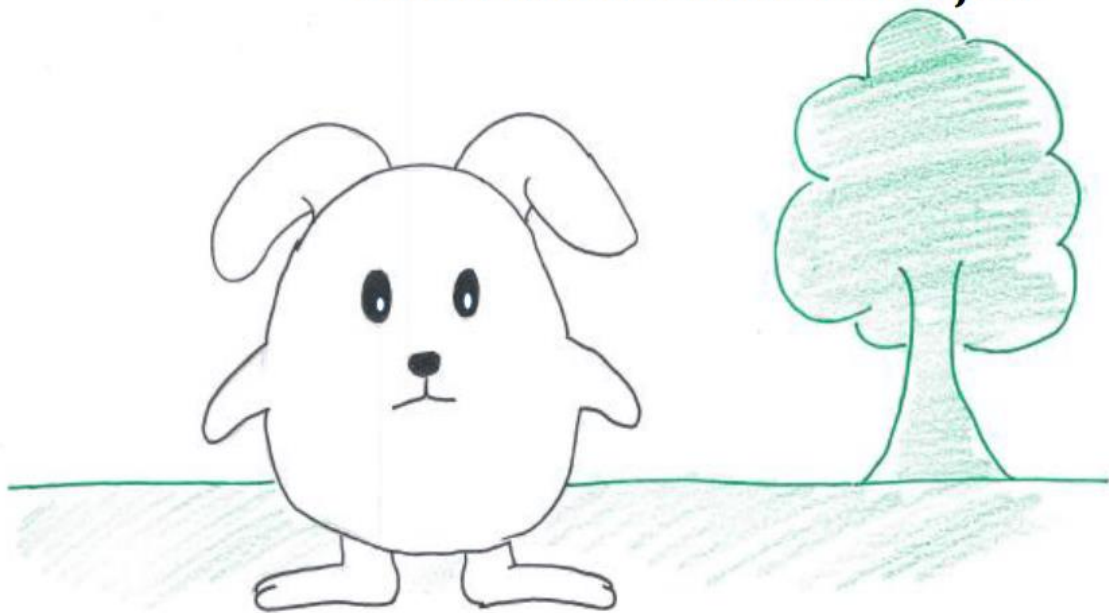
I used to wake up next to big blue eyes
and your tight grip around my waist
when I tried to move away from you
You pulled me closer to you again
and I felt so safe with you next to me
I felt your breath against my neck
well there's not a day that goes by that I don't wish
I could have that back again

I'll admit that I was fragile
While everyone picked up your pieces
And when I thought "I can't live without you"
I remember that I'm still living
I wish I can say we worked it out
That we resolved it and got back together too
But now I smile cause I say
"It was never me, it's you"

