

A Piglet's Guide to Love





THE KIDS' CANCER PROJECT WRITE A BOOK IN A DAY

Parameters Form

Team Details

STATE: VIC
DIVISION: Middle School (Required word count 3500 to 5000 words)
SCHOOL/GROUP: St Francis Catholic College - Melton
TEAM NAME: SFCC Melton 5
TEAM ID: 1797

Parameters and random words

Parameters

Primary character 1 Park ranger
Primary character 2 Dog walker
Non-human character Pig
Setting Bridge
Issue Message in a bottle

Random words

event
crisp
elastic
clumsy
bright

Instructions

- Start no earlier than **8am**
- Write an original story:
 - based on all **five parameters** (above)
 - including all **five random words** (above) as written, and in bold type
 - with some identifiable **Australian content** (in theme or setting or characters, etc)
 - keeping within the allowed word count (remember every word on every page counts)!
 - include this parameters form in your book **immediately after the front cover**
- Remember: **Every** word on **every** page counts. This includes your front cover, back cover, blurb, acknowledgements and copyright form.
- **Be sure to give yourself enough time to submit your book and complete the following checklist before 9pm**

Log on to the Team Coordinator Portal to:

- ☐ Check the spelling of your team name and team members' names
(how these are spelt on submission will be how they are displayed on certificates)
- ☐ Complete the Declaration
- ☐ Submit your finished book in **both** PDF and plain text format by 9pm

Acknowledgment of Country

SFCC Melton 5 would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this book was created, the Wurindjeri people of the Kulin Nation, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

SFCC Melton 5 would also like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this book will be read. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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Victoria 333. G.Bregmen, E.Qureshi, C.Oliver, E.Capovilla, A.John. -2026

Dedication

This book is dedicated to all the children who are dealing with illnesses, and to our sponsors for allowing us to share this story.

