



Unnamed Wonders: Alice Emmerton, Elexia Challinger, Elissa Oakey, Hailey Watson, Imogen Atkinson, Mea Cupido.

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Published by Unnamed Wonders, Australind Senior High School, 12 break O'day drive, Alice Emmerton, Elexia Challenger, Elissa Oakey, Hailey Watson, Imogen Atkinson, Mea Cupido.

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Parameters

Parameters form

Team details

State: WA

Division: upper school

School/group: australind senior high school (AUSTRALIND)

Team name: unnamed wonders

Team ID: 202

Parameters and random words

Parameters: primary character 1: Helicopter pilot

Primary character 2: Barber

Non-human character: a book

Setting: Kakadu National Park

Issue: swapping places

Random words:

Community

Skipped

Magic

Canvas

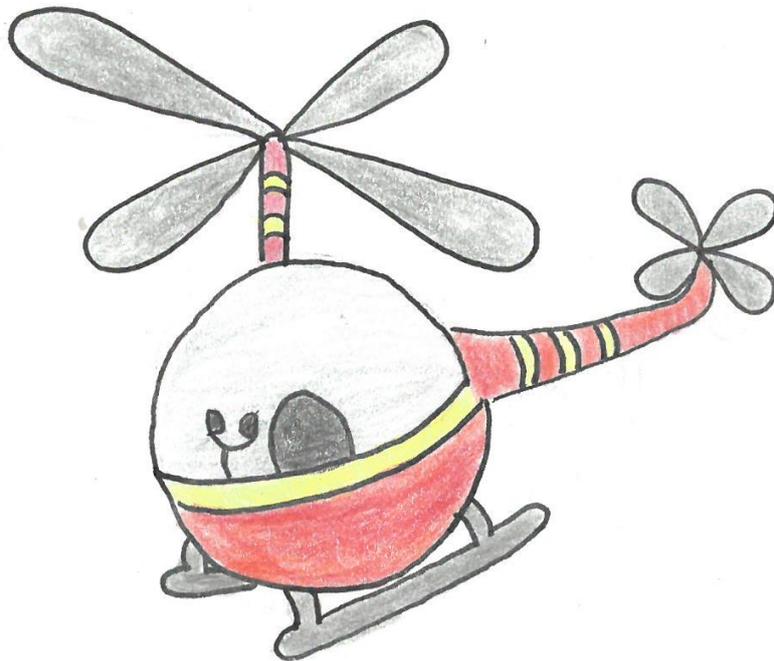
Sings

Word count:

4658

Prologue

*I used to love flying over that part of the world. It felt so serene flying alone and free in my dingy little helicopter. Kakadu National Park was the most stunning place on the face of the earth. The trees reached as tall as the clouds. The sky was always a rich blue like oils on a **canvas**. The leaves blanketed the ground like the thick snow found on mountain tops. It was my escape. A way to clear my head. I had never found a more perfect setting. Until it happened. And now I can never return....*



Chapter 1

The engine began to shake, and the red lights flashed. The gage beeped and my ears roared. As the ringing grew louder and louder. The world became blurry and then I felt the drop.

My stomach sank, the lump in my throat closing off my whole airway. My chest pounded from the lack of oxygen as I grabbed at the air desperately trying to find my breath.

The whole world spun and then suddenly there was no world at all.

Blackness consumed me and all my thoughts had vanished.

The next thing I knew an intense light pierced through my eye lids and heat rushed through my whole body.

Cold dew drops dripped unevenly in the middle of my forehead and trickled down my nose. As I sat up I found myself surrounded by the broken rubble of my old beloved helicopter.

My legs were weighed down against the rocks by shattered pieces of the propeller. I looked down at my blood-stained hands and watched on as they shook uncontrollably. Sensations were different. The world seemed different. Almost unreal.

The air felt sharper and the sun harsher. My body felt different too. Painful obviously but as I looked around at the destruction I can remember thinking that nothing was ever going to be the same. That I could no longer hide. That when I found a way back out of this mess I would have to face the world instead of running from it. I knew that my escape could no longer be used.

That feeling was the worst feeling in the world.

My gut dropped just thinking about losing the feeling of perfection. The knowledge of having to associate with other people and cram my brain with real world issues.

I hated thinking that my little world was going into self-destruction and I would have to settle for the world I had left behind.

