

Clowns, Rabbits, and Catastrophes



Produced by Kalbrook!



Write a Book in a Day



**THE KIDS'
CANCER
PROJECT**

Science. Solutions. Survival.

PARAMETERS FORM

TEAM DETAILS

STATE: WA
DIVISION: Middle School
SCHOOL/GROUP: Kalamunda Senior High School (KALAMUNDA)
TEAM NAME: Kalamunda 1
TEAM ID: 1217

PARAMETERS AND RANDOM WORDS

Parameters

Primary character 1 Delivery driver
Primary character 2 Clown
Non-human character Rabbit
Setting Cricket match
Issue Bushfire

Random words

Tiptoe
Fresh
Community
Delight
Bruised

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**
- 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 9pm.**

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 by 9pm

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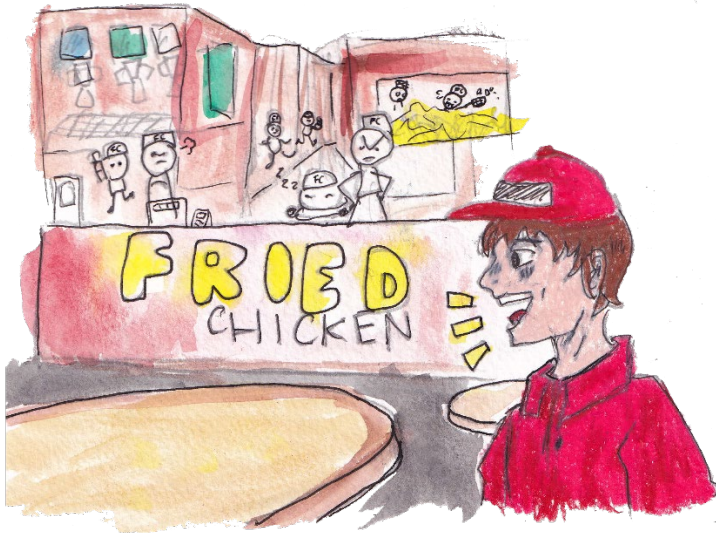
Lexie Palmer, Will Guy, Charlotte Lee Steere, Baileigh Truman, Shaylee Kinsella, Scarlett Courtenay, Mia Grime, Violet Dietsch, Lillianna Dalglish

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CHAPTER ONE – THE SURPRISE

The cicadas discordantly sung as the sun beat high in the sky. It was a stifling hot day as Steve finished his fast-food delivery shift. He flipped his cap onto his head and called out a farewell to his fast-food comrades in the sweltering kitchen. Beeps and pings mixed in with various degrees of farewells echoed from the depths of the kitchen. Steve strolled out of the kitchen, squeezed his motorbike helmet onto his head, and began his way home, valuing the occasional shade the large trees gave him on the melting tar road. The wind rushing on his face felt so soothing after the stuffy fast-food kitchen.



He stopped at the oval, the only one in the small rural town and the one his family owned. Kookaburras chuckled at his return and the cicadas continued their screaming opera. Steve lazily trotted up to the shady old wall, the crudely nailed together wooden wall. Ah, the memories of this old wooden excuse for a wall. Steve picked up his cricket bat and ball and began to practice, boots firmly planted in the small rivets of the dirt he had worn away over the years. *Boom, crack, thunk, boom, crack, thunk*, went the ball against the wall. The repetitiveness calmed Steve, put him in a rhythm and a calm headspace. They could finally think.

Steve heard something **tiptoe**, and with a small shout, a clown leapt out from behind the wall.

"Holy—"

"It's me!" the clown shouted vibrantly.

Steve started running in the other direction. Confusion clouded his judgement, but he was scared. He must run. The clown sighed, sprinted after them, and easily caught up. The clown grabbed Steve by his red-jacket collar and gently dragged him back to The Wall. Steve panicked.

"It's me- it's Erin. Do you uh.... Do you remember me?" the clown inquired.

Steve calmed down in a minute and was back to his usual annoying self.

