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# AUSTRALIA Reader's Digest

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**2021 Classic  
Collection**  
*Hours of Great  
Reading*

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Quest to  
Make Us  
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## EDITOR'S NOTE

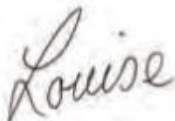
# *Insights and Charm*

**WITHOUT EXCEPTION**, the editorial team looks forward to delving into the Reader's Digest archives. When the very first edition (February, 1922) was put together manually, with a typewriter, glue and letterpress block letters, the intention of the pocket-sized magazine was to entertain and inform busy readers. With a story for each day of the month, the goal was to offer perspectives that were positive, inspiring and informative. And, above all, celebrating kindness and hope in the world. These core characteristics remain the pillars of our magazine today.

This year's Classics Edition has articles and items spanning over 90 years, each one offering insights and experiences that is a timeless reading treasure. 'Passed With Flying Colours' (page 94) was published in 1948 and offers a dignified approach to royal reporting – not intrusive or demeaning for the member of royalty involved. Also sure to entertain is 'A Dog Like No Other' (page 56), 'When Mothers Get the Bug' (page 108), and 'How We Broke the Drought' (page 88) – each one proof that a great story is timeless.

Although every one of the stories in this compilation earned its place, my favourite is 'Joey's Quiet War' (page 26), which beautifully portrays the bravery and intelligence of a woman who became an unexpected national hero during a dark moment.

Write to us and tell us your favourite story (see details on page 8). Happy reading!



LOUISE WATERSON  
Editor-in-Chief





# AUSTRALIA Reader's Digest

Vol. 200  
No. 1188  
January 2021

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# LETTERS

## *Reader's Comments And Opinions*

### **Nurturing Our Brain Health**

**In an age where we're expected to live longer, I found Sari Harrar's article, 'How to Build a Better Brain' (November), compulsive reading. Living longer is one thing, living longer with a better, healthier brain is paramount if we want to enjoy quality of life. Meditation, engaging in pleasurable activities and fuelling our bodies with healthy 'brain food' are some of the simple changes that can have beneficial effects on brains of every age. Brain health is in our hands.**

JUDITH CAINE



### **Keeping Languages Alive**

I am very encouraged by the article 'Preserving Lost Languages' by Raphael Garcia (October). Knowing one's language is knowing one's mind. Learning minority languages also means learning the traditions, culture and getting to know the people of specific groups, which

can be a great help in building a peaceful world.

THAZIN SAN

### **Saying Thank You**

Like Gina Hamadey ('My Thank You Year', August), I've committed to sending thank you notes for a year – in my case, one per week. It seemed daunting to come up

**Let us know if you are moved – or provoked – by any item in the magazine, share your thoughts. See page 8 for how to join the discussion.**

with 52 people to thank. But with the recent COVID-19 pandemic, I found plenty of recipients: my postman, my supermarket, friends and family. I encourage others to make 2021 their thank you year!

MISTY K. HAM

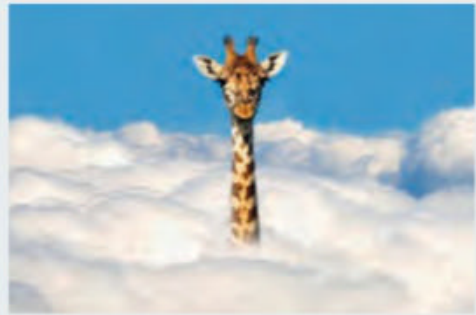
### Rising From the Ashes

‘The Search for Life on Kangaroo Island’ (November) brings to mind the phoenix. This phoenix, however, bears no resemblance to the mythological one. It has soft brown fur and a leathery nose instead of feathers. Like the phoenix of legend, Kangaroo Island’s koalas will rise from the ashes and continue to beat in our hearts because too many people refuse to let them die.

MICHAEL WOUTERS

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### LIVING THE HIGH LIFE

We asked you to think up a clever caption for this photo.

The zoo tried to put everything in the cloud.

BOON CHANG TAN

Think I stretched my neck too far!

VON (RICHARD) EBON

Beats burying your head in the sand.

BOB WALLACE

I told you I’m a head above the rest.

JODIE LLOYD

Congratulations to this month’s winner, Bob Wallace.

WIN!



### CAPTION CONTEST

Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win

\$100. To enter, email

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or see details on page 8.



### Robin's Road to Recovery

Thank you, Robin Keown, for sharing the journey from diagnosis to recovery in 'Needle Phobia' (My Story, December). Everyone deserves a shot at the most up-to-date treatment and Robin's acceptance of falling outside the trial qualifications was most certainly rewarded by the health system's decision to allow her to participate. **SUE WILLIAMS**

### Understanding Loneliness

I was fascinated by 'Loneliness, 2020's Other Health Crisis' (November). I am 81 years old and was married for 52 years. After being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, my wife had to be moved to an aged care facility. Her separation from family was aggravated by the isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Sadly, she passed away a month ago. My agony during this unfortunate period is very much similar to the inset story related by Larry Signy.

At last, I could breathe a sigh of relief about this situation, by trying to understand the philosophy of life and death which has been explained in very simple terms as follows: "We are born without bringing anything and we die without taking anything. The sad thing is that, in the interval between life and death, we fight for what we did not bring and what we will not take". **DAYARATNA WEERASEKARA**

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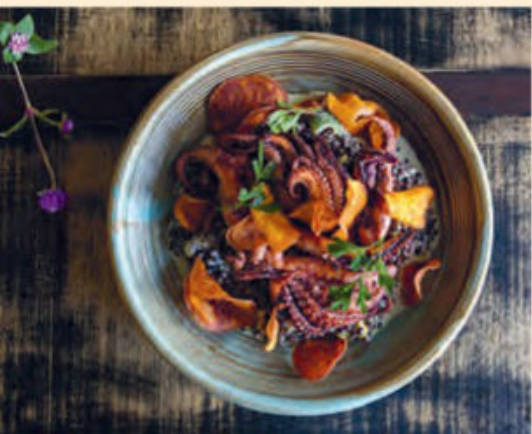
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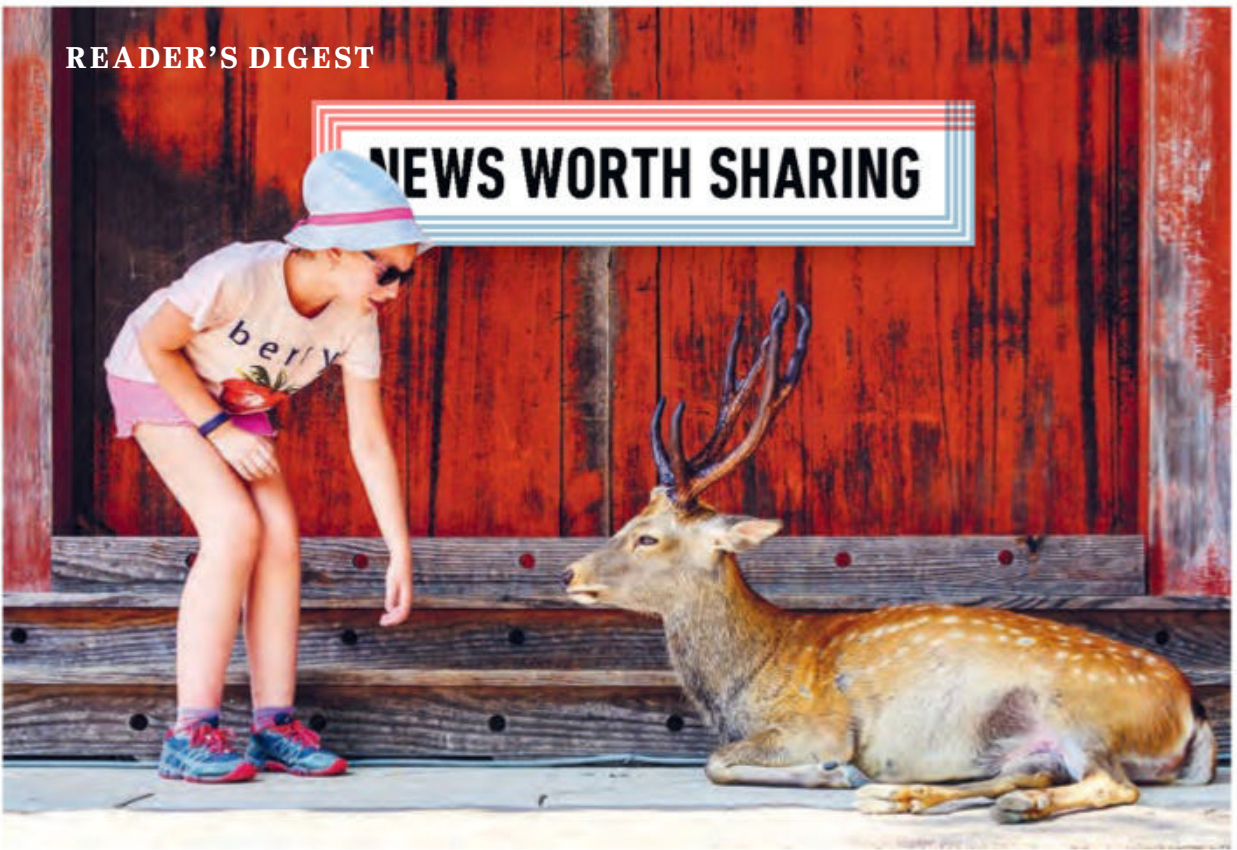
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NEWS WORTH SHARING



**Saving Nara's Sacred Deer with Edible Alternative**

**A**fter nine of Nara's sacred Sika deer died from ingesting plastic bags, local entrepreneur Hidetoshi Matsukawa wanted to do something to protect them. The 1000 deer that roam the Japanese city's park are considered messengers of the gods in the traditional Shinto religion and visitors to the town feed them treats. Although welfare groups ask visitors not to dispose of plastic bags or food packaging in the park, Matsukawa wanted to come up with a better solution to the problem. He teamed up with a local paper manufacturer and a design firm to develop

'shikagami,' or deer paper, which is made from rice bran and recycled milk cartons.

"We learned rice bran is mostly wasted in the process of rice polishing," said Matsukawa. "So this paper helps to reduce that waste as well." The edible bags are made out of similar ingredients to the rice 'deer crackers' which tourists buy to feed the deer.

The bags are being trialled at local banks and the Todaiji temple. Matsukawa hopes that as more businesses sign up to use the bags, his dream of replacing plastic bags with shikagami will save more sacred deer.



COMPILED BY VICTORIA POLZOT

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## Favourite Food Delivered to Boy

**O**ne of the only foods three-year-old Tyler Page will eat is Keith's Foods Mini Dagwood Dogs. Food selectivity is a common issue for children with autism. When supermarkets in Brisbane ran out of the sausages on a stick, Tyler's mother, Leanne, called the company.

She learned that the shortage was due to difficulties sourcing ingredients amid the pandemic. She did not expect what followed. A customer service agent not only found a box of 30 and drove for an hour-and-a-half to deliver it, she advised that as long as Tyler eats the Dagwood Dogs, they would be supplied free to him.



## Top of His Class

**Giuseppe Paternò has become Italy's oldest graduate at the age of 96 after being awarded first-class honours in philosophy from the University of Palermo in Sicily. "It's one of the happiest days of my entire life," said Paternò on graduating.**

Prevented from going to university when younger by poverty and war, he finally enrolled in 2017. "Neighbours used to ask, 'Why all this trouble at your age?'. They couldn't understand the importance of fulfilling a dream, regardless of my age," says Paternò.



## STAFF PICKS

*We enjoyed putting this issue together for your reading pleasure. Here are some favourites*



**READING A STORY FROM A CHILD'S PERSPECTIVE** can literally take you back to your own childhood, when as a young innocent you were trying to find your way in an adult world. 'My Friend The Mouse' (page 120) is such a tale. Discovering a mouse has moved into his bedroom, no doubt drawn by the shortbread hidden under his pillow, 'The Boy' tries to keep it safe from his parents. A gorgeous tale from 1968.

**DIANE GODLEY**, SENIOR EDITOR

**A BRUTAL SHARK ATTACK** is a terrifying experience at any time, but when it occurs on one of the most remote islands on Earth, it brings a whole new set of challenges. In the gripping classic

'Shark Attack!' (page 100), Mike Fraser's life is quickly ebbing away, while a helicopter pilot, paramedic and navigator hatch an ingenious, bold and risky plan to rescue him.

**ZOE MEUNIER**, MANAGING EDITOR

**OVER THE YEARS READER'S DIGEST** has introduced us to some remarkably selfless, humble and courageous people. One such quiet heroine is Joey Guerrero (page 26), who despite suffering terribly on a personal level, puts her problems aside in search of a greater goal – freeing the Philippines from Japanese occupation during World War II. I won't forget this story about a tiny, but very determined woman.

**MELANIE EGAN**, CHIEF SUBEDITOR

**'TRAPPED UNDER THE CITY SQUARE'** (page 80) is an account of remarkable human bravery and dogged resilience in the face of overwhelming odds. Surging waters suck a young boy down a hole at a public fountain. As the minutes turn to an hour, it appears all is lost.

**HUGH HANSON**, ART DIRECTOR



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# TRANSATLANTICA

NOVEMBER 1932

## *Tips and tricks for travelling the world*

◆ In Madrid a beauty contest has just been staged that ought to be a model for all the world to follow; for make-up was ruled out, and the contestants were forced to wash their faces with soap and water in the presence of the judges.

◆ There must be some bright businessman behind the latest Parisian mode in feminine ornamentation: it seems that if you are a lady and up-to-the-minute nowadays, you have to wear a necklace consisting of little medallions each containing a rare and costly postage stamp.

◆ They've just opened a new railroad station in Singapore, the Tanjong Pagar Railway Station, that brought out some pretty thrilling ideas in the accompanying speeches. We hadn't realised that even now there are only three small sections of track missing to give Singapore uninterrupted rail communication with the English channel; or that if it were not for a little stretch in Siam [now Thailand] and a couple of hundred kilometres in China, you could get from Singapore to the eastern end of the Trans-Siberian without once stepping out of a cushioned seat.



### **That's Amore**

A wanderer from Italy tells of a shoe factory in the town of Frosinone to which love has come stealing on soft, upsetting wings. Production fell off markedly, and the difficulty was traced to discord among the female employees. Discreet investigation proved the cause of the discord to be a handsome young apprentice named Giuseppe, with whom all the female workers had automatically fallen in love. Dismissed, Giuseppe appealed to his trade union. Finally, said the union stoutly, "We acquit this man, for we believe that to be loved wholesale is no offence."



## The Great Grain Race

Those who still thrill to the sight of tall ships have had their annual stirring of the soul with the arrival in England of the great fleet of 18 full-rigged sailing vessels, laden with 66,000 tons of Australian grain, which each year race from South Australia, around Cape Horn and up the Atlantic to the River Thames. This time the race was won by a four-masted Swedish barque, after a voyage of 120 days.



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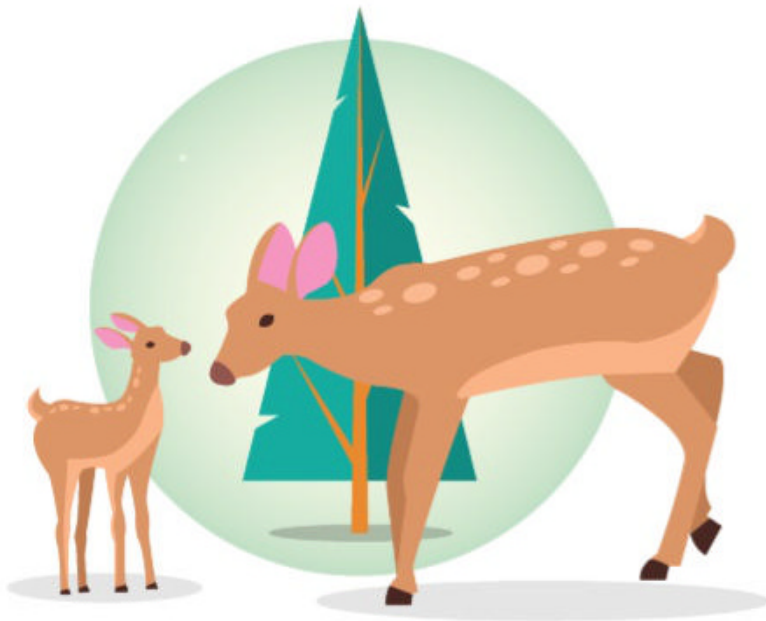
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## SMART ANIMALS

*The love of a mother for its offspring is something to behold*



### **Doe a Dear**

KATHLEEN TUCK

Some 20 years ago, my little mother doe was one of over 100 animals on our property. She had always been difficult to deal with, and would shy away at any attempt to touch her, bolting down the paddock at the slightest approach on my part. Attempts to trim her hooves or vaccinate her were met with sheer terror. But here she was, spent and exhausted, her newborn lying beside her.

It had been a difficult birth and she lay there panting for breath, with no more energy left. Her

newborn, equally exhausted, was pitilessly bleating for its mother and sustenance.

I quickly rubbed the black and white fawn down and cleared the mucus from its mouth, then held the little mite up to its mother to suckle. At that precise moment I had unknowingly gained a friend.

From that time on, when I stood in the middle of the paddock just contemplating my beautiful

---

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surroundings and the lovely rolling hills in the distance, I would become aware of a small wet nose nuzzling the palm of my hand. It was my little mother doe. I would lean down and rub behind her ears and caress the top of her head. She was my friend.

Whoever said animals do not feel gratitude really does not know what they are talking about.

Wonder fills your soul when you are endeavouring to train an animal and the moment of understanding flickers in its eyes. It's unmistakable, and fills your heart with joy.



## The Shortest Way Home

PRIYANEE WIJESKERA

When my aunt's children were small, she decided to get them a puppy. Her neighbour's dachshund had given birth to a litter of puppies a few weeks earlier and so she arranged to buy one

of the puppies once they had been weaned.

The day came to bring home the little puppy and the children were thrilled; they named him Shorty and immediately welcomed him, preparing his food – which he did not eat – and a comfortable bed in a basket.

The next day the children gave him some milk before bidding him goodbye and heading off for school. When they returned, they were alarmed to discover that Shorty was missing. They searched all over the house but he was nowhere to be found.

A few hours later, the neighbour who sold them the puppy came over carrying Shorty, apologising. He explained that the mother dog had sneaked into my aunt's house and carried the puppy back to her home.

For a number of days my aunt and her neighbour tried in vain to keep the puppy in his new home but each day the mother dog would come and fetch him back.

Finally, my aunt's neighbour gave up and offered her a refund.

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**PETS**

# Dangerous Foods for Dogs

*Some human fare is poisonous to canines*

BY Dr Katrina Warren



Our regular pet columnist, Dr Katrina Warren, is an established and trusted animal expert.

**WHILE IT MAY BE TEMPTING** to share the food we love with our canine friends, just because it is good for us doesn't mean it's good for them. Dr Katrina Warren identifies the common human foods that can be toxic for dogs.

**ONIONS** in all their forms – raw, cooked, dry and powdered – are toxic to dogs, even when they are just an ingredient in soups and casseroles. It's not clear what quantity needs to be eaten, so it's best to avoid them entirely if feeding your dog leftovers.

**GARLIC** is used by some people as a natural flea preventative, but it can have a cumulative effect and be toxic. Onions and garlic cause haemolytic anaemia, which is a destruction of the red blood cells. Pale gums, vomiting, diarrhoea, blood in the urine, rapid heartbeat, weakness and lethargy are signs that urgent veterinary treatment is required.

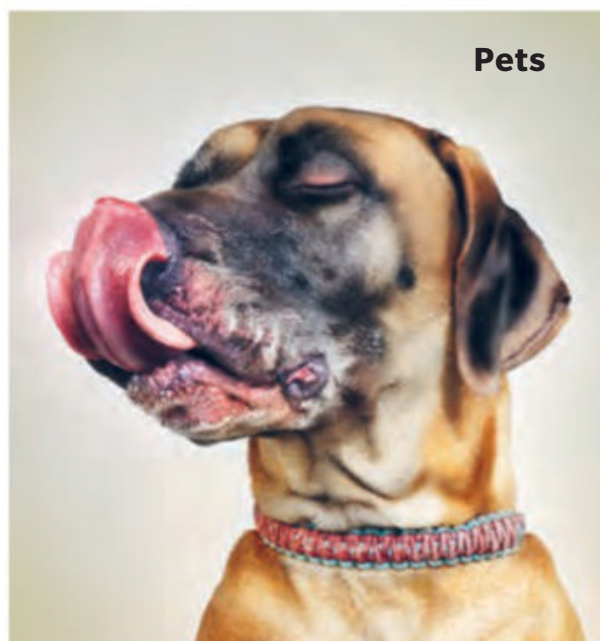
**CHOCOLATE** is very palatable to dogs, however it can be fatal. Chocolate and cocoa contain theobromide, a chemical that adversely affects the heart, lungs, kidney and central nervous system. Urgent veterinary attention is required if your dog eats chocolate because as little as 50 grams can poison a small dog.

**MOST DOGS LOVE GRAPES**, but just a few can be toxic to small dogs. Dried grapes (raisins and sultanas) are also poisonous and symptoms such as vomiting,

diarrhoea, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, weakness and a staggering gait usually appear about 24 hours after consumption.

**CAFFEINE** can damage the heart, lungs, kidneys and central nervous system of dogs. Restlessness, hyperactivity and vomiting are the first signs of toxicity, followed by panting, weakness, staggering gait, increased heart rate, tremors and convulsions. Caffeine can be present in soft drinks, coffee beans, coffee grounds and coffee drinks as well as large amounts of tea.

**XYLITOL**, a popular sugar-free sweetener, can cause serious side effects in dogs. It stimulates the pancreas to secrete insulin, resulting in hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) and can also cause severe liver damage. Weakness, a staggering gait, collapse and seizures can occur within 30 minutes of consumption. Urgent veterinary treatment is imperative if these symptoms occur.



People foods that are toxic for dogs include chocolate and caffeine

**MACADAMIA NUTS, APPLE SEEDS**, cherry pips, as well as peach, apricot and plum stones all contain the toxin cyanide.

**SPOILED OR MOULDY FOOD** should not be fed to dogs as it can cause digestive upsets or even botulism or salmonella with potentially fatal results. If it is not good enough for you to eat, don't feed it to your dog.

## DR KATRINA'S TOP TIPS TO AVOID POISONING

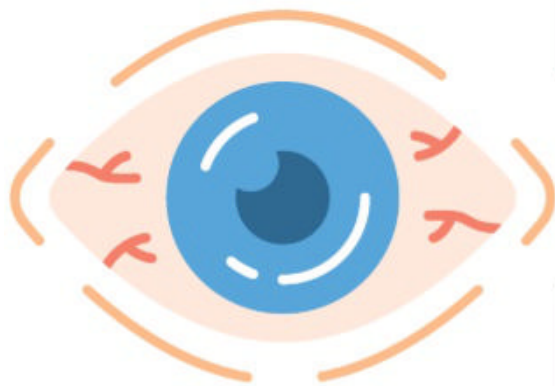
While you may be aware of the danger of feeding certain foods to your dog, it is often children who will feed a dog chocolate or grapes so explain the dangers. Consider putting your

dog somewhere safe during parties or barbecues.

Easter, Christmas and the holidays can be dangerous times; children might leave chocolate lying around

or dogs can locate hidden Easter eggs.

Alcohol of any form is toxic to dogs. Symptoms include staggering, excitement or decreased reflexes. If this occurs, seek veterinary advice.



# Help for Dry Eyes

*Five common causes of dry eyes, and the best ways to find relief*

BY *Parvinder Sagoo*

When your eyes feel like they are not producing enough moisture, you may have dry eye syndrome. Symptoms can include a stinging or scratchy sensation in your eyes, a feeling that something is caught in your eye, sensitivity to light or eye redness. Normally, a film of tears covers the surface of the eye to keep it moist,

and glands in the eyelids secrete oils to slow evaporation of these tears. An insufficient supply of tears can result in dry eyes. We explore some of the possible causes of dry eyes, and how to soothe the irritation.

**YOUR AGE** If you are over 50, you may have noticed that, along with your vision becoming increasingly worse, your eyes feel more irritated and dry. Tear production tends to diminish as you get older. Certain illnesses, such as diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis or thyroid disorders, can increase the likelihood of suffering from dry eyes. Women who are menopausal may also suffer from dry eyes due to the hormonal changes they're experiencing.

**CONTACT LENSES** Wearing contact lenses for long periods of time is a common cause of dry, irritated eyes. This may be due to the contacts being damaged, not being properly applied or lubricated, or an allergic reaction to the contact lens solution.

Pollen and dust can also collect underneath the contact lenses causing the eye to become irritated. Try to switch to glasses until the irritation subsides.

**TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME** Staring at a screen for several hours a day can cause dry eyes. Switching from



computer screen to phone screen to tablet can have a huge impact on our eye health. Not only can it cause irritated eyes but it may also bring on cluster headaches from eye strain.

The reason why your eyes become dry while looking at a screen is that the tear-film coating the eye evaporates more rapidly due to long non-blinking phases.

Try to limit your screen time, and if you have to work on a screen, take regular breaks.

### YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Prolonged exposure to heating, air conditioning, humidity and lack of fresh air all contribute to dry eyes.

A humidifier can add moisture to dry indoor air, but avoid the air blowing into your eyes. Also, don't direct hair dryers, car heaters, air conditioners or fans towards your eyes.

Pollution, pollen and dust can also aggravate the eyes, so if you are living in a highly populated city, you might find your eyes becoming dryer more often. Sunglasses can help protect the eyes from wind.

Hay fever season may also cause your eyes to become itchy due to pollen and dust particles entering the tear duct and causing your eyes to itch.

### AN UNDERLYING CONDITION

Having prolonged dry or irritated eyes can also be a sign of an underlying health condition, such as blepharitis, Sjogren's syndrome or lupus. If treatment options don't seem to be working, you should visit your GP. In some cases, treating an underlying health issue or changing medications can help clear up dry eyes.

### HOW CAN I SOOTHE DRY EYES?

Try not to touch or rub your eyes too often. People may rub their eyes out of habit or if they are tired or stressed. While having dry eyes can make you want to rub the itchy area, this can cause more damage.

Applying warm compresses to each eye and then gently washing the eyelids and lashes with warm water can help get rid of any foreign particles.

## TRY TO LIMIT YOUR SCREEN TIME AND TAKE REGULAR BREAKS

For most people with mild dry eye symptoms, it's enough to regularly use over-the-counter eyedrops (artificial tears) to alleviate any discomfort and to keep eyes moist and healthy. Some people need drops once a day, while others may need to use them several times a day. Gels and ointments may also help, so talk to your optometrist, doctor or pharmacist about which treatment is suitable.

HEALTH

# 5 Habits to Maintain Oral Hygiene



**B**EING VIGILANT in your daily dental habits goes a long way in the fight against cavities, plaque and decay.

**DON'T SLEEP WITHOUT BRUSHING** Throughout the day, the oral cavity accumulates germs, bacteria and plaque as we eat. Brushing vigorously before bed makes sure that germs and plaque are removed from the teeth. While brushing in the morning is essential, the importance of brushing teeth in the evening should not be underestimated.

**BRUSH THE RIGHT WAY** If you are not brushing properly, then your dental hygiene might be as poor as a person who doesn't brush at all. Brush the outside and inside of teeth using gentle circular strokes of motion for a sustained period of

time. Circular strokes enable effective plaque removal.

While brushing, also make sure that you gently rub your tongue with a toothbrush. Since the tongue is an integral part of the oral cavity and has a pivotal role in facilitating eating, it is subject to plaque build-up, which can lead to an unpleasant mouth odour and can also cause oral disease.

**DON'T SKIP THE DENTIST** Visiting a dental health practitioner regularly allows an in-depth evaluation of your oral health and means the dentist can intervene to make sure that any disease does not progress further.

**FLOSS ROUTINELY** This reduces plaque and stimulates the gums. Start once a day, then slowly build up the routine to floss every time after you eat.

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## WORLD OF MEDICINE

### WHEN ANXIETY PERSISTS AFTER A STROKE

It's not unusual to feel anxious following a stroke; it's a frightening experience, after all. But according to a recent review of observational studies, around a fifth of stroke survivors still live with anxiety two years later. "There's evidence, mostly anecdotal, that stroke increases the chances of social phobia and worries about recurrence," says lead author Peter Knapp of the UK's University of York. He says that while it is not clear what are the most effective treatments for stroke-related anxiety, psychoeducation, group therapy or antidepressants may help.

### ASPIRIN REDUCES CANCER RISK

An analysis of 113 studies found taking at least one aspirin a week was associated with a 27 per cent lower risk of colorectal cancer, a 36 per cent lower risk of stomach cancer, and a 38 per cent lower risk of gallbladder and bile duct cancers. People with cancer risk factors may want to discuss the findings with their GP.

### SWEARING INCREASES PAIN TOLERANCE

In a recent experiment, 92 volunteers held their hands in an ice bath while repeating either actual expletives or the fake swear words 'twizpipe' and 'fouche'. Using real swear words boosted participants' pain tolerance by 33 per cent. The fake swear words had no effect.

### HOW DIETITIANS COULD HELP WITH OBESITY MANAGEMENT

The problem with losing weight through dieting is that it isn't always entirely in an individual's control, says registered dietitian, Jennifer Brown. "The body has genetic and physiological responses to gain it back. And for many people, that has caused a sense of failure and a negative relationship with food and their body."

As well as advice on eating better, many dietitians will now help you focus on other goals, such as feeling more energetic, improving heart health, or being able to climb stairs without getting winded.



# GUT HEALTH

## MICROBIOME SUPPORT

## BLOATING OR CONSTIPATED?

## INDIGESTION AND HEARTBURN?

## FOOD INTOLERANCE? FODMAP?



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AUGUST 1951



# JOEY'S QUIET WAR

*She was one of the most heroic of  
women spies during World War II,  
whose story few knew till now*



BY *Thomas M Johnson*







**A**cross the battlefields north of Manila trudged a little Filipino woman bearing a knapsack on her bent shoulders. Several of the Japanese soldiers started to question her. Some of them seeing her bloated, scarred face, understood and shrank back. To others she bared her chest and showed her sores. When she uttered one word “Leprosy”, no sentry persisted, none examined the knapsack, none found out that — taped on her back — she carried a map of the Japanese defences north of Manila.