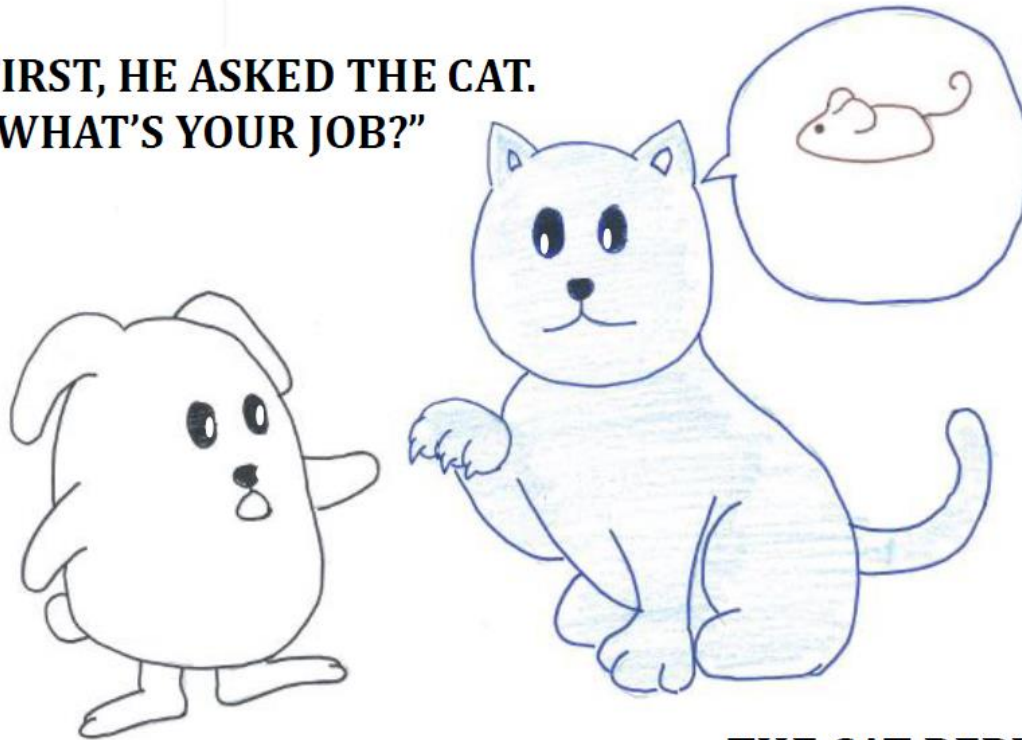
THE MESSENGER



**THE RABBIT WAS POOR,
SO HE WAS LOOKING FOR A JOB**

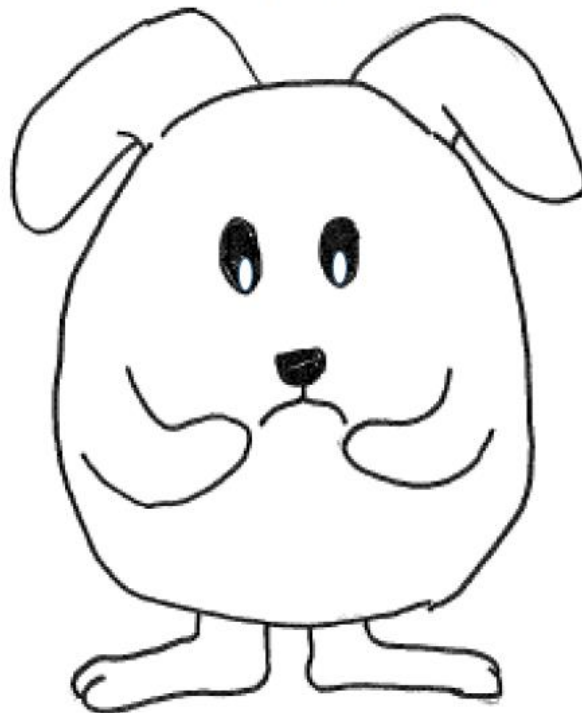


**FIRST, HE ASKED THE CAT.
“WHAT’S YOUR JOB?”**

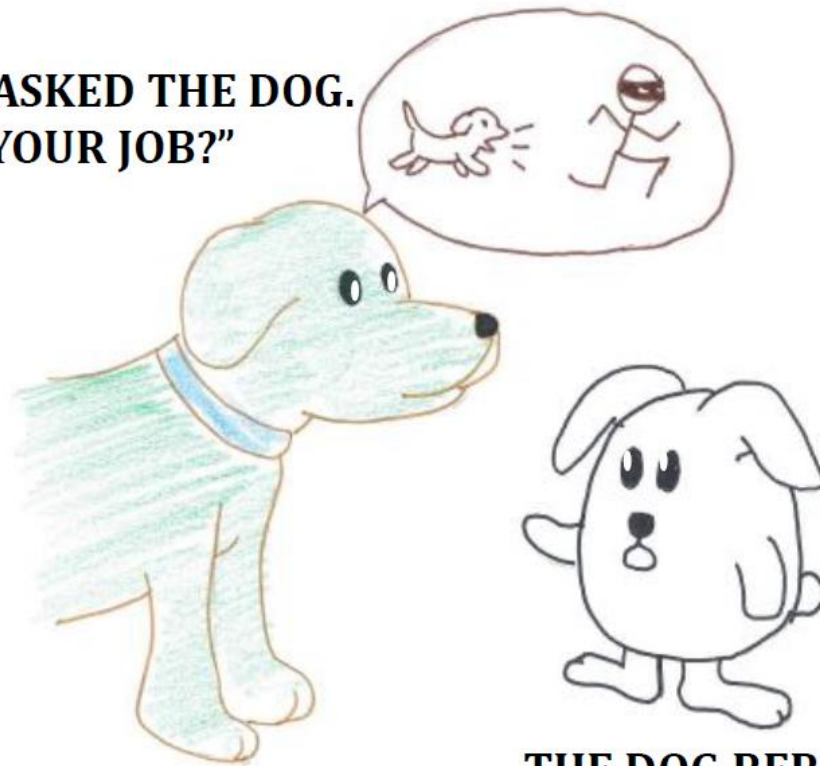


**THE CAT REPLIED,
“I CATCH MICE WITH MY SHARP CLAWS.”**

**SADLY, THE RABBIT DIDN'T
HAVE SHARP CLAWS.**

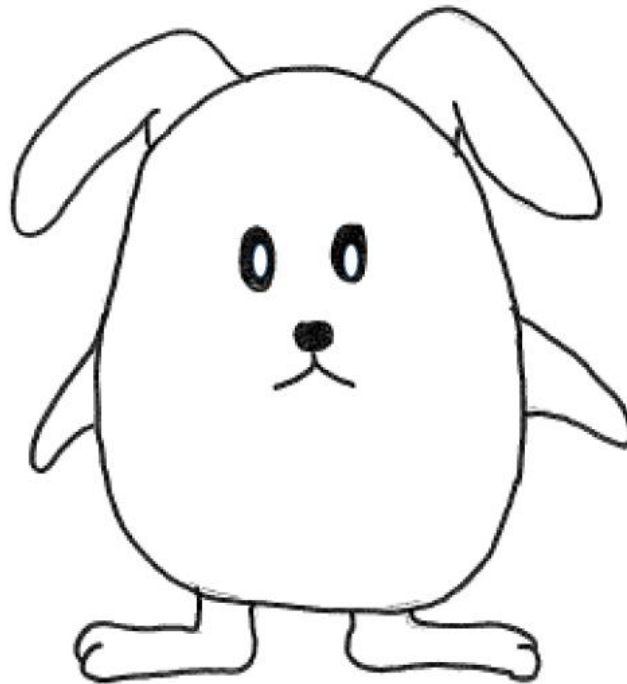


**NEXT, HE ASKED THE DOG.
"WHAT'S YOUR JOB?"**



**THE DOG REPLIED,
"I CHASE THIEVES WITH MY LOUD BARK."**

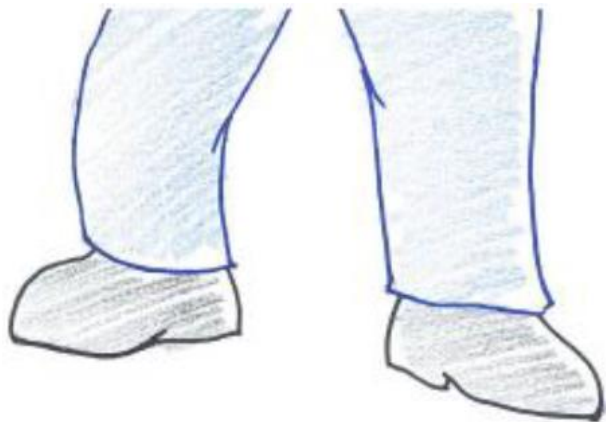
**SADLY, THE RABBIT DIDN'T
HAVE A LOUD BARK.**



**THEN HE ASKED THE OWL.
"WHAT'S YOUR JOB?"**

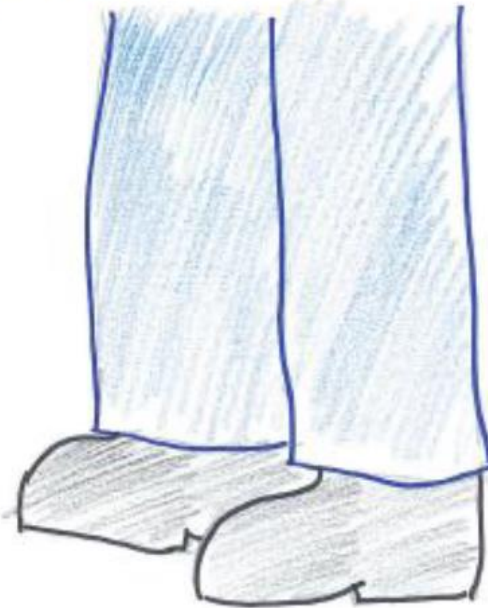
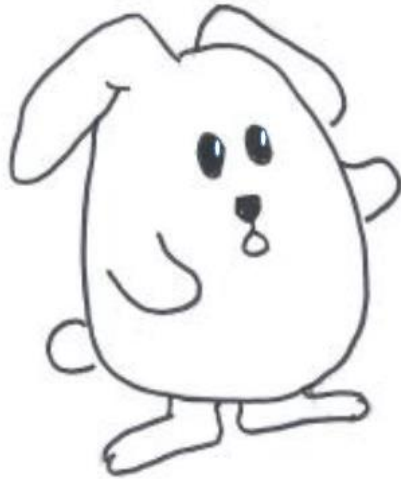


**THE OWL REPLIED,
"I AM OLD. I DON'T HAVE A JOB."**



WHY DON'T YOU ASK THE HUMAN THERE?

**SO THE RABBIT ASKED THE HUMAN.
“WHAT’S YOUR JOB?”**



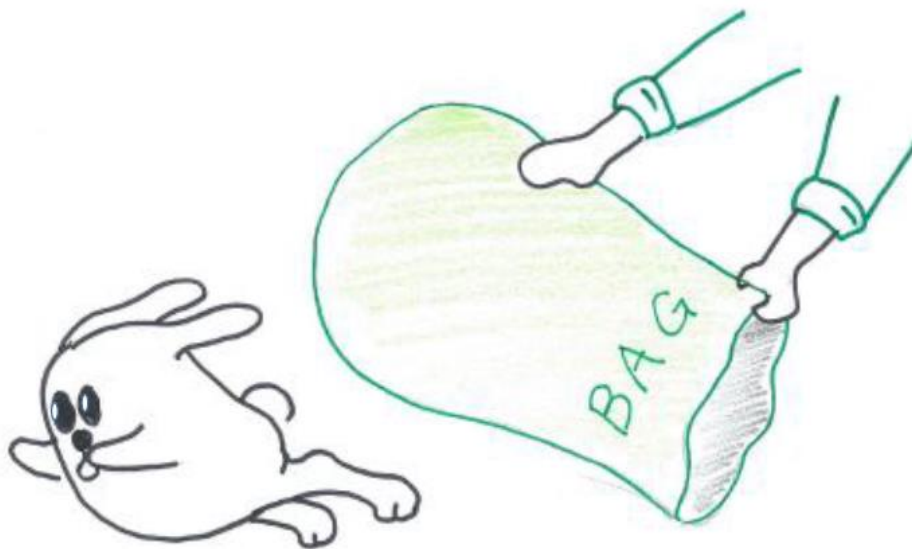
**THE HE HUMAN REPLIED,
“I AM A HUNTER.”**

“WHAT DO YOU HUNT?”



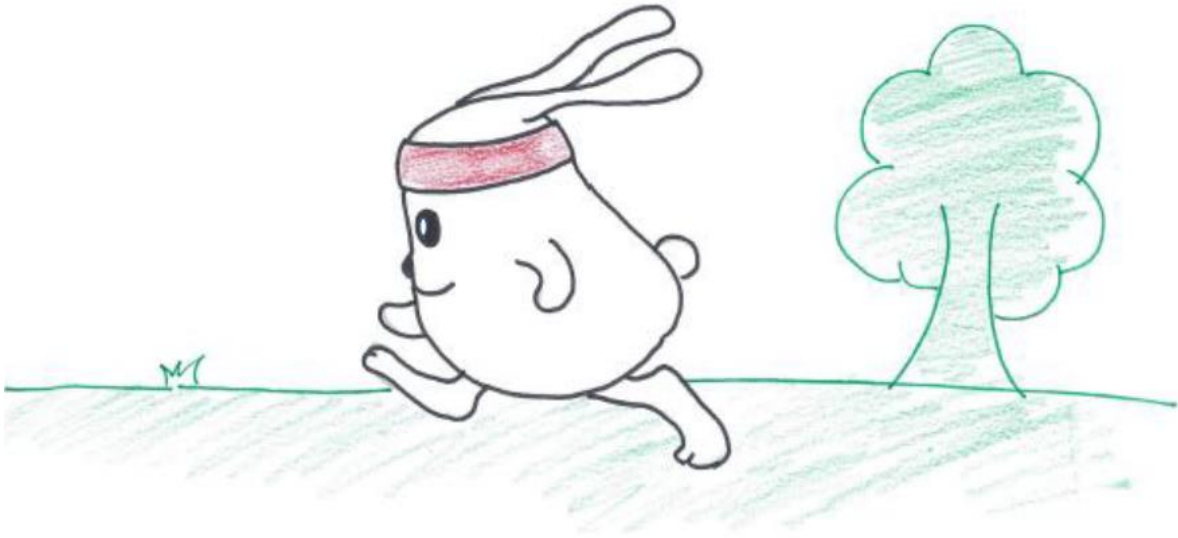


"RABBITS."