Authors

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Illustrators

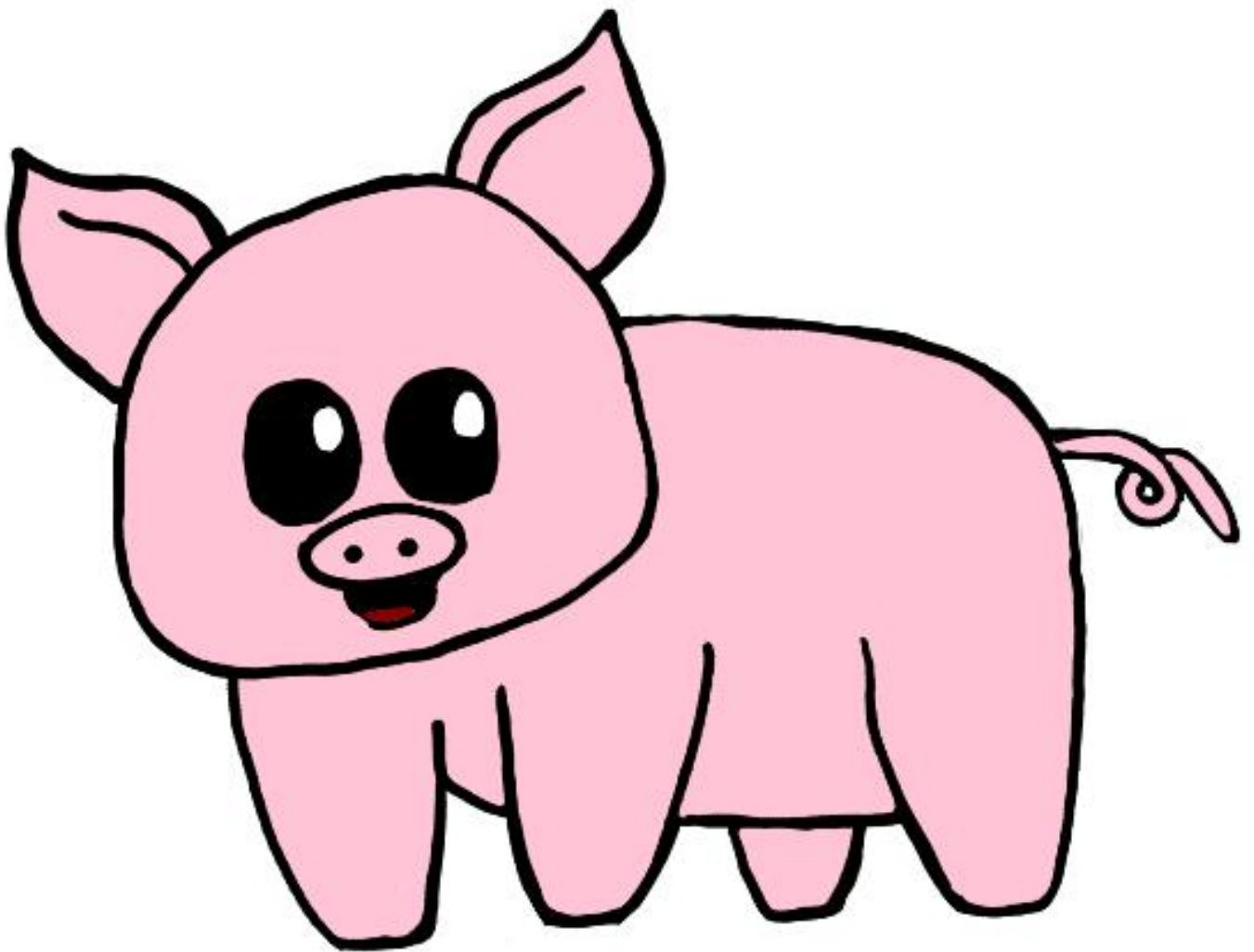
C.Oliver, G.Bregmen

Chapter 1

Jade was up **bright** and early that morning, taking her time as she put on her light pink headphones, tied her blonde hair in a messy bun, threw on her favorite hoodie and stepped out the door. She was walking dogs to make some cash and had about seven clients at this point in time. Following her usual route, she walked through the winding streets of Sydney, taking in the views and bidding good morning to her neighbors. Up and over the Sydney Harbour Bridge as the sun rose higher in the tinted sky, Jade kept pace as the dogs happily trotted along, barking at every bird they saw. Soon enough, she arrived at the Opera House and took in the glorious view. Although she saw it nearly every day, the waters never failed to take her breath away. Jade gazed over the sparkling water, over to the tall city buildings mixed with native greenery. *I love Australia!* She thought dreamily, leaning on the railing with her head in her hands.

Meanwhile at a local farmhouse, a group of pigs and piglets crowded together, being led towards a door where they would soon become a delicious snack. One little pink piglet, Jimmy, refused to face what was in store for him behind that door. He tried to stand on his little hind legs to scan the area for an exit but just ended up toppling over. However, he did not give up, as it was not a Jimmy thing to do. He may have been small and scared, but when he wanted to do something, he got it done. He scampered across the

floor, trying his best not to trip over anyone, and examined all the gates and fences for a gap. He would find a way out eventually... wouldn't he?



Chapter 2

“Oink, Oink!” Jimmy squealed as he looked all over the fence on his way out. *I can't be turned into ham, I just can't. They'll burn me to a **crisp***, he thought. To his surprise, Jimmy found what he had been searching for. It was a tiny hole cut out of the fence. This was his best chance to escape. Jimmy curled his small pink body until he could squeeze through the hole and scurried away with his tiny feet.

He ran and ran until he finally arrived at a massive landmark, The Sydney Opera House. Jimmy had a plan; he saw a nice-looking lady wearing a tag that said ‘Jade’. She seemed to be a dog walker, holding many leads at once. Jimmy quietly snuck his way into the group of dogs, making sure no one noticed him. When he reached the huddle, he secretly joined the group, acting like he was one of them, attempting to blend in with the group. After all of the sneaking and mischief, Jimmy was exhausted from all the hard work. He was so thirsty, but he had no idea where to find water. Then, he noticed a river that lay just under the famous Opera House. Jimmy's eyes widened as he lurked through the group of dogs, trying not to be noticed by Jade. He shoved through, desperate for a drink. Jimmy was filled with relief as he gulped down his long-awaited refreshment. Just as he was going to leave, and re-join the group of dogs, he saw something that caught his eye. It was a glass bottle floating in the river that had a note in it. He was curious, so curious that he picked it up with his mouth and headed toward Jade, who was busy

trying to contain the many dogs she was walking. As he approached her with the glass bottle held between his teeth, Jade's eyes locked with Jimmy's; she wondered why there was a literal pig in the park. Jade took off her headphones, keeping her eyes locked on the small piglet.

“What are you doing here, and what's this in your mouth?”

Jade took the clear glass bottle out of Jimmy's slimy, saliva covered mouth and opened it. She read the note and looked puzzled.

