

Yee & Haw
Sunshine Coast Grammar



Write a Book in a Day



**THE KIDS'
CANCER
PROJECT**

Science. Solutions. Survival.

PARAMETERS FORM 2019

TEAM DETAILS

STATE: QLD
DIVISION: Middle School
SCHOOL/GROUP: Sunshine Coast Grammar School (FOREST GLEN)
TEAM NAME: Sunshine Coast Grammar School
TEAM ID: 237

PARAMETERS AND RANDOM WORDS

Parameters

Primary character 1 Signwriter
Primary character 2 Volunteer
Non-human character Hat
Setting Music festival
Issue X-ray vision

Random words

Community
Skipped
Magic
Canvas
Sings

INSTRUCTIONS

- Start at 8am
- Write an original story:
 - based on all **five parameters** (above)
 - including all **five random words** (above), and in bold type
 - with some identifiable **Australian content** (in theme or setting or characters, etc)
 - keeping within the allowed word count (remember every word on every page counts)!
 - include this parameters form in your book **immediately after the front cover** in both the hard and soft copy.
- Remember: **Every** word on **every page** counts. This includes your front cover, back cover, blurb, acknowledgements and copyright form.
- **Be sure to give yourself enough time to submit your book and complete the following checklist before 8pm.**

Log on to the Team Coordinator Portal to:

- ☐ Check the spelling of your team name and team members' names (how these are spelt on submission will be how they are displayed on certificates)
- ☐ Complete the Declaration
- ☐ Submit your finished book in **both** PDF and plain text format
- ☐ Mail a hard copy of your book on the next business day to:

Write a Book in a Day, The Kids' Cancer Project, PO Box 6400, Alexandria NSW 2015



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Olivia Tilley





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Dear Reader,

We hope this book brings you as much happiness and fun as it was to write. The team from Sunshine Coast Grammar School wishes you well and hopes this story transports you into a new world, where hats aren't so innocent. We wish you all the best for the future.

Love, the Sunshine Coast Grammar School team





1

The engine gave all it could as he man-handled the throttle, blasting along the degraded dirt trail. A meagre attempt to divide wilderness and man-made comforts. The miniscule lizards desperately scrambled away from the weather-worn Holden ute. Running back to their sand-drenched burrows, to scratching and clawing to survive. The vast, empty nothingness of the maroon sands was briefly interrupted by vegetation clinging to whatever nutrients it could. Glenn grimaced as he narrowed his eyes against the newly-risen sun. He pressed the accelerator and sped off.

The sunrays slammed onto the rocks as the brakes squealed. To his left Glenn saw the rough grainy beach and the bottomless ocean. An endless expanse where one can be so vulnerable. Hiding beneath its white-washed waves lay the treacherous Ningaloo reef; the progenitor of the festival. The 'Reef Rescue Festival' was located three hours due north of the town Geraldton. Situated along the scenic west coast of the land Down Under, it had become an annual pilgrimage for music lovers in the dry and harsh continent. Every year the area was transformed from an undisturbed paradise into a sea of tents, signs, stalls, stages and people. Glenn, however; was no longer a music lover. Glenn was there to paint signs.



He unloaded his hefty bag of paints, oils, brushes and acrylics and threw them to the ground. *SHRIEK!* His head snapped up instantaneously, two black cockatoos savagely scrapped for dominance above him, preaching their cacophonous sermon to the waste below. Ignoring this, Glenn lifted his pack, tied his boot laces, rolled up his sleeves and marched towards the blank plank of wood that would be his **canvas**. As he began the basic sketch work for the sign, his mind began to wander. It wasn't right that he was here. He was a professionally trained graphic designer for goodness sake, he had designed merchandise for the biggest bands in the world, toured with them, been an integral part of their success. Now he was stuck painting pieces of wood in a backwater part of the world whilst the people who swindled him out of his success headlined the show. It wasn't fair and it wasn't okay. He was forced to stand in line for glory while they **skipped** along with a fast pass.