The map accurately indicated minefields which the advancing US troops desperately needed to know about. Sick and suffering, Joey Guerrero got the map through and thereby saved hundreds of lives. It was but one of her great contributions to the victory in the Philippines.

Among the cleverest and bravest women spies in World War II, Joey was decorated by the US government with the Medal of Freedom with Silver Palm — the highest award for war service by a civilian. The Catholic Church presented her with a medallion in recognition of “Christian fortitude and concern for fellow sufferers”. The US government also made it possible for her to go to Carville, Louisiana, where astounding progress is being made in treating Hansen’s disease (leprosy). Doctors now think that in two years, if all goes well, Joey should be able to go back to her daughter from whom she has been separated for years. Even then, Josefina Guerrero, ready for a new life

of service, will be only 35 years old.

As a little girl, Josefina had wanted to become a nun, but she contracted tuberculosis and the sisters said she was not strong enough for their life. Both her parents died, and a grandmother took the child to the coconut plantation she managed and brought her back to health.

Then Joey went to live with an uncle in Manila. There a young physician, Dr Renato Maria Guerrero, fell in love with the lively girl who had, to quote Joey herself, a “snub-nosed, funny little mug with unruly features”. They were married. The future shone bright. But in the winter of 1941, when her daughter, Cynthia, was two years old, Joey began to lose strength and appetite. Swellings appeared. Her anxious husband called in a specialist. As gently as he could, he told Joey the truth. “It is in an early stage,” he said. “You are only 23, and there are promising treatments. But children are susceptible, so you must leave your child.” For hours, she sat in the doctor’s surgery

praying for the self-control she would need for so many years. She went home. The child was playing in the nursery. It was like dying, but Joey dared not even take the risk of kissing Cynthia goodbye when she sent the child to her grandmother.

Husband and wife then began to plan their fight against the disease and against ostracism. It had not been long since people with Hansen's disease had to ring a bell as they walked in the streets of Manila. Specialists told them that Hansen's disease was now recognised as only feebly contagious among adults, and that Joey was no menace to others. But she did need good medical care and rest.

There was to be neither. Three weeks later came Pearl Harbour. Soon Japanese soldiers swaggered in Manila streets. One day five Japanese soldiers stopped Joey and four other young Filipino women and made clear their intent. Joey, 1.5 metres tall and 45 kilograms of outraged womanhood, whacked the largest soldier with her umbrella until he and his companions made off. That night one of the other women telephoned Joey. "Come to our house," she said, and hung up.

Her friend's husband awaited Joey. "A woman of your spirit should join

the guerrillas," he said. "You're the kind for our secret service." He told her the Filipino underground was sending information about the Japanese to General MacArthur in Australia to help plan the liberation of the Philippines. Would she join them? "I can't do big things," said Joey, "but every little bit helps. OK!"

Joey was given a trial assignment:

"Since you live opposite a Japanese barrack, for the next 24 hours count how many soldiers go in and out, when, and in what direction. The same for passing vehicles."

Behind drawn blinds, Joey noted everything that passed and the time. She not only counted a truckload of Japanese soldiers,

but observed that they looked dirty, as if coming from active service. She took a full notebook to the address given to her. There she signed an oath of secrecy and loyalty. She had enlisted in what she calls "my quiet war". Her tour of duty was to last for three nerve-racking years.

Joey was assigned to watch the waterfront. There her keen eyes spotted hidden Japanese anti-aircraft guns. She made a sketch and concealed it in a hollowed-out piece of fruit she carried in a basket. A Japanese soldier stopped her, pawed the fruit, greedily

**"FOR THE  
NEXT 24  
HOURS COUNT  
HOW MANY  
SOLDIERS GO  
IN AND OUT OF  
THE BARRACK"**





chose a large one, and walked on. Luckily, she had put the sketch in a small piece of fruit. After that, she made only mental notes and did her drawing at home.

Joey was among the group of women permitted to bring food to the starving Filipino and American prisoners. She radiated courage and faith to hollow-eyed GIs, some of whom gave her information they had gleaned from talkative Japanese guards. Once a suspicious guard threatened her with a bayonet, finally gestured her on, giving her braided black hair a parting tug. Her hair ribbon concealed a prisoner's report, but it was tied too tightly to come off.

By September 1944, the approaching Americans were bombing Manila, smashing gun emplacements Joey had mapped for them. The Kempai Tai, the Japanese counter-intelligence police, had informers everywhere and many guerrillas were being caught and tortured or shot. Underground operations were now directed by the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB). After another cryptic telephone call, Joey met Manuel Colayco, formerly a professor at Santo Tomas University, now a captain in the AIB. Would Joey join the AIB? It might mean her life, but –

“What can I do?” she asked.

He told her to meet a lorry at a rendezvous on the outskirts of the city. She wore wooden shoes with hollow soles in which she hid thin packets of tissue paper containing guerrilla information about Japanese preparations to defend Manila. The lorry took her 80 kilometres by rough back roads to Nagcarlan mountain. There a guide

led them up a narrow path. A large boulder barred the route, and a voice from nowhere challenged them. Joey gave the password. A light flashed in her eyes from a tree above and then winked out. The guide turned the boulder as if it were on a hinge. Pushing through, they found themselves in a clear-

**A BOULDER  
BARRED THE  
ROUTE, AND  
A VOICE FROM  
NOWHERE  
CHALLENGED  
THEM**



ing where perhaps a hundred Filipino guerrillas were living in nipa-palm barracks. Joey watched them set up a wireless apparatus and send off her message.

She became “just a little errand boy”. By various routes to the guerrilla hideout she brought reports, maps and photographs. And it was at the camp that she heard the glorious news radioed through: “The Americans are landing on Luzon!”

The guerrillas made handbills on a smuggled mimeograph machine – LIBERATION IS NEAR! – and added

a ringing appeal for help. Joey took the bills to Manila. She and other volunteers flitted through the blackout, slipping them under doors or into the hands of passers-by.

Next, she was assigned to spotting Japanese ammunition dumps. One night she heard a signal at her door. She admitted a man in Japanese uniform who handed her what seemed to be a bag of vegetables. "Here's something for Dr Guerrero," he whispered quickly, and then slipped from the house. Her husband, who was also in the underground, took the bag of 'vegetables', but said nothing. Many nights thereafter were thunderous with exploding ammunition dumps. In the daytime Joey checked to see which dumps needed more 'vegetable treatment'.

But soon Calayco sent word that she was needed as a messenger again, so Joey returned to Nagcarlan. She hoped the mountain air would renew her ebbing strength. With the scarcity of food and medicine, she was increasingly feverish and exhausted. She suffered excruciating headaches, her feet were swelling and more sores appeared on her body. Surely, she prayed, God and the returning Americans would bring help.

Early in 1945, when the Americans were approaching Manila, Colayco summoned her for the most dangerous mission of all. The guerrillas had sent the American Army a map of the Japanese defences which showed a

wide section free of mines. The Americans planned to attack there, but now the Japanese had mined the area heavily. The guerrillas needed someone to take a corrected map to 37th Division Headquarters at Calumpit, 65 kilometres north of Manila. There was fighting all the way. The Japanese guarded every road and footpath, searched all passers-by. Vehicles could not get through. A woman afoot might, if she was small, shabby and courageous. Would Joey try it? "Just tell me where to go," Joey said.

At first, she walked under cover of night, but loss of sleep weakened her still more. She was determined to try it by daylight. The first day a Japanese officer halted her, approached as if to search her. The map taped between her shoulder blades seemed to burn. As the officer came close, he peered at her face and saw that it was bloated and spotted with red. He stared at her in fear and then quickly waved her on. Joey suddenly realised that she had a terrible passport that would get her through.

After two days and nights on the road she reached American headquarters and delivered the map. Weak from sickness, she could not eat the pancakes and coffee which the Americans offered her, even though she had not tasted them for years.

The road back took her through heavy fighting. Once, seeking shelter from shell bursts and snipers' bullets, she hid behind an American tank,

which exploded and nearly killed her. When she reached Manila, she learned that Manuel Colayco had been terribly wounded during the last days of the fighting. She went to see him in the hospital where he lay dying. He tried to raise his torn body. "Fine job!" he whispered, in a last salute.

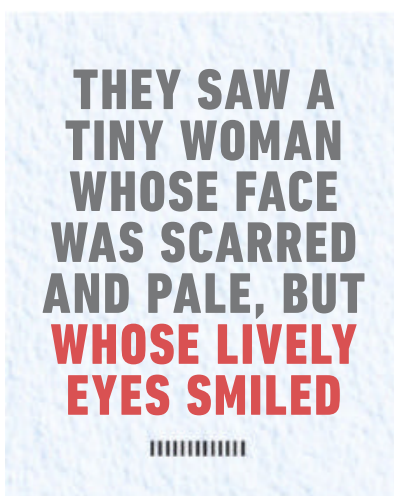
Joey turned to nursing patients in an evacuation hospital; but her illness, aggravated by overwork, became so serious that the hospital authorities told her she must go to Tala, the Philippine government hospital for Hansen's disease patients. She found a cluster of leaking shacks in a wilderness. There was little food and almost no medical care. Many of the patients slept on the same floor which they trod on with feet covered with open sores. This was no hospital, but a charnel house of filth.

In February 1947, Tala was suddenly flooded by 600 more patients. It was too much for Joey. She had been trying to bring some sort of order and sanitation to the place. Now she appealed to Aurora Quezon, the former President's daughter. An exposé in Manila newspapers brought results: new buildings, a laboratory, an operating room, more doctors and nurses, and above all, supplies of new drugs.

Through the intercession of American friends who knew of Joey's work, the US government granted her plea to be allowed treatment at Carville. There patients greeted her with bouquets. They saw a tiny woman whose face was scarred and pale, but whose lively eyes still smiled. They started daily injections and other treatments, and her health began to improve.

Now, her sores healed, her face glowing, she is a tribute to Carville's care and skill. She greets her many visitors with a firm hand-clasp and a torrent of eager words. "By heart, I am happy," she says.

When the time comes, Joey Guerrero wants to start out again as God's little errand boy in a new 'quiet war'. This time her mission will be to bring mercy and good cheer to other people with Hansen's disease. **R**



*Update: Joey continued to fight against the discrimination of people with Hansen's disease. Despite the continued stigma, more than 95 per cent of the human population has a natural immunity to the disease. In 1957, Joey was discharged from Carville, completely healed. She received two degrees and served in the Peace Corps. She died in 1996.*



# QUOTABLE QUOTES

FEBRUARY 1967

A SPEECH IS LIKE  
A LOVE AFFAIR.  
ANY FOOL CAN  
START IT, BUT TO  
END IT REQUIRES  
CONSIDERABLE  
SKILL.

LORD MANCROFT,  
BUSINESSMAN

*In the battle of  
existence, talent  
is the punch;  
tact is the clever  
footwork.*

WILSON MIZNER, PLAYWRIGHT



No mean woman  
can cook well.  
It calls for a  
genuine spirit,  
a light hand and  
a large heart.

A. M. IN *THE IRISH DIGEST*



The Weather Bureau has changed its  
name to Environmental Science Services  
Administration – and we still get six inches [15 cm]  
of snow when the forecast says partly cloudy.

JACK WILSON, REGISTER AND TRIBUNE SYNDICATE

I DON'T THINK  
BEING WELL-  
ROUNDED IS  
PARTICULARLY  
IMPORTANT.  
I WOULD RATHER  
SEE PEOPLE  
WITH A CUTTING  
EDGE ON THEM.

BARNABY KEENEY IN *LIFE*



**EDUCATION  
IS DISCIPLINE  
FOR THE  
ADVENTURE  
OF LIFE.**

ALFRED NORTH  
WHITEHEAD, PHILOSOPHER

*If you want  
people to notice  
your faults, start  
giving advice.*

KELLY STEPHENS,  
ICE HOCKEY PLAYER







FEBRUARY 1968



# THE TURNING POINT OF MY LIFE

*How I learnt a humble lesson  
in the grace of perseverance*



BY *A. J. Cronin*

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES COMPOSITE



**W**hen I was 33 and a doctor in the West End of London, I developed a gastric ulcer and was exiled for six months to a small farmhouse in the Scottish Highlands. A week there drove me crazy. Debarred from all physical pursuits, I was reduced to feeding the chickens and learning to greet the disapproving cattle by their Christian names. Casting round desperately for something to do, I had a sudden idea. For years I had nursed the vague illusion that I might write.

Now, at the desolate Highland farm I raised my voice in a surge of justification: "By heavens! This is my opportunity. Gastric ulcer or no gastric ulcer, I will write a novel." Before I could change my mind, I walked to the village and bought two dozen penny exercise books.

Upstairs in my cold, clean bedroom was a scrubbed pine table and a very hard chair. Next morning I found myself in this chair, facing a new exercise book open upon the table, slowly becoming aware that, short of dog-Latin prescriptions, I had never composed a significant phrase in all my life. It was a discouraging thought as I picked up my pen and gazed out of the window. Never mind. I would begin ... Three hours later Mrs Angus, the farmer's wife, called me to dinner. The page was still blank.

### A SPIDER'S WEB

Perhaps the tribulations of the next three months are best omitted. I had in my head, clearly enough, the

theme I wished to treat – the tragic record of a man's egoism and bitter pride. I even had the title of the book. But beyond these naïve fundamentals I was lamentably unprepared. I had no pretensions to technique, no knowledge of style or form. The difficulty of simple statement staggered me. I corrected and recorrected until the page looked like a spider's web, then I tore it up and started all over again.

Yet, the thing haunted me. My characters took shape, spoke to me, laughed, wept, excited me. When an idea struck me in the middle of the night, I would get up and sprawl on the floor until I had translated it to paper. I was possessed by the very novelty of what I did. At first my rate of progress was some 800 laboured words a day. By the end of the second month I was accomplishing 2000.

Then when I was halfway through, the inevitable happened. A sudden desolation struck me like an avalanche. I asked myself, "Why am

I wearing myself out with this toil for which I am so preposterously ill equipped? I ought to be resting ... conserving my energies, not squandering them on this fantastic task." Feverishly, I read over the first chapters, which had just arrived in typescript from my secretary in London. I was appalled. Never, never had I seen such nonsense in all my life. I saw, finally, that I was a presumptuous lunatic, that all I had written, all I could ever write, was wasted effort, sheer futility. I decided to abandon the whole thing. Abruptly, furiously, I bundled up the manuscript, went out and threw it in the dustbin.

Drawing a sullen satisfaction from my surrender or, as I preferred to phrase it, my return to sanity, I went for a walk in the drizzling rain. Halfway down the loch shore I came upon old Angus, the farmer, patiently and laboriously ditching a patch of the bogged and peaty heath which made up the bulk of his hard-won little croft (farm). As I drew near, he gazed up at me in some surprise: he knew of my intention and, with that inborn Scottish reverence for 'letters', had tacitly approved it. When I told him what I had just done, and why, his weathered face

slowly changed, his keen blue eyes, beneath misted sand brows, scanned me with disappointment and a queer contempt. He was a silent man and it was long before he spoke. Even then his words were cryptic.

"No doubt you're the one that's right, Doctor, and I'm the one that's wrong ... " He seemed to look right to the bottom of me. "My father ditched this bog all his days and never made a pasture. I've dug it all *my* days and I've never made a pasture. But pasture or no pasture," he placed his foot directly on the spade, "I canna help but dig. For my father knew and I know that if you only dig enough, a pasture can be made here."

**I WAS  
APPALLED.  
NEVER,  
NEVER HAD  
I SEEN SUCH  
NONSENSE IN  
ALL MY LIFE**



I understood. I watched this dogged working figure with rising anger and resentment. I was resentful because he had what I had not - a terrible stubbornness to see the job through at all costs, an unquenchable flame of resolution brought to the simplest, the most arid duties of life. And suddenly my trivial dilemma became magnified, transmuted, until it stood as a touchstone of all human conduct. It became the timeless problem of mortality - the comfortable retreat, or the arduous advance without prospect of reward.

## READER'S DIGEST

I tramped back to the farm, drenched, shamed, furious and picked the soggy bundle from the dustbin. I dried it in the kitchen oven. Then I flung it on the table and set to work again with a kind of frantic desperation. I lost myself in the ferociousness of my purpose.

Towards the end of the third month, I wrote *finis*. The relief, the sense of emancipation, was unbelievable. I dispatched the completed manuscript to a publisher and forgot all about it.

### TIMELY LESSON

In the remaining days at the farm I gradually regained my health, and at last one day I went around the village saying goodbye to the simple folk who had become my friends. As I entered the post office, the post master presented me with a telegram – an urgent invitation to meet the publisher. I took it straightaway

and showed it, without a word, to John Angus.

The novel I had thrown away was chosen by the Book Society, dramatised and serialised, translated into a score of languages, bought by Hollywood. It sold millions of copies. It altered my life radically, beyond my wildest dreams ... and all because of a timely lesson in the grace of perseverance.

Ignatius of Loyola was once playing a game of ball with his fellow students when someone demanded, suddenly and with due solemnity, what each of them would do if he knew he had to die in 20 minutes. All agreed they would rush frantically to church and pray ... all but Ignatius, who answered, "I should finish my game."

The virtue of all achievement, as known to Ignatius and my old Scots farmer, is victory over oneself. Those who know this victory can never know defeat. **R**



### Campus Comedy

RD MARCH 1982

My two roommates were delighted when I purchased a pet parrot and moved him into our dormitory quarters. They were equally enthusiastic about taking turns teaching the bird how to talk.

Over and over again, we repeated the words, "Hello, Baby. Want a kiss?" This had gone on for about an hour one day when a note was slipped under our door. An anonymous and perplexed individual had written: "We don't know who you have in there, but why don't you give up? He's obviously not interested!"

CONTRIBUTED BY CAROLINE OWINGS





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**"I suddenly realised I didn't have tinnitus anymore!"**

*Kelvin Fleming,  
panel beater*



**Sound Therapy**  
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JULY 1950



THE MOST  
UNFORGETTABLE  
CHARACTER I'VE MET  
BEATRIX  
POTTER

*Who would have believed that this woman would write incomparably the favourite books “that bring grown-ups and children together in a shared delight?”*

■■■■■■■■■■

BY *Margaret Lane*

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES COMPOSITE







**I**n the 1850s Beatrix Potter was born into a well-to-do London family and promptly put in the care of a nurse. For most of the time she was left severely to herself – a shy little girl who had no one to play with.

Like a prisoner Beatrix grew up in a grim town house and day after day, year after year, she looked out through the third-floor windows with solitary eyes. All day she was alone with dolls and books. Amid the immense bleakness of her solitude she had to find her own secret path to fun and excitement.

The slow discovery of it began one summer when the family went to the country. A glorious change for Beatrix, for now she could go out-of-doors. She could draw pictures of the frog watching her from a stone in a stream, or a wood mouse washing his whiskers under a leaf. Crouched in a trance of stillness among the ferns, she shared little lives though long summer afternoons.

I can imagine the starchy dismay of Mamma and Papa Potter if they had ever found out what Beatrix kept hidden upstairs in the country house: a secret hoard of beetles, frogs, caterpillars, minnows and sloughed snake-skins.

She kept on drawing, too, and already her pictures, though firmly realistic, held a note of fantasy. Muf- flers appear round the necks of rabbits skating on ice and carrying umbrellas; they walk out in bonnets and mantles.

When summer was over, some of

the treasures of the field were carried by stealth into the London house, which a cousin described as “a dark Victorian mausoleum complete with aspidistras”. On the third floor Beatrix reared a family of snails in a plant pot. Soon there was a pair of mice concealed in a box and fed on milk and biscuit crumbs after supper; and bats, which hung upside down in a parrot cage, came zigzagging across the room at dusk and settled on her fingers. Also there was a hedgehog called Tiggy who drank out of a doll’s tea-cup.

In mid-teens Beatrix was allowed downstairs a little more often, but she was too shy to meet the world. At parties given by cousins she refused to dance or to be introduced to anyone. After an hour the Potters’ coachman would take her home. She never went anywhere alone except to the Natural History Museum, a few minutes’ walk from the house; there she spent long mornings drawing stuffed animals.

For a little while Beatrix hoped to paint science pictures for museums. But one day the Keeper of Botany looked at her small, precious sketches – often no more than the fabric of a mouse’s nest or the eye of a squirrel – and told her she had a hopeless lack of “diagrammatic extension of details”.

So Beatrix laid her portfolios neatly away. After that she lived for years a Victorian life of prim do-nothingness. She reached her middle 30s, still without a man friend, and not a whit closer to her ageing parents. Then, one day, the butler brought her a letter which said that Noel, the little son of a former governess, was ill. For the next three months her letters to the sick boy were full of the doings of a rabbit, Peter, and in the margins she drew and painted tiny and exquisite pictures.

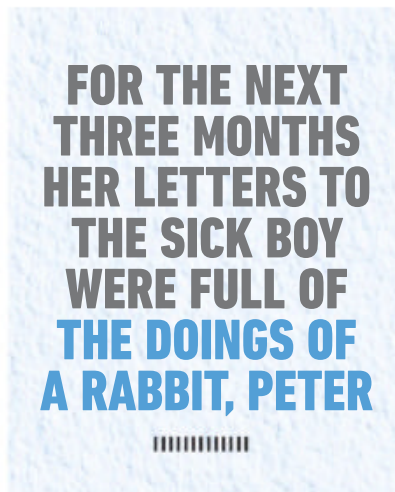
*September 4th, 1893*

*My dear Noel,  
Once upon a time  
there were four little  
rabbits, whose names  
were Flopsy, Mopsy,  
Cottontail and Peter.*

*They lived with their  
mother in a sand-bank, under the root  
of a big fir tree.*

*“Now, my dears,” said old Mrs Rabbit one morning, “you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don’t go into Mr McGregor’s garden...”*

The letter turns over, page after yellowed page. Here is Peter Rabbit among the lettuces, here Mr McGregor pursuing with his rake; and the words, read and chanted over and over again in the nurseries of two generations, still fall on the grown-up ear like an incantation of the innocent past.



It seems odd that Beatrix, this dowdily dressed spinster, could know exactly what interested children. Never did she descend indulgently to a childish level. She wrote on terms of perfect equality and as if to please herself. She was remembering something; she was stepping back, with Noel’s help, into a world of happy realities which was still the best she knew, green and secret oases in the desert of being grown up.

In the letters sent to the fevered boy, and later to other children, she was starting some of the best of her tales – creating such creatures as Squirrel Nutkin, Jemima Puddle-duck and the fabulous tailor of Gloucester, all characters as real as relatives.

These first pen-and-ink drawings show such delightful scenes as the sandy recesses of a rabbit hole, furnished with chairs and tables, places where solemn little creatures explain that dried lavender is really rabbit tobacco.

With such ecstasy were these notions received by children that Beatrix decided to put them into a little book. Her manuscript, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, was courteously rejected by seven London publishers.

But through the years, Beatrix had developed perseverance. Her parents,

though aghast, allowed her to withdraw her savings and publish her first book herself, spending £11 on it. The form was what she thought a children's book should be – small, with only one or two simple sentences on each page and a picture every time one turned over. By February 1900 the first edition of 500 copies was ready, and Beatrix began to sell them to friends.

Children fell immediately in love with them; shortly the sales became so brisk that Beatrix wrote to Warne, the publishing house which had first rejected her book, and asked them to reconsider. They did, and asked her to do new illustrations in colour.

They were the first of her hundreds of water-colour illustrations – bird and animal characters, dressed in bonnets and shawls, coats and trousers, against a country landscape of hills and woods.

Thus began a publishing adventure with few parallels in the world of children.

But there was trouble ahead. No sooner did the neglected lady on the third floor begin to be successful than Papa Potter decided to take full charge, although Beatrix was now 36 years old. When a persistent young publisher insisted on dealing with

his author without interference, she wrote, in humiliation:

*"I regret that I cannot call at the office again before leaving town. I have had such painful unpleasantness at home about the work that I should like a rest from scolding while I am away. I should be obliged if you will kindly say no more about a new book at present."*

Norman Warne, son of the pub-

lisher, seethed against the tyranny to which she submitted so meekly. Clearly the Potters were made uneasy by the tiny measure of independence which success had already given Beatrix. Moreover, they were suspicious of her brightened spirits, and not without reason. For Beatrix had made

friends with Norman, and there was a sparkle in her strong blue eyes.

Papa and Mamma were alarmed. Publishing was a trade, and certainly Beatrix could never be allowed to marry a tradesman. But Beatrix accepted invitations to the Warne house, where the warm family life was a revelation. Her acute shyness overcome, she felt at home there. With his magic lantern, Norman beguiled the winter evenings; and he showed Beatrix the workshop in the basement where building dolls' houses and rabbit cages was his hobby.

**HER PARENTS  
ALLOWED HER  
TO WITHDRAW  
HER SAVINGS  
AND PUBLISH  
HER FIRST  
BOOK HERSELF**





Soon Beatrix realised that in him she had at last found a being not unlike herself. Only her intense reserve concealed from her watchful parents the depth of her feeling. But after four years, in 1905, the Potters had to know.

Norman had proposed marriage and Beatrix accepted him.

The Potters took a stand of uncompromising hostility, and the next few months were deeply painful. Then Norman fell ill. When finally he was persuaded to consult a doctor, he was in an advanced stage of pernicious anaemia. A few days before Christmas he died.

The grief of Beatrix had to be borne in silence; at home it could not even be mentioned. Soon it became clear that a great change had come over her. Beatrix, asking no one's advice or permission, bought herself a farm in the Lake District. There was a small, slate-roofed farmhouse; herbs and flowers bloomed beside the path, and an untidy pink rosebush straggled across the face of the house.

At Hill Top Farm Beatrix was more at peace than ever before, and book after little book for the young came flashing from her pen and brush – spell-weaving tales possessed of the poetry and texture of lyrics.

And then in the midst of her triumphs she gave up writing forever. She had met a country lawyer, William Heelis. At 47, still at odds with Papa and Mamma, Beatrix Potter married.

For the first time in her life she was sure of having a sympathetic companion always beside her.

Yet, as if she could hardly bear to be reminded of her early life, she deliberately buried her former self. The few stories she essayed were far below [the standard of] her earlier tales. Reporters seeking interviews were sent away with stupefying rudeness.

For 38 years she lived in happy wedlock, farming her land and tending her animals, until her death in 1943.

Why are the Beatrix Potter books still incomparably the favourites of the nursery? In all her stories, however fabulous, she wrote of little creatures in human terms. Ginger, the cat, serving behind the grocery counter, is a figure of pure fantasy, yet his cat nature is delicately underlined: *“The shop was also patronised by mice – only the mice were rather afraid of Ginger. Ginger usually requested Pickles to serve them, because he said it made his mouth water.”*

Not long ago a leading newspaper declared: “Beatrix Potter’s greatness lies in the fact that she was able, again and again, to create that rare thing – a book that brings grown-ups and children together in a shared delight.” **R**

ADAPTED FROM *THE TALE OF BEATRIX POTTER*.



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# LIFE'S LIKE THAT

FROM THE 1970s



◆ The party was getting under way, and our hostess, who had never before opened a bottle of champagne, was struggling with the cork. It popped out suddenly, dousing the gown of one guest. The hostess was completely flustered until the soaking-wet woman saved the day by announcing gaily, “At last – I’ve been launched!”

MEGAN ADAMS, RD NOVEMBER 1970

◆ Scavenging the beach after a crowded holiday weekend is always an exciting adventure for my three youngsters. We live on a cliff overlooking a small cove, and after

one such weekend my two boys burst into the kitchen with grins from ear to ear.

“Look what I found, Mum!” shouted John, holding up one wet swim fin.

“I found a volleyball!” shrieked my ten-year-old.

My six-year-old daughter was late, and came in quietly. “And what did you find, dear?” I encouraged.

“A ring? A bracelet?”

“No, Mummy,” she smiled as another girl followed her in.

“I found a friend.”

MRS B. NEWMAN, RD NOVEMBER 1970

◆ We are the proud owners of a huge Saint Bernard dog. My father, who is in the restaurant business, often brings home large beef bones for the dog to chew on. In fact, our backyard is strewn with these bones.

One day, over the back fence, our neighbour was showing his elderly father our Saint Bernard. “Will he bite?” asked the older man.

Told that he would not, the father asked suspiciously, “Well, then, whose remains are those in the yard?”

KATHLEEN STURDIVANT, RD NOVEMBER 1970

◆ Our firm frequently purchases advertising space in the local alternative (hippie) newspaper, and almost always we are confused when we receive our monthly bill. Recently, our accountant decided to get to the bottom of the situation and called the paper's 'minister of advertising'.

"How can you send us three separate accounts for three different amounts, when we ran three identical ads?" he asked.

"Our rates," replied the hip adman coolly, "vary with the changing of the moon." **TONI TUCKER**, RD NOVEMBER 1970

◆ At the dinner table one evening our teenage daughter was telling us about a film she had seen at school. "It was on mental and emotional health," she said.

"And can you tell us," I asked teasingly, "the exact difference between 'mental' and 'emotional' health?"

"Well," she replied, "the way I see it, mental health is how you feel about geometry; emotional health is how you feel about the boy who sits next to you in geometry."

**GUTHRIE JANSSEN**, RD NOVEMBER 1970

◆ Being a working mother, I am aware there are things in our home I tend to overlook. Recently, my 11-year-old son told me he had gained full marks for an essay entitled 'My Home'.

Embarrassed, I read: "I wake up in the morning just as the sun's rays are reaching the windowsill. I lie there until they shine on the big spider's web in the corner of my bedroom, and then I know it's time to get up."

**MRS V.A STEIN**, RD SEPTEMBER 1977

◆ I was on a bus in a rural area, seated directly behind the driver. All at once my eyes caught a gaggle of blue-grey geese in the front yard of a farm property. They seemed to be straining towards the highway, charged with excitement. As we went by, the driver gave three short beeps on his horn. At that instant, there was a wild flapping of wings from the geese and a jubilant chorus of greetings.

