

**BRIGHT CIRCLES
ALL AS ONE
BENNETT ROAD**

*A collection of short writings
from Bennett Road Public School*

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WestWords is Western Sydney's Literature Development Organisation. We provide pathways of opportunity for the development of Western Sydney voices through innovative literature and related arts programs. We believe literacy, self-expression and creativity changes lives and communities. WestWords is committed to providing an environment where the stories of the communities and the places they come from are celebrated. The guiding philosophy of WestWords is that the unique stories and perspectives of the Western Sydney area deserve to be celebrated, developed in literature and shared with a wider audience. We believe that engagement with reading and writing allows young people in particular to develop their imagination, give voice to their stories and experiences, hones skills in written expression and illustration and sets them on a trajectory for life.

For five sessions over five weeks, author of children's picture books, Jodie McLeod worked with a group of Year 3-4 students at Bennett Road Public School, Colyton to assist them telling their stories – because kids love stories. This publication features their work set against the beautiful illustrations of Jannine Richardson, Aboriginal Education Officer at the school.

This publication, during Covid times, had unique challenges with learning from home and visitor restrictions on access to schools. The students worked with Jodie, initially while learning from home, then virtually with Jodie after returning to the classroom and, finally, for the last workshop, having Jodie in the classroom with them. There was much excitement among students as they completed their stories with Jodie present to discuss and provide feedback directly to them.

WestWords would like to thank the Principal, Glen Leaf, Deputy Principal Alicia Howard, and Class teacher, Stephanie Liauw, at Bennett Road Public School for their commitment to this project. We would like to acknowledge and thank Sailor Studio who continue to surprise as they bring their imagination and creativity to the design of our publications. We couldn't do what we do for the emergent voices of Western Sydney without the generous support of our partners at the various levels of government and in particular for this program, the Copyright Agency Cultural Fund and the Australian Catholic University.

Finally, thank you to the students whose enthusiasm, inspiration, creativity and dedication resulted in the book you now hold.

WestWords is proudly supported by



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At ACU, we offer a welcoming environment for everyone. We stand for meaningful education, vital research, and life-changing community engagement.

3/4L

3/4L is a Stage 2 enrichment class at Bennett Road Public School. In this class are 27 relentless learners who are constantly challenging themselves to succeed and thrive. Every day, 3/4L demonstrate qualities of a life-long learner through their resilience, persistence and problem-solving skills. Despite the COVID lockdown during Term 3, this did not stop 3/4L as they continued to demonstrate their strong work ethic and determination to learn and grow. Due to 3/4L's high attendance online during Home Learning, we decided to tackle the "Writer in Residence" program through Zoom, which then continued in the classroom.

3/4L, it has been pleasing to see you turn your ideas into such entertaining pieces of writing. Your eagerness and enthusiasm to take yourselves out of your comfort zone and into the stretch and grow zone are contributors to your success in your writing. It has been incredibly awe-inspiring watching you work with Jodie and working alongside each other on the rest of your writing journey. Remember to keep challenging yourselves and never lose your drive, passion and enthusiasm for writing.



The Experience

During Term 4, 3/4L and Miss Liauw from Bennett Road Public School had the privilege of participating in the "Writer in Residence" program, in partnership with WestWords. We were extremely honoured and excited to find out that we would be working with the very talented, Jodie McLeod, author of picture books, *Leonard the Lyrebird* and *Lilah the Lyrebird*.

Over the first few weeks, we tackled this program through Zoom due to the COVID lockdown. Despite this challenge, the students in 3/4L remained eager learners because of Jodie's dynamic and engaging lessons. I was able to witness my talented writers' confidence and skills bloom even more through Jodie's helpful tips.

Jodie helped the students to see how much fun writing can be and how we can even turn our own happy memories into engaging stories. Some of her tips that helped guide the stories written by 3/4L were starting with a BANG and the power of SHOW, not tell sentences. Jodie provided some examples of SHOW sentences and opportunities for 3/4L to have a go at their own, which helped the students to be more creative and descriptive.

3/4L and Miss Liauw learned a lot about the process of writing from Jodie and it was such a great experience that we will never forget. Thank you, Jodie, for allowing 3/4L to share their memories and for guiding them to take these memories and simple ideas and turning them into an emotional journey.



Jodie McLeod

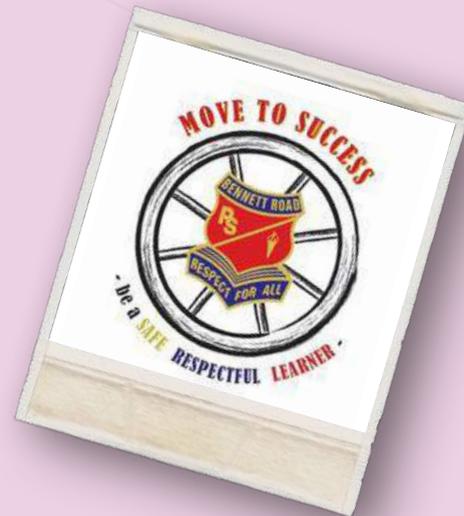
WRITER

To the students of Bennett Road Public School enrichment class, You are an especially wonderful, uniquely courageous group of students.

Not only have you made it through some of the most challenging years in recent history, with the pandemic, lockdowns and disruptions to face-to-face schooling, but you have done it all while staying engaged in your learning. And it's because of this that your teachers and the team at Westwords were able to forge ahead with our planned creative writing residency for 2021 – five workshops over as many weeks (four over Zoom and one face-to-face) where I had the opportunity to share my tips and experience on How to Make Your Creative Writing Soar.

During our Zooms we explored:

- Finding inspiration for story writing
- Writing about what we know
- Themes in writing
- How to structure a narrative
- Beginning with a bang!
- Descriptive language
- Show, don't tell
- Writing good characters
- The emotional journey
- Saving our darlings
- Editing our writing



And more!

As we now know, the first and most important step in editing our writing is to celebrate what is good and – wowzers – did I have a lot to celebrate during my residency! Over the weeks, I heard students share beautiful descriptions, inspiring ideas, cracking opening sentences, thoughtful similes, sparkling metaphors and bold creative thinking that I have no doubt are the beginnings of future careers in writing.

But no matter where writing takes you, the main takeaway from our sessions, I hope, is the notion that it's the practice of writing itself – of switching on your imagination and structuring your ideas in a way that is engaging to others – that will be of greatest value for you throughout life.

Your imagination is your secret survival skill – there to help free you when you're confined, to be your friend when you're alone, and to help you change the world when you can see a better way.

Practise using this precious part of your mind – and most importantly, have FUN with it! – and the future is looking especially wonderful indeed.

- Jodie McLeod

Children's author, writer and editor

Jodie McLeod is a writer, copywriter, editor and author of the award-winning children's book *Leonard the Lyrebird* and its follow-up, *Lilah the Lyrebird*, both illustrated by Eloise Short and set in the Blue Mountains.

With a degree in Creative Arts – Writing (Hons) at the University of Wollongong, Jodie has enjoyed a diverse career working with words: editing and writing for magazines and newspapers, along with writing music, fiction and all kinds of copy. When not dabbling in creative side projects Jodie can usually be found running the trails (and encountering local wildlife) in the Blue Mountains where she lives with her husband and two young daughters.

www.jodiemcleod.com



Bennett Road Public School

GLEN LEAF, PRINCIPAL

ALICIA HOWARD, DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Bennett Road Public School is a large school in Western Sydney. The school has 26 mainstream classes, including three enrichment classes. We also have four support unit classes. We have a wonderfully diverse student population with 37% of students with a language background other than English. 17% of our students identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and 17% are from a Pasifika background.

Our students come from a range of low socio-economic backgrounds. We provide authentic partnerships that engage the whole school community in the life of the school. We set high expectations for student success in their learning and social/emotional development. Student success is celebrated at every opportunity.

The 'Writer in Residence' program has provided an engaging literacy opportunity for our Stage Two enrichment class during remote learning. Our 'eager to learn' students have been provided with a high-quality writing program to challenge their abilities and strengthen their writing skills. It has been wonderful to witness the joy in our students as they have developed greater confidence in their writing abilities.



Jannine Richardson

ARTIST

The inner circle represents staff and community at Bennett Road Public School. The little circles represent the classes. The circles are bright to represent the futures our students have and their connection, all working together as one.

- Jannine Richardson AEO

Hi my name is Jannine Richardson, I am a Wiradjuri/Ngunnawal woman from the Southern Highlands of NSW. I am the Aboriginal Education Officer at Bennett Road Public School. I have worked here for about nine years. I am very lucky and am able to support Aboriginal students in K-6 and also present Aboriginal perspectives to the whole school in Stage groups. I have a strong passion for sharing my culture and really enjoy Culture Class as I see our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students connect to culture and engage in my lessons.



Reflections

As each lesson with Jodie ends, I learn more about how I can really hook the reader in with my writing. I learn more about flow sentences and adjectives that can really make my writing more interesting. Jodie's lessons have been an amazing experience and it really helped us to improve our writing to the very best.

- Anabela

I really liked how Jodie gave us very good tips that helped me rewrite my story to become more descriptive. The inspiration made me work harder in writing. It also inspired me to maybe write a book when I am older!

- Mason

Throughout the program, I had lots of fun as Jodie helped me improve immensely in my writing skills. She taught me so many things in a way that was easy for me to understand. It was one of the best programs and I am so glad that we were still able to do the program over zoom.

- Annie

The experience with Jodie was the happiest day of MY LIFE!!! Our activities that were given to us really inspired me to try and try. I even learnt how to start my story with a BANG. Even though it wasn't easy because of the fact that we weren't together (Home learning), we still made it to the end to finally see each other face to face! I will NEVER forget when we had our fun times!!!