THE RABBIT ESCAPED.

THE RABBIT FINALLY FOUND A JOB.



AS A MESSENGER.

THE MESSENGER



Werewolves

By Jennifer Wen

Werewolves (we're wolves)

You told me once that wolves mated for life
and that winter, I couldn't help but see the lupine in your eyes,
your lips,
your tongue

And if I smiled at you

just

like

that

I knew you would see the wild in my eyes,
my lips,
my tongue

I was a wolf girl and you were a wolf boy
and you should've loved me.

Wasn't I feral enough for you?

I howled until my throat was sore

I sharpened my nails to claws and slashed away my own dreams

I loved you under the light of the moon

when it was full and a crescent and nothing at all

I made a den for you in the shape of my body,

gave you shelter in the spaces between my ribs and my lungs

I guess I forgot that wolves were animals

and you're an animal too

I was so caught up in being wild; I forgot that animals could be cruel.

Reasons Why

By Mary Jo Alegam

I'm late.

That was the only thing that Emilia could think of as she stood in front of the school gates – that, and how much she didn't want to be there right then.

She stood there and she stared for so long that she was startled by an amused voice from behind her that came so suddenly she almost jumped.

"So, are you gonna stand there all day and be even *more* late to class, or are you going to go in?"

It was a boy in her year level she's never once spoken to in all her high school years, despite having shared a few classes together.

A boy whose name she couldn't even place or pretend she knew.

She blinked at him and glanced back at the school, all the students and teachers disappearing from her sight considering the bell had gone quite a while ago.

She still couldn't move.

"I don't want to," is all she can manage.

Stepping beside her and trying to see what she saw, the guy turned to her after a few more moments and said, "Then don't."

She wanted to agree with him and tried to turn away, but even that was a motion that forced her whole body to groan in protest.

What was wrong with her?

"You okay?" he asked her.

Her mouth opened before she could stop it – "No."

"Why not?"

Don't answer, she had told herself, looking away to stare at the cars that drove past their school, *don't answer or he'll know that there's something wrong with you.*

"I don't want to be here," she said despite her own thoughts, still refusing to meet his gaze. "At all."

She didn't think he'd understand her, simply because she's told people that sentence numerous before and every person has laughed it off and added a *me too!* or *yeah, tell me about it.* It was probably because she always sounded so flippant or whiny when she had said it, but for the

first time ever, as she felt the boys' stare on the side of her face, she said it with absolute seriousness.

"Oh," he muttered, and she thought – *great, Emilia, you did it again and scared off yet another possible new friend*. But as she watched the different cars and vans and trucks go by, she couldn't find it within herself to care.

And then he did something no one else has done before.

He laughed and walked in front of her so she had no choice but to look at the grin on his face; one that was full of reassurance rather than amusement. "Come on," he said, shifting the school bag on his back and already starting to walk backwards.

She watched him take one step, and then another, and she wished it were that easy for her to just walk away from school. "What?" she blurted, not understanding what his intentions were.

"Let's get out of here before someone sees us," he told her stopping a few more metres away so he could half turn away from her bewildered expression. "I want to show you something."

She blinked at him and still found herself unable to move.

"What?" she repeated as he gave her one last smile and turned around, already starting to walk off.

"I'm gonna give you reasons," she heard him tell her as she watched him slowly get further and further away. "Reasons why you should stay."

"I don't even know your name!" she had to call out to him since he was now three whole cars away from her and if she *were* to follow him, she'd have to run to catch up since it didn't look like he were about to slow down or stop walking any time soon.

He glanced at her over his left shoulder, hair momentarily blinding him before he pushed it back and said. "It's Harrison – Harrison Smith," he added dramatically.

The last school bell rang from behind her and hearing it made her heart stop and start before she soon found herself running towards the brown headed, green eyed boy she'd never once spoken to up until now.

Her palms were sweating and her heart was thumping against her chest by the time she caught up to Harrison Smith who walked as if he had all the time in the world; who walked as if it weren't at all the first time he was ditching school when it was, in fact, Emilia's.

"If you're giving me reasons why I should stay in school, walking away from it is rather contradictory," Emilia couldn't help but inform as they pass an oval and small children's park.

As they stopped at a pedestrian crossing and waited for the red man to go green, Harrison Smith pinned her with a look she couldn't decipher.

“Reason number one,” he said instead of replying to her condescending tone as they continued walking again, “being able to cut school when you have crappy days without anyone stopping you.”

“My *parents* stop me,” she muttered, hairs standing on end at the thought of her parents finding out about her rebellious act of cutting school *with a boy*.

He glanced at her and turned them into a street that Emilia scrutinized apprehensively, wondering why in the world she chose to follow him instead of enduring the six and a half hours of hell – sorry, *school*.

Her heart continued thumping wildly and it wasn’t at all due to the tall boy beside her.

Not liking the silence that settled between them, she asked him where he was taking her but for the second time in less than five minutes he smoothly ignored her.

“Let’s find something to eat,” Harrison Smith said instead.

Her growling stomach didn’t disagree with him.

After ten minutes of silence between them yet again, nothing but the sound of vehicles driving by and her own thoughts causing her to regret her decision of leaving school even more and more, Emilia soon finds herself in front of McDonalds.

She wrinkled her nose and stared at him but she’s met with the sight of his back considering he was already opening the door and heading inside without bothering to wait for her.

She followed him in, not knowing what else to do, and said, “Seriously? *Here?*”

He grinned and held her gaze only to find that after a heartbeat she’d look away. “What’s wrong with some good old Maccas?”

She couldn’t have wiped off the disgusted look on her face, even if she tried. “Everything is fatty and oily and greasy and gross,” she said simply, voice a little lower than usual in case any of the workers heard her and got offended.

For the second time today, Harrison Smith threw his head back and laughed, only this time it was full of complete amusement as they stepped into line. He said, “Have you even *tried* one of their burgers before?” To which she gave him a patronising look that told him his answer.

No.

“I’ve had a bite of it before – back in fifth grade and I almost vomited.”

He shook his head at her. “Nice. Were you sick?”

She pressed her lips into a thin line and turned away from him, causing him to chuckle softly as he once again found his answer without her needing to say it.

Yes.

He bought them both something, ignoring her quiet yet incessant refusal and threats that 'if he bought [her] something [she'd] throw it at his face'. He grabbed the brown paper bag, winked at Emilia and turned around to leave.

"Now where are you taking me?" she asked as they walked away from the restaurant, the hot sun on their back causing her to perspire a little.

"You'll see," is all he said, dipping a hand into the paper bag that had McDonalds written across it, before taking out a heap of oily fries and shoving it in his mouth. "Want some?"

Her face was enough to tell him that *no, in fact, she definitely did not want any.*

"So, you're afraid of school, you've never tried a McDonald's burger before, you're rather snarky and you love to read. Is there anything else I should know about you?" Harrison Smith asked her, and she wondered if maybe calling him *Harrison Smith* in her mind was an odd thing to do, but by calling him just Harrison then it would be even weirder for her since they were barely even acquaintances – let alone friends.

They stepped onto grassy land from behind all the street shops and restaurants and instead of asking where they were going – knowing he wouldn't answer – she scrunched her face up in confusion and asked, "How'd you know I love reading?"

He pinned her with the same look he gave her when they left the school and said, "We've shared at least four classes together in the past six years; I think if I saw you carrying a new novel around almost weekly it'd be kind of obvious – wouldn't it?"

She felt guilty, both for the fact that she hadn't once paid him any mind enough to notice what *he* liked or hated and also for the fact that she hadn't even *known his name.*

And then, as an afterthought as his words replayed in her mind, she said, "Hey, I'm not afraid of school."

"Afraid of the pressure, then," he shrugged as if he understood, bringing them to a stop by the local river and sitting down on the green grass.

As she watched him make himself comfortable she couldn't help but think that maybe he did understand her a lot more than she'd care to admit.

"The grass is wet," she pointed out as he took off his school bag.

He shrugged and barely looked up at her.

"The grass is always wet, just at different times of the day in different parts of the world," he opened the McDonalds bag and muttered, "Sit down."

So she did and the coolness of the grass sent a thrill up her spine even as the dampness seeped into her shorts which she wore under her school dress.

She always hated sitting on wet grass but as she took off her school bag as well and glanced at the boy beside her she didn't mind all that much, for once.

He handed her a burger and after a quick, heated argument she finally took a bite and, well, she loved it – of course – so much so that she had to refrain from moaning which of course caused Harrison Smith to laugh.