"Long time no see old friend. What is this, an outfit of celebration? My apologies, I don't know the language of the uh... the clown." He paused to bow gracefully, smirking. Erin's smile disappeared in a flash.

"It's for my job," She frowned. "I get *paid* for this stuff."

"Not very well, I would say..." Steve mumbled.

"Hey!" Erin grumbled. "I heard that!"

Steve chuckled when he heard this. Erin was the very same as when he first met her.



CHAPTER TWO – THE ARGUMENT

After Steve's run-in with Erin, he continued hitting the ball, watching it rebound off the wall. Erin watched intently, maybe a bit *too* much, because in the end, she ended up physically keeping her eye on the ball. Steve hit the ball harder and harder, and eventually, it hit the wall straight away, and bounced back off the wood, and into Erin's face. She held back her tears, before shouting: "YOU IDIOT!" Steve was hurt by her words, as he was a fairly sensitive boy.

Then, Erin slipped into unconsciousness. Steve panicked. "What do I do?" He thought. After finally calming down, he began thinking rationally again, but all he could think to do was sit by her with his water bottle in case she needed it when she woke up. After a good 15 minutes, Erin came back to life, her eye now visibly **bruised**. Steve felt a rising guilt throughout him. "Oh my goodness, Erin, I am so sorry! I wasn't thinking about-" Erin cut him off.

"Save it, Steve. I come back and surprise you and this is what I get? Some friend you are.." Erin was fuming. He knocked her out by accident, and now she was raging at him.

"I didn't mean to! I'd had a stressful day at work and-" Steve was trying to apologise, when Erin cut him off again. Could Steve ever complete a sentence?

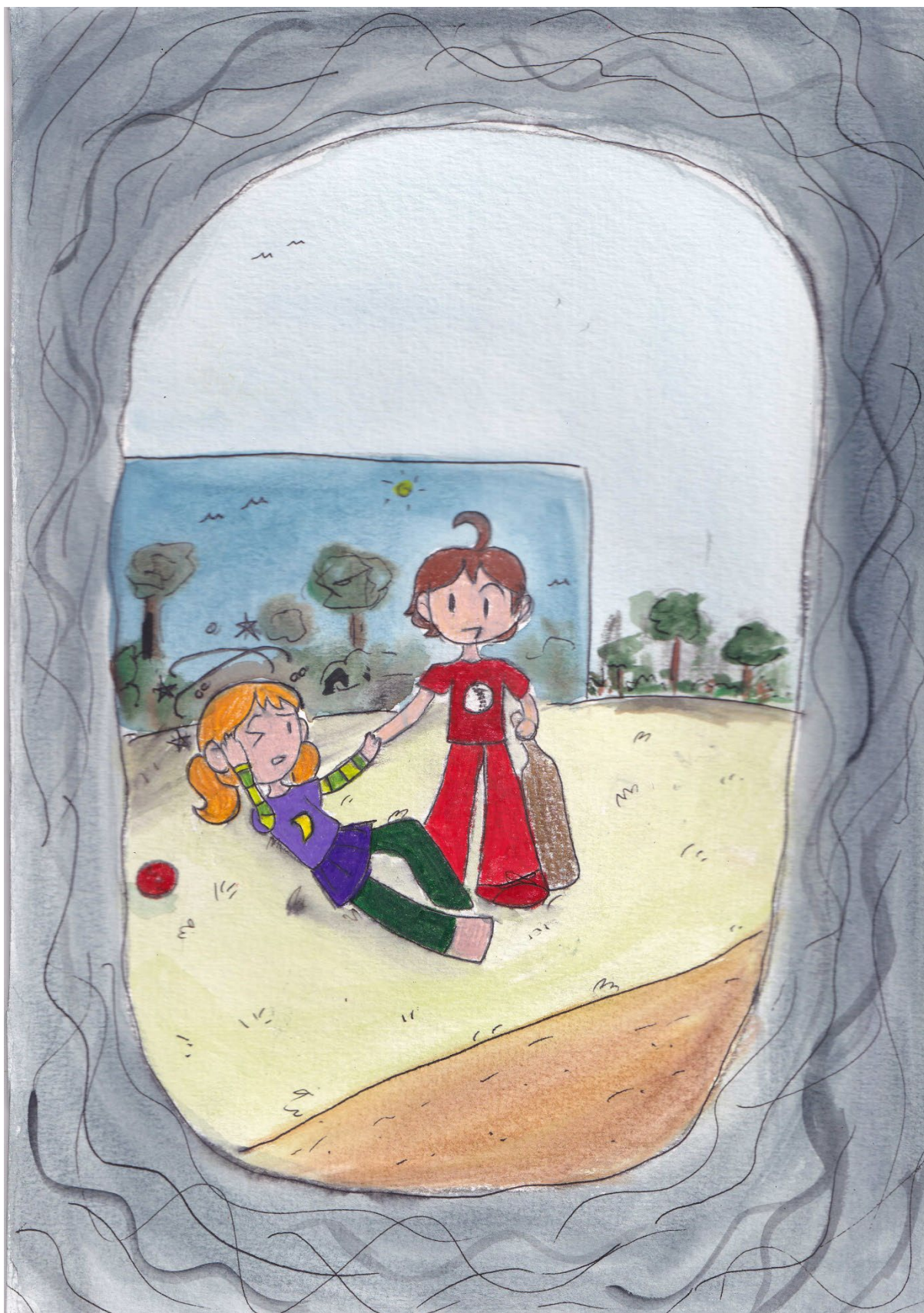
"You always make things about yourself! *Oh, I had a bad day. Oh, my mum told me to put away my phone. Oh, I have so much homework.* It's always you, you, you! What about me, huh?! I exist too, you selfish animal!" Erin was mocking him. Oh, pure anger. Steve was seriously considering running back to his house, locking all doors and windows, closing the blinds, and hiding upstairs in his room until Erin gave up and went home, but he didn't.

