

# Runaways



**BY: Leg Bread**



# Write a Book in a Day



**THE KIDS'  
CANCER  
PROJECT**

Science. Solutions. Survival.

## PARAMETERS FORM 2019

### TEAM DETAILS

STATE: NSW .....

DIVISION: Middle School .....

SCHOOL/GROUP: NBSC Manly Campus .....

TEAM NAME: Leg Bread .....

TEAM ID: 250 .....

### PARAMETERS AND RANDOM WORDS

#### Parameters

Primary character 1 Lifeguard .....

Primary character 2 Sculptor .....

Non-human character Rabbit .....

Setting Forest .....

Issue Strange journey .....

#### 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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Illustrators: Angus Geraghty, Kevin Lu.

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## Chapter 1

The rough ocean waves slapped against his board. The water was frosty and bitter. Sam breathed heavily, paddling determinedly. His blonde hair waved furiously in the intense wind. A towering wave approached and Sam powered ahead, fixed to his goal. He launched over the massive wave; it smashed behind him but he kept paddling. Ahead, he caught a glimpse of an isolated hand, struggling in the water. It strived to stay above the water, but was rapidly sinking. Sam raced forward, pure perseverance in his movement. He reached out and grasped the hand, pulling out the body of a soaked, depleted swimmer. The swimmer took a huge, relieved breath, starving for air. Sam propped him on his board and turned around, starting to paddle towards shore.

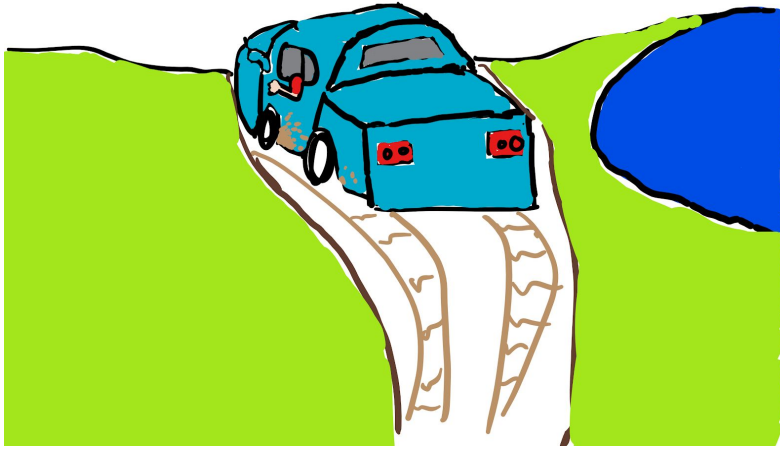
“Thank you! You saved my life!” the swimmer exuberantly exclaimed when they arrived on the shore. The swimmer collapses onto the sand, weary from the near death experience. “Are you alright? Those waves hit you pretty hard,” Sam inquired.

“Yeah, I’m fine”, were the words the swimmer could muster from his weary body.

Emergency services arrived and took over the situation for the lifeguard Sam. Another successful day on the job.

Sam arrived home, exhausted from the arduous rescue today. He slumped down into his chair by the television in his house. The news droned on about boring current events. Sam rested his head back and stared at the ceiling, observing the wrinkled grain lines on the roof. He settled into the couch, enjoying the squishy, soft texture of the beige leather. Sam was a confident, diligent man who loved his job. However it was wearing him down. He contemplated a vacation. He always wanted to immerse himself in a spontaneous road trip. After constantly helping other people he wanted to help himself for once. “Ya know what, I want to go on a road trip. I wanna go to Melbourne!”

Sam packed a cooler with slabs of cheap, ice cold beer, delectable vegemite sandwich provisions and a mountain of chips. Sam extracted a vintage brown luggage case and filled it with an assortment of clothes. He grabbed his compact radio, a surfboard and his luggage and headed outside. The sun was drifting away behind the city, the clouds blanketing the velvet sky. Sam could hear the distant noises of the peak hour traffic bustle. He was glad he was escaping that piercing, always-irritating sound of the city. His navy blue Holden ute sat stationary in the driveway. He affixed the board to the back of the ute, loaded his luggage onto the back seats and put his radio on the dashboard. He buckled up and tuned up his radio to his favourite songs. Sam pulled out of the driveway and drove away. Ready to relax.