- Ileina

On behalf of my class, I am sure everyone loved their experience with a real author! This experience was wonderful and I really appreciate 3/4 legends' hard work and effort. Our writing has improved a lot as Jodie's tips were incredible. Thank you so much for this experience. I really appreciate this!

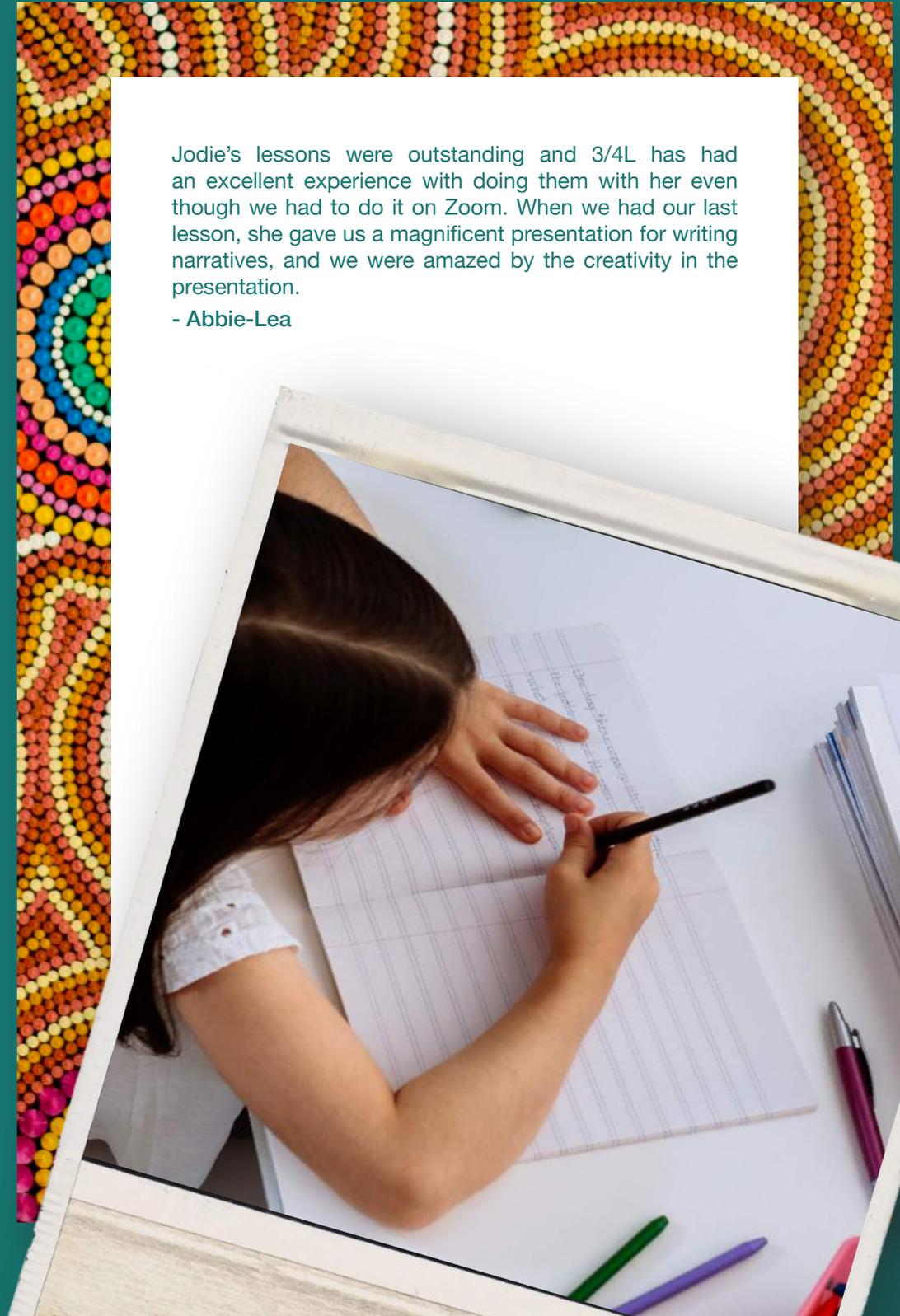
- Alara

As Jodie kept doing zooms with us, she inspired me to always rewrite and that's amazing. Jodie gave us amazing tips and they have helped improve our writing. We really needed this to help us improve and do our best. We loved how Jodie has shared her experiences with us and told us how we could improve. I love how Jodie gave us tips to help our stories become more descriptive

- Sofia

Jodie's lessons were outstanding and 3/4L has had an excellent experience with doing them with her even though we had to do it on Zoom. When we had our last lesson, she gave us a magnificent presentation for writing narratives, and we were amazed by the creativity in the presentation.

- Abbie-Lea





The Horrors of School Camp

BY JULIA

“Uughh...,” I had said it twice, I had said it once this morning when I was packing basically everything I had into a stinky school rucksack and now when I was getting ready to go onto the bus. Why? Well, because my name was Melanie Wainscott, and I was going to school camp. Of course, you would think, “You don’t have to, your parents need to sign the forms!” However, I went to boarding school, the most famous one in fact, and I know it sounds absurd but, my parents ARE too rich to sign forms. Well, that’s what they said anyways. Back to the story. It was 10:00 in the morning and I was VERY, VERY, not excited. Although my bags were packed and they SEEMED ready, I was definitely not. As a teacher yelled at me from the hallway, and I made my way down the expensive marble stairs of the school I really hated, all the horror stories that the Year 9s had told about camp raced through my mind. “Crocodiles in the river... tigers in the bush... poisonous snakes in the dorms...,” I ticked them all off on my fingers. I was scared, really scared. But more disgusted than I thought. “Triple ughh...”

The weary bus driver shooed me onto the bus despite my desperate attempts at conversation, a simple excuse to stay away from camp a moment longer. I was caught up in the steady stream of students making their way into the bus. “At least Amanda will be here...,” I sighed, my best friend was always with me. But as I craned my neck trying to spot her blonde curls, I realised that the bus had gone quiet. I clutched my rucksack, worried. Where was she? But before I could ask the head teacher, the bus suddenly lurched forward and I was shoved into an empty seat. Oh no! Camp Courage suddenly seemed a lot scarier than I imagined. Frowning, I turned my head to the window where I could see white and black flecks against the horizon, which were supposedly sheep. The gentle thrumming of the wheels on the bus lulled me to sleep, with my head resting on the window...

The chatter of other students woke me, with my ponytail sticking to my neck. There was a sudden shift of weight on my seat so, hoping it was Amanda, I turned, my eyebrows curved and my emerald-green eyes sharp. I was VERY startled to see about ten boys staring back at me, stifling giggles. “What are you doing?” I whispered, my voice sharp and my cheeks flushed. They laughed sheepishly so I turned to face the boy on my seat. There, just waiting for me was a Greek god. Wait no, he just looked SO like one that my brainy brain was VERY confused. First, I calculated how he was on our planet earth, then I calculated which Greek god he was. And while I and my brain were dumbfounded, he smiled. Sure, he had such pretty, piercing-blue eyes

and the shiniest blonde hair I had ever seen but, this was NOT acceptable!! I nearly downright yelled at him. “Sorry, my mistake,” he said, giving me a winning smile that meant “Sorry... not sorry.” He gracefully stood and walked back to his seat. I was infuriated, but I calmed myself and stared out of the window. The grassy landscape I had seen earlier had been replaced by a car park. “Camp courage,” I muttered. I was not impressed...

The moment I stepped out of the bus carrying my rucksack, I knew that my time at Camp Courage would not be very much fun and full of activities. We quickly lined up in front of the head camp counsellor who had a fake leg. “Can’t you line up maggots?!!!” the lady said, crossing her arms and glaring. “My name is Geraldine and this is MY camp, so MY rules!! Get it? You can’t do your snobby rich kid stuff here because this is MY world, and MY world is your WORST nightmare!” Geraldine roared, slamming her fake metal leg against a log. She continued. “Now drop and give me twenty!” I heard kids muttering around me, what did “Drop and give me twenty mean?” Suddenly, as if a light bulb had switched on, the Greek god, who was surprisingly athletic, started doing pushups. Everyone hastily but clumsily followed suit. Geraldine shouted, “The first ten get the best lodgings!” The more athletic students stood. “Treehouse group!” Geraldine shouted, as a counsellor with blonde hair in a ponytail led the group away. The next ten stood up, “The Hole group!” Geraldine roared. There were only the stragglers left, four people including me, two girls called Susan and Ameli and a boy named Pedro. Geraldine glared at us. “You maggots get the worst lodging... the houseboat.” I frowned and, without raising my hand, my brainy brain got the better of me.

“Don’t we have a counsellor?” I asked, waving my hands around. Geraldine looked at me with a face full of loathing. “You have the worst lodgings so no counsellor, you’re on your own.”

I paused and decided to talk back. “I just assumed that we would have one to show us where the houseboat is at least.”

Geraldine glared at me and when she spoke, her voice was an angry whisper. “Latrine digging and potato peeling duty for a week for assuming.”

I sighed and waved to my room mates. “Come on guys, we are living on a houseboat, the river’s this way.”