Glenn's attention focused on his work; this was the hardest part. The worn paint brush delved into the baby blue paint delicately, leaving a fine crater in its wake. He breathed deeply in a fleeting attempt to calm his trembling hands and pushed them forward, blocking out the buzz and chatter of the world around him like he had done a thousand times before. The brush touched down on the sign, carefully sweeping along the sketch lines of the blocky calligraphy. This was his job. This was what he was good at. But he reminded himself again that he was cheated out of his job by the very people he was promoting now. But what was he going to do? They were the most sought-after band in the southern hemisphere, and he was just a forgotten graphic designer. There was nothing that could be done. Despite the cruel sun beating down on him, Glenn ploughed on with his work.

Zippering up his pack, Glenn smoothed his bristly moustache. His mum had said that it was unprofessional, but he was particularly partial to the way it looked, it was one of the few things he liked about his appearance. Dirt and pebbles underfoot were crunched by tan boots walking with a purpose. The pale streaks of silver cloud were strewn across the aquamarine sky like toys on a child's bedroom floor. Below, the pale sand was a thin veil between the deep blue ocean and the rusty and bleak desert. He was flanked by extremes. Deep sea. Desolate desert. Torrid sun. A horizon that stretched on forever. He kept walking towards the hubbub of lights, people and noise that was the festival.

Glenn wiped the dust and dirt from his paint-splattered white t-shirt while standing in a small nook between two restaurant stalls. The smell of burger patties rapidly approaching their expiration date, spongy lettuce and something that was maybe once an animal permeated the air. Hurriedly moving on from the alley of stink, Glenn made his way out to the northern side of the festival to paint yet another sign for X-Ray Vision. Trudging through the throngs of people, he looked out to the horizon. It was hot, it was early. Too hot. He was sure he didn't need to do this sign. It wasn't fair.



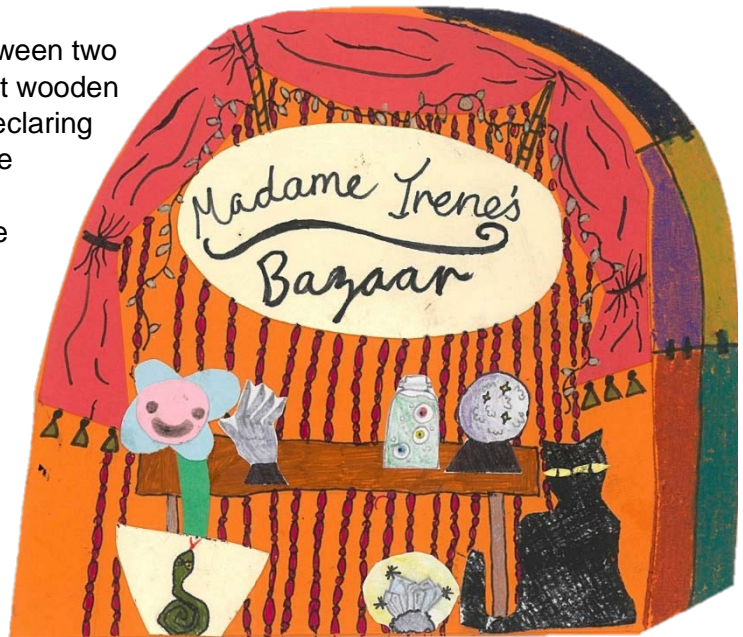


2

Surely I'll cook alive in this heat, Glenn thought to himself, tasting the salty sweat pooling on his upper lip. He had foolishly forgotten to bring an essential; a simple bucket hat. The sun became an enemy, determined to beat down upon him. His tanned skin was no defence for the unforgiving Australian summer. There weren't many stores that sold clothing at the festival; most of them were food or souvenir related. He walked around for a while, searching for a basic hat to shield him from the rays, and yet, in the massive festival grounds, he found nothing. As the day wore on, the sun's relentless attack began to scar his skin. His search for a hat became more desperate by the minute.

In his travels, he came across a chasm between two major stages. He looked up and saw a giant wooden sign, crudely illustrated with purple paint, declaring 'Madame Irene's Bazaar'. As a last hope, he walked down the ominous path towards the mysterious shop. The further he walked, the more doubt he felt. Although the stages weren't that big, the gap between these two seemed to go on forever.