I forced my body up and began the hike as I searched for a town to set up camp.

The rocky terrain was hard to manoeuvre over, and my shoes were splitting at the bottoms blistering the raw bottoms of my feet.

The heat was unbearable. I needed shade. I needed water.

Ahead I saw a thick walkway of trees and refreshing bush. As I clambered towards the hideout I felt my body about to collapse but desperate to survive I remember telling myself to power through and sit under the shade.

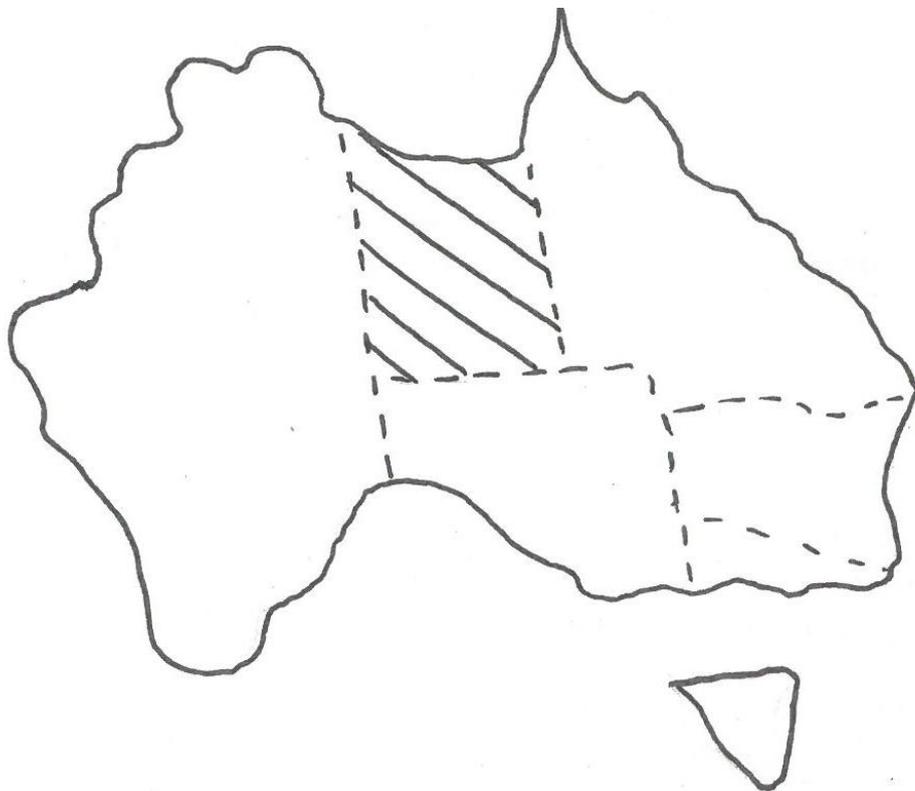
The instant refreshment that came from beneath the trees was like a weight lifted off my shoulders. Like a boost of energy that suddenly rushed through my body.

I rested against a sun heated rock and spread my legs across a damp log. My breaths were short and fast as I tried to find my bearings and as I tried to comprehend what had actually happened. At last I could finally breathe. I had to figure out how to get out of this place. But I had no idea.

I grabbed onto a rock to my side and hauled myself up. I remember looking around trying to decide in which direction I would walk. In a direction I would begin my journey.

Further into the jungle I adventured, and I just walked. I walked for hours. My legs killed but I couldn't stop. Something inside of me told me to keep going. I came to a maze of fallen trees and roots poking high above the ground.

Taking a break was not an option so I became surrounded by the broken forest.



Chapter 2

My foot caught on the raised root of a gumtree, propelling me forward until I was teetering dangerously on the edge of a steep looking drop. Gravity tugged me down with her mighty hands leaving me freefalling through the crisp air. Wind whipped my hair and clothes as I plummeted down into the pristine waters below. The cold water was a shock, thousands of frozen needles punctured my skin as I was submerged in the icy lagoon. My measly attempt at swimming was useless against the fierce currents which swept me back and forth. I was a puppet caught in mother natures strings. Water was all I could see and hear. The currents continued to force my head underwater, forcing me to gasp for air whenever I broke the surface. The stream seemed to be carrying me towards a huge waterfall, the sound of water hitting water was deafening.