Potato peeling, wood chopping, latrine digging. I thought that Camp Courage could not be any more boring and horrible. But this very day, it

took a turn for the worst. Usually, without waiting, students would just rush into the mess hall, but it seemed that Geraldine had changed things up a bit. She watched us stare at the mess hall door and smirked. "Today, you will have to work hard for food," she shouted, pointing to the river. "You will have to find a way to get your food bundles, but there are only two when there are three groups. So, one unlucky team will miss out." Geraldine pointed at the river where two bundles of canned food rested heavily on the bank of the rapidly moving current. Twigs and branches could be seen being swept away as the current moved rapidly towards a waterfall. I shivered. To be swept downstream and over the waterfall was a thought even worse than Camp Courage. But Geraldine did not seem to be the type to joke about something. We were going to HAVE to get that food back. No excuses. Nobody seemed excited, somebody could DIE! My stomach rumbled - I WAS quite hungry. "Well? GO!!" Geraldine roared, a smirk playing on her lips. Most people dived confidently, while others lingered on the bank of the river. Most had reached the other side but were too far away to get to the packages. I started to think, desperate, my brain whirred as I found a solution! Ding, went the lightbulb in my mind. I grabbed some large six-litre empty bottles and tucked them under my cardigan. They would make me float but that was all. Only fate could decide if I would reach the other side. I dived into the river, the ice-cold water chilling me to the bone. I was afloat so, kicking my arms and legs, I started swimming. The strong currents pushed me back. After I was halfway through, the water suddenly tugged at my cardigan, and I felt something leave my cardigan. It was the plastic bottles! Without them I wouldn't stand a chance! I tried to grasp the lids, but the current was stronger. The bottles fell from my grasp to float downstream and everything went black...

My vision was blurry and my head hurt, my arms and legs felt like weights pressing me down. The only thing I could see was the handsome face of a Greek god... Wait, what??! Why was he here? I was in heaven, wasn't I? "No, you're not, silly!" the face said. Suddenly, I came to my senses and I said something I never meant to say. "What's your name?" I whispered. "Ilan," he said, "my name is Ilan."



Halloween Chaos

BY PRABHLEEN

A gloomy evening it seemed Halloween crawled out of its shadow. While some were scared, others were excited and some were mellow. Shades of green, black and brown mixed in the night sky. A normal Halloween was coming, right?

Dew water dropped on the light-brown, rich soil. The sun was still struggling to rise.

“What is it today?” sighed Stephanie as she woke up with caramel-chocolate hair strands in her mouth. Sunshine shone on her face. She waved her hands in front of her so the sun wouldn’t get in her eyes. Stephanie took one look in the mirror and saw her chaotic hair. What a mess! It was like a bird was making a nest in her hair! She quickly got a firm grip on her hairbrush. Wait! The comb wasn’t doing anything, and it appeared stuck on her hand. A few drops of sweat appeared on Stephanie’s face. Why was this happening? It was the glue she was using yesterday for her school project. A hot shower would’ve done it. By ‘A’, she actually meant several.

Once dressed and ready to go, she skipped out of her room. Down, down, down the stairs she went. Polluted air tickled the tip of Stephanie’s throat. She coughed as if a giant had started to sniff pepper.

“Water. Where’s water?” Stephanie coughed drastically. She sprinted into the kitchen. She had a firm grasp on her cup. She was as red as a beetroot. Water slowly poured from the tap into her cup. Drinking it, laughter caught her attention. Walking outside, she saw her two, mischievous brothers. They had both spread pepper around the whole house, not leaving a single spot left.

“How?” Stephanie stuttered, astonished.

Her youngest brother answered teasingly. “Oh, we got pepper from the man in the park.” Just as she was going to reply angrily to that comment, both brothers bolted away, with tears of laughter. She had remembered her mother’s words then. They were haunting her. “Go let them trick or treat. Just make sure you’re supervising them,” her mum had said.

A gloomy evening it seemed Halloween crawled out of its shadow. While some were scared, others were excited, and some were mellow. Shades of green, black and brown mixed in the night sky.

The time for trick or treating had come for Stephanie’s brothers. Stephanie emitted a tiring moan. Her brother was standing behind her, ready to burst

out the door. She opened the door, while it creaked hauntingly. The first house looked deadly on the outside, the second was plain, as if Halloween was just nothing but an ordinary day. The first house had tons of candy. At the second house, they told them to get off the lawn and never disrupt them again. Stephanie judged the neighbours that yelled at them very much. Next, was a house that she would never go to, yet her brothers were keen and wanted to go to the house. Her mum’s words came back to her.

“Fine,” Stephanie uttered, regretting what her mouth had said.

The roof was collapsing, who would want to live in a house like that? The paint on the wall was peeling, as if it were skin. A shiver came down her back, and she believed that would be the last one today. It just hinted at her. Stephanie was entirely covered by goosebumps and was quivering. Her brothers didn’t seem to mind. The scarier, the better, she imagined they were thinking. She slowly crawled towards the door knocker. She hit it three times. She noticed a bell and pressed it. DING DONG! The loud noise rang through her ears, multiple times.

Stephanie went back a few steps. She waited for someone to come outside, but there was no one. Why was this house so empty? It wasn’t something she would enjoy at all. Eeh!



“No one is here,” Stephanie quickly said, “there’s obviously no reason to be here.” This time she said it clean and stern.

Her brothers looked disappointed. She couldn’t bear to see their faces like that, but there was no one coming. Was there any point in standing there for a few more minutes? Obviously not. Well, that was according to Stephanie, not her brothers.

“Why can’t we stay a little longer?” stalled the older brother.

“Absolutely not. I’m not wasting my time here, there’s no one home,” Stephanie replied in a keen voice.

Suddenly, the door creaked open. Stephanie peered inside, expecting to see someone. She couldn’t spot any life in the house. What opened that door? Her brothers ran inside as soon as it opened, leaving their sister alone on the border of the door. Their laughs faded into nothing but silence. Nothing but darkness lay ahead. Nothing. She didn’t like the look of the place. Yet, she couldn’t let her brothers run amok in a haunted house.

Stephanie took the first few steps into the creepy mansion. Her neck hair tickled. “Is anyone there?” she asked in a petrified voice.

All she heard in response was a whoosh of air behind her. She turned around in fright. She wanted to run, but her legs seemed to be stuck to the floor. Her heart felt like it was going to burst out of her chest. After a few seconds, it was gone. Just gone. It was like it was never there, like a spirit trapped here. She felt like this was a death trap. What else would she think of it?! A shiver ran down her back. She didn’t feel very comfortable here.

“Hello, where are you?” Stephanie said, searching for her brothers. Her voice echoed through the walls.

She heard scattered bones and something sucking on it. It made her shiver from her head to her toe. Searching for her lost brothers through a giant and creepy mansion wasn’t something Stephanie put on her bucket list. All she wanted to do was go home! A laugh came from upstairs. That’s where she would look next. As she crawled up the stairs, another whoosh came behind her. She saw something white. It was like it just spirited away.

She heard sounds of laughter once again. The sound guided her. She just was hoping that it was her brothers and not anything or anyone else. Thoughts of who or what it could be wandered around her mind. A few drops of water dropped onto her rosy-red cheek.

Giggles came from behind. She then spotted both her brothers laughing in a control room.

“Huh?” Stephanie said in a puzzled look.

“It was all a joke,” laughed one of her brothers. Stephanie was still confused.

After a very long explanation, she understood that everyone from the neighbourhood was planning to pull a prank on her. Well, Stephanie finally understood what that was about, but she wasn’t about to let them get away with it.



The Traumatic Tsunami

BY WAJEHA

As Lucinda gasped for fresh air, the water pulled her under. She struggled to remain calm. This was such a nightmare! How was she going to survive??

It was quite peaceful in Georgia, the birds chirped loudly, the cocktail-blue sky lit up as the sanguine sun shone brightly as if it were from magic. All Lucinda wanted was happiness but everyone in her town was grumpy, but she got used to it, nothing was going to happen, right? Lucinda, a slender girl with cappuccino-blonde hair was packing for an upcoming trip with her family to the... BEACH! She was jumping up and down with excitement. Hours later, Lucinda and her family arrived at the beach! Flocks of birds fluttered to the other direction, the water receded away from the shore, this was strange...

“TSUNA-” she yelled, not even able to finish a sentence.

Lucinda felt numb as water ran down her neck, trickling her throat that made it hard to breathe... Every time she struck up to get fresh air, she got pulled under and when she did, the water became more powerful and more in control of her. Hours later, the waves stopped and only water was floating in the distance.

“Is it over?” Lucinda said to herself as she was letting go of a palm tree. She swam up to see a wreck of a town, trees were down, houses were broken into pieces. She then saw her family all jumbled up together. “Mum! Dad!” Lucinda yelled as she ran into their arms and hugged them tightly, never letting go. Hours later, most of the water was gone and only puddles remained. They all survived and were left with a few scratches, some bruises, but they thought that it was nothing to worry about.



The Christmas Of Flies

BY ANNIE

It was very early in the morning and as the sun was rising high into the ocean-blue sky, I was standing bolt up-right waiting for my alarm to go off at 7:00 am. It was Christmas Day and I couldn't wait to open my presents. My alarm went off as I sprinted around the house, energetically waking everyone up.

"MUM! DAD! LINCOLN!" I cried. "IT'S CHRISTMAS!"

After a few minutes of grunting and groaning, my mum, dad and brother, Lincoln, got up and we all sat sleepily in the lounge room staring longingly at what was under the tree. "Go!"

My parents had said the magic word and Lincoln and I dived towards the tree, immediately ripping wrapping paper off bags and boxes. We opened one present each, jumped up-and-down a few times before settling down. Once we had calmed down, I began passing presents labelled "Mum" or "Dad" - my presents for them to open along with eagerly opening my own. All of the presents from under the tree had disappeared and the wrapping paper was in the bin. The frypan was greased and the mix was stirred. It was pancake time!