“Let me take you to Marcus; he's the park ranger. He always knows what he's doing.”

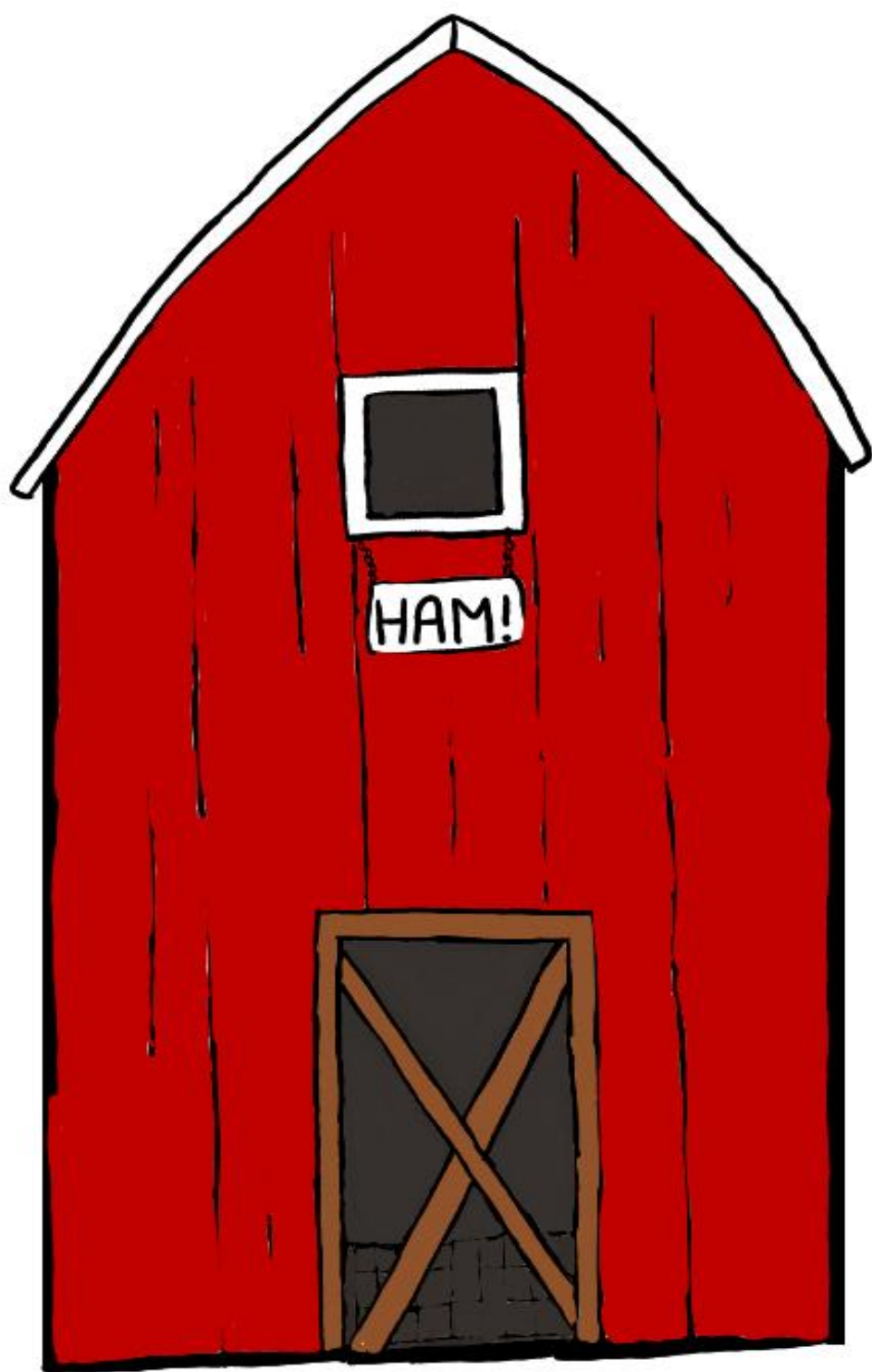
Jade picked up the piglet with one hand and held the dog leash with the other, leading the dogs along to Marcus. When she arrived at Marcus, she handed him the piglet, saying,

“This little fellow was hanging around here, isn't that crazy?”

Marcus was confused but casually chuckled and said,

"Wow, a pig? What was he doing here?"

Suddenly, the dogs began barking so loudly that Jade needed to settle them to even hear herself think. As she got them under control, the note from the glass bottle poked out of the corner of her pocket, which caught Marcus's attention. He eyed it for a good 5 seconds, long enough to read it, but he surely wouldn't think anything about it.