My fight or flight instincts kicked in and the next time I was forced under, I used all my strength to heave myself towards a tangle of vines which cascaded down the sheer rock face. My shaking hands clasped the slippery vines desperately and with a sudden adrenaline rush, I yanked myself up, struggling to find footholds in the jagged rock. Slowly but surely, I began to ascend, inch by inch at first, progressing upwards at a steady pace as I got into the rhythm of climbing. In no time I had reached a ledge that ran the full way around the rock face though behind the waterfall there seemed to be a platform big enough for me to sit down on and regain my strength. I cautiously edged around the ledge until I stepped onto the spacious platform where the entrance to a dark cave was situated. The wind whistled out of the opening, the cold air causing the hairs on my neck to stand on end. I stepped inside gingerly, maybe the cave would hold a way out? I suddenly felt a pull. Like I was a magnet being attracted to some sort of giant fridge. I didn't know how but my legs obeyed the pull, walking me down a corridor of stone. I reached my arm out to try and stop myself. Nonetheless my hand met nothing but smooth, grey rock.

The whistling of the wind seemed to be getting louder, the deeper into the cave I travelled. It seemed to be singing some sort of morbid song. Without warning, my disobeying legs forced me left, down an identical corridor. The cave was some sort of maze and I was becoming more and more lost by the second. Goosebumps erupted from my chest and rippled around my body, causing me to shudder. I wanted nothing more than to be back at home with a cup of coffee reading the latest edition of 'helicopters anonymous'. I was approaching some sort of chamber, carved into the marbled stone. Whoever had carved the passages was obviously a skilled craftsman. At the entrance of the chamber, my legs slowed to a shuffle. A large rock took up the majority of the already cramped room. Something was laid atop the rock, I scuffled towards it. It was a book.

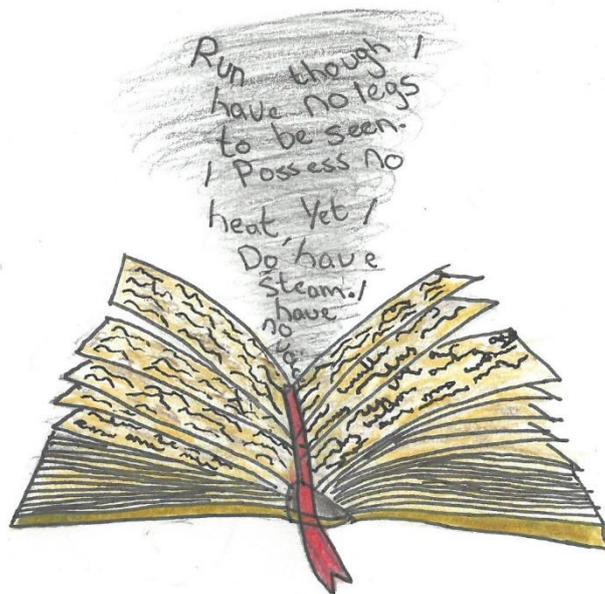


Chapter 3

The hard, almost wooden cover of the ancient journal splintered at the sight of a new victim. The leather spine had cracked with time, exposing the rotting-yellow pages. A halo of **magic** loomed over the lonely book, casting a shadow over me. Embroidered with the royals of gold-plated luxuries, a rim of gold framed the ancient cover-page. A strand of royal-red ribbon rested peacefully amongst the pages, like the tongue of a snake. The journal was relaxed upon a large boulder that lazily sat on the concrete flooring. The cold atmosphere of the cave suffocated my lungs, freezing me from the inside out. I inhaled deeply and slowly released my breath, allowing a cloud to form as the warm, moist air from my breath met the frigid atmosphere. With every gradual step towards the bulky stone, my anxiety heightened.

My hands shook as I reached for the journal, regret running through my mind. A shrill of pain shuddered me from my trance and I began to shake with misperception. The book seemed to vibrate, before jumping into the icy air that surrounded it. I watched in awe as the once lifeless creature sprung to life in a matter of seconds. Once airborne, the pages began to flip erratically. Pages were ripped and torn from the book like a band aid from a wound. Letters of calligraphy whirled around the air in a visual tornado of text. The book slammed to the ground, leaving it open to the mind and one page. The journal spat out the letters, rearranging them to form a comprehensible sentence.