“Reason number two; for these amazingly tasty, greasy burgers that tastes as good as it is bad for you.”

She doesn't bother pointing out that his sentence didn't really make sense, too busy trying to swallow down as much of the meal as she could and not seeming to care that she probably resembled a pig right then; which – considering how the boy beside her was eating – she didn't really worry about at all.

When they finished, full and satisfied after also eating the fries and drinking the one dollar large frozen cokes, they laid back against their school bags and stared up at the bright blue sky, the sun momentarily hiding away as it was covered by a cloud and tree above them.

She decided, as they went quiet, that the silence wasn't all that bad between them. Sure, her pulse still raced a little and her heart thumped unnaturally when the silence felt too awkward, but once she stopped worrying about whether she was intruding on him – despite the fact that he'd asked her to come with him – or whether or not he thought she was weird, she found that the silence was rather... peaceful.

She liked it.

“Isn't it weird that it's hot as heck right now and the grass is still a little damp from last night's rainfall?”

She doesn't look at him, instead she closed her eyes and breathed the fresh air into her fragile lungs, wishing she could just lay there forever and not have to think about school and homework and friends and home and all her other petty problems that often felt too overbearing for her.

Just thinking about it made her heart feel heavy again so she sat up and crossed her legs in front of her, 'Indian style', as she stared out at the river they sat near.

“Isn't it weird,” she said quietly instead as she watched the murky water barely even shift in the summer heat and non-existent wind, “That you're the last person I ever thought I'd cut school with to eat a Maccas burger for the very first time?”

She heard him breathe out a small laugh as he, too, sits up. He brushed fingers through his hair to push it away from his eyes and smiles a little.

"I don't know whether to be offended or flattered by that," he said before adding, "I think I'll choose flattered – since I'm great and all."

For the first time that day – maybe even *month* – she smiled genuinely and he finds that she's rather very pretty when she did so.

"Reason number three," he said softly, looking away from her to gaze at the murky water of the river she'd been staring blankly at, "New friends."

"Friends," she echoed, sending a glance his way as she rolled the thought around in her mind, realising how long it had been since she last made a new friend who could make her smile.

"Friends," he agreed, nodding as if *she* was the one who announced them as friends.

She rolled her eyes and he stood up, offering a hand which she ignored and pushed herself up on her own.

"Reason number four; pretty places."

"I've been here before, you know," she can't help but tell him, though not unkindly as they both surveyed the quiet area she once thought of as ugly and boring, but now saw the true beauty of.

He ignored her and said, "Have you been to Eskrine Falls?"

She doesn't bother telling him that she's only ever visited the city and the neighbouring suburbs before she shook her head as a no and watched him pick up his school bag to put back on, crumpling up their rubbish simultaneously with his free hand.

"Didn't think so, it's even prettier and ten times better than this place."

She picked up her bag and before she can help herself she said, "Will you take me there some day?"

His lip tilted into a smile and he led them away from the trees and the lovely flowers and the wet grass and murky water. "Of course, what are friends for, right?"

Friends, her mind repeated, an odd concept to think about since the last time she made a new friend was more than four years ago.

"Reason number five; exploring and finding new places," Harrison – *just Harrison* – said as they stepped back onto the main road and shoved their rubbish in the nearest bin.

For the rest of the day, up until 3 pm which is when they head back to school, the pair strolled around the main street and wisely made use of their time.

She told him, *thank you, I had fun*, because for the first time in what felt like forever she really *did* have lots of fun simply just by hanging and talking to a boy she never thought she'd ever speak to – let alone be friends with. For the first time in what felt like forever she didn't once think

about the things that often upset her and for the first time in what felt like forever she didn't feel pressured to do anything.

She felt free, even if she spent most of the day following him around and sometimes leading him to a shop she'd never seen.

She felt *happy*, even though he kept giving her "reasons" at random times during the day when she would smile or laugh at something they did or said or saw.

Reason six; dressing up, he said after dragging her into an Op Shop and forced her to put on random dresses and hats and clothing pieces with him.

Reason seven; saving a life, he told her after she let slip how all she'd ever wanted in life was to save someone else's once she became a doctor.

Reason eight; your favourite bands which you'll one day see, he had grinned as they shared their favourite songs and singers and, more importantly, bands.

Reason nine; your family and best friends, he murmured after he caught her texting a worried friend about her whereabouts since Emilia had only ever *once* missed school in the past three years straight.

Finally, when they reached the school gates and she was grinning after he'd told her a silly joke he cut off her snarky reply and instead said, rather quietly: "Reason ten; finding more, *better* reasons."

He then proceeded to hug her for so long and so tightly – yet gently somehow – that she found her eyes pricking with tears for reasons she couldn't begin to fathom, and when the end-of-school-bell rang he let her go, sent her a grin and walked on his merry way home after he muttered a quick *goodbye, see you tomorrow*.

It wasn't until he was too far away for her to call him back that she finally began to realise what all these reasons were really for.

These were her reasons why she should stay, and not just in school, but here, on Earth – breathing and living and smiling.

These were her ten reasons why.

And as she watched him disappear from her sight after turning a corner and sending her a quick wave without even glancing back at her she added reason number eleven to the list.

For him.

The Mask

By Emily Slee

I'm great, fine, spectacular. In a way
I relish every night, and I live every day.
I live, I laugh, I write, I sing,
I wonder what the new days will bring.

Then I get home, and I take off the mask.
The day, an almost impossible task,
Is finally over, and so I lie down,
And wait patiently for the day that I die.

I cry and cry myself to sleep,
Even though I have promises to keep.
I wait, and wonder, and cry some more,
And I ache and burn from my very core.

Then, I'm not alone, and the mask reappears:
Out goes the grief, pain and all of the tears,
As I am a happy person, cheerful all the day.
A world full of rainbow, not one shade of grey.

Of course I'm not okay, I'm not fine,
No matter how much I seem to shine.
I don't even know why I feel this...
Why my existence is one, long blisslessness.

But it is, and will be, so I cling to my life,
As one day I might slip, and end it with a knife.
But I'm still here, no matter what my dreams might say
And I hope that one day, I will be okay.

Maddy's Getaway to Indonesia

By Sophie Smythe

I was waiting... for my mum and dad to decide if we were going on a holiday to Indonesia for a whole month! Aaaahh I'm so excited. I mean who wouldn't be?

Oh sorry... Oh sorry I forgot to introduce myself. My name is Maddy Brooke Antonio. Let me tell you about myself. I am 11 years old, I am a student at South Lakes Primary, I have long golden hair, blue eyes and I have two best friends Billy and Bob. I love to dance of which I attend lessons twice a week after school and I wish to become a professional contemporary dancer when I grow up. I live with my mum, dad and my golden retriever puppy Iggy. I hope we are going on our holiday, I thought. The only thing is though I'm terrified of getting on the plane. I absolutely freak out at the thought as I find it scary because we are so high off the ground and I am scared of heights, I mean who isn't?

I was sitting in my room finishing my homework waiting... waiting... waiting for mum to call me for dinner and so I can hear the decision whether we are going to Indonesia or not. I'm busting at the seams to find out and feeling very excited.

"Maddy."

My mum calls for me.

"Dinner time."

At that moment I picked up Iggy who was between my feet and bolted to the dinner table. In front of me was a full plate of my favourite meal spaghetti bolognas. Sitting down I was eager to hear about their decision on Indonesia.

"Now Maddy we both know that you really want to go on this trip and so do we, lately you have been working very hard at school and to complete your chores. That means you have lots of money saved which is lucky... BECAUSE WE ARE GOING TO INDONESIA!"

I was so happy I got out of my chair and did a happy dance.

"Thank you so much."

I shouted with excitement and rushed to give them a big hug.

"We are leaving in two hours," dad said, "so pack your suitcases straight after tea."

Just before I vanished around the corner to start packing my suitcase my mum stopped me in my tracks.

“Maddy I’m sorry to tell you but... we have to leave Iggy at Nanna’s while we are gone.”

Dropping my head I walked to my room with Iggy walking by my side. I bet Iggy was wondering why my mood had changed so fast and she looked confused.

I started packing my case with excitement but in the back of my mind the thought about the fact Iggy wasn’t coming too.

“Clothes check, toiletries check, my stuffed teddy bear check, my money check, there all packed and ready to go then huh Iggy.”

I sat on the floor with Iggy giving her a big long scratch under her chin and behind her ears. I mumbled softly to Iggy.

“I’m going to miss you.”

Then I let out a big sigh.

About 10 minutes later I gave Iggy one last big hug and put her in the dog cage. I lugged my luggage to the car as well as carrying Iggy in her cage.