I became Santa with a beard made of whipped cream and a moustache made of apple juice and pancakes were stuffed madly into my tiny mouth. I licked my plate clean until it was sparkling and white before putting it in the dishwasher. Cleaning my mouth with my tongue as I ran, I bolted into my bedroom to get changed. I came out of my bedroom a few minutes later with a Christmas shirt and a black pair of shorts before filling an enormous, rainbow bag with car games, spare clothes and dolls.

Approximately one hour later, my entire family, including me, were all in the car and pulling up at my Nan and Pop's house.

"NAN! PA!" I yelled, running to give my grandparents a hug. With Nan, Pa, Lincoln, Mum and Dad following close behind, I made my way into the house. A few minutes after my family and I had arrived, a shiny, silver KIA and a tiny, red Mitsubishi Mirage pulled up in the driveway. After everyone that was coming to the house for Christmas lunch had arrived, we began to have lunch together.

Everyone was enjoying all of the delicious food we had all put a lot of effort into making but there was only one problem... there were flies EVERYWHERE! The flies had turned a fun and happy day into a day where we were all frustrated and angry. Luckily, (as we thought at the time), we had managed to stop all the flies from biting us or nibbling the food.

A few hours later, we were all back at home and relaxing on the lounge watching television and were all oddly and extremely itchy. As time passed by, we became more and more itchy. It felt like thirty annoying and itchy seconds had passed before we all discovered that we were covered in bug bites!

Now, this is the end of one very itchy story. However, I can assure you that if there are lots of flies at Christmas, stay inside.



The Diesel Disaster!

BY LILY

THUD! THUD! THUD! THUD!!! The car was making the WEIRDEST noises! WHAT ON EARTH WAS WRONG WITH IT?!

We were finally back on the road again, it was already about 7:00 at night, and we were all exhausted from the big day at my Granny and Poppy's house. Our next stop was home! But first we had to get fuel. My mum, dad, my big brother, Seth, and I had taken two cars, so that my dad was able to keep working at home on Saturday, and then drive over to my Granny and Poppy's house (where we were) on Sunday to see them too. My mum and Seth were in my mum's car, needing petrol, and my dad and I were in my dad's, needing diesel. Seth and I stayed in the cars, while my mum and dad filled them up and went into the store to pay. EVEN with both the windows and doors closed on the car, I could still hear all the liquid slowly trickling into the car. It sounded like someone chugging an enormous bottle of water. It sounded as if the car was SWALLOWING the fuel! Then, I watched my dad walk from the filling up station, over to the small store to pay. I watched the satisfying, paper-white lights shimmer down onto my dad's dark black billabong shirt.

Once both my mum and my dad were finished, we were back on the road again! My mum and Seth drove first, with the trailer getting towed behind them. We were taking the motorbikes home from having fun riding them in the bush at their house. My dad and I were listening to some music, and singing along when suddenly...



THUD! THUD! THUD! BUMP! THUD!

The car was making the WEIRDEST noises!! My dad and I were nothing but puzzled about what was going on. We pulled over as fast as we could in a telephone bay. My dad turned the car off, slowly and carefully. He looked at everything, from the keys to the motor. "I think there's nothing wrong with it," he said, checking some more and lifting his eyebrow in a puzzled look. I was still in the backseat, behind him, trying to think with him what was wrong with our car. My dad then sat up right, put the dangly keys in, and tried to start it.

THUD! THUD! THUD! BUMP! THUD! THUMP!

For some reason, the car couldn't start!! We decided to call my mum, who was driving safely, with no problem with her car at all. She suggested HEAPS of things that could have been wrong with the car, but they hadn't happened. Finally, she thought of it. "Maybe...", my mum continued, "did you accidentally put the wrong fuel in your car at the petrol-station?" Suddenly, my dad rapidly got out of the car, to check if she was right. To our great surprise, she was right! We had accidentally put the wrong fuel in our car - petrol instead of diesel. Instantly, my dad told my mum over the phone what had happened, and she turned around as fast as she could to get to us. My dad then called my uncle, so that he could get hold of my uncle's friend, who knows how to tow cars. He said that it was no problem for him, and he could do it, but my dad said that he would need to talk to my mum about it first. My mum and Seth were now with my dad and I, and we decided. We thought it would be a bit easier if we just got our car towed by a professional, took it to their car fixing place, and fixed it for us. We quickly put our late plan to work.

We waited there for the tow truck to arrive and take our car away. After that, we all safely drove home in my MUM'S car. Once we were all home, we went straight to bed; we were absolutely exhausted by the big night we had already had. A few weeks later, my dad's car arrived home as good as new. From now on, we always remember to put the proper fuel in the car.

My Memory

BY CASSANDRA

Music pumped extremely loudly in the car on the way to Mudgee, where my family and I were visiting a family member's property. This is where we used to go to have fun, enjoyable family weekends. As we looked out of the car window, we saw the sea-blue sky and marshmallow-white clouds. A few hours later, we were there at the amazing property (it takes around two and a half hours) and we entered the metal gates on a gravel and dirt track which led to the old, lonely house which sat in the middle of the property surrounded by beautiful bushland. The house was very, very old with barely any furniture but the landscape was magnificent and peaceful. There were low shrubs, big shrubs, different types of trees, gravel-grey rocks and even two dams. We parked the car out the front of the small house.

As our feet touched the gravel path, it sounded like we were eating extremely crispy chips. We walked up to the old house, opened the door and put our supplies in the ancient house. We would usually take our dog, Roxy (but sadly, she passed away). She was a white bulldog. We would let her out of her cage which was in the boot. She used to love to come to this beautiful and magnificent property. Then, for the rest of the day we would unpack and maybe we would have a fire at night. The fire would lick its lips like a starving lion.

The next morning, we woke up and got ready for the day ahead (do our hair, get dressed) and then BREAKFAST. Usually, when we used to go, I would have a can of baked beans or tinned spaghetti and then I would give Roxy some morning hugs. So then, maybe we would go for a lovely, calm walk or maybe just stay at the house but either way, we would always have fun.



The Mysterious Monster

BY MASON

One chilly, cold night, there was a petite, benevolent boy named Sam who was trying to sleep, until he heard an unusual noise coming from under his bed. "What could that possibly be?" Sam asked himself curiously. So, Sam looked under his bed to see a MONSTER!!! He swiftly sprinted to his bed and hid under his rose-red blanket. "Hello there, little boy," the horrifying monster uttered. Sam was frightened but he tried to be fearless, so he looked again and saw the monster's abhorrent face. Sam knew that he had to be brave while he was around the giant monster.

The two got to know each other. Shortly after, Sam fell asleep in his cozy, marshmallow-like bed because he started to feel drowsy! A few minutes later, he woke up from a growl like thunder in the starry night sky. Once his eyes fully opened, he saw that the monster was about to....

EAT him! Sam frantically sprinted to tell his drowsy parents who were sleeping. "Mum, dad," Sam yelled, "a monster is trying to eat me!!" His parents thought that he was CRAZY, but he wasn't, he was telling the truth. His parents had enough and told Sam to go back to sleep or he would be grounded for a week. He didn't want that to happen so he tried to think of a plan. Ding! Like a lightbulb flashing above his head, he suddenly came up with a sneaky plan.

He could make a scary, horrifying monster costume. He got an old, white shirt and painted it to make it look scaly. The body was a dark, gooey, green colour. He then got old pants and painted them light green. It was terrifying. Finally, he got a mask and painted it green with a bit of orange for its eyes.

The final results were hideous; he had a scaly body, rough, bumpy legs and red eyes. He was absolutely sure that he was going to scare the monster. He slowly, carefully crept up to the door and opened it to see the monster! He then shouted a loud "ROAR!" The monster was terrified and jumped out the open window and back to its dreadful home. Sam then took the costume off and went off to bed.



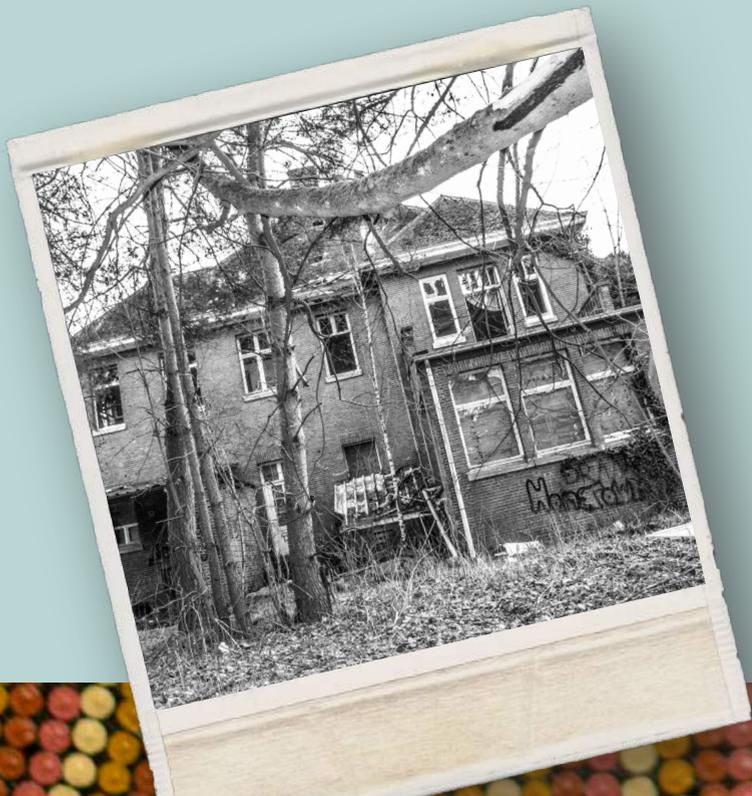
The Old House

BY THOMAS

One sunny day, there was a cheeky boy named Dennis. He would always prank anyone he saw. He was the school bully as he took anyone's lunch money and food. There was one house that stood alone on a hill. Nobody went there ever. And he had never pranked that house before.