She continued pelting him with insults and obscene language until she calmed down only the tiniest bit, which seemed to make a reasonable difference.

"Look, Erin, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to hit you with the ball. Today was stressful for me, as it most likely was for you, but that can't be helped. I didn't know that you saw me like that, and I promise I'll try to change. For now, are you okay? You literally *just* passed out." Steve finally got his words out without being interrupted by the mountain of insults and rude comments that came out of Erin's mouth.

Steve checked over Erin to make sure she was okay, before she apologised, and then she asked: "Hey, why don't I play too? Cricket is no fun on your own!"

"Game on!" Steve announced.



CHAPTER THREE – THE GAME

Steve stormed to the other side of the pitch, away from Erin. He was determined to beat her. He clenched the familiar, placid, red ball, rubbing his thumb over the white stitching. He had this ball for years, and it was starting to wear out.

“Hurry up, slowpoke!” exclaimed Erin, the sight of her clown costume making Steve burst into laughter. “Hurry up already!” she bellowed, gripping the bat tighter to refrain from slamming Steve in the face. Her blonde, straight hair hanging down. She hadn’t come all this way this Christmas to be teased by her old friend. Steve bowled the ball towards the wicket. Erin watched the ball like a hawk, the contact of the ball with the bat sent it flying away from the other side of the pitch. Erin watched as it went past, Steve hoping that the swing would allow her to get some runs in. She sprinted towards the other wicket as Steve ran after the ball. A few moments later she was exhausted and bent over, leaning on the wicket at her side. She snickered at Steve as he ran back from the trees. She’d gotten the ball all the way to the dry grass.



“Good job.” mumbled Steve.

“Let’s see if you can do better, Mr. Deliveryman!” She mocked him as she handed him the bat, standing on her tiptoes, trying to meet his eye level. “You’re way too tall, mate. It’s hard to believe you can even fit through a doorway when you’re a giant.”

“Well, at least I’m not a dwarf.” He spat.

“Not everyone is tall, like you!”

“Indeed, not everyone is short, either.”

Steve went towards the opposite side of the pitch. His hand holding the bat. He glanced at the wall. It was their favourite place to hang out. He and Erin adored it. They would hang out after school every single day until she left. The shire had allowed the children that lived in the town to paint the side of the wall that backed onto the oval, as the other side served

at Steve's back fence. None of the other kids wanted to paint, so Erin and Steve chose to. They painted all over it. Back then they weren't good artists so it was mostly stick figures with various other pictures you would expect from any six to seven year old. Steve watched the ball come towards him. He glanced straight at Erin. Then, he looked at the ball and hit it.