## Chapter 2:

Sam's hand tapped against the leather covered steering wheel, drumming to his favourite songs. For once he didn't need to worry about screams for help coming from the sea. Besides, he had earned it. He planned to drive for about five hours than stop at the small **Community** of Chiltern for lunch. As his navy Holden ute rattled along the worn tarmac he looked out at the sights on either side.

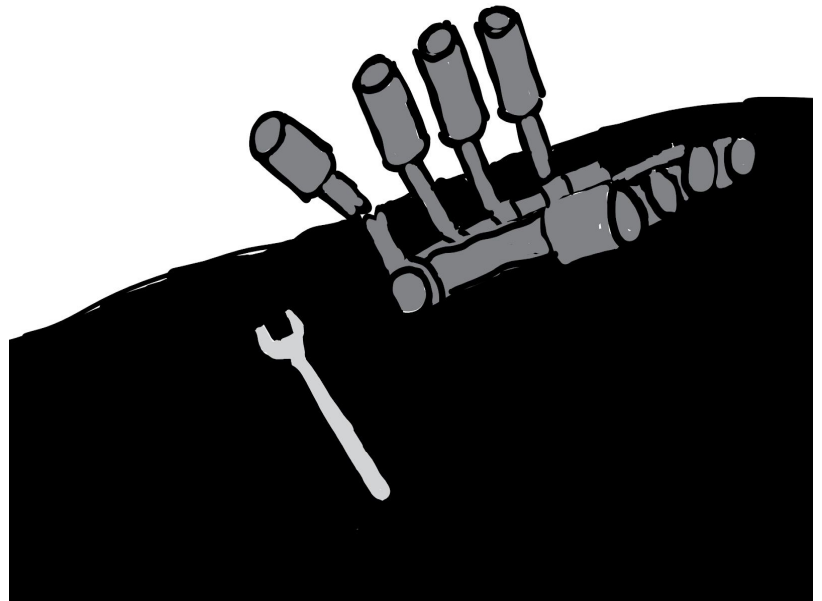
As he refocused his gaze to the road he saw a large green quilt covering the land before him, rising into the clouds and dropping down to unimaginable depths with an occasional spread of speckling stars, a splash of colour across the **Canvas** of a black night sky. It was beautiful. Houses were spotted here and there, a rush of colour as he drove along the highway. Sam was surprised that so much time had passed. He sniffed the whistling air rushing through the open window. "I'm on the HIGHWAY TO HELL" Sam **Sings** along to his radio, tapping out a beat on the dashboard to the Aussie classic.

Sam was well out of Sydney. There were clusters of gum trees left and right, with little signs of civilization. The road unfolded in what seemed like an infinite illusion. He continued driving. His engine spluttered, but he knew it would be fine; it happened daily. He wanted a break, and was pleased to note that he was



only an hour from Chiltern. Sam was enjoying the relaxing isolation of the Outback. He rubbed his blue eyes and yawned.

Suddenly, the tranquility was snapped in half by a deafening bang, followed by the jarring sound of the engine and then sudden silence. Sam's ute had been threatening to cut out for years, and it had to be now, in the middle of this forest on the side of the road in a ditch. He was stuck, no



reception, no light and no way to travel. He looked around observantly. He found a passage through the trees with a smoothed out dirt path running adjacent to the road. This was his only hope, so he pushed on in the hope of finding someone to help fix his ute.