Chapter 3

A musical place of incredible sounds, a clue is hidden in safe bounds.

“A clue?” Jade wondered aloud, reading the note in her living room.

She stared blankly at the paper for a moment, before making a statement.

“Well,” she spoke to the dogs, “What have I got to lose? I guess I’m following a riddle somewhere?”

She did her rounds, returning the dogs to their owners, collecting her small amount of pay. She didn’t earn much, but she earned enough for one person living alone. She’d always wanted a dog of her own, however, her savings wouldn’t suffice. *Maybe one day*, she thought.

Hours of pondering hadn’t gotten her far; Jade had tried decoding the riddle multiple times to the point that her head was spinning. She glanced around at her living room as her eyes travelled out to the sun-soaked balcony. The Sydney Opera House stood there humbly as she admired its beauty. The fantastic memories of visiting with her mother and best friend Marcus as a child flooded her mind. The wonderful opera gave her tingles. Those incredible sounds... *incredible sounds....*

“That’s it! That’s where the riddle wants me to go! A musical place of incredible sounds!” Jade exclaimed.

She pulled into the car park, far too excited over a random piece of paper in a bottle brought to her by a piglet. She was probably acting insane, but who cared? Dog walking was fun and all, but she craved further purpose. Jade's green eyes shimmered as they scanned the exterior of the Opera House. The riddle had mentioned a clue hidden in 'safe bounds.' The only thing that popped into her mind was a flotation device. She was surrounded by water and yachts, each containing life rings and life jackets. The stunning Sydney Harbour Bridge was shining at her. She recalled a visit from when she was twelve years old. Her and Marcus were skipping though the hallway inside, mocking the paintings on the walls. One of the paintings was titled '*Safe Bounds*'. *Hmm... sounds right, that must be it*, she thought.

Inside, Jade wandered through the corridor, reminiscent of the adrenaline rush she used to share with her friend while jumping around those halls, with security eyeing them down, understandably. There it was, *Safe Bounds*. It was just a painting, but notably her favorite. Wedged behind the painting, she noticed a small paper bag. She pulled it out to reveal another note, another clue to whatever she was headed towards. This whole chase was bridging her somewhere, but where, and why? Before she read it, a soft toy, a rabbit, fell out of the paper bag. It seemed familiar; she remembered it from somewhere. She placed it in her bag, along with the clue which she would inspect further outside. As she turned around, she noticed Marcus standing by the front desk. She walked up to him, confused about why he was there.

"Marcus! What brings you here?" She questioned him.

“Oh, hey Jade! Thanks for handing over that piglet earlier, I’ve actually decided to adopt him! His name is Jimmy. I’m here on a day trip and I’ve got to get going, but nice to see you.”

His words were warm... strangely rushed, but warm.

“Jade, before you go, what’s in your hand?”

Jade shoved the clue into her pocket.

“Oh this? It’s just a piece of rubbish I found, best to take care of the environment!”

How strange that Marcus is here, he doesn’t even live close... she thought before exiting the building.