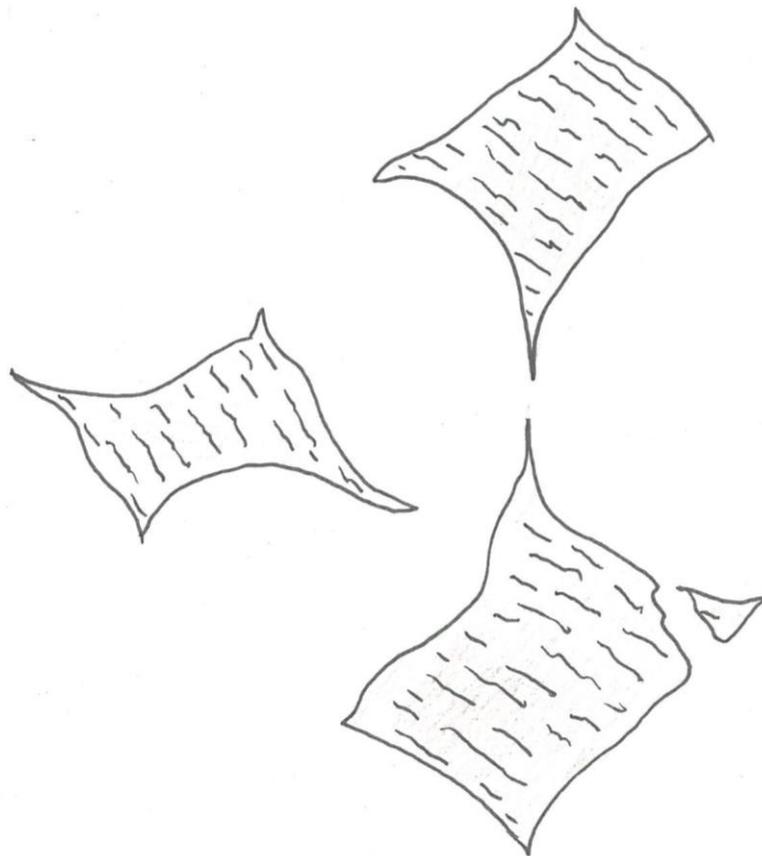
'Run, though I have no legs to be seen. I possess no heat, yet I do have steam. I have no voice to let words out, but from far away you can still hear me shout.'



This sentence made no sense to me. As I processed this information, I quickly came to the realisation that the book was trying to communicate with me. A riddle perhaps? My mind ran wild with possible solutions, my thought process interrupted by the sloshing of water. Of course. "A waterfall," I spoke out-loud. As if scalded by my words, the book began to hum.

My vision became clouded as the ground retrieved from beneath me. The lack of support left me free-falling into oblivion. Distorted natural colours of greens and browns flew past my eyes, like the blurred vision from a train. I felt weightless, like a feather in the breeze, dwindling closer to the brink of insanity. I felt as if I was Alice in Wonderland, descending into the world of make-belief. The longer I fell for, the less colour I began to see. Time slowed down and gravity assisted in the fall. Before I could picture the inevitable, it hit me.

I was back in the park but it was...wrong. Colour was absent from this strange place. Black, white and grey seemed to be all the eye could see. People bustled around though no one seemed to acknowledge my appearance. Even they were in a state of monochromaticness, bland and emotionless.



Chapter 4

“What the...” My heart **skipped** a beat as a person morphed right through my body turning it into jelly. They walked right into me and phased through my flesh.

I stretched my arm out and scrutinized it. It looked like it was a normal arm to me. I tried to push my hand through my other arm, but it didn't work. My arm and the rest of my body was solid.

They always say that if you think your dreaming pinch yourself and if you feel pain then it's not a dream. So, I pinched my forearm and winced.

“I'm not dreaming,” I murmured.

I didn't have time to move out of the way before another person morphed through me. It freaked me out that people could do that. Or maybe they weren't people at all; perhaps they were ghosts.

“No, that can't be possible,” I tell myself. “Kakadu isn't a haunted place and it isn't known for its **community** of ghosts.”

I wondered if these people could hear me even though they didn't appear to see me.

“Can anyone hear me?” I called out.

The only response I received was the trees swaying in the gentle breeze and the insects chirping in the undergrowth.

“I guess not,” I mumbled dejectedly.