"Were those geese waiting for you?" I asked the driver.

"That's right," he smiled. "Every morning, there they are. I honk at them. They honk at me. It makes my day."

**VIOLA AUGUST**, RD SEPTEMBER 1977









JUNE 1987



# JAHANGIR KHAN, THE KING OF SQUASH

*This young player from Pakistan  
dominates the flashing, subtle  
and perhaps most gruelling  
of all racquet sports*



BY *Ashok Mahadevan*

**I**t is a pleasant November evening in Cairo, but at the city's new International Squash Centre the atmosphere is tense. The final of the 1985 world open squash championship is about to begin. Inside the brightly-lit court the world's two best squash players warm up for the match, whacking practice shots at each other. Both Pakistan's Jahangir Khan, the favourite, and New Zealand's Ross Norman have powered their way to the finals without dropping a game. Khan, though, had been dogged by injuries: a bruised knee in an early round, an injured chin in the quarter-finals. Will this be Norman's night?

Khan races ahead in the first game with ferocious drives that zoom past Norman's lunging racquet. But Norman steadily draws closer. Then comes an exciting 95-stroke rally. Twisting and whirling, sprinting and stretching, the two men fling themselves all over the court, lashing the rubber ball with such force that it dissolves into a black blur, then delicately caressing it for a feather-light drop shot. Suddenly, a superbly placed backhand by Khan ends the marathon rally and the crowd leaps to its feet in applause. Minutes later, 22-year-old Khan takes the game.

In the second game, Norman draws first blood with a cunning drop shot. Continuing to play brilliantly, he wins it. As Khan piles up a 6-0 lead in the third game, he seems confident that the worst is over. But Norman storms back, winning the next five points. Undaunted, Khan appears to tap a

hidden source of strength. With three beautiful strokes, he takes the third game, then overwhelms Norman in just ten minutes to win the fourth – and the championship.

That decisive victory made Khan the first man ever to win the world open squash crown five times in a row. From April 1981 to November 1986, when he lost to Ross Norman in the 1986 World Open in Toulouse, France, he had won all the 500-odd matches he played.\* “Jahangir Khan,” says British sports commentator Richard Eaton, “is the world champion of world champions.”

Until recently, Khan's achievements would have stirred few people, for squash was largely an elitist male

\*In 1984, Jahangir lost two squash tournaments in the US. However, since the game is played differently there than in the rest of the world, these defeats are not included in the official record.



preserve. No longer. During the past decade, the game has boomed worldwide, and is now a sport played by more than 20 million men and women in more than 100 countries. It is widely played in Australia, New Zealand, Europe and Southeast Asia, and is one of the fastest-growing sports in Canada. In Australia, nearly 500,000 people play squash regularly.

A fast and exciting ball-and-racquet game, squash is played in a rectangular room about one-quarter the size of a tennis court. Its mood is gladiatorial: two players bang a four-centimetre-diameter ball off four walls and floor, using all their strength and cunning to keep it out of the opponent's reach.

Squash has caught on because it's suited to busy lifestyles. It's easier for a novice to play than tennis, and provides a good workout in just half an hour. At its higher reaches, though, squash stretches mind and body to their limits. It calls for speed, stamina, a talent for delicate shot-making and, above all, a single-minded determination to keep going through a blur of fatigue.

Why is Jahangir Khan so superior in this flashing, high-velocity game, perhaps the subtlest and most gruelling of

all the racquet sports? For one thing, he's superbly built: 1.78 metres tall, 67 kilos, with arms, chest and legs that are rock-hard and wrists like steel. His ancestry helps, too. Khan's forebears were Pathans – proud Muslim tribesmen of the mountainous Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Pathans have a reputation for being trigger-happy, but Khan's relatives were far deadlier

with squash racquets than with guns. His father, Roshan, uncles Hashim and Azam and cousin Mohibullah dominated world squash in the 1950s and '60s.

But Khan's most precious asset is an extraordinary desire to excel. "Squash has more naturally gifted players," admits his

coach, Rahmat Khan, "but no one who works as hard, no one else who, even when on top, never lets up."

### TO BE A CHAMPION

The Jahangir Khan story begins in Karachi, Pakistan, on December 10, 1963. The baby in a family of four children, Jahangir (Urdu for Conqueror of the World) was born with a double hernia, which eventually required two operations to repair. Doctors warned his parents not to let him play strenuous games.

But by the time he was ten, Jahangir

**ITS MOOD IS  
GLADIATORIAL:  
TWO PLAYERS  
BANG A BALL  
OFF FOUR  
WALLS AND  
FLOOR**



was regularly banging squash balls against the walls of his Karachi home. Since this didn't seem to hurt him, Roshan took his son to the Fleet Club in Karachi and taught him the basic squash strokes. "But don't run about too much," he insisted. "You mustn't exert yourself."

Jahangir soon got around his father's restrictions. While Roshan napped at home during hot afternoons, Jahangir was at the deserted Fleet Club squash courts, playing by himself. His shots lacked power, his legs tired easily, but already he was determined to become a champion.

At 14, Jahangir became Pakistan's junior squash champion. Soon after, he went to London and decided to stay with his 28-year-old brother, Torsam, a squash professional. Although Torsam had never been able to surpass tenth in world ranking, he was convinced that Jahangir could. "I'll make you world champion one day," Torsam promised.

The brothers worked well together. In October 1979, Jahangir travelled to Australia to compete in the world amateur championship in Melbourne. Only 15, he astonished everyone by winning. He was the first unseeded player – and the youngest – to become

world amateur champion. "It was all due to Torsam," Jahangir says. "Every day he'd call from England, ask who my next opponent was, then tell me how to play him."

Torsam was not able to savour his brother's triumph for long. Six weeks later, while playing in Adelaide, he suddenly slumped to his knees, then

rolled over on his side, gasping for air. He died two days later, the victim of a heart attack.

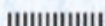
Shattered, Jahangir returned to Pakistan, accompanied by his cousin, Rahmat Khan. Like Torsam, Rahmat was a London-based squash professional, who had been ranked 12th in the world.

He knew about Torsam's dream for young Jahangir. He also knew that Jahangir's family was not well-off. Sons represent security in poor countries like Pakistan, and Torsam's death would be a severe blow. But Jahangir's brilliant promise now lay in the balance. *I must do something*, Rahmat told himself. *I owe it to Torsam.*

In Karachi, Rahmat had a long talk with Roshan. "Let me take Torsam's place," he suggested to his uncle. "Jahangir can stay with me in London. I'll train him and, God willing, make him world champion."

Roshan, however, hesitated; to send

**HE ASTONISHED  
EVERYONE,  
BECOMING  
THE YOUNGEST  
AMATEUR  
WORLD  
CHAMPION**



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his son back to London would be heart-wrenching. But England was the Mecca of squash, with training facilities far superior to Pakistan's. "Go with Rahmat," he finally told his son. "Become what your brother wanted you to be."

## MISSION TO SUCCEED

Jahangir began his training in January 1980. But his heart wasn't in it. "I kept thinking of Torsam," he says. "Every night, I cried myself to sleep. I longed for home."

Rahmat nursed the 16 year old through this painful period and, as the boy's grief grew less intense, Rahmat began driving him relentlessly. His goal was simple: Jahangir had to become the fittest player in squash, capable of outlasting any opponent. So, for six days a week, from morning until night, Jahangir jogged and sprinted, did callisthenics and pumped weights, practised squash shots over and over.

He soon turned professional, but didn't fare well in tournaments. Rahmat realised Jahangir's legs were still not strong enough. So he accelerated the exercise programme and even went so far as to climb on Jahangir's back at the end of a long training session and make him run several hundred metres.

"Most players would have rebelled against that," Rahmat says. "But not once did Jahangir refuse me anything. Sometimes, Rahmat would ask, "Have you had enough?" Jahangir would

smile bravely and say, "Only if you think so."

Jahangir finished his first season as a professional ranked 26th in the world. But at the end of 1980 things began to change. In December, he won his first professional title, the Pakistan open. Several victories followed, and he looked set to wrestle the world number-one spot from Australia's Geoff Hunt. But on April 10, 1981, in the British Open – squash's Wimbledon – Hunt beat Jahangir.

Seven months later, on November 28, the two clashed again in the final of the world open in Toronto, Canada. To prepare for this encounter, Jahangir and Rahmat flew to a mountainous region in northern Pakistan. There, amid snowy peaks and dark pine forests, Jahangir built up his stamina.

Jahangir was stronger than ever, but in an early round he injured his right shoulder. He considered withdrawing from the match, then decided against it. "Sometimes," he says, "you have to go ahead and struggle on with whatever ailment you have."

The gamble paid off. Hunt won the first game, but Jahangir crushed him in the next three games, thus becoming, at 17, the youngest ever world open champion. It was an especially memorable occasion in another way: it was the second anniversary of Torsam's death. As the crowd stood up, applauding wildly, Jahangir and Rahmat knelt in prayer on the court.

A few days later, Jahangir placed the silver trophy on Torsam's grave in Karachi. "I have completed your mission" he said softly. "I shall defend the title as long as I can."

From then on, Jahangir swept through international squash circuits like a bushfire. He won the finals of a major 1982 tournament without conceding a point. Sportswriters labelled him 'King Khan', and Pakistan issued a postage stamp in his honour. Experts called him the finest player in the history of squash.

Jahangir's successes, coming at a time when squash was booming worldwide, helped him become the game's first millionaire. Apart from earning tournament money, Jahangir is a partner in a company called Unsquashable International, which manufactures squash racquets, and endorses a variety of products from sports shoes to training films. But financial security has not greatly affected Jahangir's life. His pleasures are still simple: good food, relaxing with relatives and friends, listening to pop music.

In fact, Jahangir is a modest man, as I discovered during a recent visit to Karachi. It was the holy month of Ramadan, when all orthodox Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. "I'll

come to your hotel," Jahangir told me when I phoned. "I can't offer you anything at home."

Though not ultra-orthodox - "I don't always pray five times a day," - Jahangir is deeply religious. "It's God's will," he says about his fantastic career. "Without him, I could not have accomplished anything." He remains close to his parents, and whenever he's not playing, stays with them.

Jahangir - that rarest of creatures, a truly serene and happy celebrity - recently married, and next month will play a series of matches against Ross Norman in New Zealand.

Not yet 24, he is likely to remain at the

top for many years. When he finally retires, he wants to start squash clubs and coach youngsters in the game he loves.

"But for the present," he says, "I'll keep on playing and - *inshallah* - continue winning." **R**

*Update: Jahangir Khan retired as a player in 1993, and served as president of the World Squash Federation from 2002 to 2008, and later became its emeritus president. In 2018 he was honoured for Outstanding Achievement in Sport at the 8th Asian Awards.*

AMID SNOWY  
PEAKS AND  
DARK PINE  
FORESTS,  
JAHANGIR  
BUILT UP HIS  
STAMINA





OCTOBER 1998



A  
DOG  
LIKE  
NO OTHER

*Santos led a charmed life,  
until one unlucky day in Africa*



BY *Peter Muilenburg*

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES COMPOSITE





**A** waning moon had turned the muddy waters of Oyster Creek to quicksilver. Not so much as a zephyr stirred the inlet where our 12-metre ketch, *Breath*, lay in the delta of western Africa's mighty Gambia River near Banjul – the capital of Gambia. Days before, we'd sailed in from 1600 kilometres of ocean. Snug in this anchorage, we could still hear surf thundering beyond the low span of the Denton Bridge.

The chance to see Africa had brought our family back together for a couple of months. Our eldest son, Rafael, 20, had taken leave of absence from university to join the rest of us: Diego, 13, my wife, Dorothy, and our little black dog, Santos.

*Breath* had been our only home since I had built the vessel on St John in the Virgin Islands in the early 1980s. Life afloat had knitted close bonds. Everyone had responsibilities – the boys were standing watch when they were six. And for the past eight years, Santos, our loving, feisty, five-kilo schipperke, was at our side.

When we went to bed that night, Santos lay on the cabin top, which he vacated only in the worst weather. He touched his nose to Dorothy's face as she bent low to nuzzle him goodnight. His ardent eyes flared briefly – he worshipped her – then he returned to his duty.

We slept easier with him aboard. It was his self-appointed mission to ensure that no one, friend or foe, approached within 100 metres of *Breath*

without a warning. He'd sailed with us through the Caribbean, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, keeping sharp watch and good company, and bringing us luck. In eight years we'd never suffered a mishap. But during the night of January 2, 1991, that would change.

WE WERE ASLEEP when, just past midnight, our dock lines began to creak. At first, I thought a passing boat had sent a wake, but Santos would have barked. The creaking grew louder. By the time I climbed on deck, the ropes groaned against the cleats that tethered our boat to another vessel.

On such a calm night there could be only one cause – current. My boat was tied stern to stream, and a glance at water speeding past the hull alarmed me. The ebb had tripled its usual spring-tide rate. The cleats on the other boat looked ready to snap. If anything gave, both vessels could spin off bound together, helpless to avoid destruction. I had to cast off.

We were in a difficult spot: just a few boat lengths downstream, two high-tension power lines hung across the creek. About 30 metres behind them loomed Denton Bridge. If we couldn't turn in time, our metal mainmast might hit the wires. If the boat hit the bridge, both masts would be pinned by the roadway while the hull was sucked under.

I called everyone up on deck. Sensing that something was wrong, Santos stood by, poised to act.

We cast off the lines and hung briefly to a stern anchor, but we had to let go as *Breath* was swung violently back and forth by the current's force. I gunned the engine and had almost turned the boat round when I realised that, dragged towards the bridge by the current, we were going to hit the power line. Dorothy clutched a quivering Santos, and we all held our breath.

We just tipped the wire. There was a meteor shower of sparks and we were through, but the second wire was coming up fast. I flung the wheel over hard, but we struck the wire anyway – a long, scraping skid, the top 15 centimetres of our mast pinned against the power line.

Electricity exploded down the

rigging, and a hideous incandescence lit the sky. Flames leapt up inside the cabin; fuses shot from their sockets; smoke billowed out the hatches.

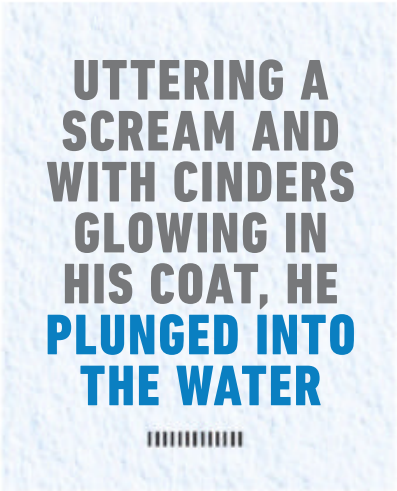
Then the fireworks stopped. The cable had rolled over the mast, but we were trapped between the second wire and the bridge. There was nowhere to go but back out – through the wire. Santos wriggled out of Dorothy's arms and dashed to the foredeck to be in on the action.

The wheel pushed hard over, we braced for impact. The mast top hit the cable, sending down a torrent of red sparks. Santos, eyes fixed ahead, stood his ground to defend the

foredeck. He was growling for all he was worth when sparks landed in his fur. Uttering a high-pitched scream, he sprinted down the side deck, cinders glowing in his coat, and plunged into the water. When he surfaced, Santos was swimming for the boat, his eyes fastened on Dorothy. But the current swept him into the shadows under Denton Bridge and out of sight.

An instant later a blast like a small thunderbolt hit the mainstay. My son Raffy was flipped backwards off the foredeck and into the water.

Then we were through. Diego



**UTTERING A  
SCREAM AND  
WITH CINDERS  
GLOWING IN  
HIS COAT, HE  
PLUNGED INTO  
THE WATER**



seized a fire extinguisher and attacked the flames as I steered towards a trawler tied to a concrete slab on the muddy bank. Raffy, a strong swimmer, managed to get to the bank.

Against all odds we were safe – except for Santos. Raffy called along both shores, but there was no sign of him. We spent the rest of the night tied to the trawler. As I tried to sleep, I kept thinking of Santos. I felt a helpless sorrow over his fate.

THE NEXT DAY Dorothy walked for kilometres along the beach, making inquiries at every hotel, talking to tourists, vendors, attendants. No one had seen him.

She offered a reward over the ship's radio, notified the police and nailed up signs. It was touching, but it seemed futile to me. Just beyond the bridge were broad flats of sand pounded that night by row after row of massive breakers. The thought of Santos funnelled helplessly into the surf made me wince.

Days later we'd repaired *Breath* but Santo still hadn't turned up. "Honey," I told Dorothy. "We've got to get on with our life – do the river, cross the Atlantic, get back to work."

"But what if he survived?" she

asked. "What if he finds his way back, and we're gone?"

"It's hard to believe he survived that surf," I said flatly, "and then swam till dawn."

She searched my face, looking for a reprieve from reality. Then her eyes flooded and her voice broke. "I just didn't want to abandon him."

With heavy hearts the next morning, we hauled the anchor for our trip up river.

**A STRANGE  
FACE PEERED IN  
THE PORTHOLE.  
SANTOS  
WOULD NEVER  
HAVE LET  
THAT HAPPEN**



OUR LOSS really hit home 80 kilometres upstream where we anchored. Suddenly a strange face peered in the porthole and inquired if we wanted to buy a fish. The fisherman had paddled up silently alongside. If Santos were there,

that could never have happened. Now we sorely missed the zealous barking we'd so often tried to hush.

Not a day went by without someone bringing up another Santos story. He might have been small, but he was absolutely fearless. Santos had a classic Napoleon complex. He had to have respect, and he got it by making bigger animals run from him. He was all bluff. But with a histrionically vicious growl and a headlong charge, he had put to flight Rottweilers, herds of goats, troops of wild donkeys, even a meter reader.

Once, on the island of St Lucia, an elephant brought over by a rich property owner emerged from the woods into a clearing where Santos was merrily scattering a flock of chickens. Our dog reacted in character: he charged. The elephant panicked, flaring its ears, splitting the air with its trumpet call and smacking the ground with its trunk as Santos dodged and darted underfoot. We had to catch and drag Santos away.

*We'll never see another like him,* I thought as I steered upriver.

Soon after, I woke one night to an empty bed. I found Dorothy sitting in the moonlight. From the way her eyes glistened, I could tell she'd been thinking of Santos. I sat down and put an arm around her. After a while she spoke. "You know what I miss most? His shaggy mane filling the porthole. He liked to watch me cook. Now every time a shadow falls over that port, it reminds me of the love in those bright black eyes."

We watched the moon slip below the treetops, then, our hearts filled with grief, we went back to bed.

Two weeks passed as we made our way 240 kilometres up the Gambia River. One afternoon Dorothy and I were reinforcing the deck's awning when I saw a catamaran with a man on board inspecting us with binoculars.

"Are you the Americans who lost the dog?" he called.

"Yes," I said cautiously.

"I don't know if it is yours, but the police at Denton Bridge have a small black dog found on the beach."

Everyone tumbled up on deck shouting, "Oh, my God! Yes! Yes!" But I cautioned, "Someone might have found a stray mutt and taken it in, hoping for the reward. Don't get your hopes too high."

DOROTHY and I took a series of bush taxis and old buses back to Banjul the next morning. With hope and trepidation we caught a taxi to Denton Bridge to see if Santos had truly survived.

"You've come for your dog!" the police officer on duty greeted us. He turned and called to a boy, "Go bring the dog." Dorothy and I waited on tenterhooks.

Then, led on a ratty piece of string down the path, there was Santos. He walked with a limp, head down. But when Dorothy called "Santos", his head shot up, his ears snapped forward, his whole body trembled as that beloved voice registered.

He leapt into her arms and covered her face with licks. Dorothy hugged him, her eyes filled with tears.

The police officer told us that the morning after we'd hit the power lines, a Swedish tourist was walking on the beach and found Santos - ten kilometres from Oyster Creek. The Swede smuggled the wet, hungry animal into his hotel room and fed him.

## READER'S DIGEST

When the Swede had to fly home, he gave Santos to the police.


We noticed that Santos's muzzles seemed whiter, and when we patted him on his right flank, he sometimes yelped in pain. We wondered what he'd experienced as he was swept into the surf and carried along the coast. We marvelled at his fortitude and his luck. But most of all we were grateful to have him back.

Next morning we made our way back upriver. We arrived just after sunset and shouted for the boys.

"Do you have him?" they called.

Dorothy urged the dog to bark. His unmistakable voice rang across the river, to be answered by a cheer of wild exuberance.

Later that night we toasted Santos with lemonade. No need for champagne when euphoria spiced the air we breathed.

Santos was back. Our family was intact. 



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### Brief Encounters

RD MARCH 1933

**"Well," drawled a towering mountaineer, "that fellow is a bigger man than I am in two ways: a bigger liar and a bigger fool."**

ARCHIBALD RUTLEDGE

**She called her husband "Theory" because he so seldom worked.**

LIFE

**Advice to motorists: Just because you see its tracks is no sign that a train has just passed.**

*Christian Advocate*

**A new form of invitation card now in vogue in Hollywood reads: "Admit bearer and one wife".**

**Adam and Eve were the first bookkeepers. They invented the loose leaf system.**

EDDIE CANTOR, COMEDIAN

**FOUND: Roll of five-dollar banknotes. Will the owner please form a line at the north entrance to B. Hall. Longhorn**



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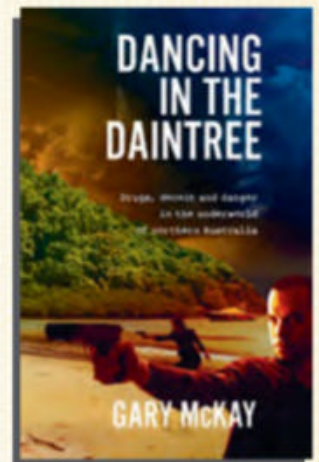
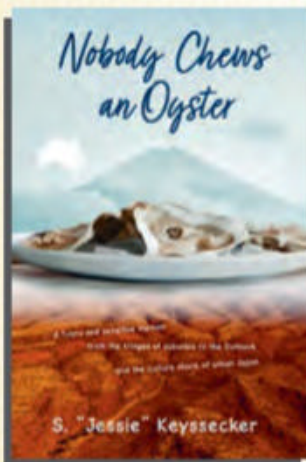


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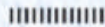


APRIL 2003



# DEADLY DOSE

*Kristin Rossum's husband  
committed suicide.  
Or did he?*



BY *Robert Howe*

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES COMPOSITE



**T**he call reached the emergency operator a little after 9pm. A woman, sounding desperate, pleaded that she couldn't wake her husband. Only a few minutes later, a paramedic bounded up the stairs to a second floor, one-bedroom apartment near the campus of the University of California San Diego. There, he found the door partially ajar, and pushing it open, saw Kristin Rossum, 24, weeping into a cordless phone. She pointed to the bedroom.

The paramedic rushed into a small off-white room crammed with a computer station, two dressers and a queen-size bed, its blue and white striped doona crumpled in a heap. On the carpet between the bed and a dresser lay Greg de Villers, 26, Kristin's husband of just 17 months. Beside him was their wedding photo, and on a bedside table was a glass half-full of what appeared to be water. Sprinkled on the floor around the young man were red rose petals.

The emergency medical crew that responded on the night of November 6, 2000, had arrived too late. Kristin's personal saviour, the man who had rescued her from self-destruction in the years before, was dead.

**KRISTIN HAD MET GREG** six years earlier when she was just 18, a petite hazel-eyed blonde with sinewy legs that had once propelled her across the stage in an amateur production of *The Nutcracker*. She had been blessed with beauty, an intellectual pedigree

and an influential upbringing in Los Angeles. It seemed the world was hers to conquer.

It hadn't worked out that way. For two years, since a 'friend' introduced her to the powerful and addictive stimulant crystal methamphetamine, she had battled the demons of drug abuse. Her grades tumbled, and her relationship with her parents eroded badly.

Still, she managed to finish high school and enrol at a nearby university. But on the night she met Greg, in December 1994, she was on the run – not from the law, but from herself. She couldn't shake her habit and was failing at university.

Rather than face her parents, Kristin caught a train south, checked into a motel and hopped on a tram to the Mexican-border town of Chula Vista. There, she headed for the pedestrian bridge crossing into Tijuana. "I don't know what my motivation was," she would later say of her flight towards Mexico.

But on that bridge, something wonderful happened. She dropped her jacket and a young knight scooped it up. "I trusted him from the very moment I met him," Kristin said.

Gregory de Villers, then 21, originally from Palm Springs, was the eldest son of Marie and Yves Tremolet de Villers, a French plastic surgeon from Monaco. Out on the town with his two brothers, Greg took pity on the clearly distraught Kristin and invited her along. Kristin went home with him that night. "It felt safe," she recalled. "And I didn't want to feel alone."

She never left. He adored her. Perhaps more importantly, he offered her hope. Greg hated drugs – even over-the-counter remedies – and was determined to help her shake her addiction. It worked. While he finished his biology degree at the University of California at San Diego, she enrolled at San Diego State University. In June 1999 they wed, six months before Kristin graduated with honours in biochemistry. Finally, she had control of her life, and to this day she credits that triumph to her husband.

**BUT WITH GREG'S DEATH**, the reverie was over. Suicide. That's what authorities suspected. A cursory search

of the apartment turned up a shredded love note to Kristin from another man. She explained to investigators that she had told Greg just a few days before that she was moving out. She said he had got angry, then drunk, and that very day had taken some of her old prescription drugs to help him sleep. Maybe, she guessed, he had taken too many.

**HER  
TRAGICALLY  
MELODRAMATIC  
THEORY  
SEEMED  
CONVINCING.  
AT FIRST**

And the rose petals? She wasn't sure. Greg had given her roses a couple of weeks before for her 24th birthday. They had withered, and she said she had thrown them away. Maybe he had retrieved them. Perhaps, she later theorised, the dead petals were his way of symbolising the end of their relation-

ship, and his own life.

Her tragically melodramatic theory seemed convincing. At first. But on June 25 the following year, police arrested Kristin for murder.

To those who knew them, it was unthinkable that Kristin could kill the man who'd done so much for her. And the couple seemed content. They were both embarking on promising careers they loved; Greg was working as a development manager at a biotech company and Kristin as a toxicologist for the San Diego County Medical Examiner's Office.

Still, just weeks before the wedding, Kristin had confessed to her mother and friends that she was apprehensive. She was too young to marry, she said, and Greg was obsessively protective.

Then, in early 2000, Kristin met the man of her dreams: Michael Robertson, a widely published Australian forensic toxicologist who was hired as her new supervisor. Michael, though married, wooed Kristin with emails and gifts, and she saw in him a soulmate she had never found in Greg.

"Greg said being romantic is expensive," Kristin would later testify in court. "I said, 'It doesn't cost much for a single rose.'"

Although Greg had bought roses for her birthday, Kristin and Michael exchanged roses several times, and the emotional bond was deeper: "I once gave him a red, a pink, a yellow and a white rose, and I wrote a note explaining what each of the colours means to me."

Kristin confessed to Greg in June or July that she had feelings for another man. Outraged, Greg called Michael and warned him to stay clear of his wife. Kristin claims Greg then took emotional refuge in bed for an entire weekend. Michael's boss, having got wind that something was up with

his two employees, also urged him to cut things off. But when Michael and Kristin went off to a week-long toxicology conference in early October, they seemed to some almost to flaunt the fact that they were an item.

Shortly afterwards, Kristin began using methamphetamine again, driven, she would say, by the pressures of her failing marriage. Precisely what happened in the days before Greg's death is still disputed.

**PRECISELY  
WHAT  
HAPPENED IN  
THE DAYS  
BEFORE HIS  
DEATH IS STILL  
DISPUTED**

**BY KRISTIN'S TELLING**, her relationship with Greg hit bottom on November 2. She was in the living room reading a love letter from Michael when Greg suddenly entered the apartment. She tried to hide the

note but claims Greg, demanding to know what she was keeping from him, grabbed her, shoved her to the floor and raised a hand as if to hit her. Then he backed off, unnerved by his own near violence.

She later shredded the note, but said Greg found the strips of paper and spent hours trying to piece them back together.

Three days later, according to Kristin, Greg ordered her to resign from her job or he would report to the head of the examiner's office that she was sleeping with her boss and that she



had a meth problem. The following evening, Greg was dead.

Kristin says Greg woke that morning slurring his speech, so she phoned his office to tell them he wouldn't be in. She arrived at work to be confronted by Michael. They argued – she says he was enraged to have found drug paraphernalia in her desk. She went home to compose herself, found Greg asleep, and then returned to work.

Later in the morning, she drove home to make lunch for Greg, who, she says, roused himself long enough to poke at some soup and confess that in order to sleep he'd taken some of her old prescription drugs – the painkiller oxycodone and clonazepam, an antiseizure medication also known for its sedating effects. She returned to the office, then left before three, when Michael left. She says the two met near her apartment and talked about their future. She apologised for the relapse and vowed to stop using drugs.

Greg was still dozing when she arrived after five. She made a stir-fry dinner, left some in the fridge for Greg, went shopping, came home and kissed her sleeping husband before settling into a long, hot bath. Emerging a little after 9pm, she then found Greg cold and pale. Instantly, she claims, she phoned emergency.

A routine autopsy confirmed police suspicions that Greg had taken an overdose, and Kristin signed the release to cremate the body.

Then came the questions. Greg's

colleagues told investigators that he was a rising star and had no reason to kill himself. And spurred by Greg's younger brothers, who said he was looking forward to upcoming birthday plans, police halted the cremation so that more tests could be done.

Fluids from Greg's body contained, as expected, modest amounts of oxycodone and clonazepam, drugs Kristin said she was told years before could help her kick her meth habit. But the tests also detected fentanyl, a narcotic used in surgery and sparingly for debilitating pain. Colourless and odourless, it is at least 50 times more potent than morphine. It is difficult to obtain legally – even in small quantities. And Greg's corpse was swimming in it.

To the de Villers family and police, there seemed to be only one reasonable explanation. Gregory de Villers had not committed suicide. He'd been murdered. And his wife was the most likely suspect.