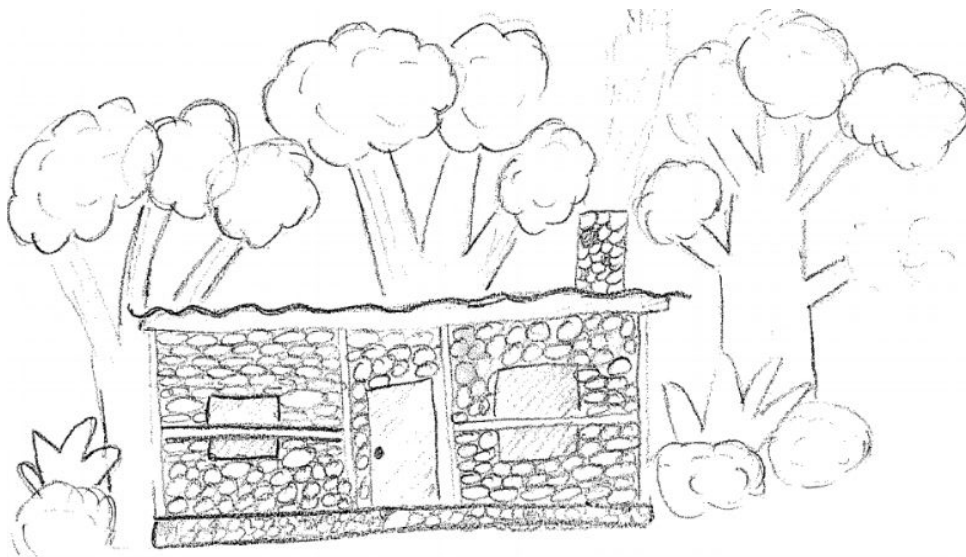
He trudged a while down through the forest, the gum tree canopies masking the night sky. The trees opened up into a small-scale pasture. A few cows grazed lazily on the grass. Some horses were packed into a ramshackle stable, sleeping on a bed of yellow hay.

Sam continued down a path and discovered a small house, hidden away.

“Yes! Finally, somebody who can help me. Let’s hope they’re not crazy.” A million thoughts crashed into his mind. How was he going to fix his totalled car? Why is this lonely person living out here by themselves? Could they fix his car? A million questions...

### Chapter 3:

Sam dawdled to the front of the house. Faded light crept through the closed curtained windows. Someone was inside. The house was one story tall, made primarily of weathered shale. Near the front porch, a rotted sunchair stood on three legs. The one impressive thing about the house was the garden holding large, intricate statues. Sam pulled away the tarps, and his eyes were strangely locked to them. They were made of finely chiselled stone. They were obviously crafted with a steady hand and an eye for detail. They sat on marble pedestals. There was a koala statue, a platypus and a wombat statue. He replaced the tarps, wondering what they were for. Sam walked up to the front door, stern with nervousness.



He clenched his fist and sighed deeply. He raises his hand and knocks briskly but strongly on the wooden door. Sam listened to

the thump of footsteps approaching. The door clicked, creaked, and opened to reveal a man. He was a swarthy Aboriginal fellow, with a squat, stocky stature. He had sunken, warm eyes and jet black hair.

“G’day. I hardly ever get visitors,” he admitted. “It is a pleasant surprise”.

Sam immediately noticed a strong accent, one he had not heard before. “Oh, h-hey there mate,” Sam replied. He was surprised to find that this man was oddly cheerful and warm in nature.

“My ute broke down. I was stranded on the highway. And then I noticed your house.”

The man was understanding and ushered Sam inside.

“What’s your name?” the mysterious man asked.

“Uh... Sam. And you?”

“The name’s Jim. This is my house.”

Sam stepped over the threshold and Jim closed the creaky door behind him. “Make ya self comfortable. I’ll let ya stay for dinner and we can check out the damage tomorrow”, Jim suggested.

“This is really nice of you. Thanks!”

Sam was grateful for the inviting man.

The house was relatively cluttered, with a dusty carpet and patterned walls. In places, the shale pierced the plastering. Later during the night, Sam and Jim sat at the dining table. They ate a casserole, but Sam’s hunger made him wolf it down. It hardly filled his voracious appetite. Finally, Sam mustered the courage to ask about the animal statues in the garden. “Jim”, he said

interestedly. “What were those statues in the garden? Sorry, but I had to look. They were amazing though!”

“Those? Those are my artworks. I’m a sculptor. I’m really proud of ‘em. Hopefully I can show you them tomorrow.”

Jim directed Sam to his comfy, draw-out couch for sleep. Sam collapsed and was consumed by the bedsheets, and went to sleep within seconds.

## Chapter 4:

Sam awoke to the sun rays sneaking through the corner of the window. He cracked his knuckles and yawned. He walked outside to find Jim admiring those same statues. What baffled Sam was the creature clinging onto Jim's leg. It was a silk white rabbit, with a fluffy, cotton ball tail and searching whiskers. Its ears seemed disproportionate.

"Jim! There's a rabbit on your leg!" Sam uttered.