The isolation hit me like a truck. I was trapped here with no way of communicating with anyone. A gut-wrenching sob escaped from the back of my throat.

My knees gave in and I fell to the ground in a heap of despair.

What was I going to do? How was I going to get out of here? Would anyone be able to help me? My thoughts were whizzing through my mind at a hundred miles an hour.

My breathing was shallow and irregular, my heart was pounding in my chest. The world around me became a blur. I tried to pull myself up, but my strength had deserted me. I sat on the floor in a sobbing heap.

My eyes were closed, my head was spinning. The prospect of leaving this god forsaken place was looking thin.

I slowly opened my eyes and looked around. There weren't as many people as before, but they were still all in greyscale.

I slowly hauled myself up off of the floor and stood on my wobbly legs. My eyes scanned the scene looking for somewhere to go or something to do, when something colourful caught my eye.

My head jerked around so fast that I nearly gave myself whiplash. There appeared to be someone who actually looked like a normal person; not a ghost. Ever since I'd been in this world all of the people had been in black and white, but this person was in full colour. The contrast was so vibrant that it hurt my eyes for a few moments.

After my eyes had adjusted to the bright colours, I collected my thoughts.

The figure approached me, and I froze. I stood as still as a statue as he came closer to me. Compared to all of the other people who didn't appear as though they could see me and walked around oblivious to my existence, this person was staring straight at me almost as if I actually existed. Could he see me? But that's not possible; is it? Why was he the only person I could see that was in colour? How could he possibly see me when everybody had looked straight through me?

As he approached me his appearance became clearer. His silky blonde hair framed his face perfectly and he had soul piercing blue eyes.

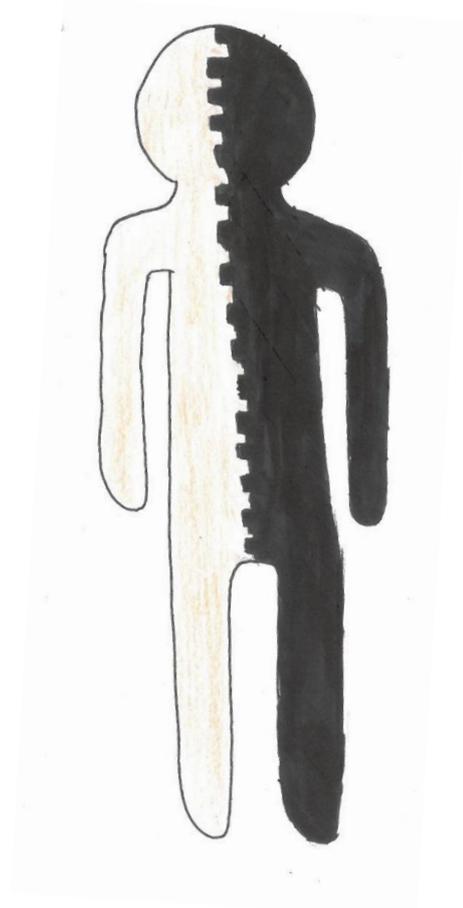
I tried to say something to him, but the words died in my throat. The only sound that escaped my mouth was a dried croak.

He smirked as if he had heard me. I wondered if he actually could.

He kept shuffling closer and closer and pretty soon he stood less than a meter away from me. He was that close to me, I could smell his stale, musty breath.

"Can you see me?" I asked tentatively.

"Why yes, I can." He said without any explanation.



Chapter 5



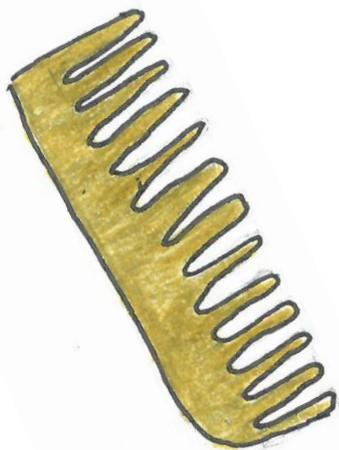
I looked at him, he looked at me. With every step he took the man crushed the warm earth beneath him. The world fell silent even the slight breeze that tickled my ears disappeared as the fluorescent figure approached me. He stopped then lifted his long-crooked finger, it reached towards me and touched my shoulder, a frosty surge of brisk coldness stung my senses as a wave of intense shock swam through my body.