It glided towards the wall and bounced off, missing Erin.

"Stop trying to hit me! Are you trying to send me to hospital?!" screeched Erin, storming towards Steve. Erin stopped before Steve, putting her hands on her hips. Steve glared at her. If only stares could hurt someone. Steve folded his arms and looked Erin in the eyes.

"Back off!" Steve yelled, jokingly.

Erin glanced at the trees, and she could smell smoke, smoke from a fire. It was summer, the 22nd of

December. The fire brigade hadn't yet been able to control the burn area. There were a couple of birds flying away from the bush. "Steve, can you smell that?" questioned Erin, holding her shoulders. If there was a bushfire, they'd need to tell the authorities about it. She couldn't help but worry. If she wasn't sweating before, she was now.

"Smell what? Are you trying to tease me again, because if you are-"

"I'm not! There's smoke in the air!" cried Erin, panicking.

"There's not scent of smoke I can smell Erin-"

"Yes, there is! There's a fire!"

"No there isn't."

CHAPTER FOUR – THE FIRE

“Steve I’m serious, do you smell smoke?” Erin said sounding scared. “I uh- actually I think I do, but I’m sure its fine” Steve said hurriedly with a hint of worry in his voice, he could tell Erin was concerned. She glanced behind Steve to look at the bush, she didn’t think she could see smoke, or was the sky darker? The smell of smoke was getting stronger, it wasn’t long until bits of ash started to fall from the sky.



“Steve, I think there might be a bushfire!” Erin was getting really worried now. Steve looked around and back to the bush “Maybe it’s just a controlled burning, I think we should head back to my house and search up if the shire is doing a controlled burn today.”

Just at that moment a rabbit came running out of the bush. As it ran there was a little jingle, like a small bell ringing following it. “Jeremy!” Erin shouted sounding a little bit happier. “Wait, what? You see a rabbit running out of the bush and name it straight away?!” Steve said, confused as she scooped up the rabbit, or “Jeremy”. “No! He’s my pet! I lost him 3 days ago!” She was definitely much happier now. “Oh, I guess that explains the collar with the bell on it.” Steve said, still sounding a bit confused. “Jeremy, you poor thing, what happened to you? You’re covered in soot!”



“Enough about me! We need to talk about the fire!” Jeremy said in a demanding tone. Erin was so surprised she almost dropped him “Jeremy! You can talk!?” Erin was obviously dying to know how her rabbit could talk, but Jeremy did not think that was a valid topic at this moment.

“Wait, how- how can you talk?” inquired Erin. Jeremy started to animatedly explain the cause of his newfound power.

“I don’t have an exact idea of how I got the power, but I think it happened when I went up to this bright red flower that almost looked as if it was on fire. But the silly goose of a rabbit I was, I decided to eat it, and then what seemed to look like a spark shot out from the roots, and into the air.”