Yet criminal investigators would have a tough time making the case. Police could not – and never did – determine how the fentanyl, the murder weapon, was administered. No syringes, drug-delivery patches or paraphernalia had been left at the scene. And because police failed to test the glass with a fluid by the bed, the scenario, though remote, that Greg had got some fentanyl and swallowed it himself remained a strong possibility.

## READER'S DIGEST

Another challenge: determining where the fentanyl came from. The medical examiner's office where Kristin worked had not conducted an internal audit for a long time, but quickly ordered one done.

The results were stunning. In seven of eight recent cases in which meth was gathered as evidence for testing in the laboratory, some or all of the samples were missing – as were small quantities of oxycodone and clonazepam. Fifteen confiscated fentanyl patches were also gone, and a ten-milligram vial of fentanyl was empty.

On December 4, about a week after Kristin admitted to police in a voluntary interview that she had a drug problem, she was fired. Michael was also sacked for failing to report her. Subsequent searches of the work station uncovered an empty drug evidence envelope and a meth pipe with her DNA on the stem. Colleagues found love notes and rose petals in Kristin's desk and, in Michael's office, more than 30 articles explaining how to use and to detect fentanyl.


**MICHAEL, WHO CONTENDS** that he played no role in Greg's death, returned to Australia in May 2001, one month before Kristin's arrest. At Kristin's murder trial in November 2002, a jury assessed the evidence and handed down its verdict: guilty.

Kristin gripped the defence table to

steady herself, and turned to her family with a shattered expression. At a December 12 hearing, the 26 year old received a mandatory sentence of life without parole.

A vital part of Kristin's undoing was the rose petals. Prosecutors made a great deal of her telling a friend that one of her favourite films was *American Beauty*, in which actor Kevin Spacey, who is slain at the end, lusts for a young woman he envisions sprinkling with rose petals. They also homed in on her claim that when she found Greg cold and unresponsive, she tore back the bed covers and saw his body covered with petals.

Following instructions from the emergency operator, she tugged him to the floor to attempt CPR. Yet there wasn't a single petal remaining on the mattress and none under his body, where prosecutors said they would have fallen as she yanked him from the bed. At the scene, police found one stem – and what appeared to be fresh petals – next to Greg.

On the day Greg died, Kristin used a supermarket card to pay for some purchases. The computerised record was logged in at exactly 12.41. Along with soup, cold medicine and a Bic lighter, the receipt shows a single rose. 



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# PATTER

1941

## Quips and one-liners

- ◆ *He's in his anecdote.*
- ◆ The stork is the bird with the long bill.
- ◆ *There isn't much to talk about at some parties until after one or two couples leave.*
- ◆ Defeat isn't bitter if you don't swallow it.
- ◆ *She knows how to fire a man her own way.*

*Dignity is one thing that can't be preserved in alcohol.*

- ◆ Man is the only animal that can be skinned more than once.
- ◆ *Any girl can handle the beast in a man if she's cagey enough.*
- ◆ Baby: An alimentary canal with a loud voice at one end and no responsibility at the other.

*Gossips have a keen sense of rumour.*

- ◆ *Her clothes are so designed that she is always seen in the best places.*
- ◆ The chairman replied in few appropriated words.
- ◆ *Child's definition: An adult is one who has stopped growing except in the middle.*
- ◆ I guess you'd call us friends – we have the same enemies.
- ◆ *It matters more what's in a woman's face than what's on it.*
- ◆ Give a husband enough rope ... and he'll want to skip.
- ◆ *Mud thrown is ground lost.*
- ◆ Anger improves nothing except the arch of a cat's back.
- ◆ *It is always the best policy to speak the truth, unless, of course, you are an exceptionally good liar.*





AUGUST 1941



# ABBY, HER FARM

*A young girl's wild imagination  
and unflinching tenacity grew  
into something much more solid  
than simply a whim*



BY *Margaret Buell Wilder*

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES COMPOSITE



**I**t began with a chance remark at age seven, on a Sunday afternoon in the country. “When I grow up, I shall have a farm.” Her father and I smiled, perceiving nothing ominous.

Thereafter, the references to a farm – ultimatums – came with increasing frequency. About a year later, vaguely disquieted, and thinking to take up the slack of our eight year old’s morbid rural yearnings, I bought her a thoroughbred mare and boarded it in one of those sweet-scented, spit-and-polish stables.

It worked – for about a week. And then one day, accusingly, “Just look at this horse’s feet! Those shoes will hardly hold! Now if we had a farm...”

I groaned and looked away from those remorseless eyes that bored through my makeshift soul. “But darling, we *can’t*,” I began for the hundredth time. “We have a *lease*. Your father works in the city. Have you any idea what *that* means?”

But somehow, during the next few weeks, a large dog, two rabbits and five cats were added unto us. Though otherwise extremely prudish, Abby did not quail before the facts of reproduction. Kittens aplenty and frequently a-borning were to be found anywhere, from our best shoes to the kitchen sink. “That’s all right,” she would reassure us. “The mother will clean it up. But on the farm, I may have to help the lambs get born.”

“It would be nice if we had a pig

– now,” she said implacably. Our zoning restrictions very definitely prohibited pigs. “But how would they know?” Abby argued reasonably. “The cops don’t even catch kidnapers. How would they catch a pig?”

“By smell, if nothing else,” I muttered. “Now for heaven’s sake keep still about it! Pigs are *out*.”

Scarcely were the words out of my mouth when the school’s Parent Teacher Association announced its annual party – with a greased pig to be given away to the parent lucky enough to catch the slippery hog bare-handed.

The odds of 200 to one against Abby’s father catching the pig must have challenged his spirit, for when the time came to loose the creature upon the school lawn, he had organised a ‘pig circle’ with all 200 fathers holding hands. Someone sprang the box lid, the frenzied animal made a beeline for the nearest man, and Abby’s next-to-fondest dream came true. She had a pig.

Burning with mother love, she husbanded the poor creature into its box, then shut it in our car. “You and Pop can go back to the party now,” she said firmly. “You aren’t enough like other parents as it is.”



“But that greasy pig will get out on the upholstery! Besides, he’s hurt – he’s groaning. He should be killed at once!”

Then, “What do you mean, I’m not like the other mothers?”

Her eyes never left the boxful of pig. “Well, you aren’t. You don’t knit, you never make cookies and you haven’t any bosom.” I threw up my hands and allowed myself to be led away, muttering, by her ribald father. When we got back the pig had been freed. “It had claustra – claustra – that thing you get in the subway,” Abby explained. “Anyway – pigs are nervous.”

Stricken, we stared inside the car. It had indeed been very nervous – all over the upholstery. We considered the poor panting creature at bay on the back seat; then we considered Abby. “I think,” said her father heavily, “it would be cheaper to trade her in for something civilised.”

Christmas brought only one wistful request, for a female goat – ungranted. “But we could drink the milk and save money,” she protested.

Her terrifying blend of logic and economy finally took its toll of resistance. Every time the market went down, her father would gaze across the dinner table and say, “Abby, tell

me about the farm. Could we live on silage?”

By New Year’s he had left on a business trip and I was alone with Abby and the Rotation of Crops.

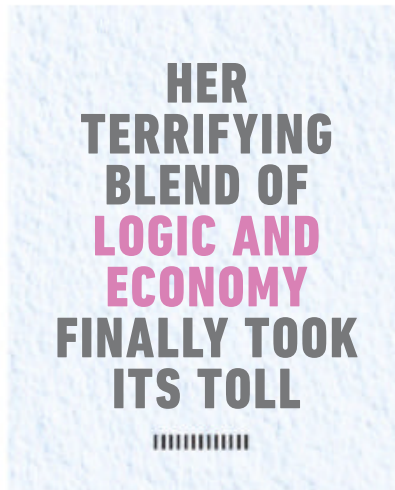
“What is that book you seem to be making?” I asked one night.

“My farm book.” Hesitantly she brought it to me – a thin, cardboard affair tied with green yarn illustrated with beautiful pink and black watercolours of Poland China hogs.

I stared at the first page and read: “In the beginning of the 20th century, Mr Aaron Aaronsohn discovered a wild wheat growing on the dry and rocky slopes of Mt Herman.” Page two was solid with statis-

tics about the yields one may expect from an acre of corn. The next page in a fine spirit of non sequitur, bore only this avowal: “Nothing Will Be Bought From A Store. I Shall Weave My Clothes And Wear Long Hair.”

“Abby!” I cried. “Is this why you won’t have your hair cut? Is this why I go through hell and high water every day fixing those pigtails? I peered sharply at her braids and remembered how she measured their weekly progress with a piece of string. “Will you have spring shearings with the sheep?” I asked.



"If you'll turn to the end of the book," she said, unmoved, "you'll see what the farm's going to be like. Then you won't worry so." Rebuked by her dignity, I turned to a sort of prose poem, entitled simply 'My Farm'.

*I want the kind of farm where chickens run loose in the front yard, and a timid long-haired colt pokes his inquisitive nose out from his mother's back to stare at you in surprise.*

*I will hear the tinkling of bells made by the big Merino sheep as they drift slowly along, following their leader. I will see the big fat mother sow and her recent family grunting for food and enjoying the cool inviting mud.*

*Then I will go slowly through my fields of waving corn to a low rambling farmhouse nestled among the lilac trees. I would enter. There will be a smell of good things in the air. I will see sausage broiling on the stove.*

*The sunbeams will find their way across the thick planked oaken floors to the pewter plates on the mantelpiece. The flowers on the table will match the crazy patchwork quilt on my high wooden bed. The sheets will be old and fine; there will be a rag rug on the floor.*

Yea, though I walk through the Valley... my mind subconsciously

went on in the rhythm of those paragraphs. Then I closed the Farm Book and laid it down gently.

"I see I was wrong about those pig-tails," I said. "They'll be very proper - if we can keep them out of the churn!"

With a wild whoop she was upon me, and the guerrilla warfare of two long years was wiped out with one tremendous hug.

"Will you wire Pop right away - will you tell him to buy a farm?" she shrieked.

Clinging to reason with one enfeebled hand, I managed to push her off to bed without that final incriminating 'Yes'.

An empty victory. Next morning I found on my desk this con-

clusive document in a familiar hand:

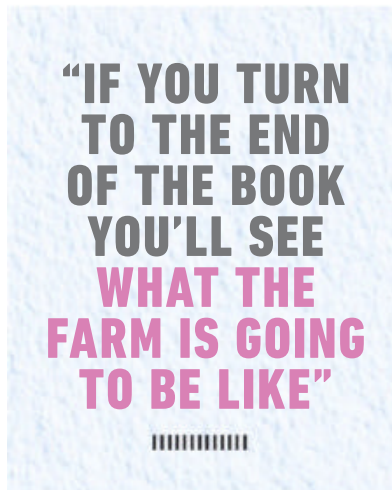
*Dept. of Agriculture*

*Dear sirs,*

*My father is going to buy a farm so I wish to be prepared for whatever might follow. Could you please send me instructions for the care of these certain domesticated animals?*

*A few cows of Guernsey breed, a few of the harder things about horses, goats (the best breed), sheep and where to buy the best stock.*

I picked up the phone and said to the operator, "Western Union telegrams please. And hurry." **R**



# QUOTABLE QUOTES

MARCH 1992

*Getting married is easy. Staying married is more difficult. Staying happily married for a lifetime should rank among the fine arts.*

**ROBERT FLACK**  
IN *BETTER THAN GOLD*



**RAINBOWS  
APOLOGISE FOR  
ANGRY SKIES.**

SYLVIA VOIROL



**IF I WERE TO  
BEGIN LIFE AGAIN,  
I SHOULD WANT  
IT AS IT WAS.  
I WOULD ONLY  
OPEN MY EYES A  
LITTLE MORE.**

*THE JOURNAL OF JULES RENARD,*  
EDITED BY LOUISE BOGAN

**Things turn out best for  
the people who make the best of  
the way things turn out.**

**ART LINKLETTER,**  
QUOTED BY TONY STEIN IN *NORFOLK LEDGER-STAR*

***Shared joy is  
double joy and  
shared sorrow  
is half-sorrow.***

SWEDISH PROVERB

**By the time you  
find out what  
makes the world  
go round, you're  
too dizzy to care.**

*THE SPIRIT OF LIFE,*  
EDITED BY DIAN RITTER

Age does not diminish the extreme disappointment of having a scoop of ice cream fall from the cone.

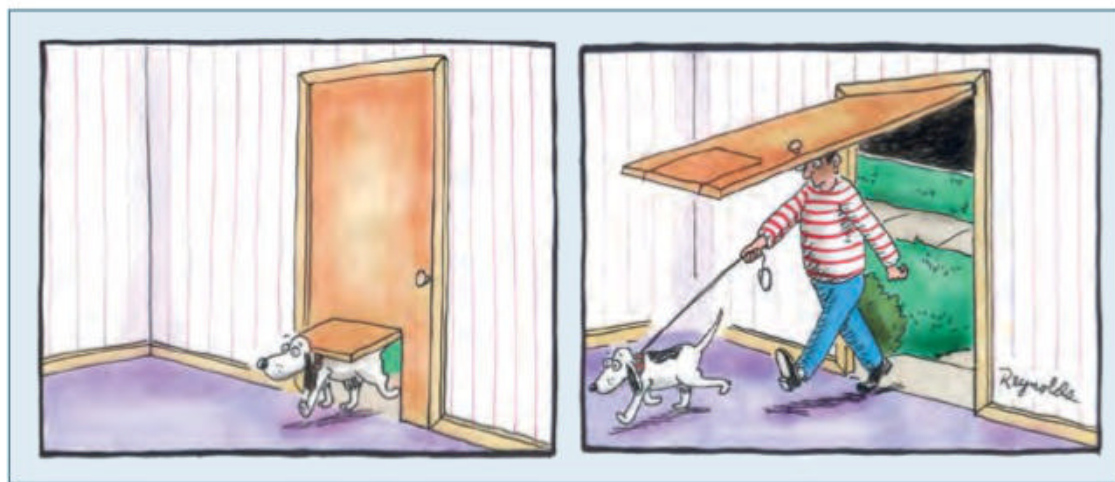
**JIM FIEBIG, BUSINESSMAN**





# LAUGHTER

FROM THE 1990s & 2000s



## 1990s

◆ “I’ve had an awful time,” a boy told his friends. “First, I got angina pectoris, then arteriosclerosis. Just as I was recovering, I got psoriasis. They gave me hypodermics and, to top it all, tonsillitis was followed by appendectomy.”

“Wow!” sympathised his friends. “How did you pull through?”

“I don’t know,” the boy replied. “It was the toughest spelling test I’ve ever had.”

CHARLIE BIRCH, RD OCTOBER 1998

◆ “I just do not understand my parents,” said a downcast university student. “I told them I needed money to buy a chair and they sent me the chair.”

RD OCTOBER 1998

After having her frisky four year old under her feet all morning, a mother suggested, “Why don’t you go over and see how old Mrs Smith is, dear?”

Off went the child, but she was back within minutes. “Mum,” she said, “Mrs Smith said it’s none of your business how old she is.”

FRIENDS OF ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL NEWS

LETTER, RD NOVEMBER 1998

◆ A boxer swiped the air furiously but could not hit his opponent. “How am I doing?” he asked his trainer at the end of the round.

“Well, if you keep this up,” replied the trainer, “he might feel the draughts and catch a cold.”

CHARLOTTE MCCAIRN, RD NOVEMBER 1998

The elderly woman finally called the police. "Officer," she said, "I want you to talk to the people next door. Every night they pound on my wall and yell at me until four in the morning."

"I suppose you can't get a wink of sleep," the policeman said sympathetically.

"Oh, it's not that," the woman replied. "With all the pounding and yelling, I can't enjoy my piano practice."

GEORGE RUSSELL,  
RD NOVEMBER 1998

◆ To prove his love for her, he climbed the highest mountain, swam the deepest river and crossed the wildest desert. She left him. He was never home.

GLENDIA CLEMENTS,  
RD NOVEMBER 1998

## 2000s

◆ Things you need to know if your son wants to quit school and become a rock star:

- What do you call a guitar player who breaks up with his girlfriend? *Homeless.*
- How do you define perfect pitch? *If you throw your son's guitar in the bin and it lands on top of his amplifier.*
- What's the definition of an optimist? *A rock musician with a mortgage.*

RD JUNE 2000

## 1998

A couple dining at a restaurant both ordered steak. As the waitress placed their plates on the table, they noticed the strange way she was holding them.

"You've got your thumbs on our steaks!" complained the wife. "You don't want me to drop them again, do you?" the waitress replied.

REG WELLARD,  
RD NOVEMBER 1998

Two mussels munched chocolate bars while a couple of fish watched. "Did you see that?" said one of the fish.

"They didn't offer us a single bite!"

"What do you expect?" replied the other. "They're two shellfish."

ARTHUR WRIGHT, RD JUNE 2000

◆ Bob checked into his hotel room and immediately noticed a dead cockroach on the floor. He called the front desk, asked for the manager

and raised a fuss.

"Sir, please calm down," the manager replied. "It's dead. It can't bother you now."

"The dead one doesn't bother me," Bob said. "It's his pallbearers."

PLAYBOY, RD APRIL 2001

◆ A fellow walked into a pharmacy and headed to the back to speak with the pharmacist.

"Do you have anything for hiccups?" he asked.

Without warning, the pharmacist reached over and smacked the man on the shoulder.

"Did that help?" he asked.

"I don't know," replied the startled man. "I'll have to ask my wife. She's waiting in the car."

NANCY MACMILLAN, RD FEBRUARY 2001







OCTOBER 1982



# TRAPPED UNDER THE CITY SQUARE

*One minute, the 12-year-old boy was splashing in Melbourne's civic fountain. Then, as his friend looked on in horror, he suddenly disappeared*



BY *Richard Shears*

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES COMPOSITE

**T**he temperature in Melbourne had climbed to 42°C, making January 14, 1981, the hottest day so far that summer. It was school holidays, and Jocelyn Hopkins had listened for hours to the complaints of four overheated boys in her charge: sons Leigh, 13, and Daniel, 12, and their friends John Thompson, 14, and Carl Powell, 12.

Late afternoon brought little relief from what the newspapers were describing as “the big swelter”. When the six-o’clock news showed dozens of youngsters splashing in the Civic Square fountain, Jocelyn decided that would be just the place to take the boys.

They arrived a few minutes after seven. The three water attractions – a rectangular pond, a large central fountain dominated on one side by a bronze statue of Australian explorers, and a 4.5-metre wall of water cascading over steps and large stone blocks – were alive with splashing children.

John had his arm in plaster, and watched while his friends headed for the water. Leigh and Daniel walked round the stone blocks towards a low wall that allowed easy access. Carl, a slightly built boy dressed in T-shirt and shorts, took a short cut, striding over the blocks into hip-deep water near the statue.

“Hey, Leigh!” he shouted to his friend, who turned to see Carl waving. And then, as Leigh stood spellbound, Carl vanished – simply

dropped straight down, as if swallowed by a giant fish.

Sensing that something terrible had happened, Leigh immediately dived in after his friend. He felt along the bottom of the fountain – the bubbling water made visibility difficult – and located a hole about a metre across. Without a moment’s thought for his own safety, Leigh plunged in head first, straight down the water-filled tunnel. As he twisted about, Leigh’s hand touched what felt like a face. It was Carl! Leigh grabbed his friend’s hair, but the powerful current created by the fountain’s circulatory system swept Carl away.

Leigh kicked hard against the concrete at the bottom, cutting his feet on glass and other debris, and fought his way back to the surface. On the way, he bumped his face against two pipes running across the shaft. For a moment, he thought he was trapped, but he worked past the pipes and burst up out of the water. Still in his fist was a clump of Carl’s hair.

Down below, Carl was being tossed by the current like clothes in

a washing-machine. Having lost all sense of direction, he didn't realise that he was being swept along another tunnel, one running at right angles to the vertical shaft into which he had plunged. *I'm in the sewers, he thought. I'll be carried out to the river ... I'm going to die!*

FOUR METRES ABOVE, in the warm evening light, Leigh Hopkins stood gasping in his dripping clothes. Then he ran round the fountain complex to his mother.

"Carl's drowned!" he cried.

From the look on Leigh's face, Jocelyn instantly knew something was very wrong. "Get the police, get the fire brigade - get moving!" she yelled. Leigh dashed across the square, through evening strollers, to a police constable on duty outside the town hall.

"My friend has gone down the fountain! You've got to help him!"

The constable switched on his walkie-talkie. At Metropolitan Fire Brigade headquarters in East Melbourne, two kilometres from the square, firemen Garry Cronin, 37, and John Rodda, 39, heard the alarm bell at 7.33pm. By 7.36, Cronin, Rodda and six other firemen were at

the square, where a crowd of curious onlookers had already gathered.

Hearing what had taken place, Cronin was at first sceptical that a boy had simply vanished beneath the fountain. After all, the firemen had had a run of false alarms lately. But Leigh frantically insisted, along with his mother and friends.

Finally persuaded, Cronin and Rodda stripped to the waist. Following Leigh's instructions, they located with their feet the hole through which Carl had vanished. They looked at each other. If a boy had gone down there, his chances were slim indeed.

Should they risk their lives to enter a water-filled tunnel to

look for a boy who might already be dead? Yes, they decided, they would have to take the risk. With no time to locate scuba equipment, Cronin and Rodda donned back-pack air cylinders and face masks used for entering smoke-filled buildings. The apparatus wasn't designed for underwater, but in a quick practice swim around the fountain they found they could breathe with it.

Meanwhile, the police had found an employee in the square's maintenance room who was able to turn off the fountain's circulatory system. The

**IF A BOY HAD  
GONE DOWN  
THE HOLE,  
HIS CHANCES  
OF SURVIVAL  
WERE SLIM  
INDEED**





water calmed. Attached to a 30-metre rope held by his colleagues, Cronin dropped feet first into the dark hole. He tried to touch the bottom, but his air tanks made him too buoyant. His head smashed into the two pipes running across the shaft, and he broke a tooth and cut his chin.

To help him stay down, Rodda stood on Cronin's shoulders in the shaft while Cronin groped along the walls to feel how the tunnel system ran. He located the entrance to the horizontal tunnel, but in the murky darkness he realised it was too dangerous to travel along it alone. He went back up.

The two firemen soon went down again, taking with them a two-metre pole with a hook on the end used for pulling down ceilings during fires. They pushed the pole into the horizontal tunnel and probed about until they caught something. It had a lot of drag. Both men feared the worst. But their catch was a large plastic garbage bag.

When the firemen returned to the surface, police advised them to give up the search. Carl had now been missing for an hour; it seemed certain the boy was dead. Spectators were being moved away, and TV crews were starting to pack up their equipment.

BUT CARL was not dead. As he had been swept along the tunnel thrashing about wildly, lungs bursting, his fingers had scraped against a wall. He had tried to dig in, but the wall was too smooth. Then, he bumped against something round, some sort of pipe. His momentum was slowed and he managed to grab hold and haul himself up in the water, praying he'd burst

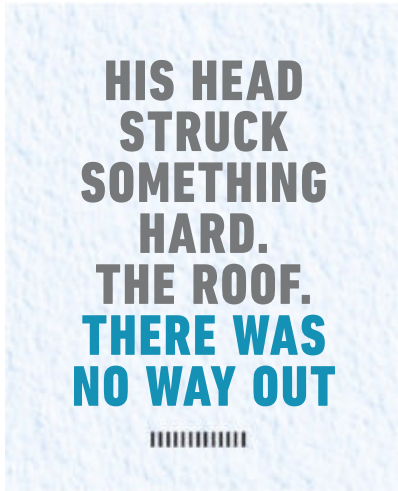
through to fresh air. But his head struck something hard. The roof. There was no way out!

Now he could no longer hold his breath. He had to inhale. He opened his mouth – and breathed! Incredibly, he had found a pocket of air, a small recess in the roof of the cavern. Breathing

in gasps, he filled his lungs.

He lowered his face, and immediately touched water. Trying to establish just how much air space he had, he moved round the pipe. All he had was about 30 centimetres – a space not much bigger than his head. He would have to live in this tiny area until help came. If it came.

He wrapped his arms like steel round the pipe. He wasn't going to be swept away. But the water was cold, and Carl was already beginning to shiver. He was aware that death might not be far off.



**HIS HEAD  
STRUCK  
SOMETHING  
HARD.  
THE ROOF.  
THERE WAS  
NO WAY OUT**

Suddenly, he felt the water go calm. He wondered: *Are they coming for me?* Although he did not realise it, the circulating water had brought the air bubbles that kept him alive. Now, as Carl breathed, his little air pocket was being rapidly depleted.

He could see nothing, hear nothing. "Why won't somebody come?" he cried aloud. The sound of his own voice reassured him, and he began to sing a favourite song. But he soon felt drowsy. He wanted to close his eyes to sleep. He had been down there now for an hour and 10 minutes.

ABOVE THE GROUND, an ambulance worker waited with Carl's mother, Kathleen Powell, and tried to prepare her for the worst. She had rushed from her home, seven kilometres away, but the police took her to a nearby shop. No one wanted her to see the stretcher and blanket waiting for the remains of her son.

Only one person still believed there was a chance that Carl was alive. "Until a body is found, there's still hope!" Rodda told his colleagues. Now, he stood beside Cronin and watched as the water level went down, thanks to an 18-tonne pump that had been called in from brigade headquarters. The pump had been back in service only since 4.30 that day, after a breakdown a week earlier.

The water level dropped rapidly but Rodda felt they couldn't wait until the vertical shaft was fully drained.

Accompanied by Cronin, he climbed down a ladder that had been placed in the shaft and waited at the bottom. The water was half-way down the shaft. As soon as there were four or five centimetres of air space along the ceiling of the horizontal tunnel, he'd swim in there on his back.

Then, as that tiny air space widened, he thought he heard something. Was it a cry? He sent Cronin racing up the ladder to yell at everyone to be quiet. There it was again!

"My God!" Rodda shouted. "The kid's alive!"

Cronin scrambled down the ladder in response to Rodda's call. Holding up two high-powered lamps, they swam backwards along the tunnel, taking advantage of the air space. Rodda scraped his nose against the slimy roof. Some three metres along, Rodda, who was ahead of Cronin, burst into a small chamber. Turning slightly, he found himself staring into the missing boy's white face. It was a stupid thing to ask, he realised later, but it was the first thought that came into his head. "What are you doing here?" he said to Carl.

Disorientated and sleepy from inhaling stale air, Carl's face showed terror as the lights glared at him. He was shivering from the cold.

"Get me out of here!" he cried. "I want my mum!" But he would not let go of the pipe. Rodda and Cronin spoke to him gently, and after some tough tugging the men managed to

## READER'S DIGEST

pry his fingers free and swim him back to the ladder.

As the firemen helped Carl up the ladder, his mother cried out ecstatically, "He's alive! They've got him!"

Carl, his pallid face a stark contrast to his dark hair, was quickly wrapped in blankets and placed on a stretcher. As his mother leaned over him with tears in her eyes, he told her, "I'm all right, Mum." It was now 8.53pm. Carl had been in the shaft for an hour and 40 minutes.

An ambulance sped Carl and his mother to the Queen Victoria Medical Centre, where he was treated for abrasions on his hands and legs. In an adjoining room, Carl's brave friend Leigh was having his cut feet attended to. When Leigh heard Carl talking, he ran in to greet him. "Wow!" he said, "were you lucky." And the two boys grinned.

JOHN RODDA went back to the Civic Square the next day and climbed down the empty shaft and along the tunnel. He saw scratches in the slime on the walls where Carl had searched desperately for a grip, and he saw the finger marks on the pipe to which the boy had clung.

He remains amazed that the boy survived. There were so many 'ifs'. If Leigh Hopkins and his mother had not raised the alarm so promptly ... if that recess had not existed in the underground chamber ... if the brigade's water pump had been unavailable ...

Rodda says now that Carl Powell's rescue from the tunnel "was nothing short of a miracle". **R**



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### It's a Dog's Life

RD APRIL 1939

The Great Western Railway of Great Britain has 25 sheepdogs on its payroll in Wales, where sheep often break through the right-of-way, endangering their own lives and delaying trains. The dogs, working without orders, find obscure openings in fences and hedges through which to herd the sheep back.

They must also develop 'track sense': if caught between trains on adjacent tracks they lie down until both have passed. If maintenance men, working on the tracks, do not heed the whistle of an approaching train, the dogs bark at them and refuse to leave until all are out of the way. *Railroad*



# VIEWPOINTS

MARCH 1940 & FEBRUARY 1941

*Musings and opinions*

◆ *How often I have worked off ill feeling against friends by telling some rather malicious stories about them, and as a result met them again with the feeling quite gone. Gossip is cheaper than going to a doctor, and much nicer than actually having a row with our friends.* W. H. AUDEN IN *THE LISTENER*

◆ Those who attach a high importance to their own opinions should stay at home. When one is travelling, convictions are easily mislaid. I set out on my travels thinking that I knew how men should be governed and what they should believe. On my return, I find myself without any of these pleasing certainties, but with the completest human tolerance.

ALDOUS HUXLEY IN *JESTING PILATE*

◆ *My grandmother, who died at the age of 99, lived continually in a state of incandescent amazement. She would rap out at us if we showed any tendency to be less excited than she was by the Jules Verne world in which we lived ... To this day I refuse to allow the sense of wonder to shrivel in my soul. For in truth*



◆ We make conversation to get away from ourselves and the people we are talking to. Talk is a world in itself, and there we are perfectly safe even from the things we are talking about.

Edwin Muir, poet

*it is surprise, curiosity and love which rejuvenate the mind.*

HAROLD NICOLSON IN *THE SPECTATOR*

◆ It is a mistake to take oneself too seriously. That only ends in self-consciousness, which is just as deleterious a habit of mind as self-pity. No doubt it is an excellent thing to know oneself, but self-consciousness is a heavy price to pay for that knowledge. Indeed, perhaps the main reward of knowing oneself is the power to forget about oneself.