As he progressed further down the alley, every minor sound began to echo, causing Glenn to flinch. Overhead, there were warm, twinkling lights, each bulb as bright as the sun, and yet, the alleyway was still darker than the outside world. The path was lined with eerie memoirs: pale,



shrivelled lizards, glowing crystals of every colour imaginable, and other curios, all of which would be labelled as too alien for common society. Finally, at the very end of the path stood a lone tent, cluttered with bits and bobs. It was crafted from cloths of deep purples, reds, yellows, blues and greens, each with different swirling and repeating patterns. Surrounding it were baskets full of fruits and lanterns which held scented candles and other questionable trinkets and ornaments. The inside of the tent was cloaked by a beaded curtain. A cat hid in the darkness, its bright, neon-yellow eyes glaring through the shadows. Suddenly a hunch-backed old lady with unkempt, grey hair, draped in bright, filigree silk and leather garments emerged behind an unsuspecting Glenn.

"What do you seek, fine traveller?" she asked disconcertingly, her kohl-framed eyes stabbing into him.

"A hat... I'm sorry, who are you? And what is this place?" he replied.

"Yes, excuse me, I didn't introduce myself. I am Madame Irene, and this is my bazaar. Now, you mentioned a hat... come, come inside and take a look at what I have in store..."





Madame Irene led Glenn through the beaded curtain into a dark and stuffy room, lit only by a couple of lanterns. In the centre of the room was a glowing crystal ball, filled with a swirling mist that danced in the flickering light. Adorning the walls were yet more knick-knacks and bric-a-brac, including a slightly worn out, beige Akubra.

"Ahh, this **magic** hat catches your eye, I see?" Irene exclaimed, "A very fine choice."

"Yes, how much would it be?" Glenn asked, knowing that this was likely the only hat he would find. "Oh, no, no, my good sir. It's free!" Glenn took the hat off the shelf and situated it atop his head. He shuddered.

"Thank you so much Madame... Irene, was it?"

"Not a problem."

Slowly, Glenn walked back out of the alleyway, feeling slightly dizzy. The velvety inside of the hat seemed to tighten around him, squeezing his head.

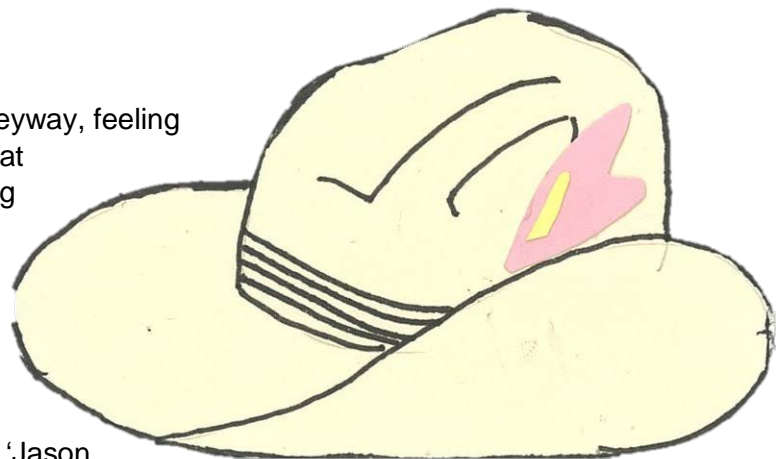
As soon as he stepped out of the dark alley, the bright sun beamed down on him. A man wearing a high visibility vest walked past him. His nametag read 'Jason, Volunteer Security Guard'.

"Mate," he mocked, "that is one interesting hat!"

"Well who asked you?" Glenn rudely shouted back.

As the guard retreated, Glenn felt a wave of guilt rush over him. *What was I thinking? That wasn't nice of me. I mean, I don't know him, but he made a remark about my hat.* He deserved it.

Emerging from the chaos of his hat-hunting, Glenn reluctantly began to retrace his steps towards his unwelcome, endless tasks.





3

A pebble of perspiration trickled down the back of Glenn's shirt. His mouth tasted bitter. Fury burned through his throat like bile, reaching up from the heavy pit of his stomach. A ruby cloud settled over Glenn's vision.