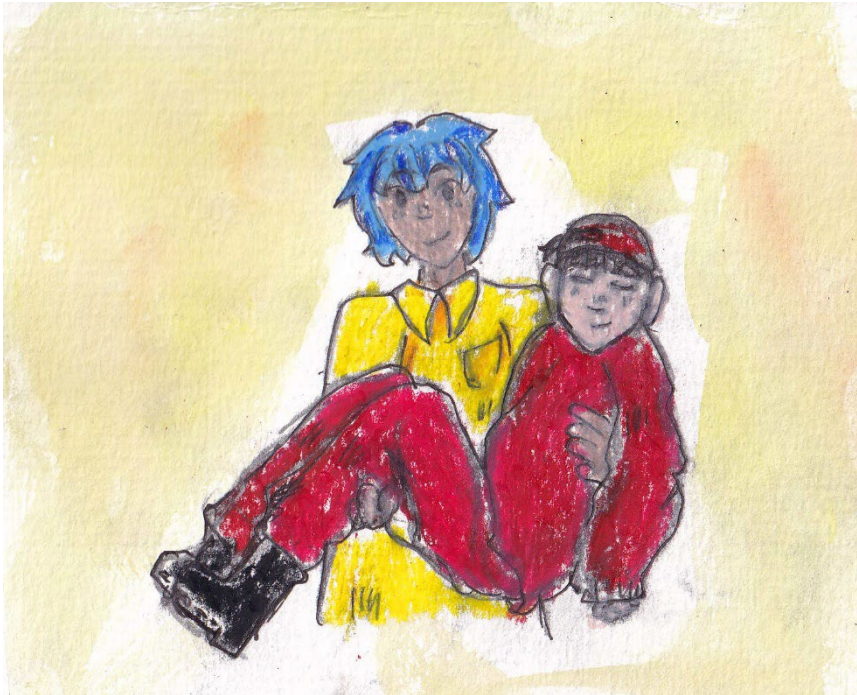


CHAPTER FIVE – THE BATTLE AGAINST FLAMES

Suddenly, Steve fainted from the smoke getting thicker in the air. Erin gently placed Jeremy on the floor, shaking from fright, struggling to get her phone out of her pocket. She called 000 and shouted into the receiver. “Please help me, I’m on the oval at the outskirts of Kalabrook, and my friend has fainted. Oh, and there’s also a bushfire coming towards us. But please, bring help for my friend.” The operator then replied in a cool and calm tone.

“Calm down dear. It’s going to be alright. The fire brigade is on their way.” Erin hung up and then looked directly at Jeremy, expecting him to not speak, forgetting about the previous event. That was until Jeremy said: “Oh come on, calm down, sister, and don’t listen to their nonsense. Let’s just enjoy the scene that your friend has made for us.” Erin thought that, even though it was a **delight** that Jeremy could talk, she thought it was just a little weird that her pet rabbit suddenly returned to her with the ability to speak.

A few minutes had passed when the fire brigade finally shows up. Erin was very excited that Steve was carried off by a boy around the same age as them. ‘*Maybe he’s around 18 years old,*’ she thought.



When the boy Erin had seen earlier put Steve down in the fire truck, he came up to Erin to find out more about what had happened. Instead, Erin started to talk about Steve, thinking that if she could land him a partner, that Steve would be happy.

“Well, uh, could you come into the fire truck? So we can take you back to the evacuation centre with uh- Steve” Evan said, blushing slightly from Erin’s dramatic recital about the ‘fabulous Steve’.

“Sure mate” Erin replied. Erin jogged up to the fire truck, lanky limbs dancing in all directions as she went. Evan sighed and jogged after her.

CHAPTER SIX – THE EVACUATION CENTRE

Steve woke up, he was in the community evacuation centre. Erin and Evan were sitting near him, looking down at him. He could hear sirens and voices outside. “What happened. How did I get here?” Steve said, confused.



“Evan carried you here. It was so romantic!” Erin cooed, grinning. Steve blushed bright red. “You look like a tomato!” smiled Jeremy, Evan looked at him surprised. Steve went even brighter then took a quick glance at Evan, he was bright red too. “STOP IT! YOU’RE EMBARRASSING ME!” Steve shouted. “It’s ok...” replied Evan, still a bit red.

The fire was still raging forward, it had almost reached the oval. The firefighters were trying their best to stop the fire. All the animals were running frantically out of the forest, while the rangers were trying to grab and calm them all down. Police blocked the streets, telling all residents to go to the community evacuation centre. There were sirens blaring and people shouting, the air was thick with smoke, it was mayhem.

Back in the community centre, the group were enjoying some apples. Evan had been told this was too big of a fire for him to tackle, as he was only a trainee. Evan and Steve kept glancing at each other, blushing slightly. It was obvious that they had a crush on each other. The two had seen each other around town and at school but had never talked. Erin looked worried. “What’s wrong, Erin?” Jeremy questioned in a concerned tone. “My dad is a firefighter, I’m just worried about him.” Erin explained. “Your dad has a lot of experience, I’m sure he will be fine.” reassured Evan. Erin gave a slight smile but was definitely still worried.