E. F. BENSON IN *FINAL EDISON*



AUGUST 1973



HOW WE  
BROKE  
THE  
DROUGHT,  
ALMOST

*Not since 1902 had the Steiger  
Vortex gun been fired. But after all,  
there was a drought on*



BY *George Parwell*

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES COMPOSITE







**O**utside the boy scouts' hall in Charleville, Queensland, stands a curious monument to man's eternal hopes of controlling nature. It is a cannon of sorts, nearly three times the height of a person. With a wide muzzle tapering to a narrow base, the thing had the shape of an upside-down candlesnuffer or a forefather of the modern bazooka. The Charleville cannon has never been fired in anger, only against innocent clouds.

I first saw the clumsy monster some 20 years ago. The occasion: an inaugural flight to Charleville in a new flying-doctor ambulance plane. My lasting impression of that 1600-kilometres circuit of sheep and cattle runs was of arid, desolate landscapes desiccating under a relentless sun. From one flat skyline to another, there was little but bare red soil, drying waterholes, dust rising and pastures eaten to stubble by stock.

Everywhere the main topic of conversation was rain. Or the absence of it. In western Queensland, stockmen will tell you wryly that their scanty annual rainfall, which can be as little as 13 centimetres, comes largely from storms that get lost on their way to somewhere else. Months pass without a cloud in that Madonna-blue bowl of sky. And even when clouds do eventually appear, they fail frequently to disgorge rain.

During my Charleville visit, however, rainmaking had taken a more practical turn. A specially equipped

DC-3 was based at the airport, operated by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation as a flying laboratory. It was there to seed clouds, an experimental practice that had already had some success in other, more moisture-bearing regions. However, the problem around Charleville was to find the clouds.

Perhaps it was the presence of that aerial rainmaker that prompted us to act the way we did. Returning to town with the flying doctor's pilot one day, I ran across a young grazier I knew. "Let me show you something," he said.

He took us down a side street past the cinema and into the fenceless backyard of a weatherboard cottage. There, among weeds and rank grass, lay that monstrous candlesnuffer of a gun. Someone had chalked on its barrel in large, irregular letters:

**THE RAIN MAKER  
STEIGER VORTEX GUN  
USED AT CHARLEVILLE 1898  
BY CLEMENT WRAGGE**

It really was a mighty affair. The mystery was how it could be fired, for although the muzzle was 76 centimetres in diameter, there was only a small hole at the other end. We were still speculating when an old man appeared at the cottage's back door.

"This belong to you?" I asked.

"That's right, mate. She's the last of her kind. All the others got melted down.

The old fellow told us he remembered those guns first being fired 50 years ago when he was a boy in short pants. He said he thought there had been six of them, though records I looked up later said there were ten.

It turned out that he was right, although he had chalked the wrong date on his vortex gun – the actual year of their use had been 1902.

But they had been fired. No question of that. And by the celebrated Clement Wragge.

A GOVERNMENT METEOROLOGIST down in Brisbane, Wragge had been deeply concerned by the six-year drought that began in 1896 – "the grandfather of all droughts", as old hands called it long after.

Throughout Queensland, millions

of sheep and cattle perished, pastoralists went bankrupt, many stations were abandoned. So Wragge decided to borrow a technique he had seen used in northern Italy.

When vineyards there were threatened by hailstorms, approaching clouds were blasted with giant guns designed by a German named Steiger. The blasts turned hailstones into innocuous rain.

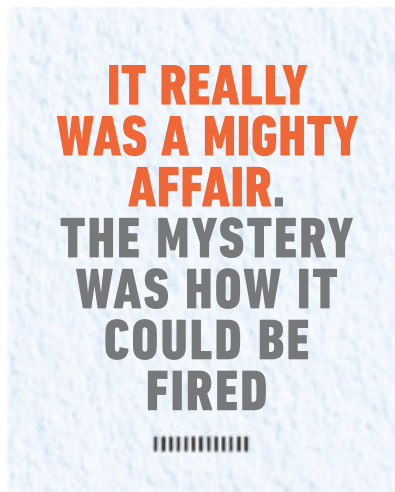
Wragge visited Europe to investigate rain-producing techniques. He contacted Herr Steiger for specifications, and had similar guns made in Brisbane.

After an 800-kilometre rail journey out west, he positioned them at strategic points around

Charleville.

They really were simple enough to fire. No ammunition was needed. All one had to do was mount them on wooden blocks, point them to the sky, pour gunpowder into a loading breech and light a fuse. The rest was a mighty blast of air.

THE OLD MAN, Bob McWha, told us there had been uproar in the town on the day of the initial firing. A market gardener's horse bolted, and wicker baskets, fruit and vegetables scattered everywhere. Galloping wildly,



with a lurching cart behind, that poor horse ran into more explosions wherever it went.

But did they bring any rain?

Not as far as he remembered, McWha said.

CLEMENT WRAGGE tried again. As before, the cloud conditions were promising. The net result was that two guns blew up in the faces of their firers. "Happily without damage to all concerned," reported the *Charleville Times*. But there was no rain, either.

Subsequent explosions were of another kind. Several councillors attacked the mayor for wasting public money.

He had, without their consent, they claimed, voted £50 towards the cost of manufacturing the guns. The mayor, trying to save face, put the blame on Wragge, who apparently left the town in a huff.

There were further repercussions when Herr Steiger heard of the affair. The German wrote berating Wragge for his "foolishness" in trying to make rain with a device never designed to do so. It was one thing to turn hail into rain, quite another to conjure it out of empty air.

Soon thereafter, the guns were

sold to a blacksmith's shop, where Bob McWha worked at the time. Somehow McWha became owner of that last gun, which was fired in the Charleville centenary celebrations of 1947.

"WHAT'S WRONG with trying it out again?" I asked him.

"No, I wouldn't come at that. Be hell to pay in town."

We were very persuasive, however. We wanted to see how it worked and, after all, there was a drought on. Who knew that Herr Steiger's famous gun might not have some effect this time?

McWha remained wary of us, but agreed to set up the gun. Together we

heaved and strained, propping it into an almost vertical position. McWha produced a packet of gunpowder, and we poured some into the breach.

"What do you use for a fuse?" the flying-doctor pilot asked.

"Well, anything'll do. A rolled-up newspaper, anything."

I handed him my paper. My grazier friend struck a match.

By this time, several bystanders had appeared. Seeing the newspaper catch alight, they ran for cover. It was not clear if they were

**A WEIRD  
WHINING SOUND  
FOLLOWED,  
SOARING  
ALMOST VISIBLY  
INTO THE  
UPPER AIR**





preparing to shelter from the rain, or if they simply remembered the last explosion. We three visitors crouched behind some buttresses shoring up the cinema walls.

McWha, our battery commander, was left alone, holding the flaming newspaper. Several times he lit the train of gunpowder, running for safety. Each time the thread of fire went out. And then at last ...

It was a tremendous bang that must have been heard far away. A weird whining sound followed, soaring almost visibly into the upper air, fading slowly like a receding jet-propelled plane. Dogs began barking up and down the street. People ran out of houses. Inexplicably, a number of boys on bicycles appeared.

But that was all – at least in Charleville. Then, an hour later, rain was reported to have fallen at Cunnamulla, 160 kilometres away. Who knows? Perhaps Herr Steiger's device worked after all. **R**

*Update: Today only two Steiger Vortex guns remain intact. They have been restored and given pride of place in Charleville's biggest park. A sign at the park reads Clement Wragge was "equal parts genius, eccentric and larrikin".*



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MAY 1948



# PASSED WITH FLYING COLOURS

*An unassuming man makes the grade*



BY *James Warner Bellah*

**T**he first time I met him was at an aerodrome in England during the last months of the First World War. He was a slender young man with a nice smile and pleasant grace; he had infinite courtesy and a diffident manner.



## READER'S DIGEST

He had been in the British Navy and had seen plenty of action. After spells on the sick list, he had been transferred to ground duty in the Royal Flying Corps, with the rank of captain.

He didn't seem pleased with his lot, for prestige was based on ability in the air, and that ability was hard to come by. Crashes were frequent, and we used to bury mistaken ability on Wednesdays and Saturdays, the bodies being held for collective funerals on those days. Ahead of us lay France, and the privilege of gambling our lives across the sights of a Vickers machine-gun synchronised with the propeller.

There was a rumour that the young captain was begging for permission to learn to fly, and that his politically powerful father was refusing firmly because another of his sons, an Army officer, was already risking his hide in France. But the diffident captain must have been persistent, for one morning he reported with orders to take instruction in flying.

The captain increased his popularity when, a month later, someone asked him how he liked flying. He answered, "Not too much," showing that he was more honest than the rest of us.

Then his brother, returning from almost four years in France, came for a visit. The brother asked if he knew anything about the De Havilland plane, and the captain said, "Practically nothing." That pleased us greatly, for neither did we, although

that was the plane we were flying. But what established him as a regular guy was an incident that happened one night in the senior officers' mess, to which I had been invited.

Another guest was a famous air fighter who wore the ribbons of the Distinguished Service Order, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Force Cross and a few assorted French numbers. He had imbibed freely, and his good taste had become dulled.

After staring for a long moment at the then-wingless ribbons on the diffident captain's left breast he said, "Captain, what are all those ribbons?"

For an equally long moment the captain looked curiously down at his ribbons as if he had never seen them before. Then he looked up and smiled and said, "I'm not quite sure. The tailor puts them there whenever I have a uniform made."

No one present failed to feel the quiet lash of the remark.

I'd like to be able to record that our young captain became a great air fighter, but he didn't. He did get his wings, however.

Then his brother, after years of prominence, stepped out of the picture and the diffident young captain was promoted.

The last any of us heard, he was King of England. **R**

CONDENSED FROM AIR FACTS

*George VI was King of the United Kingdom from 1936 to 1952.*



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# KEEP UP WITH THE WORLD

NOVEMBER 1937

*Amazing facts from the past and present*

◆ Scores of famous persons in history could not write legibly. Some of Shakespeare's work never has been definitely deciphered. Several of Nathaniel Hawthorne's manuscripts remain unpublished today because no one has been able to read them. And Napoleon Bonaparte's letters were almost in a class by themselves, some of them being mistaken for maps of battlefields.

◆ *In 18th-century England, political corruption was carried on openly. Men seeking lucrative government positions could buy them from the officeholders, who would advertise them for sale in the newspapers.*

◆ Sweden's citizens still maintain but deplore their old custom of addressing everyone by the title that designates his or her business or

profession. They say, "Will Mr The Lawyer Smith come to dinner?" or "May I offer Mr The Editor Jones another drink?" or "How is Mrs The Retailer Williams today?"

◆ *A most extraordinary enterprise of the early 19th century, before steam transportation and artificial refrigeration, was the shipping of ice from Boston to Calcutta, India, a sailing distance of more than 12,000 miles (19,000 kilometres).*

◆ As the killing of monkeys is forbidden in the colonies of France,

Kabyle farmers in Algeria rid their fields of them by catching a monkey and sewing on it a red flannel suit, covered with little bells. Turned loose, the monkey rejoins his troop, which, terror-stricken by his appearance and noise, is soon on the other side of the mountain.

◆ **In some Latin-American countries, movie theatres ring a 'lovers' warning bell' a minute before the house lights are turned on. Indeed, a Havana theatre temporarily lost its licence because the projectionist had suddenly turned on the lights when a film broke – to the embarrassment of a famous citizen.**



◆ *Centuries ago, in many lands, particularly Persia, the mourning of the death of a great man was often enhanced by having his horses, as well as his family and friends, shed tears during the funeral procession. This was done by placing mustard seeds in the nostrils of the animals.*

◆ Set up in Naples in 1924 as a memorial to operatic tenor Enrico Caruso, the largest candle in history, so far as is known, measured 18 feet (5.5 metres) in height and seven feet (2.1 metres) in circumference, and weighed three tons. Lit for 24 hours every year on All Souls' Day, it is expected to last 1800 years.

◆ *In 1880 Czar Alexander II of Russia was nearly killed by a bomb in his great winter palace in St Petersburg. The guards searched the 1000-odd rooms but did not find the anarchist. However, they did discover, in an unused boudoir on an upper floor, a peasant and his cow. Both of them had lived there for a number of years.*

◆ The most famous sanctuary of medieval England was the Cathedral in Durham. Anyone, irrespective of his or her crime, was safe from all pursuers when

◆ The greatest riot in history over a decision in a sporting event occurred during a chariot race in the Hippodrome of Constantinople in 532 AD. The fight lasted several days, a large part of the city was destroyed, and 30,000 citizens were killed.



they reached its front door and grasped its bronze Sanctuary Knocker. For 37 days the person was given food and a bed and then, if no pardon had been obtained, allowed to make their escape from the country on condition that they never return.

◆ *The sense of taste varies more than any other sense in humans. Tasting paper treated with phenylthiocarbamide proves the point. To some persons it will be tasteless; to others it will be bitter, sour, sweet or salty.*



JANUARY 1994



# SHARK ATTACK!

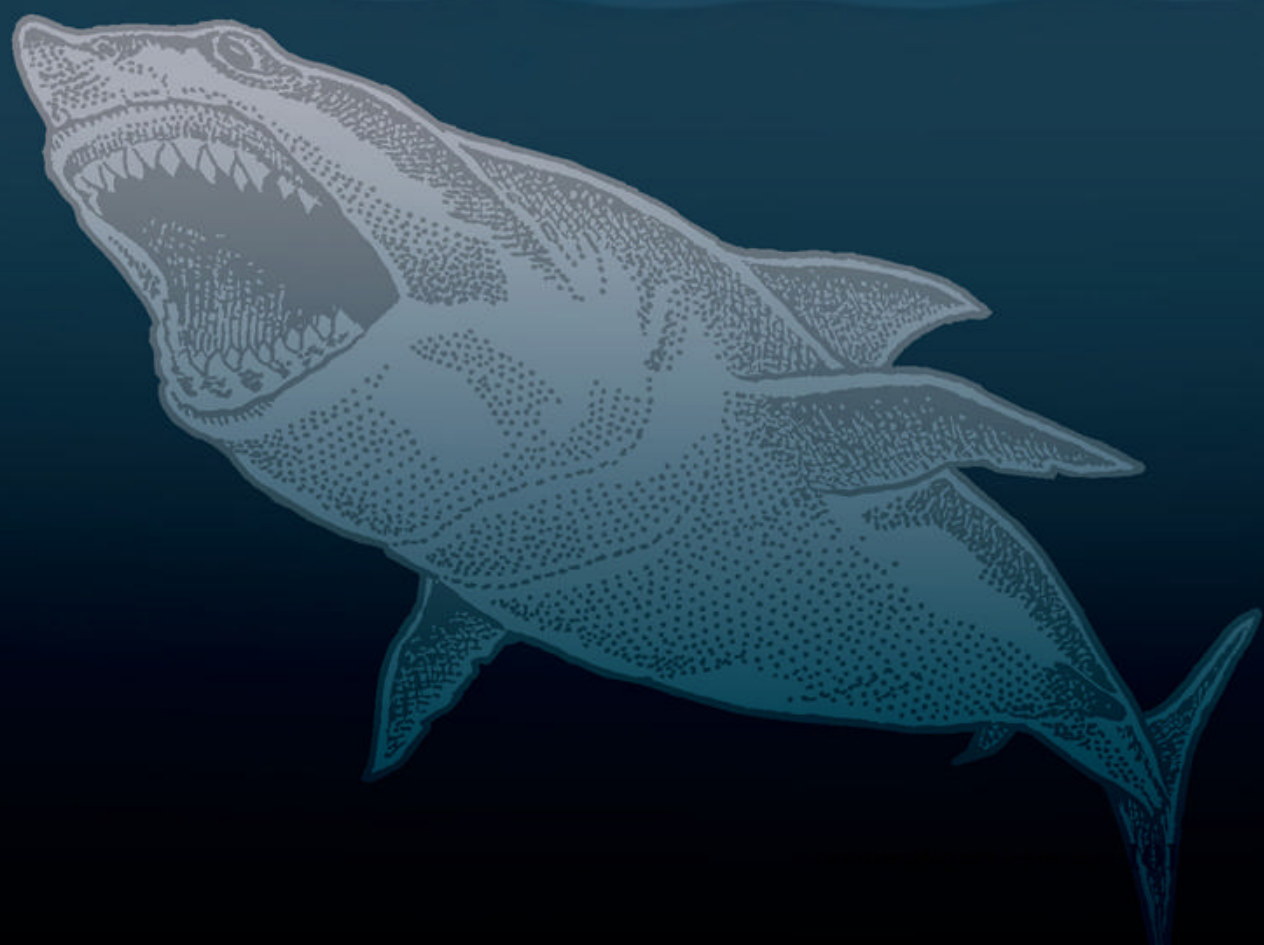
*The New Zealander lay dying on one  
of the most remote islands on earth.  
Could he be saved in time?*



BY *Richard Shears*

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES COMPOSITE







**M**ike Fraser pulled his diving mask down over his face and let the icy waters of the Southern Ocean close over his wetsuit. Snorkelling was his favourite way of relaxing from his job as leader of a weather station on Campbell Island, one of the most isolated places on earth. A speck of land between New Zealand and Antarctica, the island is normally lashed by westerly gales. But on April 24, 1992, the sea was brilliant blue and the wind a gentle breeze.

As his four teammates snorkelled in the shallows, Fraser finned his way to 40 metres offshore. He relished the feeling of oneness with nature. Here, rare yellow-eyed penguins flourished, and the sea lions were so unafraid that they would often swim alongside him.

Fraser scanned the ocean bed to familiarise himself with the depth of the bay so that he might swim with the southern right whales when they came to breed in the winter. He was relaxed. Large sharks were unknown here and, while the temperature of the water could be as low as 6°C, his wetsuit was thick enough to keep out the cold.

After half an hour, Fraser had seen enough. It was about 3.30pm. Time to go back. He stopped kicking and let himself drift.

*Thud!* A huge weight slammed into his right shoulder. Fraser was flung forwards, gasping for breath. *Must be a big bull sea lion*, he thought. An instant later, he was hurled upwards and held waist-high above the water.

Then Fraser looked down. Clamped round his right arm were the 80-centimetre-wide jaws of a huge shark.

Instinctively, Fraser swung his left arm round and punched furiously at the creature's huge, pointed snout. *I must warn the others*, he thought. "Shark!" he screamed. But his cry became a silent stream of bubbles as the monster dragged him under.

**METEOROLOGIST** Linda Danen, Fraser's second-in-command, was snorkelling 15 metres nearer the shore. With conservation officer Jacinda Amey, electronic technician Robin Humphrey and mechanic Gus McAllister, she was watching the reflections of a rarely seen sun on the sandy bottom. All they could hear beneath the sea was the steady rush of their own breathing. Then came a faint, muffled cry. The swimmers surfaced and scanned the horizon. Nothing.

Suddenly, there was an explosion of spray. Fraser erupted from the sea,

yelling and fighting ferociously. The four froze at the sight of the creature that held him. The great white paused for a moment, its head out of the water. Then, chillingly, the shark opened and closed its mouth round Fraser as if testing the consistency of his flesh.

*Think*, Danen urged herself. *There must be something you can do.* She screamed to the others, “Has anyone got a diving knife?”

But she knew they were powerless to help. The great white is the ocean’s most fearsome predator: 600 kilos of muscle and gristle against which a diver’s knife would be as useless as a toothpick. Judging by the monster’s head, it was at least four metres long. Danen watched helplessly as the shark pulled Fraser beneath the waves.

**AS HE WENT UNDER**, Fraser realised that death was only seconds away. *If you don’t free yourself now, you’re gone.* He raised his knees, then gave a powerful kick to the pale underside of the monster’s mouth. He kicked again and again, tugging desperately at his trapped arm. The shark shook him, its teeth meshing like shears as they ground deep into his flesh. Fraser kicked again. Suddenly, he felt a hard wrench, and he rolled clear.

Instantly, Fraser rocketed upwards. As his head broke the water’s surface, he sucked in air and kicked frantically for the shore. But as he ploughed through the water, his body reacted strangely. He looked down at his right arm. *It’s gone!* There was nothing below the elbow except a shredded stump that pumped bursts of bright red arterial blood into the ocean.

Fraser knew that his only hope lay in getting to his teammates before he bled to death. He had told them before: “Out here we have to look out for each other. There’s nobody else.” Now that would be put to the test.

Fraser’s instincts urged him to swim to shore as fast as he could. But years of living in remote places had taught him not to panic. He knew that every beat of his heart pumped more blood into the sea. So, to avoid panic, he forced himself to give measured kicks.

Then, suddenly, Fraser felt a tug on his neck.

He turned and looked in a diving mask. *Jacinda! Why didn’t she go in to the shore?* he thought as she slipped her body under his and began to pull him to the shore.

Waiting there, the other teammates lifted the wounded man out of the

**THE SHARK  
SHOOK HIM, ITS  
TEETH MESHING  
LIKE SHEARS  
AS THEY  
GROUND INTO  
HIS FLESH**



water. Immediately, Danen caught sight of Fraser's arm. Shreds of muscle and skin protruded from the mangled stump.

Before going to Campbell Island, she had been trained to apply splints on broken limbs, give injections and do stitches. *But nothing prepared me for this*, she thought grimly.

They were 680 kilometres from the nearest hospital. There was no airstrip on the island, and a boat would take at least three days to reach them.

By this time, shock had set in, and Fraser was having difficulty breathing. *Maybe I'm going to die*, he thought as he gasped for air. Danen quickly unzipped his wetsuit and removed his face mask.

Gradually, Fraser breathed easier. Then, while Humphrey applied pressure on the stump, McAllister ripped off the rubber strap from Fraser's mask and ran it round his upper arm, pulling it tight. The bleeding stopped.

The team's base, with its powerful radio transmitter and medical supplies, was a tough six-kilometre hike away.

"I'll go," said McAllister and set off at a run into the scrub.

Amey knew that if Fraser lost consciousness, his chances would be

even worse. "Let's keep him talking," she told Humphrey while Danen ran 300 metres up the hill to a small hut with a first-aid kit, a tent and a VHF radio. Perhaps a ship or plane was within range.

"Mayday! Mayday!" she called. "We have a badly injured man on Campbell Island." But her calls brought only a hiss of static.

Carrying the radio and the first-aid bag, Danen stumbled back down the hill. Gingerly, she replaced the tourniquet with a pressure bandage, then turned to his left arm, which was badly gashed and appeared to be broken. She tied Fraser's yellow plastic snorkel tube to his forearm as a splint.

"We must get him out of the cold," Danen told the others. With a sleeping bag from the hut, an old oar and a piece of driftwood, Humphrey built a crude stretcher. The group carried Fraser to level ground and set up an emergency tent over him.

Fraser was showing symptoms of severe shock: chalk-white face, blue lips. His skin was cold and clammy. Treatment is warmth, elevation of the legs to keep blood near vital organs, a saline drip to raise blood volume, and drugs to raise blood pressure. Danen and the others cut off his

**THERE WAS  
NO AIRSTRIP  
ON THE ISLAND,  
AND A BOAT  
WOULD TAKE  
AT LEAST  
THREE DAYS**





wetsuit, hauled him into a sleeping bag and piled more bags on top. Elevation and warmth was all they could give him.

Just after five in the evening, the radio crackled to life. "I called Wellington. They're doing all they can to get help to us. How's Mike?"

"He's still cold, Gus," Amey said quietly. "He's *very* cold."

**IN HIS OFFICE** at Taupo airport in the North Island, helicopter pilot John Funnell slowly lowered his phone back to its cradle, his mind racing. He had seen Mike Fraser just six months before on a supply mission to Campbell Island. *It's a long way*, he thought, *but we have to try*.

Funnell had a reputation for pulling off difficult rescues. But this one would be a real challenge. His six-seater Aerospatiale Squirrel helicopter had a range of 650 kilometres. To reach Fraser, the cabin would need to be fitted with long-range fuel tanks. First, Funnell had to fly the craft 1060 kilometres to the extreme south and then another 685 kilometres over the ocean.

But an audacious plan began to form in Funnell's mind. He needed two key people. One was Pat Wynne, a veteran paramedic who had flown with him on scores of rescue missions. The other man was Grant Biel, an experienced long-distance pilot and navigator – someone who could help guide the helicopter to a speck of rock

in the vastness of the Southern Ocean, and do it in the dark. Funnell called the two men. "We've got a shark-attack victim."

Meanwhile, a team of aircraft engineers hurriedly fitted three jet-fuel drums to the cabin interior and a long-range navigation system to the instrument panel.

When Wynne and Biel arrived, Funnell outlined his plan: Biel would be in the cockpit. Wynne would sit in the passenger compartment with the three drums of aviation fuel and a portable electric pump to transfer fuel to the helicopter's main tank as they flew. It was an unconventional strategy, but the men knew Fraser's life hung on the outcome.

In the gloom of the tent, Fraser felt desperately cold. Waves of agony washed over him. *At least I'm still alive*, he thought. *I've lost my right arm, but I can still make it. I've got a good team around me, and I can rely on them. They won't give up. Nor will I.*

It was after 6.30pm when McAllister returned to the tent, carrying a heavy package of drugs, bandages and sleeping bags from the base. Danen picked out the painkiller pethidine and an antibiotic, Velosef. She filled two syringes and injected Fraser in the thigh. His breathing was so shallow now that it was almost imperceptible. She moved round to cradle his head in her hands, hoping that the contact would somehow give him strength to cling to life.

## READER'S DIGEST

**AT 2AM**, after a five-hour flight from Taupo, the Squirrel soared over the southern tip of the South Island and out into the darkness. The three men were grimly silent – ahead of them lay those 685 kilometres of open sea. All that stood between them and an icy death was their small craft and Grant Biel's skill as a navigator.

To find the island at night, Biel had planned to rely on the Squirrel's Global Positioning System (GPS). But that night, the orbiting GPS satellites were taken off the air for routine repositioning in space. By a cruel twist of fate, the procedure had coincided with their flight.

Transmission was due to resume after 90 minutes, when they were half-way to Campbell. Until then, Biel had to navigate by dead reckoning, using estimates of wind velocity and speed. If the GPS link was not restored on time, they might have to abandon the rescue attempt.

Jammed into a tiny corner of the Squirrel's passenger compartment, Wynne was fighting cramps with no room to sit or stand.

"Ready to jettison," he told Funnell as the first drum ran dry. Wynne moved the fuel line to the second drum. Then, as Funnell slowed the Squirrel, Wynne opened the door and heaved the drum.

By now, they had been flying for more than one-and-a-half hours from Invercargill and the GPS receiver still remained obstinately blank. Using

information that was radioed from a Navajo aircraft 4300 metres above them, Biel calculated a new compass heading. Funnell, who had been working for 21 hours straight, adjusted his controls as they flew on into the night.

**THROUGHOUT** the night, Danen was giving Fraser sips of water to battle dehydration. But as his condition got worse, whatever he sipped he brought back up again. His body was drenched with sweat. Amey removed a sleeping bag and Danen prepared another syringe of pethidine. Soon after 5am, Fraser drifted into sleep. Danen checked his vital signs and nudged him every now and then to make sure he was still conscious.

**BIEL GLANCED** at the instrument panel and saw, at last, black numbers flashing on the small GPS screen. His navigation had been nearly perfect. But as the Squirrel neared the island, a new peril emerged. A thickening layer of low clouds was cloaking the sea.

Funnell had learned that the *Tangaroa*, a government fisheries research ship, had already headed for Campbell Island after picking up one of the team's radio conversations. He radioed the ship.

"This is *Tangaroa*," came the reply. Funnell was still flying blind. Suddenly, the cloud billowed away and, turning again, they could see the lights of the ship like a cluster of pearls on the sea. Using the *Tangaroa* as a

marker, Funnell brought the Squirrel down to 90 metres.

“Steer left,” said the ship’s radio operator, guiding them round two rocky offshore islands. A minute later, Biel saw a light on the ground.

“Got them!” he said.

Just after 6am – 15 hours after the shark attack – Wynne crawled into the tent. He found Danen and Amey kneeling beside Fraser.

The wounded man’s face was bluish-white and his eyes looked closed. *I’m too late*, Wynne thought.

Pressing his fingers against the carotid artery in Fraser’s neck, he could detect only a faint pulse. Wynne wrapped a blood-pressure pad round Fraser’s arm. The reading was 70 over 40 – so low that he was at the point of kidney failure.

The first priority was an immediate transfusion. But in the dim light of the tent, it was impossible to insert a needle into Fraser’s collapsed veins.

“We’ll have to fly him to the base,” Wynne told the women.

Working there under bright lights, Wynne searched for the main vein in Fraser’s right ankle. With a silent prayer, Wynne pushed a hypodermic needle through the skin. A thin fountain of dark, veinous blood erupted into the syringe. With Amey holding


a bag of plasma, Wynne removed the syringe from the needle and replaced it with the drip line.

He repeated the procedure on the left ankle. Life-giving fluids began seeping into Fraser.

**SIX HOURS LATER**, Fraser was wheeled into Southland Hospital in Invercargill. Doctors estimated that he had lost up to half the blood in his body.

Funnell, Biel and Wynne had flown nearly 3700 kilometres, much of the distance over ocean in a helicopter designed for short-haul work over land – a feat hailed as one of the most courageous rescues in New Zealand history.

After skin grafts and reconstructive surgery, Fraser now works for the weather service in Wellington. With exercise, his left arm, which lost two tendons, continues to get stronger. The ordeal has left him with a tremendous respect for human courage.

“It just shows the extraordinary things we can achieve when we look out for each other.” 

“STEER LEFT,”  
SAID THE  
SHIP’S RADIO  
OPERATOR,  
GUIDING THEM  
ROUND TWO  
ROCKY ISLANDS



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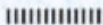


FEBRUARY 1967



# WHEN MOTHERS GET THE BUG

*Mothers don't get sick very often.  
But when they do, this is what happens*



*BY Joyce Lubold*

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES COMPOSITE



**H**ave you ever had the 24-hour bug? You know, you have a fever, you ache and you have to stay in bed. Well, most people have had it sometime, and most people get over it in 24 hours. Most people, that is, except mothers. A mother can get over it in 12 hours or less!

Mother has just taken her temperature – and it's over 38°C. She's got the bug that's going around.

It's right after lunch. The older children are at school, and the baby is napping. There's no reason why Mother cannot go to bed. But first she has a few things to do. Mix the meat loaf for dinner. Leave a note for the cleaners. Find someone to serve coffee for her at the meeting tonight. Put in the next load of washing. Carry out the garbage.