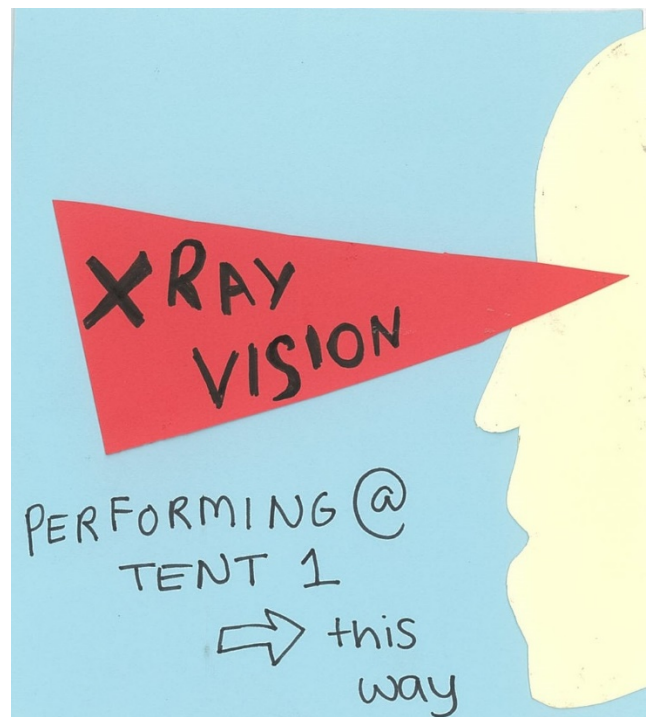
His hand moved through the familiar pattern, tracing the X-Ray Vision logo, *his* logo. His steady brush followed the jagged lines and painstakingly crafted curves, tracing the image he had conceived, the art his blood and sweat had etched. But that was a long time ago, before he had been hurled into purgatory and had been forced to crawl his way back to some respectable level of mediocrity. Graphic designer to struggling signwriter at a **community** music festival. A most Shakespearean tragedy. Glenn stared at the glistening vibrant blue and red paint still wet on the canvas.

They left you with nothing. They made YOU nothing. They stole from you.

The sign loomed over him, an advertisement of his shame, a pillar of his embarrassment, the pinnacle of the disgust crawling beneath his skin. But, perhaps, an opportunity?

While fame kissed their lives, mundanity marred yours. You think that was a coincidence, you don't think they wanted you to fail? To use you then cast you aside. X-Ray Vision wronged us, you must fight, stand-up, get even.

Clenching his fists, Glenn ripped the sign from where he had planted it that morning. He marched to the other side of the stalls and slammed it deeply into the dirt. Cruel satisfaction carved a smile upon his lips, his mouth widening like a deep wound reopened. The wooden stake pierced the chapped, red earth. Glenn wiped his clammy palms on the front of his paint-stained jeans. Already, people were beginning to follow the black arrow towards the supposed main stage.



Misguided single parties advanced towards the lonesome tent they had been wrongly directed to. Glenn's eyes sparkled with the shine of a thousand jewels as his plan slowly became a reality. The cogs of his mind churned as more people wandered around the cotton fabric of the marquee. Glenn slipped in beside the festival-goers, a look of innocence masking his bland features. Murmurs of confusion swept through the small crowd as they searched for the stage that they thought they had





been led to. Like lost lambs, they walked the red dirt path, looking to the sky as if the clouds held the answer to their unspoken questions.

“There’s X-Ray Vision!”

The shout of an excited fan surged its way through the ears of the passers-by milling in and around the various stalls. The flock of sheep now had its shepherd. They ran towards the marquee the yell had originated from, a stampede of blind and unhearing brutes.

Chaos.

Chaos in its most raw, unrefined form.

Glenn had never seen so many people in such a small space. People were screaming. Whether from excitement, pain or both, he was unsure. Sight was impossible. Blurs of wild colours mixed with red dust. Wailing like banshees, the horde surged forward. He longed to see the destruction the masses were causing in the small space. Glenn let himself be jostled by the mob as they rushed to get a glimpse of the four helpless musicians.

The guards puffed their chests in lame imitations of peacocks and demanded the crazed crowd’s respect. Glenn nearly laughed at their confusion as they struggled to control the unhinged assembly. Swarms of dusty red splattered the neon shirts of the security guards. Stumbling over themselves, they tried to contain the raging swell of people and shield the performers. X-Ray Vision were pressed to the walls, their eyes darting towards the growing group of animals that looked hungrily at them. Glenn felt himself being propelled into the large chest of a guard. Looking up, he recognized the guard from earlier.

“Tough day at work mate?” Glenn yelled above the swirling melee of sound.