“Are you ready to go,” mum yells out.

“I guess so,” I reply. Plonking my bottom on the comfy car seat and I watch out the car window as we pull out of the driveway from our beautiful house.

Before we went to the airport we had to drop Iggy at Nanna’s.

“Knock, knock, knock.”

The next thing I knew, I saw my Nanna’s smiling face at the front door.

“Hi Maddy are you excited to go on your holiday?”

“YEAH I sure am, I can’t wait,” I replied with joy.

“Ok,” my Nanna said looking forward to looking after Iggy for me.

Nanna took Iggy’s cage from me and started to close the door but before it closed fully I yelled, “I’ll miss you Iggy.”

Finally we’re at the airport. I think I’m on a lucky streak here. I mean I get to go on this trip, we zoomed through customs without delays and our plane is going to be early. We were sitting in the waiting room for the plane to arrive. I was curled up in my favourite fluffy blue blanket, listening to my favourite music and digging into some of my favourite take away... Red Rooster chips. I mean what more could a girl want?

Oh my gosh! Our plane just got called so we start to walk down the stairs to the plane. Finally on the plane we look for our seats.

“J2 Hmmm row H row I row J, J1, J2 AHA here it is,” my mum says.

Whilst taking off I cranked my head phones and put my head back and closed my eyes and fell asleep.

Three and half hours later I get awoken by my dad nudging me with his elbow.

“OUCH!” I exploded.

“We have arrived,” he said with a massive grin on his face. Suddenly my face lit up, scrambling over my parents to look out the window. I was flabber gassed. Immediately I was yanking at my mum’s arm saying, “GET UP, LET’S GO, I WANT TO EXPLORE!...”

I was shouting in my head.

Walking off the plane it felt like a heat wave had struck. I was boiling... One hour later we were through the airport and in a yellow taxi on our way to a hotel. Looking out the window things were very different to home. There were markets, restaurants and this funny little golf buggy cart on the road. I was so excited.

Ahhh, at last we finally arrived at the hotel. It was called the Holiday Inn. It was ginormous and fancy with a restaurant, lots of rooms, a huge pool right on the edge of the beach.

We lounged around the pool relaxing and having fun for 5 days it was awesome.

All relaxed it was time to explore more of the island so we packed up our suitcases and took them to the front of the hotel and waited for our van then we were off.

After a little while in the car we arrived at a place called Chandidasa and booked into room 54. We swam in the pool that afternoon and then the next day we headed for an amazing waterfall, we had been told about. We trekked up the jungle. Boy, it was hot but I felt like an explorer. When we reached the top, OH MY GOSH... The water was pouring from up so high it looked like the sky. There were amazing rocks, plants and insects and it looked like we had landed in another world. I couldn’t believe how beautiful this amazing place was. We swam in the water which was so cool and refreshing and had lots of fun before trekking back down to trail.

The next day we went to a local market and I bought a blue sarong with a flower on it which I loved. We swam in the pool and had an awesome lunch at the restaurant. It was DECLICIOUS!

BIA BAY next stop...

Bia Bay was far from any local shops or towns. It took a while to get there but I was so excited to see a waterslide at the new hotel. We settled in and had loads of fun on the slide then the following day the lady who owns the hotel asked if I would like her to show me how to make a traditional Balinese offering.

“Yes please.” I beamed.

A few moments later the lady came back with 3 bags filled with flowers, bamboo leaves, coins and incense sticks. We sat down at the table near the pool and started making the offerings. The first had circular weaves around the outside. I found it really hard to make because the weaving was in all sorts of different directions. The weaves made up the outside of the basket, then we next filled it with flowers and decorated them. I put dark pink and dark blue flowers inside. I was delighted at how amazing it looked. The next one we made was a square shaped box we repeated the same weave and I put yellow and orange flowers in it and a coil. The last offering we made was a Balinese praying offering. We got one strip of bamboo leaf and wrapped it around it like a spiral cone then filled it with blue and yellow flowers. All the offerings were amazing but I was a little disappointed as I couldn't take them home.

When I woke early the next morning I was super excited. We were going on a wooden traditional boat to go snorkelling. The boat was unusual looking and made of wood and painted funny colours. When we got out on the boat the water was crystal clear you could see the bottom of the ocean floor.

“WOW!” I said out loud to myself as I ran my hand over the water as we glided through it. It was warm and inviting. When we arrived at the point to snorkel I put the goggles, snorkel and flippers on with total excitement. SPLASH... In I went with my mum and dad right behind me. Swimming around I looked down... I was astonished... there were fish everywhere and everything was so colourful. It was magical, it was like a paradise underwater. I thought it was the coolest thing I had ever seen. I spotted what I called my favourite fish it was blue, green and light pink and it sparkled.

Falling asleep that night I had the biggest smile on my face and I felt all warm and fuzzy. Tomorrow we were off to Lovina.

Finally arriving at Lovina we got out of the car and took our luggage to the check-in desk. Boy, my luggage was heavy. I was excited that our room was right next to the most

gigantic pool I had ever seen right in front of the beach. I really was having the best holiday EVER. I asked mum if I could had a moktail at the pool bar... It was to die for it was so refreshing and a mix of awesome juices. YUM YUM.

The whole family relaxed for the rest of the day splashing and having fun. I even worked on a little bit of tanning and it was so nice laying in the nice warm sun.

Beep, beep, beep.

The alarm awoke me the next morning at 5.00am. It was pitch ark and we were going out on another traditional boat to watch the sun come up and see pods of dolphins. Once we were on the water it was a little bumpy. 10 minutes out and I got a big surprise WOW about 8 dolphins jumped right out of the water. I couldn't believe my eyes they were so graceful and they glided across the water beautifully. It was amazing watching and soon there were hundreds of them with the pink sky rising in the background. What a day to not forget.

Checking out of the hotel we travelled half way back to the main town but stopped in a place called Ubud. We were going to have an elephant ride. It felt like the car ride took forever to get there as I was so excited. We got our tickets and walked up the stairs of a really high platform where we could get on the elephants. I was eagerly waiting for someone to call our name... Then suddenly it was our turn. My tummy did a back flip as I jumped on the basket attached to the elephant. Mum came on with me and dad followed on next.

"Aaaahhh!"

The elephant started walking it was very wobbly I thought the basket was going to fall. I held mum's hand tightly with a mix of feelings excited but unsure if we were safe. The elephant started walking us down a dirt track and that's when I asked to the elephant rider, "What is the elephant's name?"

The rider replied, "Her name is Buddy."

"Wow what an interesting name."

I mumbled to my mum. We rode further down the track and started walking through a jungle, then in the distance I saw a refreshing river. Curious enough I asked, "Is the elephant going to go through the river?"

"Indeed we are," he replied.

The elephant's toe was already touching the water. When the elephant reached waist deep it felt like a big powerful machine pushing through the water. Sadly the elephant ride came to an end soon after that. Finishing off another amazing day I got to feed and pat buddy. Her skin was like leather which felt really strange. I was a bit scared at first but once I fed her I could see she was really a big friendly giant. It made me smile, I fed her carrots and cucumbers and she must have been hungry because she snatched it firmly from my fingers.

Time to go home...

Eventually when we got back to the taxi we started the drive to the airport. Half an hour later we arrived at the airport. Shortly we boarded the plane and took off and soon were flying back to Australia.

Hours later our plane was landed back in Australia. I had lots of fun in Indonesia but it was good to be home.

After getting out of the chaotic airport we went straight to my Nanna's house to get Iggy back.

Finally we arrived at my Nanna's house. I rushed to the front door and knocked on the door three times.

"Knock!"

"Knock!"

"Knock!"

I heard Iggy give a cheerful bark as my Nanna opened up the door and saw me.

"Hi Maddy how was your holiday!" My Nanna beamed.

"It was AWESOME, we had so many adventures snorkelling, watching dolphins, visiting waterfalls and riding humongous elephants!" I blurted really loudly.