At last...she...sinks...into...bed. *Ah-h-h-h!* Her aching legs soak up comfort from the cool sheets. Her burning eyes close. She's asleep!

Then, suddenly, the front door bangs open as the children burst home from school. "Mum! Mum! Where ARE you?" Mother tries to answer but their cries drown out her weak calls. Soon they find her – in bed.

"Didn't you even get *up* yet?" cries the younger girl.

"How am I going to get to Bill's?" asks the boy.

"What about dinner? We've got to eat," says the older girl.

Mother understands. She knows

that the children aren't used to a mother in bed. "I'm sick," she says. "I can't do *anything*. I'll just have to leave it all to you." She sighs. "Cook the potatoes...take care of the baby... set the table."

The children dash off like soldiers going into battle. For a time Mother is left to the quiet of her room and the ache in her pounding head.

Then Father comes home. He bounds into the bedroom, drops heavily on the side of the bed and reaches for her hand. He looks tired. Mother starts worrying about him. "It's nothing, darling – just this bug that's going around," she says. "I can get up and do dinner and—"

Father shakes his head. "You stay right there. Don't worry about a thing. The kids and I will take over. We'll get along fine without you."

Mother's room is quiet again. But it's also empty. Mother tosses and turns. The sheets are no longer cool. And they scratch. She lies still, listening for family sounds. She feels left out. She feels terrible! But everybody else seems to feel great. In fact, there seems to be some sort of party going on. There are giggles from the



children. And there are loud laughs from Father.

Suddenly there is a crash, followed by Father's voice. "Get the baby out of the way before he cuts himself! Where's the broom? Don't disturb your mother! I said DON'T DISTURB YOUR MOTHER!"

Now the house grows quiet. It is clear to Mother that the family is eating dinner while she lies there sick and alone. No one had thought to bring dinner to her. They've forgotten all about her. They're doing *fine* without her. There's no point in going on living.

Then there is another crash. The younger girl rushes in with the news. "They dropped your tray and the dog licked up all your dinner."

She dashes off. There is more noise until, finally, the children appear, beaming. They are proud of what they bring. There's a glass of water, spilled onto the tray. There's a plate with three beans, a cold

boiled potato, a tiny slice of burned meat loaf.

"Can we stay with you while you eat?" the children ask. "Dad's kind of mad. And the kitchen is a mess. And nobody knows where the broom is. Is it all right if we stay with you?"

Suddenly Mother feels wonderful. As the children watch carefully, she eats her cold dinner. "Everything tastes so good," she tells them. She notices, without surprise, that her aches and pains are gone.

The older girl speaks up. "Gee, Mum, I sure wish you'd get better. It's just no fun when you're sick."

"Yeh," says the boy, "I hope you feel better tomorrow. We miss you."

Mother smiles. "I feel better already," she says.

**SO YOU SEE HOW IT IS** with mothers. Other people have the 24-hour bug for 24 hours. But not a mother. If she feels needed enough, she can get over it in 12 hours or less! **R**

**"WHERE'S THE  
BROOM? DON'T  
DISTURB YOUR  
MOTHER!  
I SAID DON'T  
DISTURB YOUR  
MOTHER!"**



### Good Neighbours

RD JANUARY 1953

**Nothing makes you more tolerant of a neighbour's noisy party than being there.** FRANKLIN P. JONES IN *The Saturday Evening Post*

## ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

FROM THE 1980s



◆ Applying for a sales job at the local fabric shop, my sister-in-law was given a short test of her knowledge of measurements and calculations. The owner was amazed when she answered all ten questions correctly, and immediately offered to hire her.

"You wouldn't believe," he said with a deep sigh, "how many people get seven or eight wrong on this test."

"Oh yes, I would," she replied. "They've been waiting on me for years."

SHIRLEY J. TISCHER, RD DECEMBER 1983

◆ We'd been going slightly crazy with a new copying machine that seemed to gobble paper like a piranha and needed repair almost every day. In addition, a large sign proclaimed: "Only qualified key operators are allowed to open machine. Please call one of the persons listed."

These people were very difficult to find at crucial moments, so someone scrawled on the sign: "Jammed if you do - and jammed if you don't."

JEANNE ROGERS, RD DECEMBER 1983

◆ For many years, I was a university theatre director. My wife was once asked by one of her clients about her plans for the coming weekend.

"I think I'm going to watch my husband's play," she replied.

"Oh," the client said. "How many do you have?"

ROBERT PUTNAM, RD FEBRUARY 1984

◆ I was 21 when I broke the news to my mother that I was going out with an older man. I asked that she be especially nice to my friend, who would be picking me up after dinner. The doorbell rang, and I was still getting ready.

"Make him comfortable," I shouted to her. "I'll be down soon."

Twenty minutes later, I entered the lounge to find a total stranger, about 60 years old, sitting there with a drink in his hand. And Mother was, of course, treating him with great courtesy.

I suppose the kitchenware salesman still marvels at the welcome he received that night.

B.S., RD FEBRUARY 1984

◆ Delivering speeches was usually a thankless part of my public-relations for a large bank, so I was surprised to receive a phone call shortly after appearing on a convention programme.

"I heard you at the convention," the man said. "You were good. Can you give us that same talk at our next meeting?"

Ego soaring, I readily agreed.

Two weeks later, I sat at their head table. The programme chairman sent my ego even higher with the glowing introduction. But then, as I stepped to the podium, he added, "What we most want to hear is that great story you told at the convention - the one about the old lady taxi driver who smoked pot."

I was puzzled. "That couldn't have

been me," I explained to him. "I've never even heard it."

The chairman sank back in his chair. "Oh, no," he groaned, "I've got the wrong man."

ORV GOERGER, RD FEBRUARY 1984

◆ I used to have a job painting clown faces on children at a flea market. Each day when I arrived, I'd paint my own face first. One morning as I examined my make-up in the rest room, I was pleased that my clown-white looked even, my mouth and

nose shone a suitably garish red, and my bright-purple eyebrows formed perfect triangles.

I also noticed a woman at a sink nearby watching me and shaking her head disapprovingly. Finally, on her way out, she tapped my shoulder and whispered, "Too much!"

ROSA MICHNYA, RD APRIL 1987

1987

Sorting mail at our postal centre involves memorising postcodes. After I tried several times to explain the method we use for packaging to a newly hired employee, I overheard him mutter, "This is too complicated. I knew I should have stayed in medical school."

KATHY PHILLIPS,  
RD APRIL 1987

◆ Hairdressers, like bartenders, are expected to listen sympathetically when needed. One Friday morning, a regular customer came in, sat down, and as I flung the towel round her neck, asked, "Now where did I leave off last week?"

CAMILLE MANDELL, RD APRIL 1987





JUNE 1959



# THE UNBELIEVABLE MR RIPLEY

*The creator of 'Believe It or Not'  
had an insatiable curiosity about  
strange and astonishing facts*



BY *Douglas F. Storer*

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES COMPOSITE





**I** first saw Bob Ripley, the creator of 'Believe It or Not', on a December evening more than 30 years ago. I was the brash young director-producer of a new coast-to-coast radio programme sponsored by the Hudson Motorcar Company, scheduled to go on the air in exactly 78 minutes.

We'd wanted an original and striking feature for the broadcasts and had hired Ripley sight unseen. During the rehearsal-time bedlam I was handing out scripts, barking orders, yelling for quiet, when a large man, grinning like an embarrassed schoolboy, edged timidly through the studio door. He wore an ensemble straight out of a haberdasher's nightmare: pale blue shirt, batwing tie of flamingo orange, checked horse-blanket jacket, fawn-coloured slacks and gleaming black-and-white sports shoes.

He gave a nervous little bow. "You're Bob Ripley?" I asked, blinking. He blushed and nodded. Speechless, I handed him the script.

All he had to do was read a 30-second introduction to a dramatised 'Believe It or Not' story, and then at the end authenticate the story and say good night. It sounds sweet and simple, but by the time we went off the air that memorable night I was a tottering wreck and Ripley was even worse. Microphone fright? It was fantastic. His script rustled like a palm tree in a hurricane. Four times he dropped it, picked it up and each time nearly knocked over the microphone stand.

He mumbled his lines, but he kept on, to the bitter end. When it was over, he reeled to the control room. "H-h-how'd I do?" he stammered.

His flushed face held an expression so boyish and appealing – so earnest and honest – that my professional outrage melted. I stuck out my hand. "You need a little practise. Outside of that, you were great."

The show stumbled along. In fact, the public *liked* Ripley's awkward manner. We became friends, and before long Ripley asked me to be his personal representative. From that time, until his death in 1949, I travelled and worked with him, arranged his lectures and radio and television shows, and helped him with his motion pictures.

As I look back on it now, Ripley was probably the biggest yokel ever to succeed in show business or gain world renown as a newspaper artist. He had no polish. He was shyer than a white rabbit, painfully conscious of his buckteeth and his lack of education. But he threw himself heart and soul into everything he did, blundered through and, win or lose, he had a wonderful time.



Once in Marineland, Florida, the script called for Ripley to go down into the big saltwater aquarium in a diver's suit, hand-feed a school of sharks and describe the experience to the radio audience through a microphone in his helmet.

"Terrific!" he said. "Where's the helmet?"

I was amazed. "Have you ever been in a diver's suit?"

"Heck, no," he said. "I can't even swim." But down he went.

He did a hundred other crazy and sometimes dangerous things. Once he made a broadcast from a pit full of live rattlesnakes. No matter what things he tackled, he plunged into them with the tremendous zest that made them adventures.

**RIPLEY WAS BORN** in California. His father died when Bob was in knee-length pants, and he left school to go to work. All he had in the world was a knack with a pencil – and a million-dollar curiosity. In his teens he kicked around as a sports cartoonist on a San Francisco paper, then – fired for asking for a raise – headed for New York and landed a job on the old New York *Globe*.

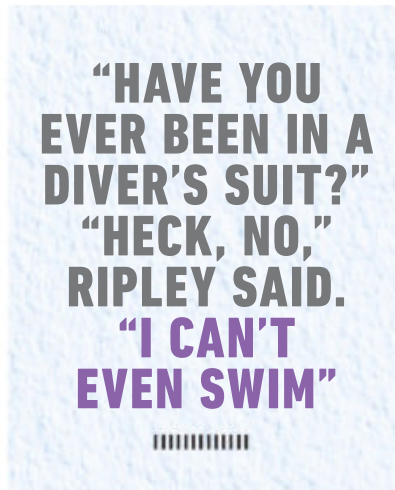
One dull day in 1918 he filled a hole in the sports page with drawings of a

sprinter who ran the hundred-yard dash backwards in 14 seconds. He added other sporting world oddities, slugged them 'Champs and Chumps,' and tossed them on the copydesk. The copy editor thought the heading was weak. Ripley then changed it to 'Believe It or Not.'

"That's better," the editor said, and sent the material to the composing room.

'Believe It or Not' caught on. *The Globe* began running it twice a week, then daily, and Ripley cast around for oddities outside the field of sports. His mail increased. He accumulated a staff – two secretaries and a researcher. In 1923 he moved over to the *New York Post*.

Rip always said that out of his tens of thousands of cartoons he owed his fame and success primarily to two. In 1927, a few weeks after Lindbergh's flight to Paris, Ripley ran in 'Believe It or Not' a drawing of the *Spirit of St Louis* winging across the sea. Underneath was the caption: "Lindbergh was the 67th man to make a nonstop flight over the Atlantic Ocean." The day the cartoon appeared, the *Post* switch-board sizzled for hours. Ripley received more than 200,000 telegrams and letters, every one a scream of protest. He was in seventh heaven. He



pointed out that before Lindbergh, the Atlantic had been crossed by two Englishmen in a heavier-than-air craft, by 31 others in an English airship and by 33 Germans in a German airship.

Then in 1929 'Believe It or Not' made the astonishing announcement that the United States had no national anthem; what Americans sang instead was in reality an old English drinking song. How come? Francis Scott Key wrote the words to 'The Star-Spangled Banner', then put them to the music of a rousing tavern ballad which he had discovered in a songbook. More than five million indignant letters funnelled into Washington from every state. In 1931 Congress rectified the oversight and formally declared 'The Star-Spangled Banner' - words and music - to be the US national anthem.

**WHEN WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST** saw the first book of 'Believe It or Not' cartoons he sent a two-word wire to his King Features Syndicate: "Hire Ripley." Overnight, Ripley's income soared from \$200 a week to \$100,000 a year. Suddenly he was the highest-paid, most widely-read cartoonist in the world. He bought a rambling 29-room house on an island

in Long Island Sound and had the time of his life cramming it with Aztec masks, Buddhist shrines, the shells of man-eating clams and other exotic curios. But he never sat back and played lord of the manor. He was the hardest worker I ever knew. By 6.30 every morning of the year, he was at his drawing board. He never paid for an item, people from all over the world

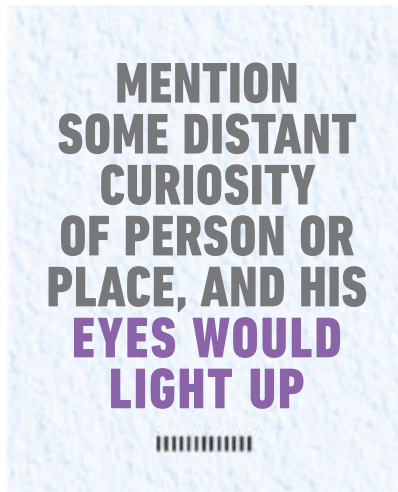
sent him suggestions. In addition, a full-time assistant dug up historical oddities. Ripley himself made the drawings and wrote the captions. He was a fanatic on accuracy. Every item had to be verified, witnessed, notarised.

Much of his material he gathered firsthand. Mention some distant

curiosity of person or place, and his eyes would light up. He'd take a deep breath, as though he could already sniff the trade winds, and start packing. He'd toss his drawing materials into one suitcase, travelling gear into another, and take off for the ends of the earth.

Once he heard about a mountain-top monastery in Greece that one could reach only by being hauled up a 300-metre cliff in a wicker basket. So he went to see it for himself.

I remember when he heard about the Bell of the Maiden, outside of



Tartar Gate of Peiping (now Beijing). It was supposed to be the largest hanging bell in the world. The legend was that in order to satisfy the emperor's wish for the sweetest-sounding bell in China, the bellmaker's daughter threw herself to her death in the molten bronze, just before the bell was cast. Ripley travelled all the way to China to see the bell and sketch it.

Another time he heard a fantastic story about some German scientists who froze to death in the middle of Africa. Soon he was on his way to the Belgian Congo. Sure enough, he found the story was true. In 1908 an expedition of 20 men had died of exposure at  $-51^{\circ}\text{C}$  on the glacial slopes of Mount Karisimbi, a volcano only 160 kilometres from the equator. He hired a plane and flew over the place.

**THE YEARS SWIRLED** by for Rip in a montage of trips, radio shows, lecture tours, television programmes – and very little rest. One night at a party at his house just after World War II, he and I were sitting to one side, talking. He looked tired. He was in his 50s and some of the snap was gone from his brown eyes. “Rip,” I said, “why don't you quit and take it easy?”

Thoughtfully, he picked up a Canton ivory ball – one of those hollow, filigreed balls within balls – that had taken a Chinese craftsman a lifetime to carve. He turned it over in his hand. “It's impossible, isn't it, for anyone to have done this? Yet there

it is. A hundred years ago a man sat down and devoted his life to making this ball. It's things like that that keep me going. Proving that the impossible can happen – that it happens all around us every day. Trying to make people see that they themselves can do the impossible if they try hard enough.” He grinned, and added, as if to take the edge off being so serious, “Believe it or not.”

Ripley never did quit, even though hypertension had caught up with him. On Tuesday, May 24, 1949, he appeared as usual on the weekly ‘Believe It or Not’ TV show from New York. Three days later he was dead.

‘Believe It or Not’ cartoons, drawn by others, still appear in hundreds of newspapers every day. I think of him every time I see them – also, every time I look out the window. On our lawn in New Rochelle, New York, there is a big hand-carved Alaskan totem pole. Rip sent it to me 30 years ago as a house-warming present. When I protested about what my neighbours might say, he only chuckled, “The kids'll love it.”

Today Rip's totem pole is a neighbourhood institution. Each year new classes of school children come to see it. Strangers stop to inspect it. It's a landmark. And it's Ripley. To me, looking at it is just like hearing Rip's voice again, with the old ring in it, saying that the world is filled with romance, and there are lots of places and lots of things he's got to see. **R**







MARCH 1968



MY  
FRIEND  
THE  
MOUSE

*The best-laid plans of small boys  
and their pets depend on outwitting  
parents — and avoiding temptation*



BY *Robert Fontaine*

**I** made a friend of a mouse. I had never really known a mouse before, and this new comradeship taught me a sad lesson in love and loyalty.

Sometimes I took shortbreads to bed to keep under my pillow and munch while I read fairy tales. This was forbidden, but I knew that Maman expected me to do it anyway, and that her only interest in the matter was in keeping her conscience and record clear. So I disregarded the injunction. The Mouse, I soon discovered, was gnawing on the shortbreads while I slept. I caught him in the act one morning. Fortunately, Maman had not yet had time to teach me to fear mice. I wished him to remain with me so that I may have him for a pet. Fervently I asked the Lord to make it so no one would see The Mouse and set a trap.

But Papa entered my room one night and saw The Mouse.

"Hein?" Papa said as a grey streak flashed across the room. "What was that?"

"*Qu'est-ce que c'est?*" I said naively.

"What was that which just now appeared and disappeared?" Papa demanded.

"Me, I saw nothing. You promised to fix my skates."

My father frowned and sat down slowly on the bed. But in a moment, he suddenly arose with a bad light in his eyes. He was, I could see,

no longer a good, kind man with music in his heart; he was now a fierce hunter. He had discovered the doorway to The Mouse's home. It was a very small hole just near a corner.

"Oho!" he shouted like a savage.

"Is something the matter? I inquired.

"Aha!" Papa exclaimed. He knelt down and peeked into The Mouse's home.

Don't let him kill The Mouse, I demanded silently of the Lord. Fair is fair. I have learnt already twice the number of Bible verses I am supposed to learn and You have hardly noticed me at all. Papa is Papa and I love and respect him, but You know and I know The Mouse is my friend.

This was the first time I had ever given the Lord orders, and I was not so sure I had used the most politic method.

I tried to engage my father in conversation. "What do you think I learnt in school today?" I asked eagerly.

My father replied without looking up: "Very little, no doubt. And that little of more harm than good."

I tried hard to think of something else to talk about when suddenly Papa jumped up, holding his nose, and cried: "*Nom d'un nom!*"



The Mouse apparently had scratched Papa's long nose. I could not help but laugh. "You too would be angry if someone sticks his nose in your house," I said.

Papa rubbed his nose and came back to the bed, a little confused. He began to repair my skating boot, and I sighed happily, thinking he had abandoned his wild-game hunt.

Perhaps he had, but The Mouse had not given up Papa. Foolish Mouse!

As soon as my father became comfortably seated on the bed, The Mouse walked right out. Not only did he walk out; he stood up on two legs and looked my father calmly in the eye. It was as if he wished to say: "Look here, I did not mean to hurt your nose. It was an accident. The Boy and I are friends. It is not easy to find a true friend in this world. For a small boy it is difficult; for a mouse it is almost impossible. Can we not talk this over, man to man?"

Alas, my poor father, who understood so many lovely things so well, did not understand The Mouse. He saw only a wild animal and lunged for it. The Mouse, who apparently knew something of human nature, was intelligent enough to disappear.

The next day there was a trap with

some cheese. I stole the cheese in the name of my friendship with The Mouse. I could not do otherwise.

The following day, Papa, seeing neither cheese nor mouse, remarked pointedly: "Aha! What a remarkable mouse it is we have here, eh? He eats the cheese and yet he does not spring the trap!"

I rolled my eyes and tried to look as much as possible like a cherub in the Sunday-school pictures.

"Such a thing is possible - for a very smart mouse."

Papa looked me in the eye. "It is not possible," he said firmly. "But what is most possible is that a small boy with a vacant head is removing the cheese from the trap."

"What small boy would do such a thing?" I inquired.

"You shall find him in the mirror," said Papa.

He then forbade me to touch the cheese. It was a direct command of the first degree and had to be obeyed.

Once more I prayed for The Mouse. "Dear Lord, I have saved The Mouse once, what I can do, certainly You can do. If the worst comes to the worst, remove The Mouse from the temptation of the cheese. Lead him not into temptation, but deliver him from the evil trap."

**THE MOUSE  
STOOD UP ON  
TWO LEGS AND  
LOOKED MY  
FATHER  
CALMLY IN  
THE EYE**



Nevertheless, I awaited, with terror in my heart, the end of *mon ami*, my proven friend.

I opened the subject later with Maman. "If you have a friend whose loyalty is proven, you stand by this friend when others wish him harm. *N'est-ce pas?*"

My mother was darning one of Papa's socks. "*Mais oui,*" she replied.

"Aha!" I shouted triumphantly. "Then why do we have to catch The Mouse?"

My mother stood up quickly. "Mouse?" she repeated nervously. "What mouse? Where is The Mouse?"

Papa put down his newspaper. He looked at me across the room with a wise smile. I could see I had made a fatal strategic error. Maman was afraid of mice.

"The Boy," my father said quietly, "has in his room a mouse. They are friends, these two. So The Boy claims. The Mouse has said nothing."

"Set the trap!" cried Maman. "Set the trap!"

"The trap was set," my father explained patiently, "but The Mouse removed the cheese without springing the trap."

"*C'est impossible!*" my mother said. She turned to me. "I forbid you to remove the cheese. You understand?"

"I will not remove the cheese," I promised sadly. "But it is only a coward who stands still while his best friend is killed with low tricks."

"Listen to him sing!" Papa exclaimed, a little upset.

"Maman herself has said this is one of the things one does not do," I argued.

"A mouse," my mother countered, "is different."

"A friend is a friend," I said. "At least, if you wish to fight my friend you could fight fair - not with traps."

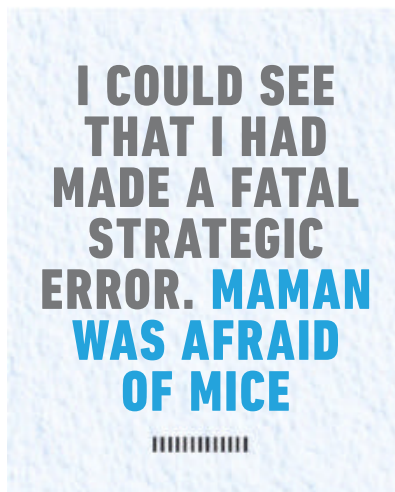
"Ho! Name of a thousand and one names!" Papa cried. "Shall I make a tail for myself and get down on my hands and knees and bite The Mouse with my

teeth?"

Papa went upstairs and set the trap with an unfairly large and unusually attractive piece of cheese.

I sighed. I could see it was no use. The Mouse could be saved now only by the good Lord.

When I awakened in the morning the cheese was still there. I jumped out of bed, knelt down, and told the Lord: "*Merci bien, Monsieur!*" Then I dressed and bounded joyfully down to breakfast, humming gaily. I ate my porridge in bliss. Just as I had finished, there was a scampering above us.



“Is that,” Papa asked, “perhaps The Mouse?”

I held my breath and prayed one more time. Maman said nothing. In a few moments there was scampering again. This time it seemed very close.

“Does The Mouse even know the way downstairs?” Papa asked in surprise.

I did not answer him. I busied myself putting jam on my toast. Halfway through the toast I felt as if something soft had touched my feet. I looked down. There was The Mouse, reeling, wobbling, struggling towards my feet.

When he saw my friend, my father stood up hastily. I do not know what he intended to do – perhaps protect Maman. It does not matter. In a few seconds The Mouse rolled over my feet, dead. He did not die, however before he said something to me with his eyes. My father rushed upstairs and came back excitedly, exclaiming, “Astonishing! The cheese was removed from the trap. One imagines the trap must have sprung and struck The Mouse in the jaw. This is a mouse who has died from a punch in the jaw!”


The wonder of it did not impress

me. I knew The Mouse was a brave one. But I did not know about myself, for, with his eyes, The Mouse seemed to have said to me: “Look, I was your friend and you have killed me. But here is the wonder – I am still your friend. See, I come to die at your feet and to forgive you. It is easy to love those who are kind to you; it is a terrible but necessary thing to love those who betray you.”

Ah, perhaps The Mouse did not mean anything of the sort. Maybe it was my own heart speaking, learning, growing up.

“Papa,” I asked quietly, “is there a heaven for The Mouse?”

“Yes, yes,” Papa said unhappily, “there is for everyone a heaven.”

Maman, who had been white and silent through the tragedy, now spoke meekly, “After this, let us get a large cat, so that such matters will be out of our hands.” 

CONDENSED FROM *THE HAPPY TIME*  
@ 1945, BY ROBERT FONTAINE



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### Funny Business

RD SEPTEMBER 1945

A retailer, annoyed because he had to wait several months for an order, wired the manufacturer: “Cancel order immediately.”

Back came the response: “Regret cannot cancel immediately.

You must take your turn!” *Chicago Sun*



*Towards a More*  
**PICTURESQUE SPEECH**

OCTOBER 1926, FEBRUARY 1934, MAY 1934

*Twists and turns of phrase*

- ◆ She had a tongue that would clip a hedge.
- ◆ *The clock-hands were closing like scissor blades on midnight, snipping off another day.*
- ◆ She was throwing herself away, perhaps, but she was taking careful aim.
- ◆ *They clucked over their grains of gossip.*
- ◆ Restless as a windshield wiper.
- ◆ *She listens to what you don't say and never misses a word.*

*Her look hung a price tag on every object in the room.*

*As hard to catch as a waiter's eye.*

- ◆ Irrevocable as a haircut.
- ◆ *Her hat always looked as if it had made a forced landing upon her head.*
- ◆ The secret was hushed about from place to place.
- ◆ *A famous politician trying to save both his faces.*
- ◆ I won't be highbrow beaten.
- ◆ *The kind of man who remembers your age but forgets your birthday.*
- ◆ As unplanned as a hiccup.
- ◆ *He dresses like an unmade bed.*
- ◆ As uncomfortable as an after-thought.

- ◆ *The slow punctuation of fire-flies in the garden.*
- ◆ He's all sail and no anchor.
- ◆ *Her hands dropped open, spilling dismay.*
- ◆ He looked like an accident going somewhere to happen.
- ◆ *The bureaucratic squanderlust of our times.*
- ◆ He had a good memory and a tongue hung in the middle of it.
- ◆ *The full moon pushed the clouds aside as if they were double doors.*
- ◆ Genuine as a thumbprint.
- ◆ *Her line of conversation was as interesting as a laundry list.*
- ◆ The crowds coming from the subway oozed out just like toothpaste.
- ◆ *Impressionable as a new sheet of carbon paper.*
- ◆ Her voice stamped its foot just a little.

*He talks like a dictionary on its best behaviour.*

*She didn't want advice: she only used you as a waste basket for her worries.*

- ◆ *Suffering from a compound fracture of the illusions.*
- ◆ As new as a peeled egg.
- ◆ *The softness of a kitten's feet – like raspberries held in the hand.*
- ◆ The women came to the picnic by hundreds, to get tired in a new spot.
- ◆ *He received the news with his eyebrows.*
- ◆ Those sweet uncomplaining women one knows who have seen trouble, and worn blinkers ever since.
- ◆ *The town was so small that when the train stopped, the engine was out in the country.*
- ◆ The rain came down with swift, slanting strokes, like the penmanship of an old schoolmaster.
- ◆ *She has a small mind but knows it thoroughly.*
- ◆ He felt like a wet towel flung into a corner of a bathroom.



MARCH 2008



# THE DAY I DIED

*A question that haunts many of us is  
“How will I die?” Top Gear driver  
**Richard Hammond** knew exactly how  
and when his life would end: at 17.30  
and 33.08 seconds on Wednesday,  
September 20, 2006*



BY *Richard Hammond* WITH *Mindy Hammond*

FROM THE BOOK **ON THE EDGE: MY STORY**

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES





**A**nother hotel room, another night spent away from home in the service of Top Gear. I rang my wife Mindy – we always ring each other last thing when I'm on a trip. Our children, Isabelle (nearly six) and Willow (three), were sleeping soundly.

The menagerie of four horses, five dogs, three cats, a small flock of sheep and a handful of chickens had all been fed and bedded down. My dog TG (Top Gear Dog) was fine, and booked in to visit the groomer the next day – she'd been pretending to be a sheepdog and had got her long, woolly coat full of spiky grass burrs. We wished each other goodnight. In less than 24 hours the jet-car drive would be behind me and I would be setting off for home.

It had been my idea, after all. I'd been on the *Top Gear* show for four years, and the show works best when people tip ideas into the mix and something comes out at the other end.

"I think we should do a piece on going faster than we've ever gone before," I announced. "Straight-line speed. I've driven at 321 km/h in a car and on a bike. What does it feel like to go faster? And I mean a lot faster."

Andy Wilman, the editor, looked up from his desk. I continued my pitch. "We can be the fastest car show on earth. What about that?" Andy nodded.

On September I strode across Elvington airfield, near York; a man in

his 30s, living the dream he'd had since childhood. I was walking confidently towards a jet-propelled car, the Vampire, which I would be driving in front of not only the *Top Gear* production crew but, thanks to the efforts of the crew, millions of TV viewers the world over. It doesn't do to get too self-congratulatory in life – pride comes before a fall and all that – but as I slipped the blue padded neck brace on to the shoulders of my silver racing suit, the ten-year-old boy still inside me was giggling with excitement.

The Vampire looked like the dragsters I had loved when I was a kid. I would sit in front of the telly and rummage about in my plastic tub of Lego to build drag racers that looked exactly like this car, with its long, skinny body, big chunky rear wheels and little front ones. But my models had never had the strange, cylindrical addition that lay immediately behind the driver's head. This was the jet engine, the heart of the machine and the very reason for its existence.