“Don’t I know it!” Jason replied, his muscular arms restraining two screaming teenagers.

The writhing mass of flesh pulled Glenn away, wrenching him backwards.

A shaky wall of security guards set up a protective barrier around the band. A fragile ring of volunteers held back the ocean of deranged fans as waves of insults were hurled at them for removing their idols. Jarring indigo bruises were present on every inch of bare skin. Shuffling away from the clawing hands, they directed the band towards the nearest exit and as far away from the rabid fans as possible. The guard’s ears closed to the screams of abuse that were being thrown at them. Their eyes directed away from the pulsing crowd.

Glenn wandered through the many festival stalls, revelling in his recent victory.

“Hey! Signwriter! What was that for? You were meant to be directin’ them to the main stage!”

Whirling around, Glenn saw the mammoth security guard striding toward him. Glenn could feel the white-hot fury resurfacing, filling every fibre of his being until it was almost unbearable. His face contorted with rage, aiming his hateful glare at the unsuspecting security guard.

“Don’t you have a job to do? Or have they finally realised how incompetent you are?”

“The situation got outta control ‘cause some nutjob moved the sign, it wasn’t my fault!” Jason huffed as his hand moved to the large bruise located above his elbow.

“Why don’t you ask the person who started it?”

“I need a witness’s account of what happened,” Jason explained tightly.





"Well why don't you go ask someone, ay?"

"I am right now." Jason stepped closer, towering over Glenn.

"Look *mate*, you saw what happened, everyone did. Maybe if you had half a brain you would realise that and stop bothering me. Look at you playing detective, you're just a volunteer who lucked out with the biggest band. You're nothing."

A buzzing on Jason's shoulder halted the words that had formed on his lips. He ripped the walkie talkie from its place on his arm.

"What is it?" he unceremoniously responded. Jason glared at Glenn before turning away. "Be there soon," he spoke into the device.





4

Solar threads of gold scratched into Glenn's skin, heat dragging through his veins. Abhorrence weaved a grimace on his face as he stared at the poster before him, advertising the main act of the music festival, X-Ray Vision. Meaningless reviews of an undeviating band reached across the shining paper: 'X-Ray Vision, the greatest tribute band playing today... ACDC's music played like never before...best of women in rock...play Angus Young's guitar with the same fervour and passion he did...**sings** like Brian Johnson'. That darn guitar, the iconic instrument in their success, half of the band's bloody personality.

Take it. Take the guitar and destroy it.

Glenn wrung his hands into bold and complex patterns. He tugged his dark moustache.

Come on. It would be easy. It'll be easy as pie.

His chestnut eyes darted over the cluttered stalls and the miscellaneous treasures, yet all he could see was red.

You coward. You utter coward. You're not even man enough to do this simple task.

Glenn stood, straightened his back and looked ahead. He knew what he had to do.

The four artists stood by their van, surrounded by technicians and security. The women chatted amongst themselves, leaning languidly against the polished metal. Jason stood guard, his broad frame filling the space. Drums, amps and microphones moved through the hands of crew members towards backstage. There it was, encased in a plain black case but recognizable to anyone as the legendary instrument. The guitar was here. All he had to do was take it.

X-Ray Vision's frontwoman stood tuning the black electric guitar, mostly concealed by the steep curtains of the stage. Glenn stood at the edge of the barren mosh pit, a predator waiting for his prey.

"What do you think you're doing?"

Glenn jumped as Jason appeared behind him, his looming figure casting long shadows over Glenn. He smiled sweetly, "Just trying to get a good spot. Wouldn't want to miss the performance of a lifetime."

Jason leaned back, searching Glenn for any hint of maleficence. "Fair enough, mate. But I see you anywhere near X-Ray Vision and we're gon' have a problem. Clear?"

"Crystal," replied Glenn his sickly smile flickering.





5

Glenn winced as the makeshift floorboards creaked under his feet; if he wasn't quiet, he'd be discovered by security. Hours had passed since he had decided to steal the guitar, and the anger that was once a slight simmer had now become a rolling boil. He was going to ruin them, just as they had ruined him.

Hiding in the shadows of the stage wings, Glenn silently observed X-Ray Vision setting up the stage with their crew, preparing for their performance. His hands moulded into fists and an ugly snarl formed on his face.