“y-y-you are real?” I stuttered slightly as the man retrieved his frosted finger.

“Yes of course I’m real why wouldn’t I be?” his smile reached the dull sky as he brushed back his perfectly combed golden hair.

“But how?” I threw my arms up. “How is this possible?” My thoughts swam around like a hungry shark circling its prey.

“Let me explain,” the man **skipped** elegantly through the wattle trees, spooking the emus who bounded and faded into the wild bushlands. “Oi mate you coming?” he turned his head sharply. I stumbled through the vast landscape leaping over the sharp rocks that laid in the hot soil. I stopped, my heart pounded vigorously against my chest as I tried to gasp for fresh air. *Oh, why am I following this unknown man? How can I trust him? And where did he go?* My mind buzzed with endless questions about this unknown human. I turned around on my heels and saw him again, his bright figure sunk into a small divot on top of an enormous rock. Beside him laid a pair of shiny silver scissors and a golden comb, its edges still perfectly pointed.



“Would you like a haircut? I can do any style you like!” he picked up his pair of scissors mischievously.

“No thank you” I kindly declined his offer “now can you please tell me, how did you get here? Through the book? That’s how I got here,” I questioned the man.

His face faded like the world around us as he clenched his fists and jaw. “I don’t like to be asked so many questions!” he snapped as his voice changed to a low grumble.

“Please?” I begged like a dog for a bone. The man sank his body into the rock and fiddled with the scissors in his spider-like hands.

“Fine. I will tell you only if you do me a favour,” the man said slyly.

“Deal!” I smiled although unaware of the favour the man had installed. The man shyly smirked as he cleared his throat.

“First of all, my name is Thomas and yours is?” he glanced over.

“My name is Percy” I smiled taking my seat on the ground.

“Now Percy, you see I was on a mission to find the worlds next best haircut. A haircut that would become so famous that would make me rich, filthy rich” Thomas laughed like a crackling witch brewing a poisonous potion. “So, I took off on a journey with my forsaking apprentice” he muttered and rolled his eyes. “Anyways I came across this old book, so old that the pages were thin as a sheet of ice and as faded as this universe.”

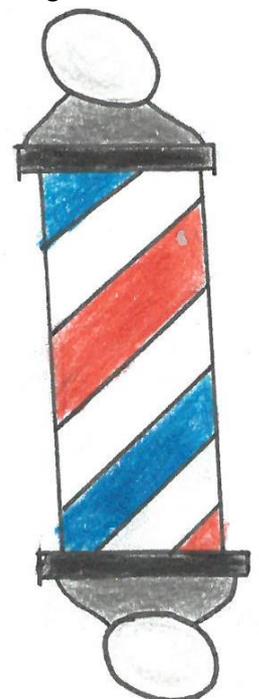
“I saw that book too; did it suck you here as well?” I quickly cut in.

“Do not interrupt me!” Thomas spat; blind rage shot from him. My body jumped out of my dusty boots. “Now this evil book has pulled me into this cursed land!” Thomas raged; his golden hair flared like an angry lions’ mane. “And all I wanted to do was find love” he winced as his mood changed to sorrow.

“I need your help Percy, please help me meet my dear Lily again.” Thomas jumped from the rock and kneeled Infront of me, begging.

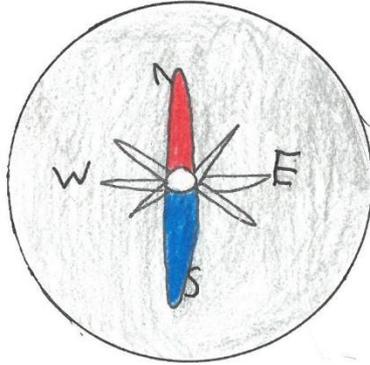
“Please, her face is as pure as the soft snow that falls on top of the mountain ranges, her hazel eyes are like a precious emerald and her caramel hair is a chestnut picked freshly from the leafy green trees. She **sings** with the voice of an angel. She is the Juliet to my Romeo. Please Percy, bring me to her again.” Thomas pleaded.

“Fine, I will help you.” I gave in and decided to help the poor man.



Chapter 6

We stood there at the place where I first arrived in this universe. I picked up the compass I had left on the ground and quickly put it away. Thomas was looking up at the sky, hope filling his mind a tear forming in his eye.



"I'm going to see her," he whispered to himself.