"This is my pet rabbit. He's my best buddy; his name is Bjørn. Funny lad he is. My wife named him before she passed away a while back."

"I'm sorry to hear that," Sam sympathized.

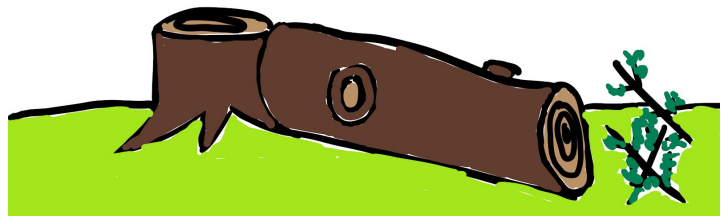
"Maybe I can help you on the farm for a while".

Bjørn was a loveable rabbit. Everything he did was so innocent, yet cheeky. His fur was so clean and white despite the dirt everywhere. Passive and undeniably adorable.



Sam and Jim got to work.

Jim had assigned the job of cutting down trees for additional pastureland in the dense forest. It was at that



point that Sam noticed the vast forests. They yielded sharpened axes and systematically chipped at the base of trees. They came toppling down with ease. Jim parked a trailer near the site and they began stacking the tree branches in it. “I’ll be using these to build a new set of stables for the cows. Eesh, this stuff is sappy,” Jim said on a side note as he caressed his sap-ridden hands.

“They say this stuff is **Magic**. Can make things and inanimate objects come to life. Weird story aye? The wives used to tell that tale a long time back, hehe” he chuckled heartily. Sam listened intently, considering this story. He knew it wasn’t real but something was telling him that maybe there was some truth in it. He wiped the gathering sweat off his brow which left it glistening in the searing heat. He continued to hack away at the trees. Sam figured that if he helped Jim cut down trees, Jim would help him fix his car. Jim seemed to know his stuff about outback survival and he was pretty nifty.

“Anyway, let me show you the sculptures,” Jim stated, turning and striding back towards the house. They dropped their axes in the dirt with a thud.

Jim walked over to the garden to unveil the statues, his rabbit hopping energetically behind him. He unveiled the statues for each of the animals. Sam



ran his fingers along their smooth edges, the ‘magical’ sap still on his hands. The animals had fine details and swirls, made with undeniable skill. They looked incredibly realistic. Sam could have sworn he saw the koala’s eyes move.

Sam and Jim resolutely decided to fix Sam’s ute after a filling lunch. “‘Ere ya go. Some toasted sandwiches. These’ll get ya filled right up Sam,” Jim explained as he merrily cooked sandwiches on a grey sandwich toaster. When they cooled, Sam took a bite. They were amazing and tasty with cheese seeping from the sides. They wrapped up lunch and then began to go fix Sam’s ute. Jim quickly grabbed a small tool kit. They strolled casually to the car.

“All righty, let’s get to work.” Jim confidently popped the hood of the car and scanned it. “Ah! I see the problem. Yer cylinder head is broken. No worries. I got a spare one right here. It’ll last you a few weeks. Though you might wanna get it done properly when you get home. “Jim reached into his kit and pulled out a new cylinder. In a collaborative effort, they fixed the car swiftly. Sam screwed in a few bolts and then closed the hood.

“Jim, I can’t thank you enough. You were a big help there. I really appreciate it.”

“Aye, no problem. Nice to have someone over for once. Let’s head back and I’ll get you a beer.”



## Chapter 5

Sam's heart **Skipped** a beat as he glared at a confused and distraught Jim. "Th-They're...gone." Jim's emotions had shifted. It was like something had sucked the life out of him. The marble bases were cracked, footprints lead in different directions. The sculptures had disappeared.

"I don't understand how they could have gone missing. Hours of work... for nothing. Sam could see the devastation on Jim's face. Sam thought about it. That myth that Jim was laughing about; could it have been true? Jim's rabbit stared where the statues once stood, obviously having no idea what was going on. Sam noticed trails consisting of claws and webbed feet leading from the area into the forest thicket. Sam was bewildered. Did they come alive and walk off?!"

"What happened?" Jim asked, obviously distraught. "They were right here."

Sam felt responsible for this, and apologised whole-heartedly.

"I'm sorry. This could have been my doing. I touched the artworks with the supposedly magical sap."