You need to do it now; time is running out.

Nervous sweat trickled down from his temples, whispers of revenge and carnage steeping his brain. Once an ambitious designer, Glenn now barely earned enough for rent. Living like a man without a mission, working odd jobs here and there. Uncommitted. Indecisive. Unexceptional. It was no way to live.

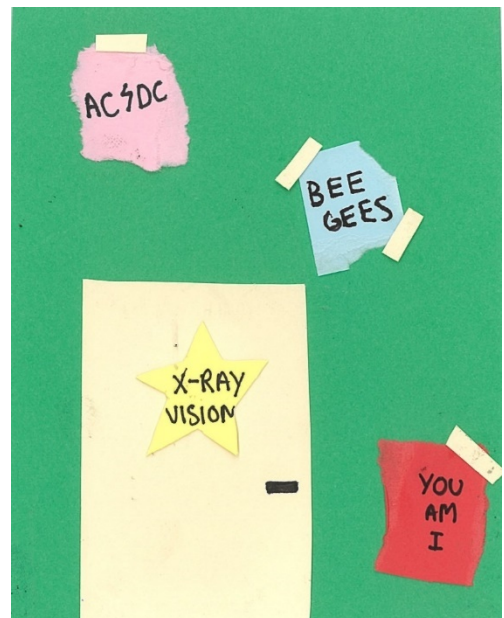
Crouched over, breath caught in his throat, Glenn crept onto the stage. As he moved across the platform, a smooth black object came into focus. There it was! The prized guitar cloaked in its case, poorly concealed at the other side of the stage.

Do it Glenn! They deserve this!

Rising, a blade from the flame, the signwriter charged at the iconic guitar. He had to destroy it, destroy them.

"Oi, you! What d'you think you're doing?" Jason shouted as he sprung from his post, pursuing the thief.

Barely pausing to glance behind him, Glenn allowed himself to be swallowed by the curtains of the stage wing, snatching the handle of the case with his left hand. Leaping over an amp, he heard Jason's heavy tread behind him. He dodged a towering steel monolith, Jason hot on his heels. Glenn skidded around a tight corner. Barely keeping his balance, his elbow dashed against the wall, propelling him sideways. Jason's beastly hands grasped for him. They clutched at the tail of Glenn's t-shirt. Twisting away, Glenn battered Jason with his fists. Shoving the beaten volunteer off him, Glenn sped away.



Blindly running through the endless maze of corridors and small dressing rooms, he couldn't help but notice Jason's heavy footsteps fading.





Shadows hung off amps and boxes, the cramped storage room's walls reached towards him. Panting, Glenn glanced behind him seeing only an empty doorway. Moving rapidly, as if propelled by a divine force, Glenn slammed the door shut, leaving him alone in the black. His hands shook as he clicked open the two simple clasps of the case. Lifting the lid, Glenn stroked the gleaming instrument and lifted it from its protective shell. Despite the beauty of the guitar, metallic cords etched uniform lines in his sweating palm, just as X-Ray Vision had etched failure into his life. The shining black of the guitar's neck felt slick in his hand. Glenn stared down at his prize. His hands tremored, a dangerous cocktail of righteous fury and adrenaline cascading through his veins, scarlet and onyx claws scraping towards his rapidly beating heart.

The time is now. Time is running out.

Tawny eyes wild and reddened, tears and sweat sanding them smooth. A saline drop ceremoniously caressed the voluptuous black curves in solemn serenity.

You incompetent, lazy, spineless worm. What are you waiting for?

With trembling hands Glenn raised the guitar, a holy child after baptism.

Do it. Do it. Do it.

He closed his eyes.

DO IT!

An undefinable roaring filled his ears, they deserved this. They deserved this. Did they deserve this?

A small, unremarkable man stood alone in a tiny backroom. A priceless instrument raised above his head. Rage and hurt shakily handwritten on his face. A wounded beast, trembling in some dark, pathetic corner. The creature opened its tawny eyes.

Slowly, as if wading through treacle, Glenn lowered the midnight prize to the soiled and dusty concrete.

What are you doing? Why did you stop? Of course, you didn't come through, you never could have. You uncommitted wretch. You never had the courage to stand up. You'll be trampled again and again. And guess what, you'll deserve it. You'll never-

Glenn took off the hat.