Chapter 4

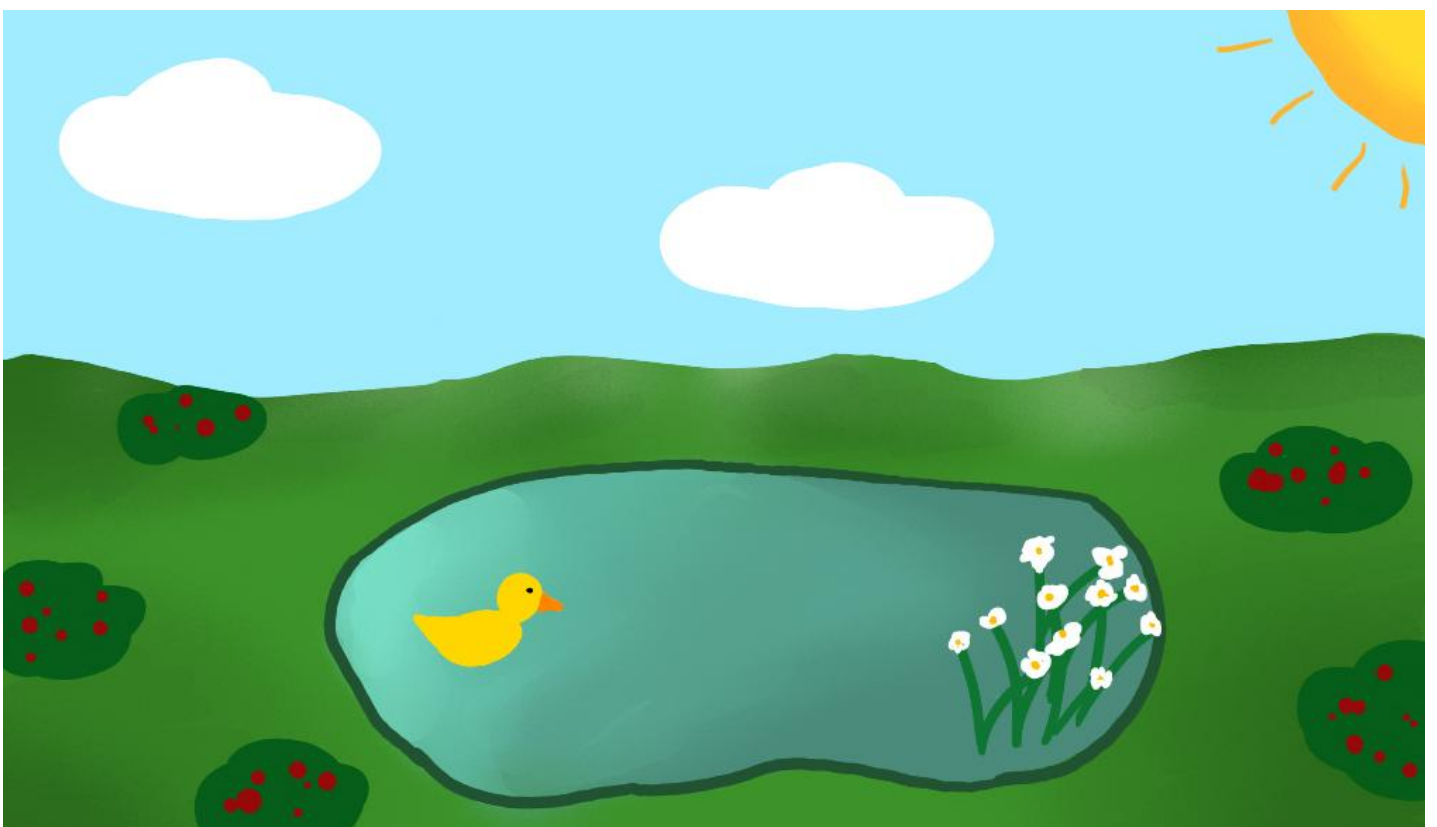
Jade stared at the clue for a moment before smiling. Finally, an easy one. After the last clue had sent her running all over Sydney, she was relieved that this one practically told her exactly where to go. Royal Botanic Gardens. Mrs. Macquarie's Chair, easy. As she made her way through the streets, her thoughts drifted to Marcus. She pictured his warm smile, deep brown eyes, and messy curls bouncing whenever he laughed. However, she quickly shook those thoughts away. *Why am I thinking about him? Focus, Jade.* The afternoon sun warmed her face as she walked, while the sky slowly changed into shades of pink, orange, and purple. Sydney looked almost magical in the fading sunlight, with the harbour sparkling between the buildings. Suddenly, something huge scurried across the footpath. Jade froze. A giant rat.

"AHHH!" She stumbled backwards and tripped on a lip on the footpath and landed straight on her bottom, where she got stuck to gooey, **elastic** chewing gum. *I'm so clumsy,* she thought.

She quickly looked around to see if anyone had witnessed her very ungraceful fall. Luckily, nobody seemed to be paying attention. She dusted herself off and continued walking. *Definitely not letting that ruin my day,* she thought. When she finally reached the Royal Botanic Gardens, she recognised the familiar paths and colorful flowers. The cool breeze rustled through the trees, and the harbor shimmered in the distance. Then she spotted Marcus. He was walking along with Jimmy, his little pig, trotting happily

beside him. Jade smiled and waved, gesturing Marcus to glance over and smile back. He kept walking and her smile slowly disappeared. She sighed, continuing towards her destination. *Come to think of it, Marcus has been at every single stop,* Jade thought, *It's a little bit suspicious.* When she reached where she was headed, she stopped and looked out across the harbor. The Opera House and Harbour Bridge stood proudly across the glistening water, glowing in the warm evening light. Jade looked around. "Okay," she muttered. "That was definitely easier."