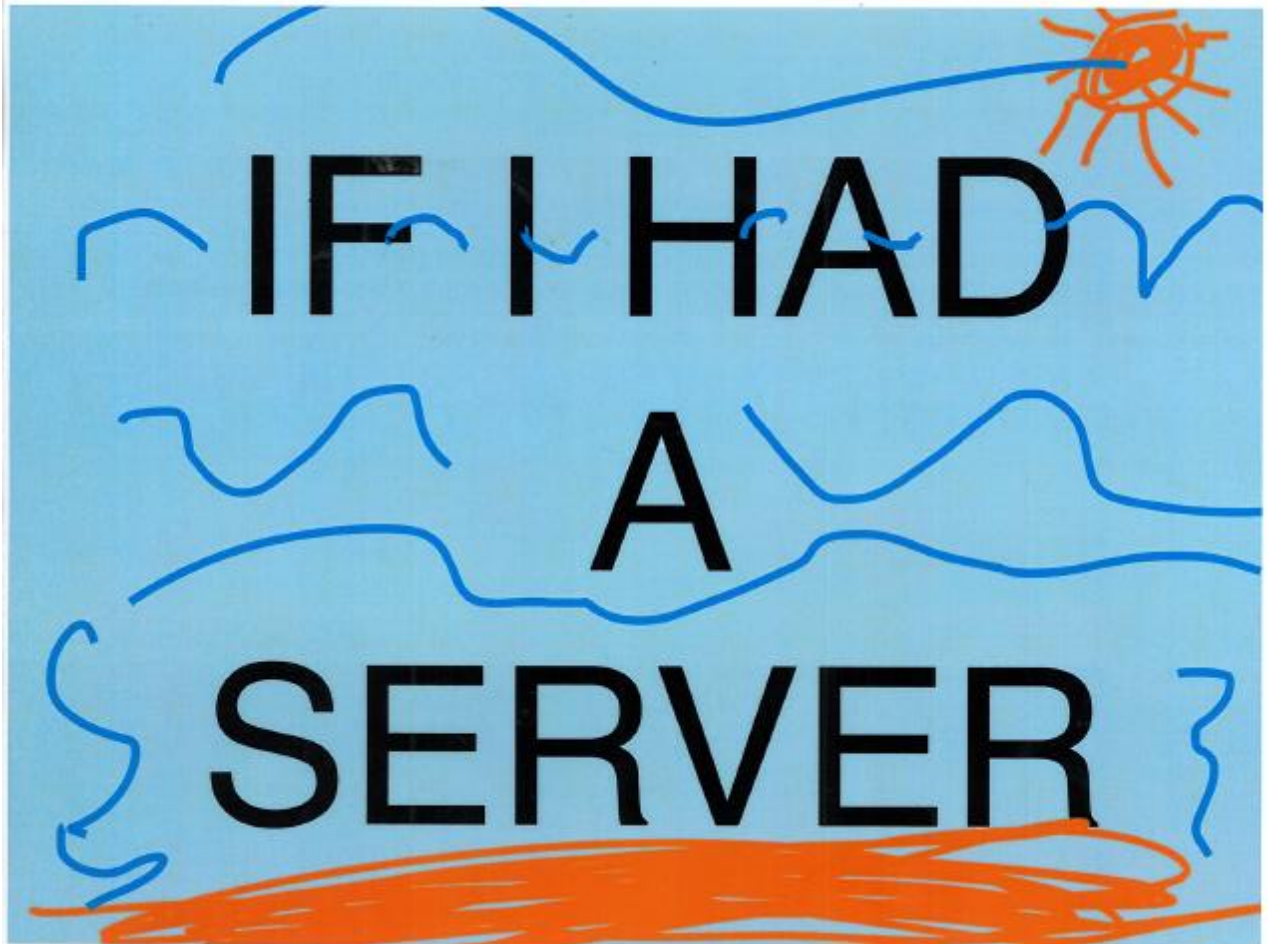
"That's wonderful dear," my Nanna replied. Whilst my Nanna and I were talking Iggy ran out the door at full speed.

"Iggy!" I yelled as I lifted her up with joy. After my parents talked to my Nana and we all said our goodbyes, we got in the car and started driving to our beautiful house we missed very much. I was sitting in the back seat hugging Iggy tightly.

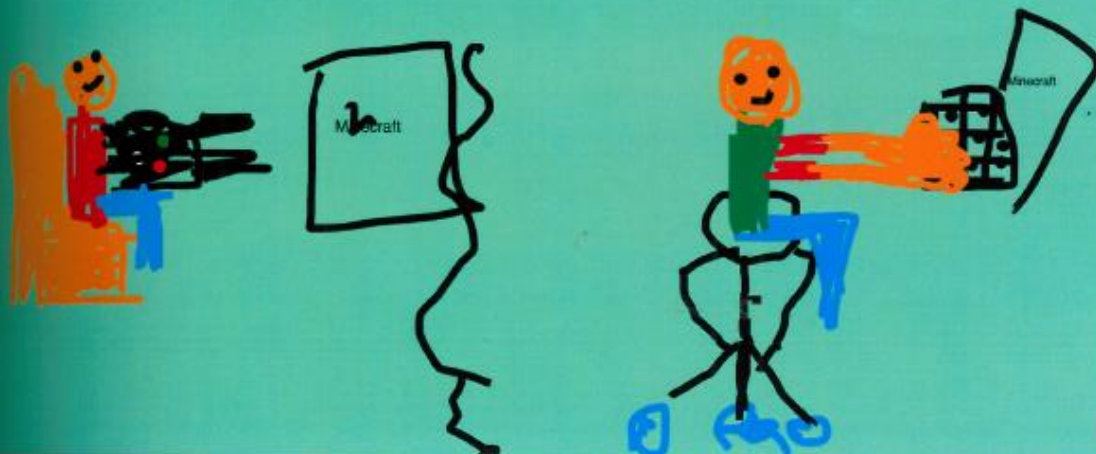
"You know Iggy, I did have lots of fun in Indonesia, but it's also nice to be back home," I mumbled to Iggy whilst hugging her tightly with joy.

If I Had A Server

By Jimmy White



If I had a server I could connect via internet to other computers so i could play games with my friends.



If I had a server we could PLAY Minecraft hunger games AND I WOULD SEE ALOT OF PEOPLE.



If I had a server I could make a SUPER SECRET PORTAL called Viado. My friends could meet me there but it is so dangerous!



If I had a server I would always check with my parents before connecting with a friend or others.



If I had server I could go through my friends worlds to go to other people's worlds and we could all play together.



If I had a server I would make up a SUPER AWESOME nickname and never use my real name.

BANANAMAN 1

JimBob08

Marvel06

Spideyweb_07

TheDarkKnight

HulksmFish1000

Flashlightning

Wyndham15

I wish my Mum would let me connect to a server. Maybe when I'm older...



The End

The Beach

By Kian Miguel

Waves rolling in the soft sand
Beautiful sunset in the distance
Shadows of colour are so amazing
Reflecting on its waters
The smell of salty clear water
Running over oceans floor
Crowded by many in the heat of summer
Wonders bringing in life from deep under
Birds chirping, children playing, kites flying
A retreat from a busy life
Calm

Urban

By Emily McMann

In between Alder and Thulin,
summer evening streetlights buzz in the oppressive
dusk heat. Under feet,
almost worn-through soles slap cracked cement slabs
forming a patchwork sidewalk.
Sweat gathers on shoulders' top and on shirt covered backs,
leaving skin grungy and odiferous.

To highlight night's dishevelment,
particulate light reflects off overly oily skin.
Those who are not able to settle nor continue with their work
in the uncomfortable fever of the murk
stand against chipped doorways, exhaling thin plumes of
smoke into the already smog saturated air,
coughing coughing crookedly like insects in the night.
Tonight, the dress code of the overheated is
clammy jammies and thongs,
slightly stained with grime ingrained by grotty feet.

Dead grass dominates miniature lawns,
while bygone plastic wrappers litter gutters and
rattle the bars of leaf clogged drains,
waving tiny crinkled flags.

From the base of a rubbish bin,
a lonely syringe tempts the soft fingers of small children.
Through buzz-lighted streets children
on bicycles that whimper tiredly with each pedal push
lazily swerve back and forth across two lanes,
crunching gravel with grip-less tyres.

On the right-hand side of the road,
a boy in a tee the colour of envy walks home.
His home: A paint-chipped gate,
a half-dead rose bush,
and fading christmas lights that should have been taken down months ago.
Inside, from the lounge, the TV shouts quietly and
lights strobe across the walls and into the hallway.
The boy shuffles away from the
sounds that squish him
against the wall.
Leftovers sit lukewarm on dirty plates,
fat from meat turning hard and white.

Limp potatoes,
waxy corn,
and lamb, tossed onto a plate,
rotating round and round in the microwave for
exactly one-hundred and seventeen seconds.
Popping intermittently, as food
in the microwave tends to.
When it emerges from its food spattered cave,
it only breathes hot from the left side,
but it's eaten anyways.

On the couch,
marinated by television,
a father slumbers.
The news plays tidy violence,
and the boy stands to watch for a moment,
angrily staring at the adversary that constantly muddles the mind,
clogging the thoughts.
Making everything seem too loud.
Too bright.

Looking at the sleeping man,
hooded eyes squint and sweaty palms reach for the remote
trapped between one meaty hand and the sofa,
pressing one single button,
shutting the damn thing up.