"The myth isn't real. Stuff like that don't happen around here. That sap stuff? That story? Nothing but a joke. Someone took my sculptures. And I'm going to find them and get my sculptures back."

His anger was unbearable. Jim knew he was in denial, he didn't want to admit that something like that actually existed.

“But why are there tracks of the exact three animals, leading in different directions. That's not fake,” Sam pointed out.

Jim was defeated. “Sam, I need your help to find my statues.

They've wandered off! We need to find them with your ute.

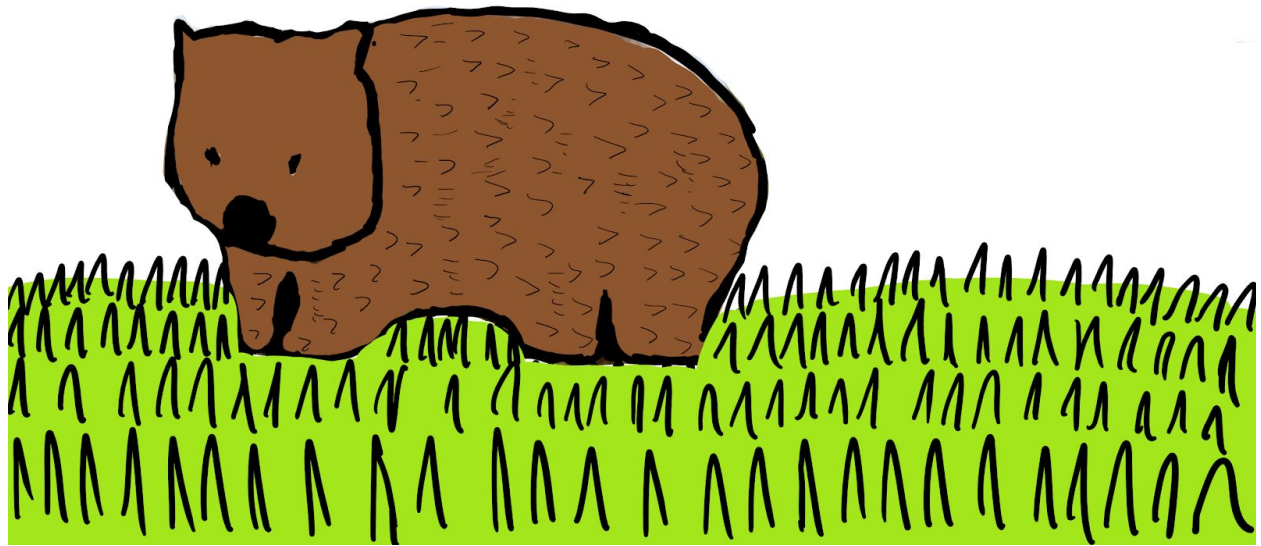
PLEASE!” Jim was visibly distressed. Sam agreed to help Jim catch his sculptures. Sam owed it to him for everything.

Jim rushed over to his dilapidated shed, tucked away behind some trees. He dug up some makeshift cages and other equipment. He attached them to the back of the ute and got in the passenger seat. Bjørn the rabbit followed behind and rested at Jim's feet. Sam got in and ignited the car, the engine roaring to life. They followed the trail of the wombat statue first into the thicker forest.

The car shook like an earthquake as it drove over the rough terrain of the forest. Every log, leaf pile and mound of dirt under the wheels of the ute was another jolt that caught them off guard. The ute rolled downwards on a slope. The rabbit at Jim's feet was uncomfortable with the sturdy, vibrating vehicle. Sam peeked over the steering wheel onto the dirt path, a pattern of paw prints in the mud.

“Looks like this wombat's heading down to the old creek,” Jim predicted. There was a pile of square dung, unique to the wombat on the side of the road. They were on its heels. The

trees thickened and the vibrantly coloured bushes covered the floor of the willows. The tranquil rhapsodies of chirping birds could be heard throughout the rustling trees. The sun shone over the forest brightly. They park the blue ute by the creek. The water was slightly murky with trees hanging overhead. They exited the car and Bjørns ears suddenly perked up. “Bjørn heard something” said Jim. Bjørn suddenly bounded off into a nearby collection of shrubs. “Somethings not right. What scared Bjørn” pondered Sam. “maybe nothing scared him maybe he scared



something” said Jim. They sneakily walked towards the bush careful not to step on any twigs. Jim witnessed the wombat ahead, sitting in his recently constructed burrow near the creek shore. They slowly split up in order to corner it.