The fire was starting to retreat, everyone's hopes were getting higher. They had been fighting it for hours and it had covered the oval, as well as having reached the little wall that Steve and Erin had painted a little mural on when they were little, all those years ago. The firefighters managed to put out the fire just before it reached Steve's house.

They had been told that the fire was put out, so Erin picked up Jeremy and started to go back to the oval, with Steve and Evan who were now holding hands. The community all came as well since they wanted to see the damage.

CHAPTER SEVEN – THE RECOVERY

The **community** gathered on the oval, from the kids to the seniors, everyone had joined the meeting. Everyone was anxious about what had just happened, as the town had never been this close to a disaster. The most that ever happens is flooding in the rainy seasons. This was the first major event the town has dealt with. After the Mayor had calmed and quieted everyone down, the feeling of sorrow and despair was unsettling, as such a vibrant town brought to it's knees by tragedy. The point of this meeting was to discuss town damage, nobody was harmed, but they all lost so much. All of the bush, the countless animals, and the beloved mural wall, which meant so much to this town, it had been there for over 150 years, when the town was first built.

As the commotion occurred, Steve, Erin, and their new accomplice, Jeremy, were listening to the news. They all had fond memories of their childhoods at the pitches, running around the wall, having somewhere to chill and the countless times that it had been hit by cricket balls from a lucky six or an unlucky miss. As they listened to the news, Steve started to run to the wall and suggested that they rebuild it. "What an excellent idea, young lad!" Exclaimed the Mayor, so they began repairing the very structure that glorified their childhoods. They cleared the burnt wood and rubble, and the area was beginning to return to its former glory, the concrete around the area was burnt beyond cleaning, but the community left it as a sign of their resilience through this time. Layer by layer, Steve and his friends placed a brick on the wall, until it was finished. An excellent project founded by the community and driven by a group of friends. As they stood back and admired their day's work, Steve noted "It needs something, a touch of our community!"

After they rebuilt the wall, they painted it with various bright colours, and Erin had Jeremy put a pawprint on the wall, and everyone in the town had congratulated each other, as they all did a great job and should get some rest after all their hard work.



CHAPTER EIGHT – THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

A few days had past since the incident had happened and it was finally Christmas time. Everyone was excited to see everyone again and mingle with each other. The Christmas party was held at the oval, just like every other year. Here, was the muffled sound of the town's children running around with water pistols, the cries of toddlers waiting for lunch, which is usually **fresh** chicken and salad, as well as bread for those who wish to make a delicious chicken and salad sandwich.

Erin turned up to the party with Evan and Steve behind her. The two boys were holding hands, looking for the perfect shady spot to sit. The adults always asked about school, as if they wanted to talk about that, so sitting under a tree that *hadn't* burnt down was a nice – even if temporary – escape from uncomfortable questions.