Dennis went to the old, creepy house and planned to ding dong and ditch it but, before he could, IT GOBBLED HIM UP and locked him in a cage with human bones. He screamed at the top of his lungs but nobody found him. Every day, the house would drop food. He wondered who was dropping the food and how? He didn't know that the house was EVIL...

A couple of hours later, the neighbour looked at his cameras and saw Dennis going to the evil house so he went there and opened the door and was gobbled up too. They figured out that there was a hole in the top, so they climbed out. The boy told his mum everything, so they destroyed the house. But the haunted house refused and they figured out that it had arms and legs. It then destroyed the other houses and destroyed their nice luxurious and expensive houses too.



Overcoming Her Fear!

BY ABBIE-LEA

Shadows crawled through the forest and stopped in front of a petite cottage. A shadow appeared behind the window beside the door. It was a GIRL named Jasmine, laying in her bed with a reflecting coat of fur beside her; it seemed like a DOG! A few minutes later, Jasmine woke up with a frightening scream. She pushed the door open like a bear searching for honey. When the dog was out of sight, she decided to take a nap against a tree. Little did she know; the dog was STILL chasing her but was zooming in different directions. A few moments later, BANG! The dog had crashed into a tree as a whole tsunami of leaves came rushing down. The whole tree almost came down as well. Some were still on the tree. She woke up seeing three circles appear in front of her...

Jasmine tried to walk straight into the circles but then a mysterious voice declared, "IT'S A TRAP!" Another one tempted her by saying, "GO IN!" She ignored the PANICKING voice and followed the second one. When she started to walk forward, she heard bells ringing in her ears with licks from a lizard's tongue on her leg. Not long after, she looked down and couldn't believe what she saw. The dog was licking her with its blushed tongue. She tried not to scream with all her heart. Jasmine squinted her eyes as she knelt down and gently placed her hand on the dog's softly coated fur.

She finally noticed what it was like to rub her hand along a dog's reflecting fur. When she still went to rub her hand along the fur, she was STILL horribly terrified but she FINALLY faced her fear of touching a dog's gentle coated body.



The Tragic Wave

BY AUSTLE

It was like any December morning (hot like the sun) when a young, teenaged boy named Sam was preparing for his family trip. Sam was just packing to go to Byron Bay. His little brother, Jack, was jumping with joy and running around Sam. A few minutes later, Sam and Jack were ready so Sam jumped in with Jack next to him. On the way, Jack fell asleep and it was like 45 degrees. It was so hot, it felt like Sam was burning in flames. He was almost there when loads of flashes came rushing by and the crashing of waves came rushing his way.

“JACK!!”

Jack looked up to see a mammoth wave crashing down. He was shaking uncontrollably and his heart was thumping so hard it felt like it would jump out of his rib cage. There was no escaping it. Sam spoke, “Oh no” ...

Sam closed his eyes with Jack and CRASH!! The cold, blue embraced him. Jack got knocked. Sam unstrapped Jack’s seat belt and swam up as the waves were pushing him when, BANG!!

Something banged Sam, knocking him out. They both drifted away before being stopped at a mountain, a mile away from their home. Jack woke up underwater. He swam up and yelled, “Get off MEEEEEEEEEE!”

Jack got off, Sam grabbing Jack before he drifted away. Jack asked Sam, “W-w-what d-d-do we-e d-do?”

Sam started to think and look (it was hard to swim because his legs kept on getting hit by floating debris - stuff that was floating by). Suddenly, in the distance, he saw a non-flooded cave and swam over to it. The waves pushed him back and forth. Finally, he made it to the cave. He yanked Jack up into the cave and waited there for the night.

Next dawn, Sam and Jack woke up and saw that the water was still there, so they started exploring the cave. Sam grabbed bark from a nearby tree hanging over and lit a fire. He ventured into the cave and soon saw a blinding light. They walked over to it and saw it was a completely unflooded town so they climbed down and lived there for a week until the wave dried up. Then they went on their vacation and went home.



The Dragon King

BY PATTON

It was a day that was really hated. The day of the dragon and this was way back in the time where dragons lived. There was a tall boy and a crown prince whose names were Chalum and Ajit. Chalum was adopted but he fit in perfectly. Ajit was seven years old and was to be crowned king one day, that's what crown prince means. Chalum and Ajit explored the castle all the time, now they played in it. They always split up to have some fun, but they never expected shadow elves. Chalum ran everywhere to the library, to the big bathroom, the throne room then walked in slow motion out of the throne room because the king was in there. He went to the best, most beautiful room, the art room.

Suddenly, Raya showed up (shadow elf) and declared, "I have to kill the king and the crown prince, but I don't want to kill. It is not my thing." She pulled out her sword, ran faster than the wind and light and stopped when she heard the real crown prince in a real frame. She knocked that down and saw a tunnel that Ajit was in. Chalum pulled Ajit, ran further into the tunnels and found the most beautiful thing in the world - the dragon egg. They tried to escape but the generations of dark magic's daughters stopped them. "Chalum, Ajit. Come here," she said. Chalum walked up with a chain. He chained her up, took her orb and ran.

She used dark magic and made two panthers. Ajit and Chalum were surprised when Raya was finding a way out. Chalum remembered a spell that Claudia said when the two panthers came. "Aspro," he said, and it blew them away. "Wait, I did it, I'm a mage," he said.

"No one likes a loud mage," she said. They finally made it to the top and they saw Yan. "Spence is the captain of the shadow elves," Raya said. "We found the egg, but the egg hatched, and it killed Chalum and Ajit. It killed everyone in the castle except the shadow elves."

"Oh yes, he is going to wake up the queen," she said.



Halloween Scare

BY ALYSSA BE

On a spooky, stormy, Halloween night, a kind but bullied seven-year-old girl named Lily was being bullied again by Billy and Jack. Billy and Jack's parents called them in for breakfast, so Lily ran to her house too. She hated being bullied but she didn't tell her mother because she knew that her mother wouldn't believe her. Lily's mother thought that Jack and Billy were nice, kind boys.

Later that day, Lily was being bullied again, but this time it was at the shops. This was it. Just then, she saw a poster of dressed up, petrifying kids, on a window. She had the best idea ever. Since it was Halloween, she was going to dress up as something VERY HORRIFYING to scare Billy and Jack. As soon as she was free, she dashed down the street and grabbed everything she needed.

Lily dressed up as a SPOOKY GHOST and told her mother that she was going trick or treating but she was going to scare Billy and Jack. While Billy and Jack were walking along the street together, she jumped out of the bushes behind them and scared them away and Billy and Jack never bullied anyone ever again.



The Massive Snake

BY AARAV

One ordinary day, Aarav woke up with an awful nightmare. He went outside and saw the gloomy sky. He was so excited to go to New York, America, to see the Statue of Liberty. He packed his bags and drove with his parents to the airport. After what took hours, they finally arrived. The moon gazed through the ominous clouds and their flight time was almost there. In the blink of an eye, their flight was ready to go. They glanced towards the massive plane, took their seats and were ready for lift off.

The next day, Aarav and his family reached their destination. They got off the plane and a taxi drove them to the Statue of Liberty. "It is so magnificent!" Aarav exclaimed. It was such a beautiful sight! It looked like a Statue that was as green as swamp water. All of a sudden, people started to scream. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw a massive snake. It was as green as the grass; its eyes were as yellow as the sun and it had massive fangs like it was a vampire. The massive beast charged at Aarav at full speed! He breathed at the top of his lungs and sprinted through many people so that the snake could get its attention off him.

Aarav saw a sign that said, "Snakes are bound to come in this area." Another sign said, "If you possibly encounter a snake, call this number." He quickly dialed the number and they came immediately because they were just beside the monument.

Aarav was relieved. He went to one of his friend's houses to go and relax after what he had to suffer. Again, he took the taxi and went off. By the time he got there, his head started to hurt because of all the intense running. He quickly ate food and slept for some time.



Unicorn Friend

BY BIANCA

On a cold, rainy morning, two friends named Cathy and Bella were walking on the brown path near their house so they could get to their new school. After they reached their massive, spacious school, the rain stopped and suddenly Cathy got the shivers, so they stopped under the biggest tree they could find. "I have the sh-sh-shivers," said Cathy. Before long, her shivers went away and the school bell rang. So, all the students ran in happiness. However, Bella heard something in the bushes, but she just ran into the school in fright.

After lunch, the girls had to share something about themselves with the class. Cathy shared that she was a shy, intelligent girl and Bella said that she was a joyful, curious girl. After the bell rang to go home, all of the students said bye and ran home. When Cathy and Bella got home to their little, pink cottage, suddenly they heard a big BANG and smelt a strong, strange smell coming from the biggest mountains in the dark, creepy forest. They ran to the mountains and BANG! Rocks came crashing down. "MOVE OUT OF THE WAY!!!" cried Bella. Suddenly, a white unicorn with a rainbow horn, hooves, tail and mane came flying down to the girls. "Hi," said the unicorn. "My name is Stephanie, but you can call me Steph for short. I'm just looking for friends."

The unicorn became SO happy when she saw them. "Do you guys want to be my friends?" asked the unicorn. "Let us think about that," replied Cathy softly. Before long, Bella baked a cake while Cathy thought about whether she would take the unicorn's offer. "I say we take it!" cried Bella. "Okay then, it's settled, we are going to take the unicorn's offer!!!" replied Cathy.

So, they ran to the unicorn and said, "We want to be your friends."

"YAY!!!!!" yelled the unicorn.

Bella, Cathy and the unicorn became the best of friends.