Sam crept from the left, Jim from the right. The mud squelched under their shoes, their socks starting to soak. The wombat looked up, its head swiveling to analyse the foreign beings advancing. The wombat, only partially hidden by the bush, backed further into the burrow. Suddenly, a hand grabbed the wombat. The wombat dodged it, and scratched Jim with its claws. He recoiled with shock, three lines leading from his wrist to his knuckles. Sam swerved, trying to confuse the wombat. He jumped and seized the sculpture animal. They fitted him into the cage in the ute so he wouldn't escape. "My statue! It really is alive!" Jim was shocked. "Quick, let's go find the others! Only two more to go!"



## Chapter 6:

“Where would we find the platypus sculpture?” asked Jim.

“Well, don’t they live in freshwater lakes? I think...”

“Yeah! I remember. I learned that somewhere. The nearest lake is Lake Moon. It’ll probably go there.”

They redirected the ute to the next trail created by the platypus sculpture. The tires rolled down a hill in the deep forest, branches snapping off in every direction as the car came in contact. Dirt accumulated on the windscreen. Jim was stiff, he ruffled his crazy black hair. The soil started to moisten, as the ute started slipping; the brakes failing more and more. It would be detrimental to veer into the bushes. Sam unfolded a sandwich from his cooler while driving. He ate it hastily with one hand. They continued into the forest, the ground gradually levelled out. The bush, however, got no lighter. The lake opened up ahead, the visible rippled reflection of the sun on the water. They came up to the lake, just in time to see the platypus’s tail dipping below the surface. It created a disturbance in the water.

Jim, Sam and Bjørn got out and observed the lake environment. It was an obstacle.

“How are we gonna get that Platypus? It’s right out there in the water. We can’t swim out there can we?” Jim was lost.

A shadow of the platypus could be seen from the surface of the water. It was gliding across the lake, free and joyous. It had a white underbelly, blending into a furry brown coat. He had a large black, curving bill and two beetle-like eyes. It had interesting webbed feet sprouting from its body, which were moving in succession like a machine to push itself through the water. The platypus occasionally rose to the surface, then plummeted to the bottom of the lake and wiped against the pebbles and abundant seagrass of the lake floor.

Sam had an idea. He still had his surfboard stored in his ute. He retrieved it and ran towards the water.

Sam dived into the freezing water, balancing precariously on his board, breaking the smooth surface. Although the platypus was much faster, Sam could easily outwit it. Sam used the natural curve of the lake. Even though it was just like any rescue, this time it felt more difficult. The more the platypus was confined, the more aggressive it became. Suddenly, out of nowhere, it flew out the water, seemingly floating centimetres from Sam's face. The poisonous spur glimmered in the midday sun, the reflection so bright it was blinding. More worryingly, it was dangerous, even to humans. The platypus sculpture swam away, Sam on his back. He reached out, attempting to grab him, but to no avail. He swam vigorously Sam reached out and caught it. Jim yelled "Howzat?", like a cricket commentator. He was elated with his catch. Sam remembered his life guard training

and how to handle restless patients. He held onto the platypus firmly and paddled back to the sandy shore.

“YEAH! You got him!” Jim yelled, celebratory. They had two now. Nearly there. But they were already focused on the final challenge - the koala. They placed the platypus carefully in the cage and fastened it. He schlepped the cage into the back of the ute.

## Chapter 7:

Jim's morale improved significantly. He now had two of his prized sculptures back. The joy was actually visible at that point. However it waned slightly when he realized that the koala could be in any Eucalyptus tree in the forest. Jim, Sam and Bjørn the rabbit slumped down at trees. Bjørn curled up and went to sleep. Jim and Sam cracked open soda cans, and drank the fizzing bliss inside. They opened up some vegemite sandwich provisions and chowed down on them. Sam rest in the sun, drying off his damp body.

"You know how many trees are in this forest? Too many to count. We'll never find this koala!" Jim said.