Not wanting to intrude on his moment I walked away and looked up at the sky again, trying to find an angle. Not seeing anything that could help, I moved around trying to see if there was a loophole in this universe. The dull sky straining my eyes even more than the normal sky would have. I started to rush while scanning my surrounding so desperate to get back to the real world I almost missed a black line protruding in the sky. I back tracked my steps and slowly the line emerged from nothingness.

"A hah!" I cried.

"What? What did you find?" Thomas called, scrambling over to me. He searched around frantically like a madman. I reached over and grabbed his shoulder to stop him. He glared at me and his body faded back into black and white, my hand now passed through his body, the feeling of jelly pushed up my arm; I shook it frantically to fight the sensation

I glared at Thomas and crossed my arms

"If you want me to get out of here and to find Lily, then you need to work with me Thomas!"

He glared back at me before the colour slowly returned to his body. And he was back to -.

"Thank you" I told him "now for your information. I think I found a page of the book, if we could get me up to it I might be able to climb up through the book and get out"

"That's not a bad idea," Thomas remarked.

"I know, I came up with it," I replied.

“Yeah, but how are we going to get you up three metres in the air genius?”

I looked around and spotted rocks sitting buried in the ground “Grab those rocks over there and bring them under the page.” I told Thomas.

It took him half an hour to have faded and moved the rocks right underneath the page. Finally, there stood a massive podium of rocks waiting for us to climb. Smiling Thomas wiped his hands as his body returned to colour.

“There!” he said, proud of himself “your podium awaits you, your highness.”

I rolled my eyes before making my way to the top I reached above me, and my fingers just brushed over the crisp edge of a page.

“So close” I called out “need more rocks.”

“There are no more rocks” Thomas cried out.

“Wait Thomas come here” I called out thinking of a way to get up to the page.

Thomas struggled his way up already tired from building the structure. When he got to the top his face was red and you could hear the gasps as Thomas struggled to pull air into his lungs.

“Okay I need you to lift me up” I told Thomas

“No, why?” he asked in angry frustration.

“I think I’ll be able to climb out of the book”

Thomas grabbed for my shoulder, I turned to face him.

“Promise, that you won’t leave me here alone.” His voice softening as fear struck his face.

“I promise I’ll help you,” I promised him.

Thomas nodded before enlacing his hands together and bringing them near my knees. I placed my foot in his hands as he pushed me up. I grabbed a hold of the page and pulled it down. The rotting yellow pages opened in front of me, the crisp smell exposed into the environment taking a deep breath I climbed through the page and felt myself falling.

My vision again became clouded and colours of greens flashed brightly before my eyes, they grew in intensity as more colours began emerging. Suddenly, I was back to reality. Colours were back to the vibrant colours that I saw in the rainbow and everything felt normal, not disoriented.

Chapter 7

Adrenaline pumping through my veins I began to shout and celebrate as I had returned to reality. I sat down on the ground pulling the book with me its wooden cover and ribbon allowed me to ground myself as my mind raced in many directions. After a while, I managed to pull myself off the ground and I walked towards exiting the cave.

I trudged through the bush pushing past trees and over the rocky terrain, with the book in hand, and map in the other. Tracking my way towards the road that would get me out of the park; Waltzing Matilda running through my head, so I began to hum to pass time. I kept myself in high spirits knowing I got out of the book. My feet entangling in shrubs as the tops of my boots were pulled back by the flora. The temperature had cooled considerably, and I managed to push myself further.

It was just after the sun had started to set that I reached the road. Exhausted, thirsty and in pain, I wanted to get this day over. I started walking east along the road in hopes of getting out of the park. Just as the sun was about to sink into the horizon a pair of headlights flashed into view. Hope filled my body and I put my thumb out like a typical hitch hiker waiting for the car to come closer. As the car pulled up a lady winded down her window.

“Are you okay?” she asked

“No,” I replied “I need to get to Darwin”

The lady nodded her head “Get in” she replied

We travelled a great distance to Darwin where I was dropped off. I thanked the lady and continued to find Lily. I walked through the town in search of Thomas’ love. It wasn’t until the morning when people started noticing I was new in town that I had questions asked.

“Young man, you seem lost. Can I help you?” One kind lady asked me.

“Um yes, I’m looking for a Lily.” I replied.