The Strange Cave

BY ZACHARY

On a hot spring day, there was a courageous boy named Max. All Max would always say was that nothing could scare him. He would even say to his mum that he was not scared of anything.

“We’ll see about that,” whispered his mum, while laughing. Some time went past, and Max was watching horror movies when his mum tried to scare him. He laughed mockingly as her plan was foiled. More time went past, and Max was half asleep when he saw a shadow.

“W-W-Who is that?” stuttered Max.

“BOO,” Mum exclaimed. Again, nothing could scare Max!

A few days later mum suggested they go camping. When they arrived, they saw a cave. It wasn’t any normal cave, it was arranged strangely and pitch black.

“Max, if you’re not scared of anything, go find an unlit lantern and go in that cave,” demanded mum. When Max found an unlit lantern, he lit the lantern up and then bolted into the cave. Some time went past, and the sun started to set. “Where is Max? It’s been almost an hour,” said mum in a frightened voice.

More time went past, and Max was nowhere to be found. His mum decided to go into the cave. “MUM!” screamed Max. When his mum tried to follow the echo, it got quieter, and she instantly forgot where the echo came from.

“Try to find sunlight,” shouted mum.

When they found sunlight, they met up just outside of the cave then went home.

“What is our lesson today?” asked mum.

“Do not go into random caves!” replied Max.

Mum giggled. “That was one, but also, don’t be too confident in yourself because things change, don’t they?”

Max replied in a frightened voice “Yep, they sure do!” Then he never stepped into another dark, creepy cave ever again.



The Mysterious Power

BY MALAKAI

One cold, rainy afternoon there was a brave boy named Jack who was walking home from school in the rain with his umbrella. He was crossing the road when a huge lightning bolt hit him! Strangely, he didn't get hurt but, instead, saw electric bolts on his fingers. He then realised that the lightning bolt gave him lightning POWERS! He rapidly sprinted home to tell his mother.

"Mum, guess what? I got lightning powers," Jack said in a shocking voice.

His mother didn't believe him, so he showed his mother his lightning fingers. He touched his mother to show her. She was shocked. His mother was amazed and told him to not use his electric fingers. Suddenly, there was a mysterious knock on the door that got their attention. It was the S.W.A.T team.

They came to lock Jack in PRISON! He ran as fast as he could and as far as he could. The S.W.A.T team tracked him down and found him in a park. The creepy park was empty. They started attacking Jack and he attacked them with his electric fingers and speed. "Ahhhh!" The S.W.A.T team yelled loudly as Jack stunned them.

The S.W.A.T team was stunned and then Jack made his move and ran away back home. His mother was worried about him, but they were both okay. They drove as fast as possible to the nearest airport. They both flew to a different country and Jack promised his mother to not use his powers ever again!



The Massive Glare

BY MUKHTAR

It was an amazing weekend. As I woke up, everything seemed to be just fine. The sun was up and the grass was blooming along with the flowers. Nothing could go wrong today!

I rushed downstairs to see my mom preparing my favourite breakfast, pancakes, but I realised something was off. The stove wasn't on!

I turned it on and the stove started and the pancakes were getting ready. I went back upstairs to brush my teeth and two minutes later, I was done. However, what I saw froze me in place...

A few moments later, I looked out the window to see a bucket of soap and water right in front of the car. I went outside to see something very small at the car window. I rushed to see what it was. It had this long tail and a beak too big for its size. Suddenly, I remembered what it was from the research that I did. It was a Lyrebird! I went back inside to see my mother, and everyone gave me a massive glare...

I rushed outside to see the Lyrebird building a home at the front of my house so I thought if it was making a home, I could too. I used some of my allowance to buy some bricks and cement and I got someone to help me build my home

3 months later....

"All done", I blurted out. Now I had a bit more allowance so what I did was buy some furniture and I stayed in that home with my brother. We had fun with no rules. Although I might've lied about saying nothing could go wrong today. But for some reason, when I went upstairs, all of my family members were there. I dropped my tablet with the picture of the Lyrebird in it and then they all shapeshifted into one. I was surprised to see this so then I showed a family photo, and everything was fine...

I was living with them in the new home and everything was the best!



Tornado Kick!

BY SOFIA

BANG! Big winds crashed into the rain. One night, two kids named Valerie and Andrew, were alone at their house while their parents were at work. Valerie had beautiful butter-scotch hair, amazing ocean blue eyes and was wearing a marvelous purple dress. Andrew also had caramel coloured hair and amazing blueish-greenish eyes. He was wearing a classy, green top and blue jeans. However, the kids were confused because their parents didn't work on a Saturday night. The thing was that the kids were at home, horribly terrified. Then, a sudden "BANG!" happened. The kids sprinted as fast as a tiger to find a place to hide...

Valerie peeked out of the window and saw a gigantic, grey tornado going around the city! Andrew was in another place hiding. Valerie was in the room all alone. Suddenly, Andrew marched into the room saying, "You won't believe what I just saw coming from outside!"



Valerie replied, "I know! I think we should stay together now so we don't lose each other!"

Andrew said, "Amazing idea, Valerie!"

As they slowly ducked down under the bed, they heard the door creep tenaciously. But then it stopped so they looked back at the tornado and it changed. It was still in the city spinning. It was grey and gloomy like the night and scary like a ghost...

As the door kept creaking, they were still hiding quietly under the bed, worried about the tornado. The tornado kept rotating around the city. A few hours later, the tornado was still revolving around the city. The creaking haunted door was still creaking. They finally realised that the door was creaking loudly.

Andrew said, "Did you hear that?"

Valerie replied, "Y-Yeah I did..."

They both walked quietly to where the creaking sound was coming from and saw it was mum and dad! Valerie cried out, "W-w-what are you doing here?!" Dad and mum replied, "We came home early because of the tornado and we were worried about you kiddos!" Finally, the tornado disappeared. They were all happy and they lived happily ever after.

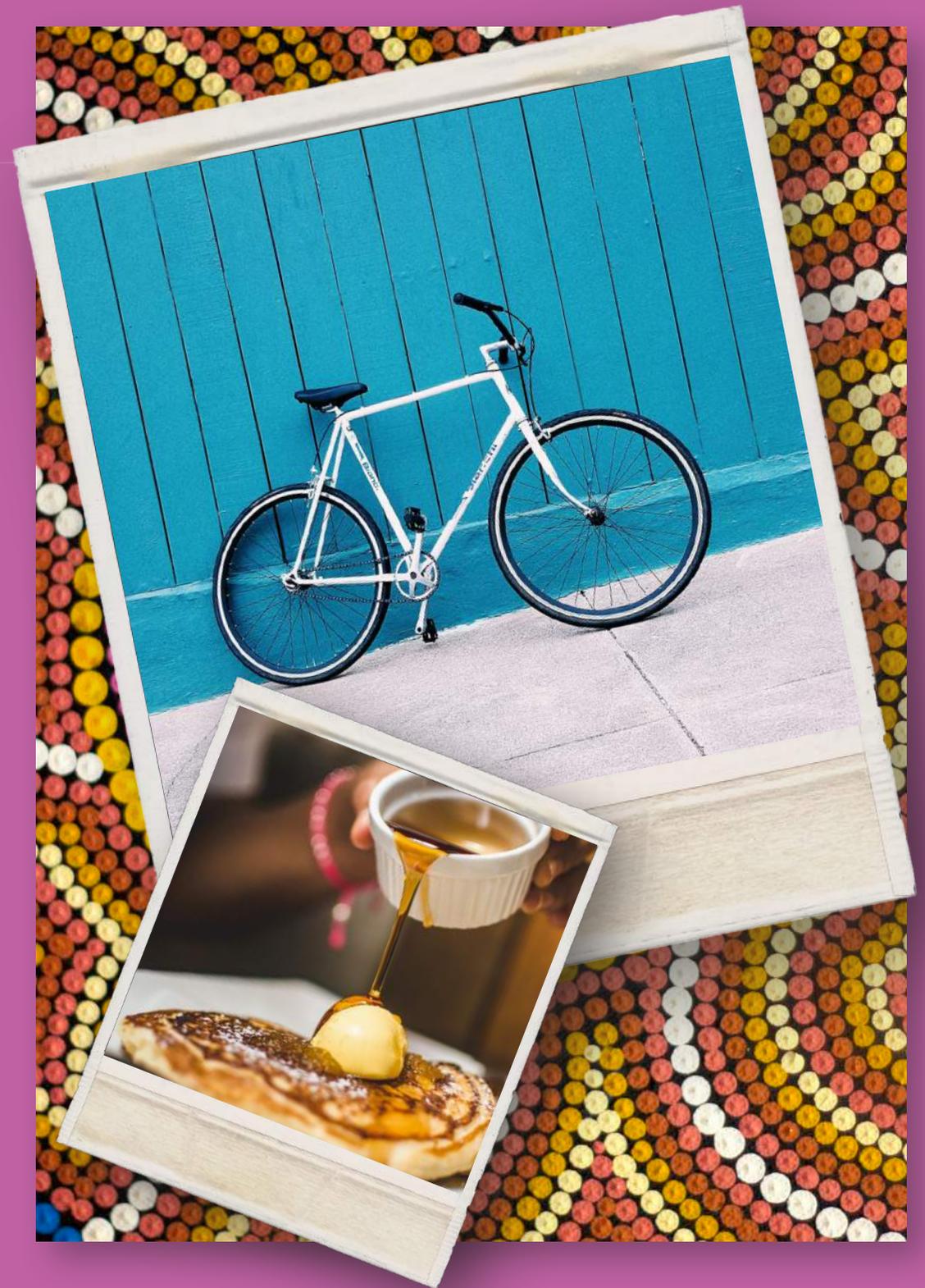
Sunday Trouble

BY MADDEN

As I slowly crawled out of my bed, waking up to my dog barking and playing, I walked out of my bedroom to see my other dog standing at the door like a creep. I slowly opened the door and saw the sun slowly rising.