The gentle bristles felt unforgiving against his fingers. His legs felt heavy, leaden tendons drawing him back to the earth. The room seemed blander, darker.

Voices filtered through the heavy air.

"Sound check. Anyone found the guitar yet?"

The cool doorknob felt warm in Glenn's hand as he drew the door open, guitar in hand. Sunlight blazed through the room, beating back the grasping shadows, embracing his paint-splattered figure, calloused hands and weary face. Glenn stood stunned in the doorway of blinding, heavenly white.

"Oh, ya found it? Thanks mate."

He felt weightless without the dragging heft of the instrument. Chatter and music filled the air with a medley of melodies. Glenn felt his feet take him towards it, people rushing past in chaotic urgency. He felt the rusted dirt beneath him. Flashes of flesh garbed in cloth soft and floating danced past





him, sweet cinnamon lazily drifted through the air, swirling and swaying, seducing the twisting clouds of dust. Laughing, chattering, singing, the flock of people carried Glenn with them, a school of fish moving as one. Sunlight filtered down onto Glenn's weathered face, gently stroking him, streaming through the dust. Warmly embracing him, a friend long overdue. Glenn smiled.





6

There was a sense of finality in the air. Everyone who had wronged, damaged and corrupted him, every hurt he had suffered suddenly seemed insignificant. He was here, he was *alive*. His heart floated heavenward, light and unrestrained. The burden of the pain and resentment that had drawn him along his journey to revenge no longer dragged at him. He had been released. The second that the hat left his conscience, he came to the realisation that it was time to let go and move into the future. Maybe he would be wronged again, but then, why would it matter? The road ahead would be as bumpy as the dirt track that he drove along, but he would be okay. He had been holding onto a moment that had passed, envisioning a world where his destiny had taken a different trail.

The crowds of melody-entranced folk had packed their Hawaiian t-shirts and khaki pants and driven away into the sunset. Glenn had made one final sign, painted in fluorescent colours, complete with an overlay of neon lights.

"Come back next year!"

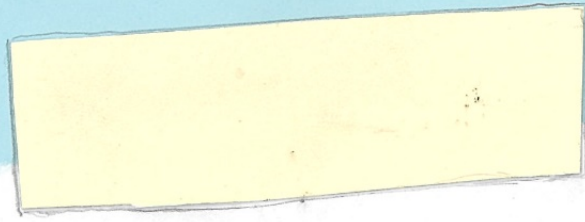
Glenn had loaded his various paint tins into the back of his ute and sped along the compacted sediment road. He followed the flow of traffic back to a world of reality, leaving behind song, dance and Akubra hats. The windows were rolled down, letting the salty air charm his nose. His eyes followed the long line of blazing brake lights, as he hung his arm lazily out the window, the light breeze tickling his fingertips. The frustration of 5:30 traffic lay ahead, yet he leaned back, unaffected, readying himself for the long drive home. He looked out to his right where the azure waves rolled away from the flaming horizon. Indescribable colours embroidered the afternoon sky, a divine amalgam of tangerine, violet and burnt orange.

A tired signwriter let his mind sink to the treasures below the glass-like surface. He imagined the deep Indian Ocean waters filled with sunlight, shimmering underneath the waves in a patterned mirage. The placid creatures of the deep watching from afar as the small-minded fish darted to-and-fro close to the surface.

The opposite side of the road stretched out like a carmine tapestry. Ground stained a passionate red, reaching out to the heavens, worshipping the vast expanse of bronze. The colour danced in his eyes and the ignited sky kept its resplendent intensity. He gazed at the serene landscape, a sleeping giant, a lucid muse of nature. Remembering when he could only see a landscape of brutal colours and harsh textures; a person who saw the world through a filter of rage and fury. Glenn was no longer that person, he had become free like the ocean, tranquil like the burnt landscape. As he pondered who he was and who he would be, the still desert and the rolling ocean, driving straight down the convergence between two worlds.







360 days of the year, Coastal WA is a sleepy place, littered with ocean-loving tourists, but when the "Reef Rescue" festival comes to town, the area around Ningaloo reef is anything but Sleepy. One of the many festival-goers is Glenn, the signmaker. He has some history with one of the bands, and if you throw a magic hat into the mix,

KABOOM!



Recommended reading age: 10-16 yo