I pulled my crash helmet on, climbed in past the roll bars and lowered myself into the seat. The car was towed into position at the head of the

runway. I was strapped down under the broad harness so tightly that my breath came in ragged gasps as my chest adjusted to what little space was left. I looked at my race gloves as my hands gripped the wheel: two small handles, each like the end of a garden spade. One more crazy roar up the runway, a piece to camera about the car and then I could go home.

That morning, before I even sat in the Vampire, I watched as its owner and builder, Colin Fallows, had taken it for a shake-down blast up the runway, something he'd done hundreds of times before. I felt a twinge of nerves in the pit of my stomach.

Essentially, the car consists of an engine, a parachute to stop and the seat. No clutch, no accelerator. No speedometer. Just a dial for turning the engine up to the required level and a large metal lever which cuts the engine and deploys the parachute. And a foot-brake, only used to hold the car stationary as the engine got up to speed. My left foot would rest on a "dead man's pedal"; if something happened, my foot would come off and the engine would be cut. And there was a tiny switch to operate the afterburner, which sent a flame shooting down the centre of the engine, igniting the

unburnt fuel to produce something like a cross between a standard jet engine and a rocket. The power would instantly be doubled to 10,000 brake horsepower.

My first two runs got me acclimatised to the sheer power delivered by the jet engine and the technique needed to keep the car straight – Colin advised me that to counter the

camber and the crosswinds I had to apply a constant 30 degrees of steering input. On the third run the afterburner failed to ignite properly. But the next time the car exploded into action, a manic, violent thing. Just 23 seconds after hitting that little switch, the run was finished.

I'd ridden a wave of

power that ten Formula One cars together would struggle to achieve. I was ecstatic. Colin and the crew knew from the on-board telemetry (but didn't tell me) that I'd hit 505.9 km/h; faster than the official British land speed record.

*There was time for one more run.*

Colin begins the start procedure. The engine's noise builds to the whine of a jet engine as Colin gives the all-clear. The power dial is set to 125 per cent. I hit the switch and release the brake. In under eight seconds we're doing 321 km/h.

**I'D HIT 505.9  
KM/H; FASTER  
THAN THE  
BRITISH LAND  
SPEED RECORD.  
TIME FOR ONE  
MORE RUN**





## READER'S DIGEST

*14.25 seconds in; 463.9 km/h*

By the time my senses have sped up enough to keep pace with what's going on, I realise that something is wrong. This is not the usual push and pull of the steering as the front end scrabbles to keep the one-ton car and its passenger heading in a straight line.

*14.64 seconds; 459.1 km/h*

I am counter-steering now and battling something. Unknown to me, the front right tyre has suffered a catastrophic and total failure. On video footage, the front of the car leaps high enough with the explosion to lift the other front wheel clear off the ground.

*15.0 seconds; 449 km/h*

The car veers off to the right. My foot hits the brake – instinctive but useless. I am still fighting. But I am losing.

*15.71 seconds; 373.3 km/h*

I know that I'm going to crash. I remember the parachute lever. I pull it. The car does not stop and begins to roll over. The next thing to happen, I am quietly convinced, is that I die. I am not scared, my life does not flash before my eyes, there is just a calm resignation. And I pass out as the G-forces generated by the crash exceed those at which I can maintain consciousness.

The roll bars protect my head, but they dig into the grass, slowing the car from 372.3 km/h to 307.3 km/h in just 0.46 seconds. My brain is



**“The arm-restraints and harnesses do their job, keeping me pinned in place as the car rolls”**

thrown forward, distorted; its shape elongated, hitting the front of my skull. The force my brain experiences overstretches some of the nerves and causes them to break. The resulting injuries could leave me paralysed, deaf or blind, or wipe out my personality, the person I recognise as me.

Part of the car touches down on the grass and digs in, sending the entire structure into another roll that turns into a flip. The avalanche of mud and stones kicked up by the roll bars flips the helmet visor up, exposing my face. My left eye is damaged, the surrounding tissue pulverised. My mouth and nose fill with soil and

mud. As my head slews to the right, the side of the helmet is dented, cracked and caved in when it hits the crash structure. The right-hand side of my brain sustains more damage.

It ends. Just five seconds after the front right tyre blew the car lies upside down, the wheels still turning. Inside, I am unconscious still, but changes are happening. My brain, thrown around inside my skull by the immense G-forces, is beginning to swell. My breathing is severely constricted by the soil in my mouth and nose. I am in a critical state. As far as I am concerned, I have just met my own death and answered the big question.

## MINDY

It was Andy Wilman who rang with the news early on Wednesday evening, September 20, 2006. "Mind, Richard's had an accident."

"You mean he's crashed? How bad is it?"

"He's moving his arms and legs. They're taking him to Leeds General Infirmary. I'll meet you there."

Andy hadn't been at the shoot and was driving up from London. I knew that meant it was serious. I rang Richard's mum and dad, who immediately offered to come and help look after the girls, then my mum, who said simply and calmly, "Drive carefully. Please promise me. Let me know what I can do and ring me when you can, love."

I prepared to tell Izzy and Willow. "Daddy's gone and bumped a car again."

"Oh, not again!" said Izzy, rolling her eyes.

"Yes, I'm afraid so. And he's ripped some clothes, so I have to go and take him some new ones," I explained.

In the car, the BBC news came on. It said that Richard was in a critical condition. Critical! It was the blackest night, blacker than black. On the four-hour drive to Leeds all I could see were the lights of cars and lamp-posts. I was shaky and crying - no, weeping. My amazing, funny, brave, beautiful, lovely, adorable husband was ahead of me. But maybe it wasn't him anymore.

I pulled myself together in the last six kilometres. I wiped my face, blew my nose and pulled on my armour, ready for battle. Andy met me at a side entrance and we were smuggled in to avoid the gathering press.

A ventilator tube was secured in Richard's mouth by a bandage wrapped round his head. There were drips in both arms, monitors stuck to his chest and hand. His swollen face was yellowed with bruising, a bizarre lump the size of a fist on his forehead and his left eyelid was four times its normal size and deep crimson. He had dried blood round his nostrils, mixed with earth. He was still. Not a flicker of life. "Hello, my darling." The tears were dripping off my chin as I spoke, but I was half-smiling. Awful

as it was, I knew, with every ounce of being, that he was there. Buried, tired, exhausted. But not dead. I'd just have to wait for him.

The hospital staff warned me that the first 48 hours were vital. He'd been conscious after the accident, but anaesthetised in A&E to prevent him damaging his brain further. The drugs were soon switched off and their sedative effect ceased, but then the effect of the brain injury had taken over. There was no clear boundary between conscious and unconscious. He had haemorrhaged and he had suffered most damage to the right frontal lobe, the part of the brain that deals with recognition, the ability to judge distances, decision-making, problem-solving and personality. We could only watch and wait. It's very strange to live through a scene you've watched so many times in TV dramas. There's a sense that the situation just can't be real.

Every 30 minutes a nurse would carry out observations (obs), asking Richard to do various things. Open his eyes, say his name, wiggle his toes, squeeze her fingers. For a while, his obs showed a slight improvement. But then, about 4am,

he started to dip. He wasn't trying. I looked at the nurse.

"It's bad, isn't it?"

"It's not good," she admitted. She'd tried causing him pain, to stimulate a reflex, but it hadn't worked. She was shouting at him, "Richard! Richard!", her index fingers inside his limp hands.

"Can I shout at him? The way I do when he's drunk?" On those rare occasions when he's been on a boozy night out with the boys, shouting is the only way to get him off the sofa and into bed.

"Richard! You squeeze those fingers. Squeeze those bloody fingers. It's important." The tears were running down my face.

As I finished, he made a very tiny movement with both middle fingers.

Richard remembers thinking he was tired and there was a nice, easy route - he could just drift away. Check out. That was what he'd decided to do. He remembers being jolted back. Exhausted as he was, he made the effort to pull himself back.

On the day shift a different nurse, Jim, tried to stimulate a response for the obs. Richard reacted violently to the pain: thrashing about, he threw himself into a sitting position, grabbed the three

**THE NURSE WAS  
SHOUTING AT  
HIM, "RICHARD!  
RICHARD!", HER  
INDEX FINGERS  
INSIDE HIS  
LIMP HANDS**





centimetre-diameter ventilator tube with his right hand and started yanking it. When two nurses tried to restrain him, Jim told them to let go. As I watched, horrorstruck, Richard gagged like an animal regurgitating food. But each time he retched, he yanked another few centimetres of tube out of his mouth. Once it was out, he coughed and moaned, then collapsed.

Without the ventilator, his breathing was very weak. I sat there staring at him, at the monitors. Unexpectedly, his right arm began to move. He fumbled around under the bedclothes and his hand found what it was seeking.

Jim was beaming. "He's a scrab-ler. That's what we want to see." He explained it was common in men who've had a similar injury. "They regress. He's a little boy. He's back to basics, and he's checking his most important part is still there."

Later that morning Richard found another foreign body inserted where he didn't want it - a catheter. He grabbed at the tube and gave it a tug.

"Richard, no! Don't!" I tried to catch his hand, but he pushed me away. As he did so I realised his good eye was slightly open.

"Hello," I said gently.

He looked straight at me, but there was absolutely no recognition.

While Jim sorted the mess out, I walked to the loo, locked myself in, and cried. "Where are you?" I was



**"Mindy understands me better than I understand myself. When I fell in love I knew I had found a soulmate"**

whispering as I held my head in my hands. "Please come back, please."

Despite trying to remove the finger monitor, the drips and the oxygen mask, Richard was making progress. He hated being roused from his deep sleep to do obs and was really irritable.

In a more peaceful moment, I was stroking his forehead gently when he moved his head towards me and mumbled something.

"Sorry, darling?" He repeated, and I just made out the word "gearbox".

A few days earlier something had gone wrong with my Land Rover. I was sure it was the clutch and Richard said it was the gearbox. The local dealer discovered differently.

## READER'S DIGEST

"No," I told Richard, "it was the master cylinder."

"Oh, OK." He went back to sleep.

I was grinning like a Cheshire cat. He was remembering a piece of his life, recalling his world – our world.

Almost the entire *Top Gear* team was encamped in a boardroom opened up for them by the hospital. Both Jeremy Clarkson and James May had driven up the night before, as soon as they heard the news. I took a break when they were allowed in to see Richard on Thursday evening. He amazed them by opening his eyes. As I dashed back into the room, he was, incredibly, sitting on the side of his bed. He looked straight at me, a great dopey grin on his face, his good eye half-open. "Hello, baby." He knew me! How I loved to see that cheeky, naughty, lovable look again. He insisted on standing up and going for a pee. I took one elbow and a nurse the other, with a second nurse wheeling the drip as we headed to the loo. Richard was surprised at this lack of coordination, but kept looking at me and grinning. I thought my face would explode, I was smiling so hard.

That night, after phoning the world, I was able to grab a few hours' sleep.

Given his improvement over the past 24 hours, it was decided he could be moved from intensive care to a high-dependency unit. Every time he became lucid we asked him if he knew where he was. He'd kind of understood that he was in Leeds and

when you asked him where, he'd respond "hospital", but he had no idea why he was in hospital. I explained that he'd had an accident.

"Ooooooh s\*\*\*," he responded calmly, and gave me a disbelieving look.

"You crashed, darling," I whispered.

"Did I? Was it good?"

"Pretty impressive," I told him.

"Oh." His attention was drawn to a passing nurse with a cup and saucer in her hand. "Shall we have a cup of tea?"

He was suffering from post-traumatic amnesia and for the majority of the time he had the memory of a goldfish (around five seconds). When he talked to people he might seem normal, until the conversation turned full circle and started all over again. It was all new to Richard. It did mean that he was always delighted when cottage pie arrived for lunch. "My favourite! How did you know?" he'd ask, despite having ordered it himself from the hospital menu. He could remember scraps of past history, just very little since the crash. He was described as being "clinically confused".

Also, he had appalling pain in his head, and he was given morphine regularly, together with a cocktail of other drugs. The one thing he knew absolutely was that I was his ally. What he couldn't be sure of was whether I really existed or was simply a figment of his imagination. But I couldn't bear to leave his side.

I was sitting on his bed talking

to him, when he said, “This is very nice. You’re very lovely. But I have to go now.”

“What do you mean?”

“I’ve got to go back to my wife.”  
That was a shocker!

“No, darling, I’m your wife.”

“No, you’re lovely, but my wife’s French.”

There was a big hole in Richard and I was worried we’d never find all the pieces.

On Sunday the girls arrived. Richard was overjoyed to see them. I’d done my best to prepare them and Izzy tried to talk to him about home and the games she’d been playing, but he wasn’t able to concentrate. He was nodding, but his eyes were heavy.

“Time to say goodbye,” I whispered to them. Willow gave Richard a kiss.

Izzy’s eyes really started to fill. “Bye, Daddy.” He’d ripped off the eye-patch covering his gory left eye and it was a horrific sight. Her voice was breaking, but he was half asleep. His eyes closed and we walked out. Izzy exploded into uncontrollable sobs.

“Iz, he will get better. OK? He will, he’s just tired.”

“OK, Mummy.” She bravely wiped away her tears. But I’m not sure she believed me.

Just a week after his accident, the doctors agreed he could be transferred by air ambulance to a hospital in Clifton, Bristol, to be closer to home. His care was taken over by neurosurgeon Rick Nelson, who was always very calm and softly spoken, and would listen patiently to Richard’s animated exchanges, seeing past the bright and breezy persona.

He recognised that Richard was trying to demonstrate how articulate, how well recovered he was and yet ... ask him what town he was in and there was instant confusion.

His mind remained jumbled. The doctors compared the state of his mental function to a filing cabinet that

had been knocked to the floor; all the notes and papers contained within each file were spread all over the room. We were trying to help him put it all back together.

Richard would be frustrated; he’d become angry and despairing, but patience was the key. Patience and rest.

The brain, as we often forget, is not simply a tool for thought and consideration, for mental calculation; it also drives every minuscule action. When you move your finger or twitch a toe, the brain is working.

**THERE WAS A  
BIG HOLE IN  
RICHARD AND  
I WAS WORRIED  
WE’D NEVER  
FIND ALL THE  
PIECES**





His brain was exhausted and the best therapy was sleep.

I spent every night with Richard, rushing back to see the girls during the afternoon, but Richard was going stir crazy. Now he could walk and was even going to the gym, he really wanted to get out of hospital.

The issue was to find somewhere that was peaceful and quiet and get him out of hospital without massive press attention. The flashing lights from a bank of press photographers could quite possibly put him at risk of a seizure and he couldn't put up with being a prisoner in his own home.

A remote cottage in the Highlands was the answer and a team of highly trained ex-Special Forces men went into action, smuggling us out of hospital to a rendezvous with a Winnebago containing the girls and two of the dogs.

In our hideaway the next step of the healing process began. Unexpected emotions bombarded Richard: he was terrified of strangers, angry at being scared, frightened of the responsibility of being alone with the children, frustrated at his inadequacies. But every day he got a little better. Finally, we could go home.

## RICHARD

This didn't feel the same as a homecoming after a long holiday. I had been away for just five weeks. I walked from room to room, standing in each one and taking it in. I was surrounded by memories and artefacts.

Yet, standing in my own house, I felt sad. This was the first time I had been somewhere I could remember from before I damaged my brain. This was the first time I had met myself. The house was the same, but I would never be the same again.

I found Mindy and we held each other. I didn't need to tell her I was sad, or why. She knew. Without realising it, I had come to rely on her as I rely on air and water; she was my refuge, shield and strength.

Now, more than a year after the accident, I'm no longer terrified of strangers and I can get through a day without needing a nap. The doctors, medics and nurses saved my life and gave me back my mind. But I then had to relearn subtle lessons in how to use the fully functioning brain they had given me back. It's still going on. And I thank every one of my lucky stars that I am able to make that trudge.

I got back to the *Top Gear* studio

**RICHARD WOULD  
BE FRUSTRATED;  
HE'D BECOME  
ANGRY AND  
DESPAIRING,  
BUT PATIENCE  
WAS THE KEY**



too. The boys cooked up a few gags for my return to the show and we played it partly for laughs. But at the same time, we knew that we were dealing with something difficult and sensitive, not just for me and the team, but for anyone affected by the thousands of car crashes that happen every day.

The doctors had been very worried about possible flashbacks when I first drove. In fact, it never really crossed my mind. What happened to me happened in a jet car. If I had fired up my Morgan and heard a jet engine start immediately behind my head, I might have had a bit of a moment. But this was different, this was just driving, and I loved it. We laughed a lot. So did Izzy and Willow when I first took them for a drive a few days later.

“Daddy, are you driving?”

“Yes. Yes, I am, because the doctors said I can now.”

“Cool.” They sit in silence and exaggerated concentration. “Daddy?” they both ask together.

“Yes?”

“Don’t go upside down and bang your head again, will you? We’ll all have to go to hospital then and who will look after the horses?” They laugh and laugh and laugh at their joke.

If I can help it at all, I shan’t. **R**

FROM *ON THE EDGE: MY STORY*. © 2007 RICHARD HAMMOND, PUBLISHED BY WEIDENFELD & NICOLSON



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**Puzzle Answers**

From pages 150-152

**FISHY BUSINESS**

Kanoko should buy 13 packets of patties and 16 packets of buns. She'll spend exactly \$100 and assemble 128 fishburgers.



**SHAPE UP**

(or a reflection or rotation of the same solution).

**SUDOKU**

8	3	7	5	2	6	9	1	4
1	4	5	3	9	7	8	6	2
6	9	2	4	8	1	5	7	3
4	2	9	8	7	5	6	3	1
3	7	8	1	6	2	4	9	5
5	1	6	9	3	4	7	2	8
2	6	3	7	5	8	1	4	9
7	5	1	2	4	9	3	8	6
9	8	4	6	1	3	2	5	7

**RECTANGLES**

9								12
				6	6			
				3				
							2	
				12				
		6			6			
10								8

**SKYSCRAPERS**

3	1	5	4	2
2	3	4	1	5
5	4	2	3	1
1	2	3	5	4
4	5	1	2	3

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## RD RECOMMENDS



**Dairy-free Chocolate  
Ice Cream**

### **Supergood Chelsea Winter**

PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE

**S**he might be the author of five previous cookbooks, but what makes Chelsea Winter's latest instalment different is that every recipe is plant-based. She created *Supergood* because she wanted to prove cooking vegetarian and vegan food can be just as tasty and satisfying as her other recipes. The dishes are designed for everyday people of all ages – especially, she says, those who adhere to the “it’s not a real meal without meat” adage. In fact, you could probably trick a few people with her Fireside Cottage Pie, which looks remarkably like mince meat.



COMPILED BY DIANE GODLEY



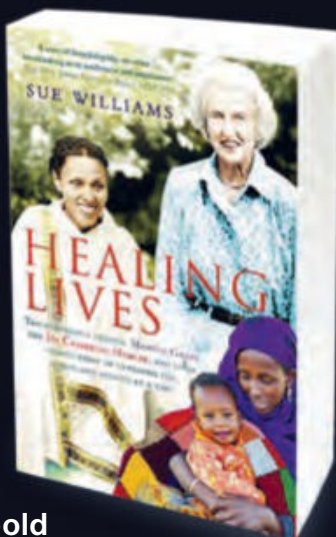
Non  
Fiction

## Healing Lives

**Sue Williams**

PAN MACMILLAN

When Dr Catherine Hamlin and her husband saved the life of Mamitu Gashe, an illiterate 14-year-old peasant girl, at the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital in Ethiopia they set up in 1962, the girl and doctor became more than firm friends. Under the doctor's guidance, Gashe went from mopping floors to becoming one of the most acclaimed fistula surgeons in the world, despite never having had a day's schooling. A moving true story of a friendship that saved the lives of 60,000 of some of the world's poorest women.

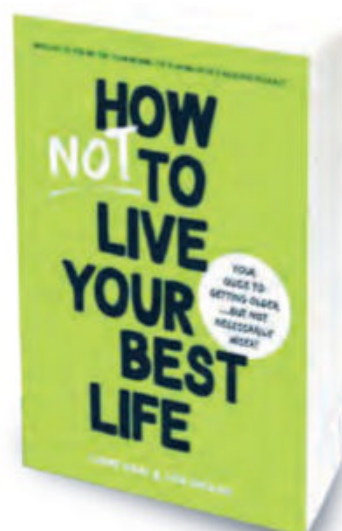


## How Not to Live Your Best Life

**Claire Isaac  
& Lisa Sinclair**

BAUER BOOKS

When Claire Isaac and Lisa Sinclair – the duo who produce the laugh-out-loud podcast *Playing Devil's Avocado*, where they talk frankly about life over 45 – hit mid-life, they decided we needed a 'how-to' guide to getting older, although not necessarily wiser. From saying 'No thanks' to being your work mum, to dealing with ageing-related anxiety and ailments, to the big M (menopause), beauty tips and fashion no-nos, Isaac and Sinclair delve into serious and not-so-serious topics while laughing at themselves, each other and everyone else.





## A Brush With Birds

**Richard Weatherly**

HARDIE GRANT

Birds have captivated our imagination for centuries, but with around 10,000 species on earth, the best we can hope to enjoy are our local birds. That's where the skill and insights of the artists that study and bring to life a breadth of bird species come into the picture. In his memoir, Richard Weatherly, a world-renowned artist, portrays the mentorship involved in being a bird artist. His intuition, patience and mastery plus fascinating stories about the birds (and bird people) he's encountered over a 50-year career makes this an enchanting natural and personal history.

## Celebrating Australia's Magnificent Wildlife

**Daryl Dickson**

EXISLE PUBLISHING

Nature lovers and lovers of art alike will adore this book. Not only does it provide a captivating glimpse into Australia's unique wildlife through the eyes of a life-long conservationist, it is packed with exquisite watercolours and illustrations. Working from her studio on the edge of the wet tropics of the Kirrama Range in Far North Queensland, Dickson doesn't need to look far for inspiration for her art, which includes koalas and kookaburras, emus and echidnas. Uplifting and inspiring, this book is a treasure trove of beauty as well as being educational.





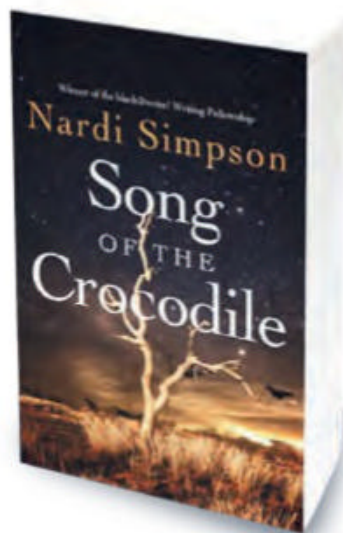
## Fiction

### The Dressmaker's Secret

**Rosalie Ham**

PAN MACMILLAN

Rosalie Ham's beloved cult classic and box-office sensation is back with a sequel. Set in 1953, Melbourne society is looking forward to the coronation season – grand balls and celebrations of the young queen-to-be. Our heroine Tilly Dunnage, ie the Dressmaker, is trying desperately to escape her past and keeps a low profile. But when her name starts appearing in the fashion pages, Tilly's hopes of staying anonymous and her secrets hidden – from the law and the Dungatar inhabitants – seem doomed.



### Song of the Crocodile

**Nardi Simpson**

HACHETTE

Set in a regional 'gateway town', *Song of the Crocodile* follows three generations of the Billymil family. Race relations between Indigenous and settler families are fraught, but as progress marches on, and there are rapid social and environmental changes, some things stay the same. However, when the town's secrets start to be discovered, it is rocked by violence that shatters a century of silence. The author is Yuwaalaraay and a founding member of Indigenous music band Stiff Gins. *Song of the Crocodile*, her debut novel, was a 2018 winner of the black&white! Writing Fellowship.

## Troubled Blood

**Robert Galbraith**

HACHETTE

Featuring private eye Cormoran Strike and his business partner, Robin Ellacott, this is the fifth in the series by Robert Galbraith, a pseudonym of Harry Potter author J.K Rowling. A labyrinth of leads sends the pair chasing hither and thither as they investigate a cold case and confront a serial killer, the occult, and unreliable witnesses, all the while dealing with their attraction to each other and their complicated personal lives. At 927 pages, it's an engrossing, big fat read for lovers of crime fiction during the holiday season. **M.Egan**

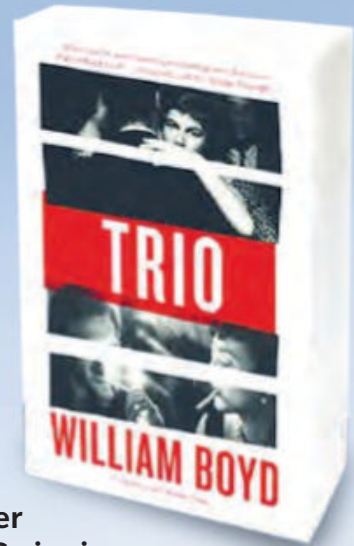


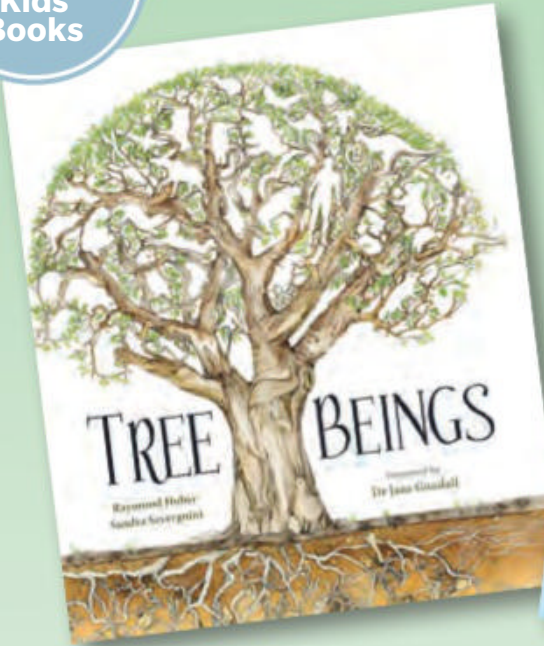
## Trio

**William Boyd**

VIKING

The award-winning author of *A Good Man in Africa* and *An Ice Cream War* focuses his razor-edged intellectual power on the turbulent summer of 1968 and the Swinging Sixties. In sunny Brighton, an actress, a producer and a novelist are making a second-rate film. But all three are hiding duplicitous and hard-to-resolve secrets, and their multi-layered private lives begin to exert pressure on the movie shoot. By turns satirical and sad, this lively novel captures the seismic political and social changes of the times. **M.Egan**



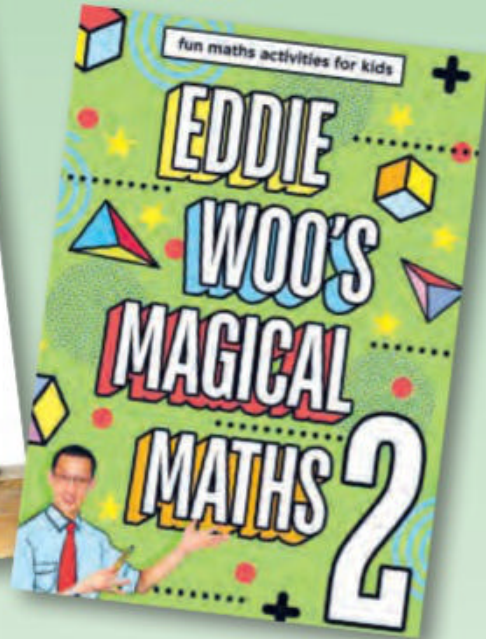


## Tree Beings

**Raymond Huber  
and Sandra Severgnini**

EXISLE PUBLISHING

Trees hold so many wonders for children, as places to play under, hide behind and climb. Written and illustrated in a way that appeals to young readers – with tree facts, tree secrets and even how similar trees are to humans, *Tree Beings* draws on the insights of scientists and natural explorers to tell the true story of trees and how they contribute to making the environment a rich and fertile place. In the book's foreword, anthropologist Jane Goodall suggests we stop thinking of trees as 'silent statues'. After reading this book kids are bound to share their new-found knowledge about their fellow tree beings.



## Eddie Woo's Magical Maths 2

**Eddie Woo**

PAN MACMILLAN

According to Eddie Woo, there is magic in maths if you know where to look. And if anyone would know, the creator of Wootube would. Since putting his maths classes online in 2012, he has amassed a loyal following of fans, both at and outside of high schools. The second instalment of *Magical Maths* is brimming with things to draw, puzzles to work out, codes to decode and many more fun activities to entertain curious minds. If you like our puzzles page at the back of the magazine, you'll be amazed with this book. The perfect remedy for bored kids during the school holidays.





## Podcasts

**Edith's Story**

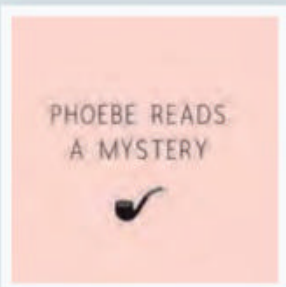
When Barry Martin took on the role of construction supervisor of a huge commercial complex in Seattle, he never imagined that he would end up befriending Edith Macefield, the feisty 84 year old who had refused \$1 million from the developer to move house.

**Hidden Brain**

Using science and storytelling, *Hidden Brain* helps us understand ourselves – and the world – better. Anecdotes reveal the unconscious patterns that may result in laughter, rage or fear, the biases that shape our decisions, and the triggers that chart the course of our relationships. Presented by Shankar Vedanta.

**Off Track**

Take yourself on an hour-long walk though nature with Ann Jones. *Off Track* combines the soothing sounds of nature with interesting stories of wildlife and the environment, all recorded in the field. There are also pure sound tracks such as Water Flow, Shore Sounds and Mountain Music.

**Phoebe Reads a Mystery**

Listen to *Jane Eyre*, Agatha Christie's *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* and *The Murder on the Links*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and more. Each day a chapter is uploaded. While Phoebe's voice is not as animated as some of the books read on Audible, the podcast is free to download.



Audio Book

**HOW TO GET PODCASTS** To listen on the web: Google the website for 'Hidden Brain', for example, and click on the play button. **To download:** Download an app such as Podcatchers or iTunes on your phone or tablet and simply search by title.