After about 20 minutes of standing still, I quickly rushed over to my bike and saw a red back spider on the bike's handle. I thought to get my shoe and, WHACK! The spider then crawled into a little ball and rolled off my bike. But then I ran and tripped which caused me to scrape my knee. It started to bleed so I rushed inside and got a band aid to put on.

After that, I decided that I would ride my new 20 x 9 mountain bike. But it was way too small, so I almost instantly jumped off. When I put it back, my mum yelled out, "PANCAKES!!" As I rapidly bolted inside, I rushed to the bench to steal the maple syrup off my mum. I then poured it onto my plate and started to scoff it down my throat. After that, I went to my chair and fell asleep for four hours. Then my mum yelled at me to wake up and eat dinner, so I did. When I finished eating, I quickly rushed to my bed and fell asleep for another crazy day.



The Kookaburra's Laugh

BY ANABELA

As Bella looked everywhere for her parents, they were nowhere to be found. Suddenly, she heard a sound, kind of like a laugh.

As the sun shone through her window, she slowly opened her eyes, half asleep. Each step echoed through the hallway. When she reached the kitchen, she sat with her family discussing what would interest her today. Bella had luxurious, toffee-blonde hair and her eyes were as deep-blue as the ocean. It was an ordinary Sunday and she decided to go for a bush walk with her family. Trees circled the forest as Bella and her family walked up and down paths. Suddenly, she was walking by herself with nobody in sight. However, at that moment, she heard a sound kind of like laughing...

At first, she ignored it but a second later she decided to follow the sound, just in case it was in trouble like her. The laughs continued. Bella thought this would be easy till she reached something quite unusual. A tree that moved? Her mouth dropped... The tree's branches moved in every direction. Her hair soared with the wind. She had no idea how to pass this. Then she saw something around her. A bird? However, whatever dropped on the ground was nothing like any type of bird. It was a sword. She thought to herself: "How on earth was she meant to fight a tree with a sword?" As she walked towards the tree, she heard the call once again. She knew that it must then be close. As her red, cherry nails scraped against the sword, she picked it up.

So, what if Bella had a sword? It was not playtime. Therefore, she did not know how to use it. She waved the wand in every direction. As her footsteps crunched in the leaves, she faced the tree. It was like an old country showdown. Her hands were behaving as though controlling her. Each hit she was surprised not to miss. However, something unusual happened. The tree fell straight to the floor. Its branches fell on the ground. There on the other side were her parents. They were so relieved to find her. As they walked back home, she saw something fly above her. A kookaburra, with navy blue wings. From that day on, she would always remember the kookaburra's laugh.



The Mysterious Gem

BY BLAKE

“RING!” The bell had just rung at school where there were two boys named Zax and Alex who were sneaking out of school. They were not interested in the upcoming maths test, so they decided to ditch it. They tip-toed out of the old, creaky gate without the strict, spine-chilling principal, Mr Johnson, noticing. But the rusty gate creaked so loudly that it caught the principal's attention. “HEY! GET BACK HERE!” They bolted through the metal fences, with the principal chasing them down. Zax and Alex were too fast for Mr. Johnson, and they sprinted to their local park. The teachers thought they were missing as everyone had a tear in their eye... except the angry principal. Zax and Alex were still bored so they just went to their peaceful, chilled park until they found a cocktail-blue gem.

They threw the strange gem over a silver fence with a sign. “DO NOT CLIMB”. Zax started to get anxious and shivered. He knew something terrible was going to happen. Next minute, a strange, multi-coloured creature hissed and snarled. Zax tried to calm him down but then the creature CHASED HIM DOWN! “AAHHHH!” screamed Zax at the top of his lungs. The terrifying, spine-chilling creature had the gem while Alex ran as slow as a snail. Luckily, Alex had a phone and called 911. When the police department arrived, Zax and Alex went in the car immediately while the police had a pistol to shoot the mysterious, fierce creature. Zax looked out the window. The brave officer finally calmed it down. He investigated and saw it was one of the rarest creatures in the world. The massive, cold-hearted creature went to jail.

Zax and Alex were luckily saved and did not get expelled from school. Everyone was happy... except for the principal. That story still haunts them to this day. Beware, there are nineteen more of those creatures hiding behind that fence...



Crazy Day

BY BRAITHAN

One pleasant, warm day there was a girl with rosy-red hair and tar-black eyes with the name of Barney. Barney was a girl who liked to make delicious, scrumptious cupcakes! The day was a perfect day to make cupcakes, so she sprinted rapidly to the kitchen. As she made cupcakes, she went to wake up everyone with joy! When she went into the bedroom, nobody was there. She was confused. She said, "Where is everybody?"

She hesitated heavily before saying, "Am I HOME ALONE?"

She looked around the house shouting, "Guys, stop pranking me or am I really home alone?"

As Barney was home all alone, she decided to go for a walk to the pools. While she was walking, she was listening to music. She was bopping along to the music when she noticed the pools were gone! She was so angry she threw a bottle of glass at the window but it hit a bird! Feeling distraught, she went back home like the flash. ZOOM! As she ran like the flash, she was so tired. So, she went inside of her house and put the air conditioner on and relaxed.



Barney became very sad because she missed her family, so she started to watch her favourite scary movie called the Horrifying Zombie Town. Shortly afterwards, during the movie, she fell asleep like a koala. When she woke up from her nap, she made scrambled eggs. She poured on tomato sauce and it tasted so scrumptious. Her mouth was drooling so she kept on making more, more and more. When she got full, she stopped. She started to get sleepy, as she was counting sheep, so she fell asleep again. The next morning, she was confused when her family was back. However, she was glad that they were.



The Great Tsunami Escape

BY DAISY

As it swarmed like a cheetah, a desperate voice echoed beside me. The tsunami was exploding its lungs like a gorilla. Things were breaking down on the heads of people. A moment later, I caught a glance of my mother...

It was a peaceful morning like no other. The sun was shining, with sparkles of the sun falling down. Suddenly, my dad called out our names loudly, Sue (me), Tom (my brother) and Sheen (my mother). He had a tremendous surprise for us. We were going on a faraway beach trip for a week! We were going to eat, sleep, play, bathe and do everything there. Our dad put everything important in the car's boot and we set off. Finally, after hours of sitting in the car, we reached our destination. The breeze of the soft air was touching my face, as lovely birds chirped to the shine of the waves.

Suddenly, the birds started flying in the opposite direction. We were playing in the garden of our hotel room when, a moment later, a gigantic wave burst into the room like torrents of tears. It had swallowed everyone into its tremendous stomach. I thought this was the end of my life. But no, it wasn't. Suddenly, a big brown log splashed into the water like thunder, separating my family and me from each other. At least I was safe.

As it swarmed like a cheetah, a mysterious voice was calling. The tsunami was exploding its lungs like a gorilla. Things were breaking down on the heads of people. A

moment later, I caught a glance of my mother. However, I realised she was dying! I knew how to swim so I jumped into the water. I had just reached her and....

I realised she was not dying after all. Her leg was stuck so my brother was trying to pull it out. Finally, her leg came out. We started to grab things and pass through the water. A moment later, we saw that our dad was floating on top of the water. I had an idea. We dragged him to a nearby tree and pushed his chest. Slowly, all the water came out and we climbed to a dry place. As days passed to weeks and weeks to months, the water from the tsunami was gone. We found a safe, dry home and lived a happy life there, far from the ocean.



Space Danger

BY ZANE

“Oh no,” Bob said. June and Bob were panicking, trying to get out of the way of a massive, rocky asteroid. Hold on, who and where were they???

June and Bob’s dreams were to go to space to explore. June had platinum blonde hair and white skin while Bob was the opposite, midnight-black hair and black skin.

As soon as they were allowed to go to space, they took the chance. It required many months of training but was worth it. Stars of all sizes were twinkling left and right in the midnight-black of space. It was an awesome view. They were almost there, so they decided to land shortly after. The planet had orange trees, a rainbow sky and green water. The crash alarm went off. The irritatingly loud noise filled their ears as they ran to the control room to see what was going on.

They realised there was an asteroid. They started running around like CRAZY. Suddenly, another ship came out of nowhere and the asteroid was destroyed! As days passed, they kept exploring the universe and changed humanity when they landed.



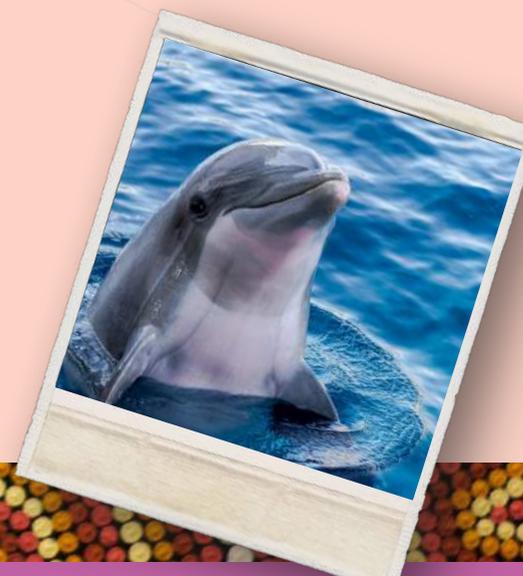
Amber’s Dolphin Adventure

BY ALYSSA BA

It was early in the morning when the sky was arctic-blue and everyone was peacefully sleeping. Amber woke up to the sound of birds chirping as she dragged her head off her pillow. Excitement filled her as she realised that today she was going on a dolphin cruise!