“Oh, just down the street and the last house on the left” the lady replied before continuing on her way

I continued to the end of the street and was on the doorsteps of Lilly’s house. The mint green paint seemed to hide the house from the view, and blend into the trees around it. Many plants lined a shelf along the wall and the veranda.

I knocked on the door and a pair of dull, aged hazel eyes met my own as the door opened.

“Oh hello, how can I help you?” the woman asked.

“Hello, are you Lily by chance? Thomas’s Lily?”

“Thomas! You’ve seen Thomas?” Lily shouted, urgency racing through her voice.

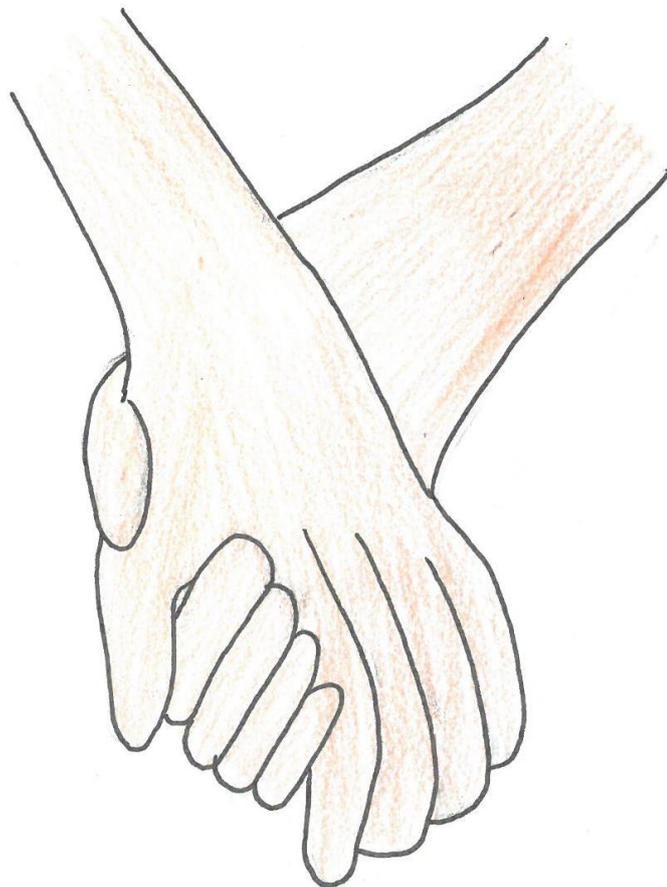
“Yes, you see I found him a faded place and he dearly misses you,” I replied

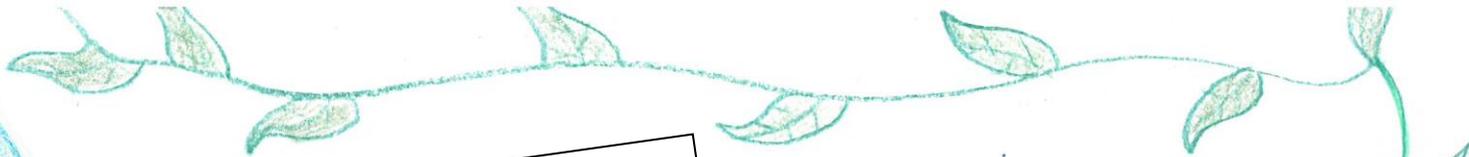
“Where is he?” She asked

I didn’t reply to her question, instead I handed her the barbers bible. Confusion filled Lily’s face, she opened the book and started to read. A small piece of her hair fell onto her face as she became

engrossed into the book. Suddenly a bright flash of light erupted, and I shielded my eyes. I looked up and she had disappeared. I looked to the ground and saw the book had been dropped. I picked it up and found it had changed.

The cover showed what I expected Lily to have looked like when she was younger holding hands with Thomas. I flipped through the pages, the book was now Thomas and Lily's very own love story. I smiled picking up the book and placing it on the bench inside the house before closing the front door. Although their future is now the past, their time shall never run out.





"Enchanting story with a heart-warming ending."

"I was transported into another world! Truly magical."

When Percy crashes his helicopter in the National Park of Kakadu he sets off to find a place to rest his head but stumbles across a lot more than he bargained for. Can he handle the adventures or the jungle of has he bitten off more than he can chew?



For reading ages 10-16