The Sacred Book of Lijiang

By Adit Sivakumar

Prologue:

Three hundred years ago in the mists of old China there was a magical teller who could do anything in combination of the book. His name was Cheng Xing. Two years later the old teller was getting unaccompanied so he was feeling lonely, so in regards of the ancient spirits of the book he created the ancient, magical and fun filled city of Lijiang. The teller died 2 months after his mid-life.

Chapter One: The Dreaded Curse

There is only one thing about this magical book and its powers, there is a curse and that curse is that when someone dies in this city, the ground in China shatters. After one thousand deaths the city will collapse and the whole of the city of Lijiang will be destroyed because of this terrible curse. The only thing that can stop this dreaded curse is that there is a prophecy that can stop the bad curse...

The prophecy states that the only way to stop the curse is, that there is four boys. These four boys can have a good chance to destroy the evil spirits of the book of Lijiang. Their names are Drake, Liang, Coby and Luke. They have been chosen specially by Cheng Xing A.K.A the teller. They were chosen because of their AMAZING talent and skill in the martial art of karate. They are yet still not skilled enough to battle the spirits of Lijiang...

Chapter Two: The Way...

There is still a way to destroy the spirits. There is a trainer that is the BEST overall China. His name is Zealanthous Xing and he can train any student or person who does not know how to do karate art. But the thing is that Zealanthous Xing is not training people who do not know how to do karate or martial arts. He is going to train skilled students who have been going to karate lessons since they were a little cute child aged at about three. The good thing is that they are best friends and study at the same school: Lijiang High.

At Lijiang High, the four boys that we mentioned earlier all study at 9L. Their boring ol' teacher's name is Mrs Lee. She is mostly the meanest teacher in the whole school and

she asks the most hardest of all questions. Today in mid period she asked the class “What is the cubic root of eighty one, PLUS the cubic root of sixteen?” I mean, come on, who knows that stuff. At the back of the class, Coby quietly whispers over to Drake “BORING” thinking that the teacher couldn’t hear. But with the teacher’s supersonic ears she hears and says “Coby and Drake, would you two like to repeat what you just said boys?” Nothing comes out of their mouths. “DETENTION both of you!”

Chapter Three: Training for the Battle!

Zealanthous Xing walks into the classroom with no one able to see him... except for the teacher. “What do you think you’re doing in MY class?” He goes up to the teacher and whispers something in her ear. She faints suddenly and he asks the prophet boys to come with him to journey to a mysterious adventure to destroy the evil spirits of the book of Lijiang. The whole class burst to laughter. A flaming fireball burst out of Liang’s hand. And Liang got into suspense.

“Each of you have a power, my great, great grandfather gave one power to you each to destroy all four of the spirits of Lijian. He thinks all of you four are responsible enough to take the spirits down to the afterlife where they will not be accepted through and they will get burned in fire that even the fire spirit cannot handle. Now I will explain your powers, first Liang is FIRE, Luke is WATER, Drake is GRASS and Coby is EARTH. Each of you will be versing the same element spirits. You will all travel through one gate each, so overall there is four gates, four kids and four spirits,” Zealanthous says patiently.

“Whoa, this is so cool, it’s like one of those Jackie Jan movies,” Drake replies confidently.

Chapter Four: It’s Time!

Six months later after they had finished training, they met up in an alleyway. They went to that alleyway because all the cameras are broken and graffiti has stained the walls. They thought no one was watching them but the only thing they did not know... was that the spirits Lijiang can see EVERYTHING, including the heroes. Now it was time for Zealanthous to open the portal, he did a spell, and it opened.

Chapter Five: The Earth Gate

Now it was time for Coby to flow with the powers of Earth. When he went into the gate he saw a big rock smashing onto his face, suddenly a huge piece of granite blocks the rock from going onto his face. "WOW that is AWESOME." Now he got more enthusiastic. He saw a dinosaur right in front of him. BUT... that is not the spirit. The earth spirit would look brown and green and could control the surface within 20km². He took down the dinosaur with his ground pound.

Now it was time for him to battle the Earth spirit. The spirit hit Coby with all of the force he could use, which was a terrible mistake for the spirit. It drained all of his energy and he was about to die. He regenerates his health with his fountain of dryness. Now Coby was getting very angry (and sweaty). He used his special move (and his anger management) to perform one of the best combos in the whole of magical spirit fighting. With that one move the Earth spirit was defeated. "YES!" Coby said happily.

Chapter Six: The Grass Gate

The trees swaying movements hit Drake in the face. He suddenly fell on a big rock and about to have an injury on his head, when a big pile of fluffy grass evolved onto the stone. He saw a huge flower that was about to attack him... An axe made out of immortal wood was carved onto Drake's hand, now he knows what to do. He suddenly goes straight to the flower's roots and chopped it up. The gigantic flower fainted to the ground and Drake did an air punch...

But not for long! A huge spirit appeared in front of his face. "This must be the Grass spirit," he thought to himself. He suddenly noticed that it did not have any roots. It was like a weed on the ground, and also it kept on evolving into more and more weeds. Drake knew that there was no way to destroy this spirit, so he decided to suicide himself in regards of his king and loving country (what a nice guy). So he ran towards the spirit and while he saw a bottle of weed killer dropped from his backpack and he sprayed it on the spirit. "YES!"

Chapter Seven: The Water Gate

The powers of Atlantis is among with Luke. He has just now entered the room but it's full of WATER, he was about to die of sinking. When he reached the bottom of the floor he evolved gills and scales. A big great white shark swam in front of him. He shot out bubbles

from his hand but the shark had swiftly dodged. "Aww man..." Luke said. He knew the only way to stop a man-eating shark was to capture it... with nets. He had some string in his pocket and rapidly transformed it into a net and threw it at the shark.

A big bubble creature stood ahead of him. "The WATER spirit!" he shouted aloud, in fact he shouted so loud that he made steam come out of the water and suddenly no water was in the room, so Luke evolved into human form and the water spirit had gotten so dry because there was no water at all in the surface that the water spirit had fainted and lost its breath. Now it is time for the final gate. The hardest gate of all. The leader: Liang has to face the FIRE gate!

Chapter Eight: The Fire Gate

Liang as leader of the group, has a big responsibility. He has to face THE FIRE SPIRIT with no distractions. So he saw the fire spirit right ahead. The whole place was covered with molten lava. Liang didn't know what to do... but with his expert knowledge of skateboarding he thought he could glide all the way in the heating lava with a big rock that he found on the floor. So he did. He made it past, I can't believe it! (Nor can he.) But he knew that he had to continue to do the mission. But the show must go on!

He quickly goes flaming red like the fir- wait... he IS ON FIRE. He is now going crazy because he is on fire. As he was arguing a big flaming monster (The Fire spirit) comes and roars in his face. "Hello," Liang says and blasts the monster onto the ground. But the monster keeps growing bigger! He didn't seem like he wanted to do *THAT* again. Instead he got a water bottle out of his hand and sprayed it on the terrible Flaming Beast. "That was easy," he said.

Chapter Nine: It's finally the END!

After they had all defeated their rival spirit it was time for them to stop the curse. They each found one amulet stone in their pocket each. Zealanthous congratulates them on defeating the spirits. He holds up an amulet and each of the four boys put their stones into the amulet. A light appears from the sky and the curse is resolved... and there is something or someone coming from the sky...

It is Cheng Xing! He said that the way he died was that the spirits had killed him because he was using it loads of times and put a curse on Cheng Xing, that he could only

come to life when someone or people fixes the amulet by destroying the evil spirits of the book of Lijiang. "Grandfather," Zealanthous said to Cheng. "My son," Cheng said to him. They both chatted for a while and then Cheng congratulated the four boys. It's been amazing working with you they say!

Fate

By Emily Jinu

There she lay, drifting over the calm, ocean waves on a small, wooden raft. She was in a deep sleep, eyes closed, pale skin, still as death. Completely oblivious to the world around her. She was eerily beautiful with dark brown curls which framed her thin, pale face. She had clear blue eyes which shone in the sunlight...when they were open. There was something she had to do, someone she had to find. Until she found who she was looking for, she would remain in this state, not alive, not dead. Just drifting. Her name was Nerissa.

He spent his life at the beach. Every day, he would wake up and go to the beach. He would only leave to go to school or go home to see his family and sleep. Sometimes, he would spend whole weekends there, running across the golden sand, swimming along the shoreline. He had found a little cave near the bottom of a cliff overlooking the beach where he would sometimes spend the night. His parents wondered about him. They worried for his future, what he would do when he got older, how he would maintain relationships with his friends and with them, his family. His name was Dilan.