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# FAMILY FUN

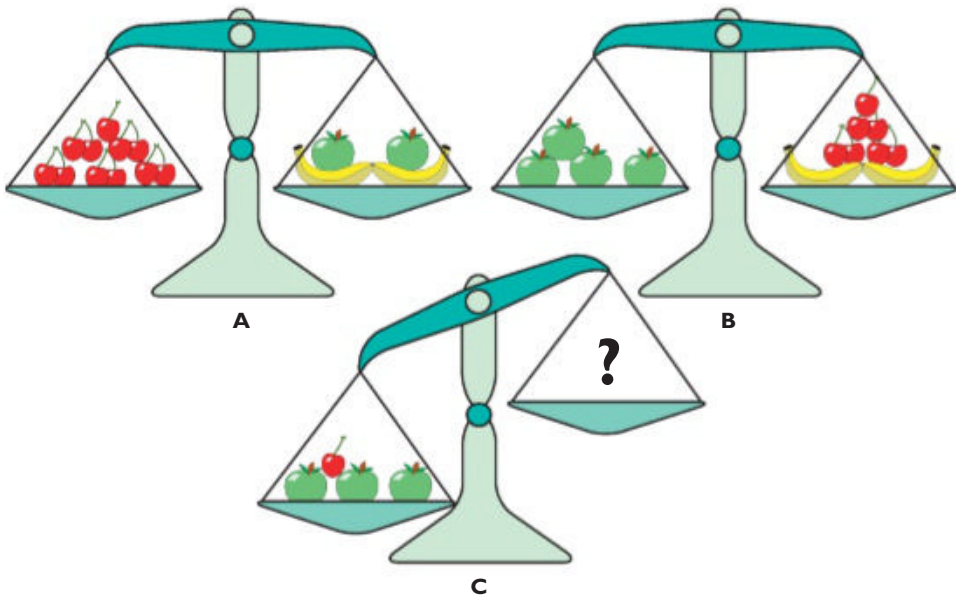
## Spot the Difference

There are ten differences. Can you find them?



## Weigh it Up

Given that scales A and B balance perfectly, how many bananas are needed to balance scale C?



*Check your answers for Family Fun on page 156.*



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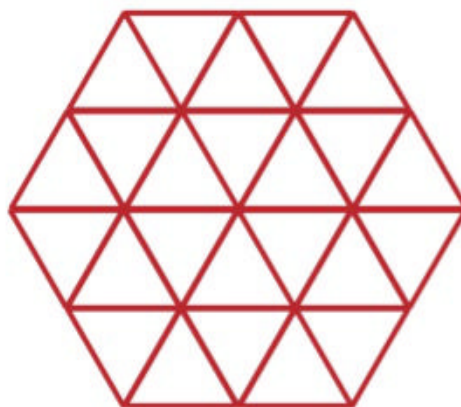


# PUZZLES

*Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 139.*

## Shape Up **Difficult**

This hexagon is made of identical equilateral triangles (triangles with three equal sides). If you don't count rotations or reflections, then there are three different shapes you can make by joining four such triangles fully edge to edge. First, determine what these three shapes are. Next, figure out how to use two copies of each of them to make the hexagon. There's only one solution (not counting rotations and reflections).



9								12
				6	6			
				3				
						2		
				12				
	6				6			
10								8

## Rectangles **Easy**

Subdivide this region along the grid lines into non-overlapping squares and rectangles. Each of these rectangles or squares must contain exactly one number that matches the number of small cells that make up its area. Can you draw the correct boundaries?

(SHAPE UP) DARREN RIGBY; (RECTANGLES) FRASER SIMPSON

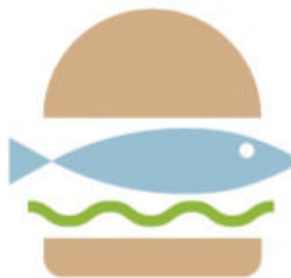
				6	9	1	4
			3				2
		2			5	7	
			8	5		3	
3							5
	1		9	4			
	6	3			1		
7				9			
9	8	4	6				

### Sudoku To Solve This Puzzle

Put a number from 1 to 9 in each empty square so that: every horizontal row and vertical column contains all nine numbers (1-9) without repeating any of them; each of the outlined 3 x 3 boxes has all nine numbers, none repeated.

### Fishy Business Easy

Aishah is volunteering for a programme delivering meals to people with limited mobility, and she has a budget of \$100 to shop for fishburger ingredients. It costs \$4 for a packet of 10 fish patties and \$3 for a packet of eight buns. How many packets of each should she buy to maximise the number of fishburgers she can assemble? She can have extra ingredients left over, but she won't serve a patty without a bun or vice versa.



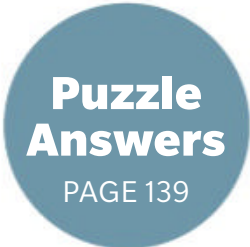
(FISHY BUSINESS) EMILY GOODMAN

BRAIN POWER  
brought to you by



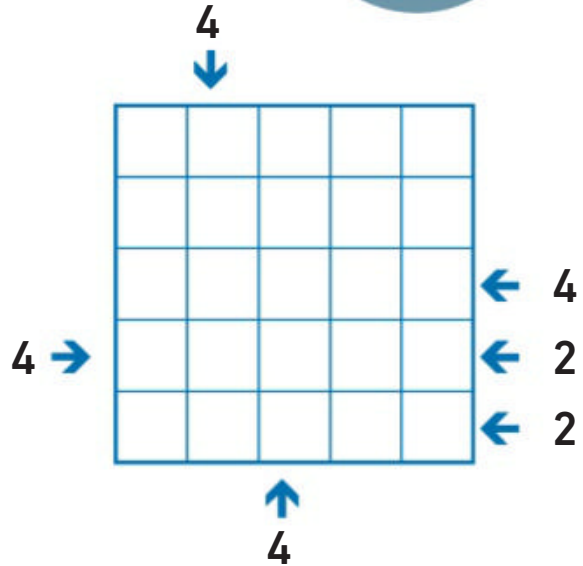
ジュースアップ  
*Juice up*





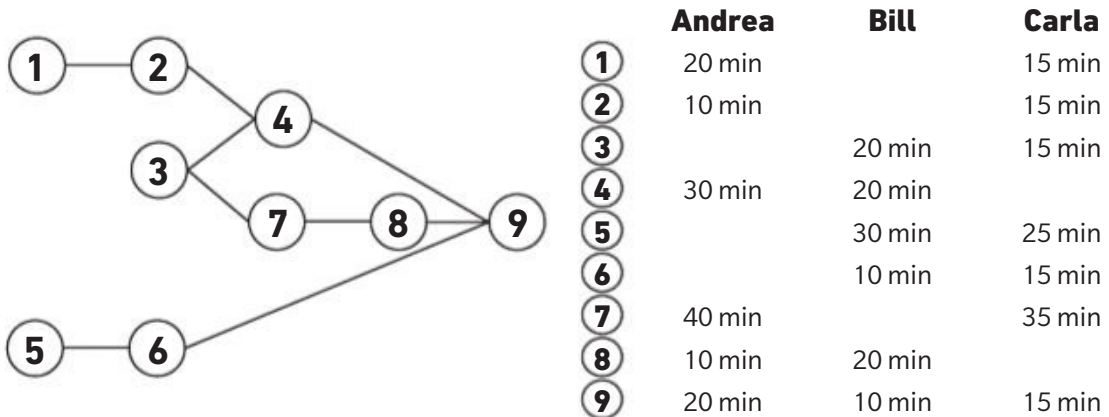
**Skyscrapers**  
**Moderately Difficult**

This grid represents a bird's-eye view of a city's centre. Place a number from 1 to 5 – representing a building's height in storeys – in each square so that no two buildings in any row or column have the same height. The numbers outside the grid tell you how many buildings are visible in the corresponding row or column to an observer looking in from that direction. Higher buildings block the view of lower ones behind them. Can you determine the heights of all 25 buildings?



**It's a Process Difficult**

There are nine steps to building a widget, but certain steps can only be started once other ones are finished. This process is diagrammed in the flow chart: if a line joins two circles, the circle on the left marks a step that must finish before the one on the right can begin. You have three workers, though not every worker is trained to perform every step. You've noted the length of time it takes each worker to complete each step they can do. If they started now, how soon could you have a brand new widget in your hands?



(SKYSCRAPERS) FRASER SIMPSON; (IT'S A PROCESS) DARREN RIGBY



# GREAT TASTE

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# TRIVIA

## Test Your General Knowledge

BY Beth Shillibeer

- 1.** BBC sports commentator Andrew Cotter has made popular Youtube videos featuring contests between whom? **3 points**
- 2.** The 2020 winner of the Oscar for Best Documentary (Short Subject) features Afghan girls performing what sport? **1 point**
- 3.** How many legs does a tripod have? **1 point**
- 4.** According to a 2013 survey, what demographic asks nearly 300 questions per day? **1 point**
- 5.** What board game is purportedly not played by the British royal family because it makes the players too vicious? **1 point**
- 6.** The international cosmetics retailer Lush sells 'naked' products, which don't include what? **2 points**
- 7.** Who released the 1970s albums *Young Americans*, and *Station to Station*? **1 point**



- 15.** Name the recurring silent film character for whom Charlie Chaplin is best remembered. **2 points**

- 8.** What is the capital of Bangladesh? **1 point**
- 9.** Which city, where the Prophet's Mosque is located, is the second-holiest site in Islam after Mecca? **1 point**
- 10.** Who said: "A man dies when he refuses to take a stand for that which is true"? **2 points**
- 11.** Which university was Mark Zuckerberg attending when he launched Facebook? **1 point**
- 12.** NASA has tested equipment in Chile's Atacama Desert because it's similar to which planet? **1 point**
- 13.** Which poses a greater threat to undersea fibre-optic cables: sharks or fishing boats? **1 point**
- 14.** The first ever commercial bungee jump took place in: (a) South Africa, (b) Australia, or (c) New Zealand? **1 point**

**16-20** Gold medal    **11-15** Silver medal    **6-10** Bronze medal    **0-5** Wooden spoon

**Answers:** 1. His two dogs, Olive and Mabel. 2. Skateboarding. 3. Three. 4. Young children. 5. Monopoly. 6. Packaging. 7. David Bowie. 8. Dhaka. 9. Medina. 10. Martin Luther King Jr. 11. Harvard. 12. Mars. 13. Fishing boats. 14. (c) New Zealand. 15. The Little Tramp or The Tramp.

PHOTO: ESSANAY STUDIOS/PUBLIC DOMAIN

# WORD POWER

## *Similar but Different*

*This month's words come in pairs – plus one triplet – that are nearly identical, save one character that has been added, removed, shifted or replaced. Can you tell these look-alikes apart?*

BY *Emily Cox* AND *Henry Rathvon*

**1. apprise** – A: force open a lock.  
B: inform. C: honour a promise.

**2. appraise** – A: evaluate.  
B: compliment profusely. C: bid on.

**3. gaffe** – A: camera operator.  
B: social blunder. C: hunter's boot made of leather.

**4. gaff** – A: special favour.  
B: comedy routine performed by clowns. C: metal hook.

**5. inculcate** – A: add up. B: instil.  
C: hit a dead end.

**6. inculpate** – A: file down to get a smooth finish. B: swallow.  
C: incriminate.

**7. mantel** – A: straw wreath.  
B: handsaw used in logging.  
C: fireplace shelf.

**8. mantle** – A: baseball cap.

B: a layer of something that covers a surface. C: flowering tree.

**9. factious** – A: split into cliques.  
B: inaccurate or erroneous.  
C: self-serving.

**10. fractious** – A: irritable.  
B: splintered or cracked.  
C: buried deep.

**11. averse** – A: unrhymed couplet.  
B: opposed. C: skilled.

**12. adverse** – A: unfavourable.  
B: upside-down. C: commercial or money-oriented.

**13. jib** – A: bad attitude.  
B: tomcat. C: triangular sail.

**14. jibe** – A: agree. B: terrify.  
C: dance.

**15. gibe** – A: lend a hand.  
B: ridicule. C: take a bow.



## Answers

- 1. apprise** – (B) inform.  
Has anyone apprised Cinderella of the midnight curfew?
- 2. appraise** – (A) evaluate. As part of the review, employees will be asked to appraise their own performance.
- 3. gaffe** – (B) social blunder.  
Jane admitted gargling with the table wine was a bit of a gaffe.
- 4. gaff** – (C) metal hook. Samantha used a gaff to haul the 90-kilogram marlin into the boat.
- 5. inculcate** – (B) instil. Coach Huang works to inculcate confidence in her young players.
- 6. inculpate** – (C) incriminate.  
“I advise you to keep quiet, or you risk inculpating yourself,” the lawyer warned.
- 7. mantel** – (C) fireplace shelf.  
Malik hung his wife’s portrait over the mantel in his study.
- 8. mantle** – (B) cloak. We watched the building vanish under a mantle of thick smoke as the fire swiftly moved through it.
- 9. factious** – (A) split into cliques.  
“The city council has been factious in recent years, but now is a time for unity,” said the mayor.
- 10. fractious** – (A) irritable.  
Like most toddlers, Timmy is fractious when he’s tired.

- 11. averse** – (B) opposed.  
I’m not averse to trying new things, but you’ll never persuade me to go skydiving!
- 12. adverse** – (A) unfavourable.  
Sue stopped taking the medication after she had an adverse reaction.
- 13. jib** – (C) triangular sail.  
The captain lowered the jib and mainsail and let the boat drift with the currents.
- 14. jibe** – (A) agree. “That doesn’t jibe with what your sister said,” Dad said suspiciously.
- 15. gibe** – (B) ridicule.  
The crowd giped the referee for botching the call.

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### VOCABULARY RATINGS

5-8: Fair 9-12: Good 13-15: Word Power Wizard

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### FAMILY FUN ANSWERS *See Page 148*



### WEIGH IT UP

**4.** One apple weighs as much as three cherries; and two bananas weigh as much as five cherries. Thus four bananas are needed to balance scale C.

**On your entire order! – Quote code RM12S when ordering**

**Only \$2 Postage**

### Fantastic Ice Maker

**- make your ice cubes fast!**

This brilliant freezer creates ice cubes in as little as 8 minutes – imagine that at your next party! Simply fill the water tank and select from three cube sizes; by the time you've poured the drinks your ice could be ready to use!

**Ice Maker • ICEML \$129 or \$32.25 x 4 mths**

*Serve icy drinks in minutes!*



#### FEATURES:

- Signals when the ice cube container is full or the water tank is empty
- LED displays
- Energy-saving mode with automatic switch off
- Viewing window in the lid
- 2 litre water tank
- Complete with scoop
- 41.5H x 34W x 34.5D cm

*Great addition to summer entertaining*

*Refreshing ice cubes in just 8 minutes!*



### Miracle Gel Cushion - sit in comfort!

If you spend a lot of time driving, sitting at a desk or in a wheelchair, this cushion could be a life-changer! As the pockets of cooling gel respond individually to pressure, you could feel relief for any pressure spots as you enjoy personalised support. 40 x 38 cm and a generous 3 cm deep, it fits most seats. The washable cover has a slip-resistant base to keep it securely in place.

#### Blissful Gel Cushion

• MGCOL \$39.95

*Ultra soft gel holds its shape*



*Perfect for sitting at home or while travelling*

**SAVE \$10**

**Buy two for \$69.90 or \$23.30 x 3 mths**



*(Shown with washable cover on)*

Dispenses the right amount of liquid soap every time

**TOUCH FREE WITH MOTION SENSOR!**

## Automatic Soap Dispenser

- the most hygienic choice

These days, when we're so conscious of washing our hands, you'll appreciate the hygiene of this no-touch dispenser. Liquid soap flows into your hand automatically and you can set the amount you need to clean thoroughly without waste. Powered by 4 x AAA batteries (not supplied) and holding 350 ml, it measures 20H x 11W x 7.5D cm and is very easy to fill. The sleek design

in gleaming stainless steel will also complement your kitchen or bathroom.

**Auto Soap Dispenser**

• ATSD \$19.95

*Easy to fill!  
Perfect for kitchen, bathroom, laundry*



## Your Favourite Healthy Grills Made Simple - a meal is as easy as toast

If you can use a toaster you can prepare a delicious, healthy meal. Simply arrange meat, fish and vegetables on the basket, pop it inside this 26H x 42.5W x 12.5D cm vertical grill and set the timer and desired temperature. The heating elements adjust automatically to meet the targeted temperature. Fat drips down into the washable tray and, as food cooks from both sides, a whole meal could be ready in 20 minutes or less. What a great way to enjoy tasty, home-cooked food!

**Vertical Grill • VRGRL \$99 or \$24.75 x 4 mths**

*Looks like a toaster, but it's also a grill!*

La Nouvelle

VIDEO ONLINE



*Just pop food into the grill*

*Easy to use controls*

*Easy to clean pull out dripping tray*





## Portable Project Tray & Stand

Versatile yet stylish, this portable work station is ideal for all kinds of crafts, but striking enough to enhance your home décor as an attractive piece of furniture. Made from MDF with a white matte finish, the tray attaches to the stand with hook and loop tape so it can be easily removed when the tray is not in use. The stand folds down for easy carrying and storage. The tray measures 82 x 62 cm, with a working area of 79 x 59 cm, and has a lip 5 cm deep. The collapsible stand folds down to 72 cm long by 15 cm wide and 83 cm high. The complete unit measures 82 x 62 x 73 cm high.

- **64304 \$149.00 or \$37.25 x 4 mths**



Pictured contents not included



Adjustable nose bridge

2 Layer Face Mask

Set of 5



## Washable Black Masks

- set of 5, top quality

Designed to fit comfortably over your nose, mouth and chin, these double-layer masks are made from a polyester and spandex mix with a cotton-rich lining against your skin. Washable and easy to wear, they're supplied in a set of five.

**Cloth Fashion Mask Black**

• CMASKB5 \$24.95 Set of 5



Washable



Reusable

## No-Contact Thermometer

- **hygienic, accurate, easy to use**

Held 1-5 cm from your forehead this thermometer shows your temperature in °C or °F. The background glows green for normal, yellow for a slight fever, red for concern and the memory holds 50 readings for checking progress. Hygienic and easy to use, it will also test the temperature of bath water and hot drinks for safety. Powered by 2 x AA batteries (supplied).

**VeraTemp Thermometer • VERAT**

**\$129 or \$32.25 x 4 mths**

Memory holds 50 readings

Quick fever checks when you need it



EASY TO USE

NO CONTACT

HYGIENIC

Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods 337424



Portable but powerful!

Gently swings air from side to side



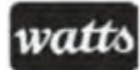
Clicks into 6 different vertical positions

## Quiet Oscillating Fan

- sleep, work and relax better!

You can adjust this fan to direct the breeze exactly where you want it. Vertically, it clicks into any one of six positions and it can also be set to swing gently from side to side. There are three speeds to choose from to create the perfect cooling effect – and you'll be amazed that a fan so quiet can be so powerful!

At 34H x 27W x 18D cm, it's perfect for any room in the house.



Oscillating Fan

• OSFAN \$99 or \$24.75 x 4 mths

**\$2**  
Postage on your entire order!

**Only \$2 Postage!** - Quote code RM12S when ordering



**THE CROWN**

**Queen Elizabeth II.** This award-winning drama series explores the Queen's private journey behind the public façade with daring frankness. 4 DVDs, 525 mins. **SUBTITLES**

**Collection: Seasons 1-2 (8 DVDs, 19 hrs)**

- MCROWC

**\$59.95 or \$19.98 x 3 mths**

---

**Season 3 (2019)**

- MCROWD

**\$44.95 or \$22.48 x 2 mths**



4 DVDs



## A Country Practice

Relive the highs and lows of the townfolk of Wandin Valley. Join all of your favourite characters including: Dr Terence Elliott, Sgt. Frank Gilroy, Shirley Gilroy, Bob Hatfield, Matthew Tyler, Lucy Gardiner, Luke Ross, Esme, "Cookie", and of course Fatso the Wombat. 22-23 DVDs, 67 hrs.

22-23 DVDs

**Season 11 (1991)**

• MCPTA

**Season 12 (1992)**

• MCPTB

**Season 13 (1993)**

• MCPTC

**\$169 each or**

**\$42.25 x**

**4 mths each**





## Tough, High-Traffic Door Mat - ideal for the kitchen, hall or patio



You'll find it hard to believe this chic and stylish mat is so tough! The looped pile is woven from recyclable thermoplastic rubber, which is weather-resistant, light and strong and, when it's dirty you can simply pop it in the washing machine or hose it clean and hang to dry. The size – a practical 113 x 76 cm – is perfect for the kitchen, hallway, patio or even the garage and the smart navy and pale cream stripes will look great in any setting.

**High Traffic Door Mat • HTRMT \$29.95**



## Flower Trimmed Sandals - eye-catching comfort shoe with adjustable fastening

You can dress these gorgeous sandals up or down – they're perfect to wear on any occasion. Cool and comfortable enough to wear all day long, they have a gently-padded insole, two elasticated ankle straps and a broad 4 cm heel. They'll also complement your favourite evening outfits thanks to the decorative flowers in pretty acrylic beads with the look of diamonds, rubies and emeralds. Made from PU, they're finished with a hard-wearing and slip-resistant sole.



*Stylish and comfortable*

*Pretty beads will sparkle as you walk*



### Flower Trimmed Sandals

• FTRMS \$49 or \$24.50 x 2 mths

Euro Sizes	36	37	38	39	40	41
Australian Fractional Sizes	5	6	7	8	9	10

*Gabbeni*



5 speed levels, whisper quiet peration

Sit comfortably while the pedals rotate to provide gentle exercise

Remote control included



## Low-Impact Elliptical Trainer - great for all fitness levels



This mains-powered elliptical trainer can help tone your lower body and improve flexibility with minimal pressure on your joints. Simply sit comfortably and enjoy up to 30 minutes of effortless movement. Choose between the three pre-set programs or select from five different speeds in manual mode. The remote control requires 2 x AAA batteries (not supplied). Easy to store at just 38L x 34W x 25H cm, it keeps track of time, distance, speed, pedal count and calories burned.

**Elliptical Trainer • ELPKA**  
**\$249 or \$49.80 x 5 mths**



Multi-Directional Pedals

**Only \$2 Postage!** - Quote code RM12S when ordering

**\$2 Postage**  
on your entire order!



### ▲ Coral Reef Island Diamond Dotz kit

This kit includes quality colour printed fabric, acrylic facets sorted by colour, stylus, wax caddy, craft tray and multi-lingual instructions. 130 x 64 cm.

• 65093 \$149.00 or \$37.25 x 4 months

### Steam Train Victoria Jigsaw Puzzle ▼

1000-Piece jigsaw puzzle. 69 x 49 cm.

• 64451 \$18.95







*Stylish ankle-length design*

*Create a flattering silhouette*

*Warm weather favourite*

### **Chic, Comfortable Cover-Up - stylish, relaxing maxi-dress**

Whether you're enjoying drinks around the pool or strolling along the beach, this stylish sheer polyester cover-up will look elegant over your swimsuit. The ankle-length design, with tie waist, deep V-neck and elbow-length sleeves create a very flattering silhouette – and it's also perfect for relaxing indoors. Easy to wash and quick to dry. Sizes S, M, L & XL.

**Comfort Cover-Up • CKAFT**  
**\$49 or \$24.50 x 2 mths**

### **Easy-To-Read Alarm Clock Radio - specially designed to give you a better night's sleep!**

This feature-packed alarm clock radio will wake you up and, when you program the timer, help soothe you to sleep. During the day, you can stay tuned into your favourite AM or FM channels or listen to your own music using your phone. Measuring a neat 9H x 19W x 5.5D cm it has a large, clear easy-read display and is powered by a rechargeable battery for portability which is easily recharged using your phone charger. It's a great companion in the kitchen, garden or bedroom.

**AM/FM Alarm Clock Radio • RDCLK**  
**\$59 or \$29.50 x 2 mths**

*All in one alarm clock radio!*



*You can listen to your favourite tunes and songs*

#### **Great Features**

- AM/FM Radio • Clock
- Alarm • Sleep Timer
- Bluetooth • Snooze
- AUX • Dimmer







*Delightful  
by day or  
night!*



## **Adorable Twins Garden Ornament - soft glow solar lamp**

So cute in their identical tops and engrossed in the same book, these adorable twins clearly share a special bond. And they can

even go on reading after dark thanks

to the soft glow of the removable solar lamp! 52H x 25W x 23D cm, the polyresin has been crafted to

capture every detail from the pages of the book to the children's dimpled knees.



**Twins Solar Light • FFRSL**  
**\$79 or \$19.75 x**  
**4 mths**

*Perfect detail  
captures a special  
moment*

## **Adorable Bulldog Bench - part sculpture, part seat!**

Welcome this bulldog into your garden and you'll have a striking sculpture as well as a handy place to rest. It's crafted from polyresin for lightness and strength – and you'll love the way it captures every last fold and wrinkle on that impressive head. Who could resist that endearing expression? A generous 76L x 49H x 35W cm and ready to enjoy, it's sure to be a favourite with all ages.

**Bulldog Garden Bench**  
**• DGBCH \$199 or**  
**\$49.75 x 4 mths**

*Cutest garden  
centrepiece!*



*A great place to sit  
or rest your feet*



*Crafted in  
beautiful  
detail*





*Delightful  
by day or  
night!*



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**Bulldog Garden Bench**  
**• DGBCH \$199 or**  
**\$49.75 x 4 mths**

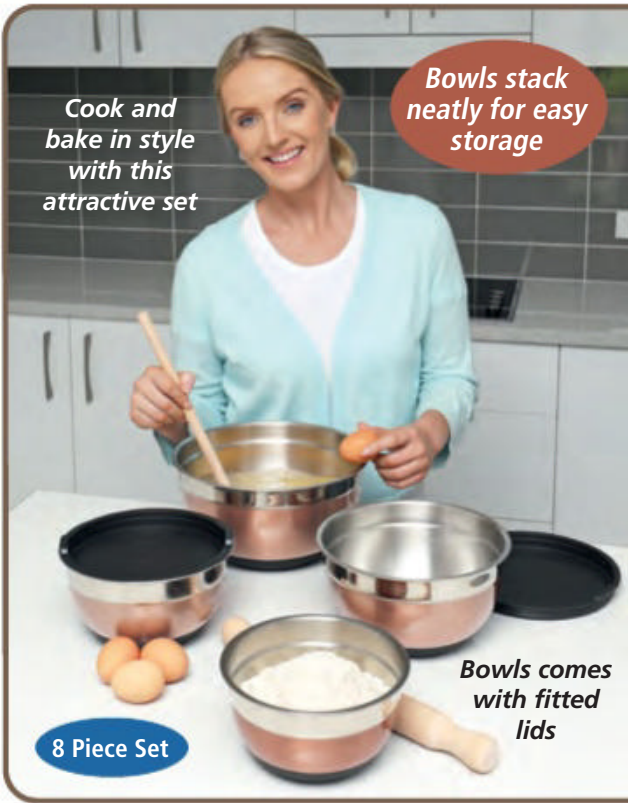
*Cutest garden  
centrepiece!*



*A great place to sit  
or rest your feet*



*Crafted in  
beautiful  
detail*



## Set of 4 Copper Tint Bowls

- mix, store, prep and serve

Could these be the only mixing bowls you'll ever need? Well-made from food-grade brushed stainless steel with an attractive, contrasting copper tint, they have non-slip silicone bases and airtight lids. They're perfect for storing and serving as well as mixing and preparing food and the four practical sizes – 16, 18, 20 and 24 cm in diameter – can be nested or stacked for easy storage.

**Copper Tint Mixing Bowl Set • CTMBS**  
**\$79 or \$19.75 x**  
**4 mths 8 Piece Set**



*Easy to stack*

**\$2**  
**Postage**  
 on your entire order!

**Only \$2 Postage!** - Quote code **RM12S** when ordering

## ▼ Flamingo Embroidery Scissors

Delightful bright pink embroidery scissors. 11 cm.

• 65076 \$17.95



## Blue Floral

A classic cushion, all in blue, exquisitely adapted from a Gzhel panel by Riolis. Your **Counted Cross Stitch kit** includes 14-count white Zweigart Aida fabric, fabric for cushion backing, pre-sorted Italian wool and acrylic blend thread, needle, chart and instructions. 40 x 40 cm.

• 65163 \$69.95 or \$23.32 x 3 months

## Gertie Sews Vintage Casual ▶

A modern guide to sportswear styles of the 1940s and 1950s, from popular designer Gretchen Hirsch, who is inspired by the icons of the era, including the beatnik, the domestic goddess, the bombshell, the bathing beauty and others. 224 pages plus patterns, spiral-bound hardcover.

• 65008 \$49.95 or \$24.98 x 2 months





*A warm,  
inviting  
glow for  
any room*



*Featuring  
Australia's  
most iconic  
bird*

## **Captivating LED Kookaburra Lamp**

**- it looks lovely day and night**

A kookaburra sitting on the branch of a gum tree – what could be more Australian than that? This lamp captures this iconic image beautifully with reproductions of a stunning painting, so detailed you can see the brush strokes! Elegant in frosted glass, it has a slim, elongated shape and stands 29 cm tall. It's powered by 3 x AAA batteries (not supplied) and you can adjust the 20 LEDs to create the perfect mood.

**LED Kookaburra Lamp • LEDVB \$39.95**

## **Multi-Pocket Activity Gilet** **- great for your outdoor activities**

This vest will keep a host of accessories organised and within easy reach. There are zipped and flapped pockets to hold your phone, keys and wallet on your daily walk and, if you enjoy outdoor activities, there's plenty of room for sunglasses, maps and other key essentials. Made from a lightweight mix of polyester and cotton, it's cool in summer and generously sized to fit over a sweater in winter. Sizes M, L, XL, 2XL.

**Activity Gilet • ACTGL**  
**\$59 or \$29.50 x**  
**2 mths**

*Roomy zippered  
and flap pockets  
to hold glasses,  
keys, phone and  
much more*



Animals give  
you a better life

You can leave them  
a better world.