As she jumped around, her parents were awoken by her energetic jumping, but she didn’t care. She bolted to the bathroom to get ready. Not long after that, they were all in the car ready to go. Her excitement grew as they arrived at the ship dock. She got on the ship and stared in amazement at how big it was. As she sat down, she heard the sound of the engines of the ship starting. She stared out at the side of the ship to see some fish swimming. Amber had always loved dolphins, but she had never seen one. She sat back in her chair as the ship started moving. A few hours later when the ship had stopped, she glanced out the side of the ship hoping to see dolphins. Her excitement grew less as she saw no dolphins. She felt depressed and disappointed as she fell back into her chair, feeling gloomy.

An hour later, the ship stopped again. Amber didn’t even bother to look for dolphins. She had lost all hope. SQUEAK! She turned her head to the noise that was coming from the water. She stared out at the ship and saw nothing but crystal-clear water. “Maybe I’m dreaming,” she thought as she heard another noise. She stared out and saw a dolphin jump out of the water! A smile grew on her face as she could not believe her eyes. She finally saw a dolphin! Her wish had finally come true as the ship headed back to the dock. Her adventure was done.



In the Eye of The Storm

BY ALARA

A morning like no other; a storm grew as if it was a person. It grew and grew until everywhere turned damp black like dark chocolate. The night was Halloween where everyone dressed up like scary monsters and took time shopping for hours at the store, buying Halloween decorations.

On Halloween night, everything was normal, trick or treating and decorations on every corner and much more. "How could this spooky night possibly go wrong?" she thought.

The night's dark sky became darker until the skies became nothing but one single little star left in the sky. It was very unnerving for every kid trick or treating that night. "With a dash and a swing of my jolly old wing, let these disasters disappear!" said the good witch of Oz. SNAP! Everything suddenly disappeared!

The little boys and girls continued to thank the good witch for saving everyone's life except for one - she was the oldest and the smartest.

"Why are you not thanking me?" the good witch questioned the eldest and smartest, who hadn't said anything.

"You never did anything but stand there and say some words!" screamed the girl.

So, she continued trick or treating until she got horripilation and felt ungrateful for the way she acted to the good witch. She turned back and bolted her way to the good witch.

She bolted towards the celebration, turned and pushed everyone in her way to get rid of this curse but every time she pushed, a little bit of her personality disappeared and she started turning into a monster! When she got there, she turned into nothing but dust.

"Lovely light, don't you dare fight, get this curse and turn into light".

"Oh, I'm free! I'm really free!" .

"I'm sorry," she said, disappointed in herself. "My actions should be punished. Punish me for this misery."

"It is okay, you didn't mean it. Now off you go!" The eldest and smartest of the girls continued her Halloween night as it was meant to be, but a lesson was learnt. Remember to always remember your manners and be thankful.



There's A MONSTER Under My Bed...

BY ILEINA

Stephanie laid down in her bed, desperately gasping for air. The screeching noise alerted her that nothing ordinary was under her bed. SCREECH! The annoying sound lured her to the floor. Suddenly, she saw something peculiar...

Just after supper, a young, slender girl named Stephanie was bolting to her room. Her father George, following along to tuck her comfortably in bed. Softly singing, "Twinkle twinkle little star," Stephanie slowly shut her eyes and dozed off. It just hit midnight when something strange started to happen. Her floorboards started to move UP and DOWN! She woke up to the loud bang the wooden floorboards made. Jumping on the moving floorboards, she laid down in bed, desperately gasping for air. Screeching noises echoed in the room. SCREECH! The tragic noise lured her towards the floor. Suddenly, something peculiar pulled her under the bed...

Ooze leaked from a close distance and fur covered her chocolate-brown skin. A fishy smell filled the room and made Stephanie faint. Several hours later, she woke up to the LARGEST MESS in the WORLD! Vases were cracked, all her shoes were eaten and MOST OF all, her DOOR WAS BROKEN!!!! Stephanie wondered how she didn't wake up to all that racket. THUD! THUD! Coming up the stairs was her father. With a shocked face, he demanded a punishment for this issue. Slowly walking down the stairs, the monster once again popped out of the cupboard and continued to make a mess. Stephanie yelled at the monster to immediately stop! However, the tough monster grabbed her by the waist and shook her to sleep. Her last words were "SAVE ME!!" Well, that's what the monster thought he had... Winking and slowly opening her eyes, Stephanie did something she thought she would never do.

With a pow in the face and kick in the stomach, Stephanie was so sure that she would now defeat the monster! POW! POW! She remembered that she learned karate at the beginning of the month. She was already on black belt! It meant that you were the top of all students and you were a PROFESSIONAL! The evil monster screamed with anger and more emotion. He tried to fight back but he was just a BABY. Monsters only learn to fight when they are fully

grown. His weak cries and sore bruises told him to NEVER COME BACK! Stephanie kept on going until dawn. By the time the sun was up, the baby monster was lying on the floor, beaten. Stephanie's dad walked up stairs to see the monster on the floor, desperate for help. All they could do was call the police and tell the REAL story why there was MESS everywhere. Minutes later, the police took the monster and George finally understood the true MEANING of the MESS! He apologized for judging her without knowing what happened. "Next time, I am going to sleep in your room!" announced Stephanie. Slowly, they both giggled.



Maleficent's Power

BY ANNIE

As the sun was rising in the blue sky of Auradon, Mal awoke with a loud groan. It was another day in The Isle of The Lost and, like always, Mal got ready, grabbed her graffiti cans and headed outside. Walking through the dark, misty alleyways, Mal was slowly joined by her partners in evil - Evie, daughter of the evil queen, Carlos, son of Cruella De Vil and Jay, son of Jafar. They all headed to a tall brick building. They crept quietly around the back because where they were going was a secret. At the back of the building was a steel-grey staircase with a square, yellow sign. Carlos picked a rock up from a bucket behind him and threw it at the sign. A door opened as the evil four went up the staircase. As soon as they were up the stairs, they all immediately threw their heads under pillows and boxes. They knew what was coming and hated it whenever it happened.

“DING! DING! DING!” went the bell of Auradon Prep (which was what they hated).



With a sigh of relief, they took their heads from under the objects and grabbed the graffiti cans Mal had brought.

With smiling faces everywhere, the children of Auradon crowded outside Auradon prep, the school of Auradon. Once the doors had opened, everyone rushed inside, heading to classrooms and sport fields. As he made his way through the doors to the fencing arena, Prince Ben made an important decision, answering a question his parents, King Beast and Queen Belle, had asked him earlier that morning.

They had asked him a difficult question about the villains on The Isle of The Lost. He had made up his mind and decided that he would travel to the edge of the protective dome that kept all villains from magic and stop them from coming into Auradon and announce the big news. That afternoon, Prince Ben and his parents were in their royal chariot on their way to The Isle of The Lost to announce the big news.

Meanwhile, in Maleficent's palace, Mal and her mother were having a private talk. Everyone on The Isle of The Lost had heard that Prince Ben had some important news.

“When that border is opened my dear, you will jump through it, steal the fairy godmother's wand and bring it back to me. Then I shall have my dream come true! We can rule the world together and Auradon will finally bow down to MMMMMEEEEEEEE!”

With the vilest cackle of all time following after her speech, making her crows screech and flee from her shoulder, Maleficent left the room. A devilish grin spread across Mal's round, pale face as she immediately ran away to tell Evie, Carlos and Jay. They all evilly agreed to the plan and decided they would help Mal and Maleficent take over the world eventually but for now, they would get through the border and steal the fairy godmother's wand.

Minutes later, Prince Ben arrived at the border with Fairy Godmother, carefully only opening a necessary part. Immediately feeling a dash of energy, the evil four sprinted for the border. Not noticing the four running toward them, the royals continued their usual business. Jumping through with an evil laugh, Mal, Evie, Carlos and Jay ran frantically across the bridge. Turning around to notice the four villain children, Queen Belle and King Ben ordered the fairy godmother to close the border. With a wave of her wand, the fairy godmother closed the border just in time before another villain got through.

Luckily, Jay, Evie, Carlos and Mal got to Auradon and hid near a lake they had found behind the palace. Their arms were shaking slightly as people were heard passing, looking for them. The four children slowly crept around the happy town of Auradon, creeping to the palace. Taking an enormous gasp in hope that they weren't going to be caught, the four crept inside the palace and into different rooms. Sharing a wide grin, the four friends sighted the fairy godmother's wand before immediately grabbing it. Now there was only one more thing to do - get out! Nearly being caught by Prince Ben, the villain's children snuck back through Auradon.

Jumping back through the border, Evie, Carlos, Mal and Jay scuttled away, swiftly taking the wand to Maleficent. Back in Maleficent's tower, with evily smiling faces and heads held high in pride, the four presented the wand to Maleficent.

"Ha ha ha ha haaa!" Maleficent cackled. "The power is finally MINE! Now, back to business. Storms and rain, with this shiny dome, shall I begin my reign, for a dome to no longer roam!"

After a flick of the wand, the transparent barrier over The Isle of The Lost disappeared from above the clouds.

Approximately one hour later...

"Greetings, everyone (or should I say happy, kind scumbags)! I am now your ruler, and you shall obey my every order. Now, as the first order of business, you must bow down to me!" Maleficent cried to Auradon.

Feeling like there was nothing they could do or say to stop her, the people of Auradon all bowed down to Maleficent, trying their hardest to think of a way to stop her or at least stand up to her.

Five months later, Maleficent ruled the land, and nobody ever tried to stop her. She became once again the greatest villain of all time and let all the other villains do whatever they wanted, while still obeying her evil rules.