It was fate that drew them together.

Dawn was breaking when he first saw her. He had awoken to the sound of the waves crashing onto the beach from his little cave near the shoreline and had stared out into the endless green-blue which he regarded as his home. He had seen her raft, drifting towards him, her pale face glowing in the early morning light. He watched the raft make its way closer and closer to the shore. As it got closer, he began to see her more clearly. The flowing, white silk dress she wore, the paleness of her skin, her dark curly hair, not a trace of imperfection on her face. He had stood up and made his way to the place where the raft finally ceased its drifting, stopping on the shore. He knelt down, curious, and put his hand on her forehead, trying to see if she was as dead as she looked. Her eyes flew open as soon as their skin made contact, startling blue against what now looked like the dull colours of the beach. She looked deep into his eyes, seemingly searching for something in him. He pulled his hand back, confused, surprised. She was beautiful. She smiled, a perfect smile which compelled him to smile back. She began to sit up and he hurried to help her, pulling

her into a standing position. As she stepped off the raft, the waves raced up the shore and pulled it out, back into the ocean, where it drifted away.

He had seen her before. He knew her name. She was Nerissa. And he could sense that she knew his name too. A fate had visited him in a dream, telling him that he was destined to meet a girl with brown, curly hair and skin as white as porcelain. She would show him a new path, what he was born to do. She would explain everything – why he was drawn to the beach, why he could not leave, why his father did not speak to him anymore, why his mother cried every night, why he was an only child – the questions that had been eating at him for the six years since he had turned twelve. It was his birthday today. He had just turned eighteen. It had been so long ago since this message had been delivered to him. Long enough so that he had almost forgotten, pushed it out of his mind as a mere dream, not a message from the fate. But now, here she was.

“Dilan.”

It was but a word, but the sound of her voice echoed through his skull, making him dizzy. He recognized her voice from that dream so long ago. The voice which had told him all he needed to know.

“Nerissa.”

She smiled, calm, peaceful.

“You know why I’m here.”

“Yes.”

“I have the answers to your questions.”

“I know.”

“Do you trust me?”

Did he have a choice? Could he afford to not trust her? She was his future, his life, his entire being. Despite their just meeting, he knew that no was not an answer.

“Yes.”

“Follow me.”

She turned and walked into the ocean, and he could do nothing but follow her. She was not at all slowed by the water as she walked, walking out to the point where her head sank below the surface. He walked too, realizing that the water did not slow him either. He walked until the water began to lap at his chin before stopping, doubt in his soul. He knew

that she would not come back for him, however, return to the raft and recommence her drifting, searching for the one. The fate had warned him of this. Did he trust her?

Could he afford not to?

He continued walking, bracing himself as the water caressed at his cheeks, feeling the cold sensation creep over him as he submerged himself in the icy depths. He squeezed his eyes shut, fearing what he would see and feel. He held his breath, waiting for his lungs to realize that there was no sufficient air supply here, waiting to drown and die.

He opened his mouth, his lungs bursting, sucking in the water which surrounded him. He choked and thought that this was it, the fate was wrong, he was going to die. He was suffocating and wanted to resurface but his limbs did not seem to be working, his body refusing to float up to the surface which was a few mere centimetres above his head.

“Dilan.”

The voice echoed through the water, sounding distant and far away.

“I thought you trusted me.”

He was dying, he knew. He could feel the air being snatched away from him.

“Have faith in me.”

He opened his eyes wildly, attempting to search for her in the gloom, finding it startlingly easy. The water was clear and he saw her standing a few metres in front of him, her silk dress billowing out, fish swimming around her feet. He looked down and saw his feet firmly on the floor, and realised that he was breathing.

“How...”

He was bewildered.

“All humans can. Not all humans have faith. You were fed stories as a child. Poisoned with the illusion that the ocean meant death. You must have faith in me and in yourself. Do not allow yourself to be plagued with doubts.”

“But, why couldn’t I breathe before?”

“Your mind believed that you could not breathe under water. So, you couldn’t.”

She continued walking and he could do nothing but follow. As they walked, he saw the beauty of the ocean floor, the life in everything that moved. She didn’t seem to notice a thing, walking steadily as if this was the street she lived on and walked every day of her life. He felt like an idiot, whipping his head around like a small child so he could look around and take everything in, walking behind her poised figure.

He was struck suddenly with the thought of his family, his silent father, his grieving mother. Would they miss him? Would they look for him? Would they care? He thought about his friends. What would they think? Would *they* care? Did they ever care?

“You are having doubts again.”

She turned to look at him, her eyes piercing into him accusingly.

“Can you blame me?”

She sighed.

“I suppose you are human.”

She walked over to him and put her hand on his forehead. Her arm was slender and her hand small and dainty, her fingers startlingly strong. She closed her eyes and suddenly, she was in his head, seeing his thoughts and he felt a deep sense of intimacy between them. Her eyes flew open, as they had when she had first awoken on the beach and she looked at him.

“You must leave them behind, Dilan. They have no place in your future. They cannot help you answer your questions.”

He bowed his head, unable to rid his head of the memories of when he was a child, back when his parents treated him like any normal parents would. Before he was drawn to the beach every day. He felt her hand leave his shoulder, felt her gaze linger on him before continuing her steady walk. He could do nothing but follow.

He knew where they were going. He knew why they were going there. He knew that he had no control over what was about to happen, as all his decisions had already been made. Whether it was him who had made them or the fates themselves, he did not know.

They were approaching the place. He could see it just a couple hundred metres in front of them – a formation of rocks, creating a little door-less room which could fit only one or two people at the most. She walked into the box without hesitation and motioned for him to do the same. He could do nothing but follow.

He walked into the rock formation and watched, without much surprise, as a large rock slid over to close the entrance to the room with a flick of her hand. So they were there, in that pitch black rock formation. Still, silent.

Slowly, the sea floor beneath them began to dissolve and she reached for his hand to comfort him – he knew that she could sense his doubt and fear. As the floor beneath them disappeared, they fell into the abyss that lay below. They were falling, falling to their deaths.

He thought that he may really die this time. Any landing from this height would result in the death of both of them. That, he knew, was a fact.

“You are doubting again.”

The words echoed in his head, her voice chiding and crystal clear.

“Stop doubting and have faith.”

He took a deep breath and thought about a trampoline, imagining that wherever they landed, they would just bounce right back up, safe, unharmed. He squeezed his eyes shut and felt her hand squeeze his as they landed, hitting the ground as if they had floated down rather than fallen.

“You must learn to have faith, Dilan. Nothing is impossible.”

He shook his head, refusing to let go of his previous life. Refusing to let go of the logic that he had been taught. The ‘poison’ that had polluted his mind.

“You must let go. Otherwise, there will be no answers.”

He was scared. He was frustrated. He did not want to let go. She pulled him onwards, pulling him through the dark corridor and into the light of the underwater city.

Atlantis.

His home.

He was finally home.

It had called to him since he turned twelve. He could not ignore it. He was supposed to be here. He was a descendant of the people of Atlantis. But not just any descendant.

“Atlantis!”

Nerissa yelled, her voice magnifying and echoing around the entire city.

“Welcome back our leader of old of old...the reincarnation of Atlas, our king!”

For years, he had lived on the earth, born to an infertile couple, who were favoured by Poseidon. As his people cheered for him, the mental block in his mind was removed, and he remembered everything, all the answers to his questions.

Poseidon had made it so Dilan was born on earth so that he would grow up away from his royalty in Atlantis, so that he would not have to endure the stares of his peers and people every day. He grew up like any other average child would, and for twelve years, his parents treated him like a normal child. However, they were warned by the fates that as soon as he turned twelve, he would receive the first calling and would not be able to refuse. His father, at first, did not believe, but upon seeing his son returning to the beach day after

day, he stopped speaking to him, in fear of what he had become. His mother cried every night, because she knew that as soon as he turned eighteen, he would be snatched away from her, taken back to his home. His real home.

Dilan had been both a blessing and a curse to his parents who he had left behind.

He turned to Nerissa and smiled. She smiled back. He took her hand and pulled her to their final destination – his castle. He knew a wedding feast had already been prepared there and he and Nerissa were finally ready to be the king and queen of the ancient city.

Imagine

By Suhani Poddar

Imagine a place, a place of peace.

Imagine a place where everyone would get along, there would be no right, no wrong.

Imagine a place where there are no horns tooting, or guns shooting, a place of calm and quiet.

Imagine a place where you could sit back in the green grass, and watch the trees sway as time flies.

Imagine a place where you could sing about the sky so blue, admiring everything old and new.

Imagine a place, a place of peace.

PEACE OR PIECES?

It's your call.

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