"Wait, Jim do you hear that?" Sam exclaimed. Sam heard crunching and munching coming from somewhere. They all looked around trying to find the source the chewing which could have been anywhere. Jim looked above and spotted a plump creature in the tree. He noticed its fine details and curves. It was the koala!

"Oh my gosh! Look, Sam. We found him. What are the chances that he would be right here!" Jim was ecstatic. Bjørn the rabbit scratched at the base of the tree.

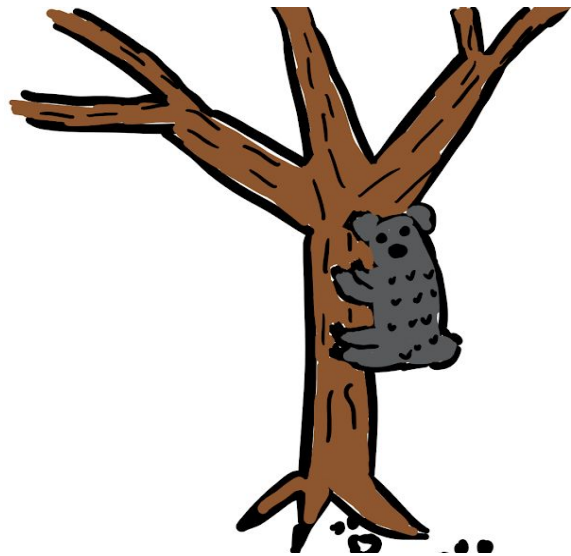
"How are we gonna get up there?" Sam asked Jim.

"I've been around trees my whole life. I know what to do. I'll climb it using my belt."

"What? Your belt?"



Jim unclipped his waist belt on his blue denim jeans. He wrapped it around the tree confidently and held both ends firmly. Jim schlepped himself up the tree, pulling the belt close to his chest. He continued up the tree struggling more and more, his muscles straining and working overtime. Finally, he heaved his strong legs over the branch. He could reach out and pat the koala from here. The koala stared at him intently. *Why is this man staring at me* it probably wondered.



Jim reached out and clutched the koala. The koala hugged Jim like a tree. It was absolute insanity to Jim. He slipped down the tree with the koala cradled in his arms. It was chubby and had a soft grey fur coat. It had a round face and a friendly vibe. He coaxed the koala into the cage, and finally they had all three.  
All three animals.

## Chapter 8:

Jim, Sam and Bjørn the rabbit filed into the Holden ute. The feeling of accomplishment was relieving and rewarding. Sam went on a road trip for adventure, and he sure did get a wild one. He was glad to help out Jim. He had a mellow personality. They drove home to Jim's humble home. The sculptor was beyond happy to have all his three masterpiece sculptures back to him.

They pulled into the driveway and got out. They pulled out the caged animals from the ute.

“What're you going to do now that they're... alive?” Sam asked  
“I don't know... I can't keep them caged up like this, it's not right.” Jim had a melancholy tone in his voice.

“What do you think we should do. When we found them, they were all just trying to be free,” Sam said.

“There must have been a reason that they went where they did,” Jim said soundly.

“I think we should let them go.”

“I think you're right there Sam. They'll be happy this way.”  
Jim unlocked the cages and beckoned the animals out. They slowly but surely disappeared into their respective habitats.

That night, Sam and Jim shared a barbeque outside with cold beers. They reminisced of the wild adventure they had

experienced. Jim propped out some lawn chairs on the porch and they sat down, relaxed.

The next morning, the sun rose over the horizon and lit up the leafy canopies. A chilling wind flew through the air. Jim walked out to where the statues once were in sadness. He was reassured however by the thought of their definite happiness.

“Goodbye” he said, to no-one in particular.

Sam prepared his ute and after a few moments of revving, drove off into the rising sun.

## **Chapter 9**

Jim opened up his shed and hauled out a large slab of clay and rock. He equipped an assortment of chisels and paints and began to carve. Jim would carve out the extinct animals of the Australian outback and set them free into the wild. Bjørn accompanies Jim at his feet as he lets his artistic talent flow.

The story follows a hard working lifeguard from Sydney's Northern Beaches named Sam. When a spontaneous road trip takes an unexpected turn, he discovers a hidden magic within the forest of Outback Australia with his newfound sculptor friend Jim and his companion rabbit Bjørn.

This tale is recommended for children aged 10-16 years of age.