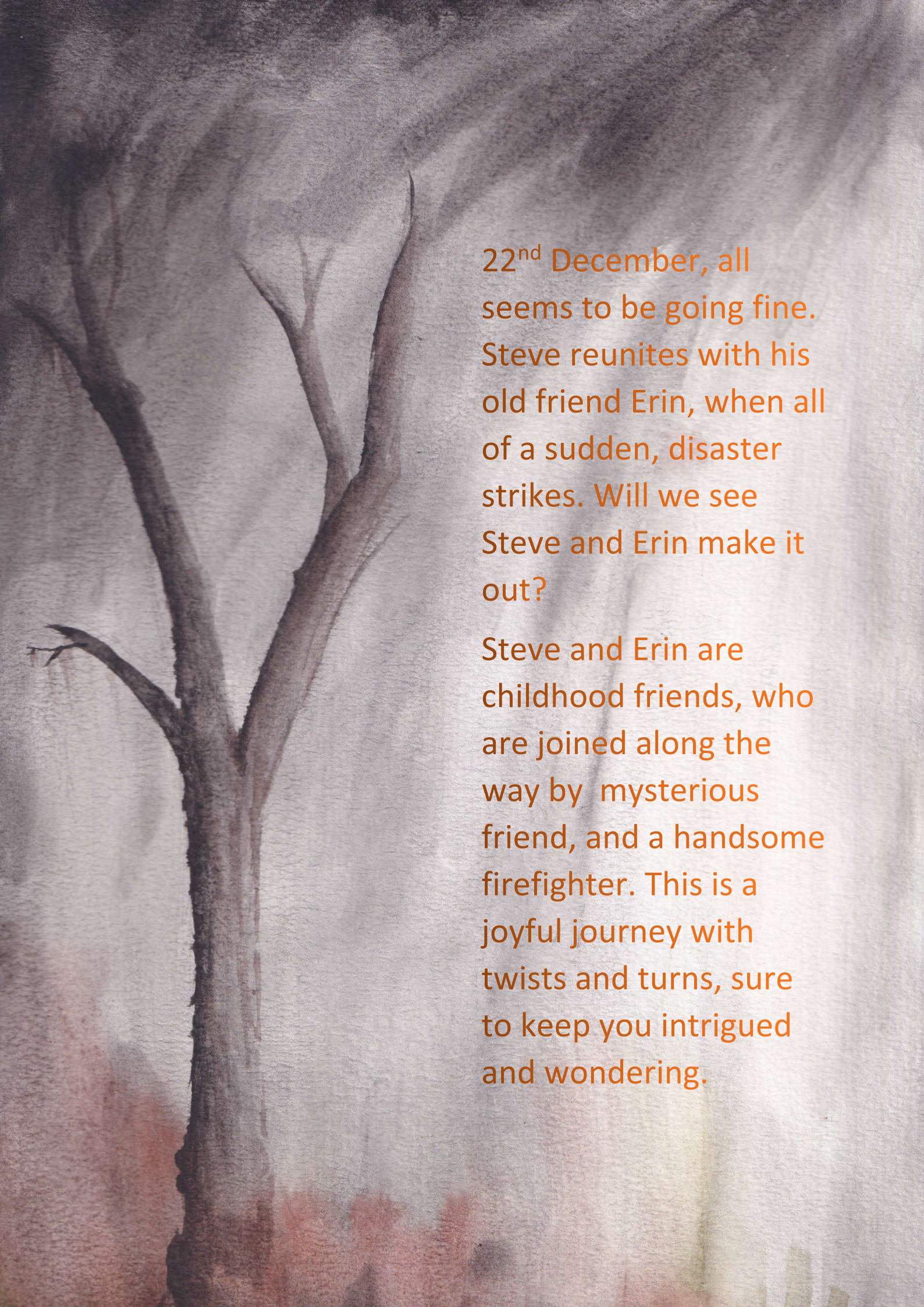


As the day progressed, the little cousins were worn out, and draped themselves over chairs, parents' laps, tables, you name it. As night fell, the parents took their little one's home, and the remaining aunts, uncles, and estranged family members nobody knows stay and have a laugh together. "I need to go now, Steve. Thank you for sitting with me today." Evan broke the silence before the cicadas could. Erin jumped to her feet. "Hey, guess what?" She exclaimed as she reached into the pocket of her clown suit. "What?" Both boys said. Steve looked up and saw a sprig of mistletoe in Erin's hand. "Um, no." He stated with a sharp punch to the shin.

"Ow!!" She laughed as he slapped her hand away. Steve stood up, helped Evan to his feet, and gave him a hug, to which Jeremy responded: "EWW!! Get a room, you two!"

Everyone laughed, and Evan walked Steve home after Erin left.

The next day, Steve was due back at work, and he was met by the tired, disturbed co-workers he saw nearly every day. Then, as he looked around, he saw a familiar face. It was Erin! She stood there, waving and smiling, ready for her first day at work with her best friend.



22nd December, all seems to be going fine. Steve reunites with his old friend Erin, when all of a sudden, disaster strikes. Will we see Steve and Erin make it out?

Steve and Erin are childhood friends, who are joined along the way by mysterious friend, and a handsome firefighter. This is a joyful journey with twists and turns, sure to keep you intrigued and wondering.