She pulled the clue from her pocket and read it again, scanning every word. There was nothing on the chair. She checked underneath it, then looked through the bushes surrounding the area, searching in every nook and cranny for the next clue. Then she spotted something. Lying underneath the chair was a pile of paper daisies sitting on top of another note. Beside them was a small diamond necklace. It was beautiful, and it looked brand new. She knelt down in shock, staring at the necklace, which she placed gently around her neck.



Chapter 5

“Okay,” Jade muttered. “Another riddle. Let’s see.”

Among the flowers by the sea, a smiling face now waits for thee, where laughter echoes bright and far, your next clue waits beneath a star.

Jade stared at the paper for a while. It didn’t seem difficult, but her mind was blank.

Why can’t I think of anything! She thought.

“Oh wait!” She said loudly. “Luna Park! ‘A smiling face waits for thee’; that’s the giant face out the front of Luna Park!”

When she arrived, Jade noticed that there were heaps of cars in the car park. There must have been some kind of special **event** going on. *Great*, Jade thought sarcastically; *more people mean that it will be harder to find the clue.* She stared up at the massive face looming over her; its creepy smile slightly faded from the rain. The park was extremely crowded, just as she’d thought. Jade decided to look at the first ride she ever went on with Marcus, just to reminisce in the memories. It felt like only yesterday when he had dared her to go on the scariest ride in the whole park. She had a strange feeling that someone was watching her. It was clear that the adventure was for her only, it was important that no one was after whatever prize she was waiting for... including Marcus, who she hated to doubt, but he had always seemed to be nearby. Remembering those fun times was gleeful though; she had screamed the whole time on that first ever ride,

while Marcus roared his loud, obnoxious, adorable laugh and held her hand, his long, curly hair falling into his eyes. His beautiful smile spreading wide across his delicate face- *Enough of that*, she thought, *I will not get distracted*. She walked through the large crowd, towards the ‘Hair Raiser’, a terrifying 14-story drop tower known for its forceful free-fall and stomach-dropping sensation. She could still remember her screams. As she looked at it, she saw Marcus and Jimmy coming from it.

“What are they doing here? And who brings a pig to Luna Park?” Jade asked herself.

They made eye contact, and Marcus hurried off. It seemed like he was afraid to see her, but Jade wasn’t sure why. This was the third time Marcus had shown up where her riddle took her. Jade was becoming suspicious. What if he really *did* want whatever the riddle was taking her towards? *No*, she thought, *it’s just a coincidence*.

She made her way to the entrance of the Hair Raiser but stopped at a sign. On one of the corners, there was a small piece of paper and a package attached by a piece of string. Jade grabbed them. The package had a bracelet that looked awfully close to the one her mother used to wear. This was seriously beginning to get weird. She had so many questions buzzing through her mind, confusing and befuddling her. Why was this riddle taking to all these places? Why was Marcus showing up everywhere she went? But she wasn’t sad about seeing him; it was just really becoming strange that he always appeared at the same place at the same time.



Chapter 6

Leave the laughter, lights, and rides. Follow the harbor to the other side. The end of your journey is drawing near; your final clue is waiting here.

This one was obvious too and sounded like that last of the clues. After walking for miles, she finally arrived at Sydney Harbour Bridge. Fully exhausted, she leant against the rail while taking in the spectacular view. The bright sun was setting as the sky turned shades of red and orange, while the harbour water shimmered beneath the fading light.

Jade closed her eyes. Her journey was over. She breathed deeply and let out a sigh of relief. What she didn't realise was that Marcus was just around the corner, watching her every move. Jade slowly turned around and began searching for the final clue. Then something caught her eye. Marcus. Again. She couldn't take it anymore. She needed answers. Jade marched towards him.

"Why are you following me, Marcus?" she asked, not meaning to sound so angry.

"Jade, I can explain."

"Then explain!" She snapped. "You've been everywhere I've gone today. The Opera House, the Botanic Gardens, Luna Park, and now here. Every single clue somehow leads me to a place where you just happen to be."

Marcus sighed. "It's not what you think."

"Really? Because right now it looks pretty weird to me. I know we're close friends, but following me? Really?"

Marcus gave a small laugh. "I'm serious!"

"So am I," she replied, waiting for an answer.

"Jade, every place you've visited today means something to us."

She frowned. "What are you talking about?"

"The rabbit, the painting, the clues... all of it."

Jade's eyes widened, "You did all of this?"

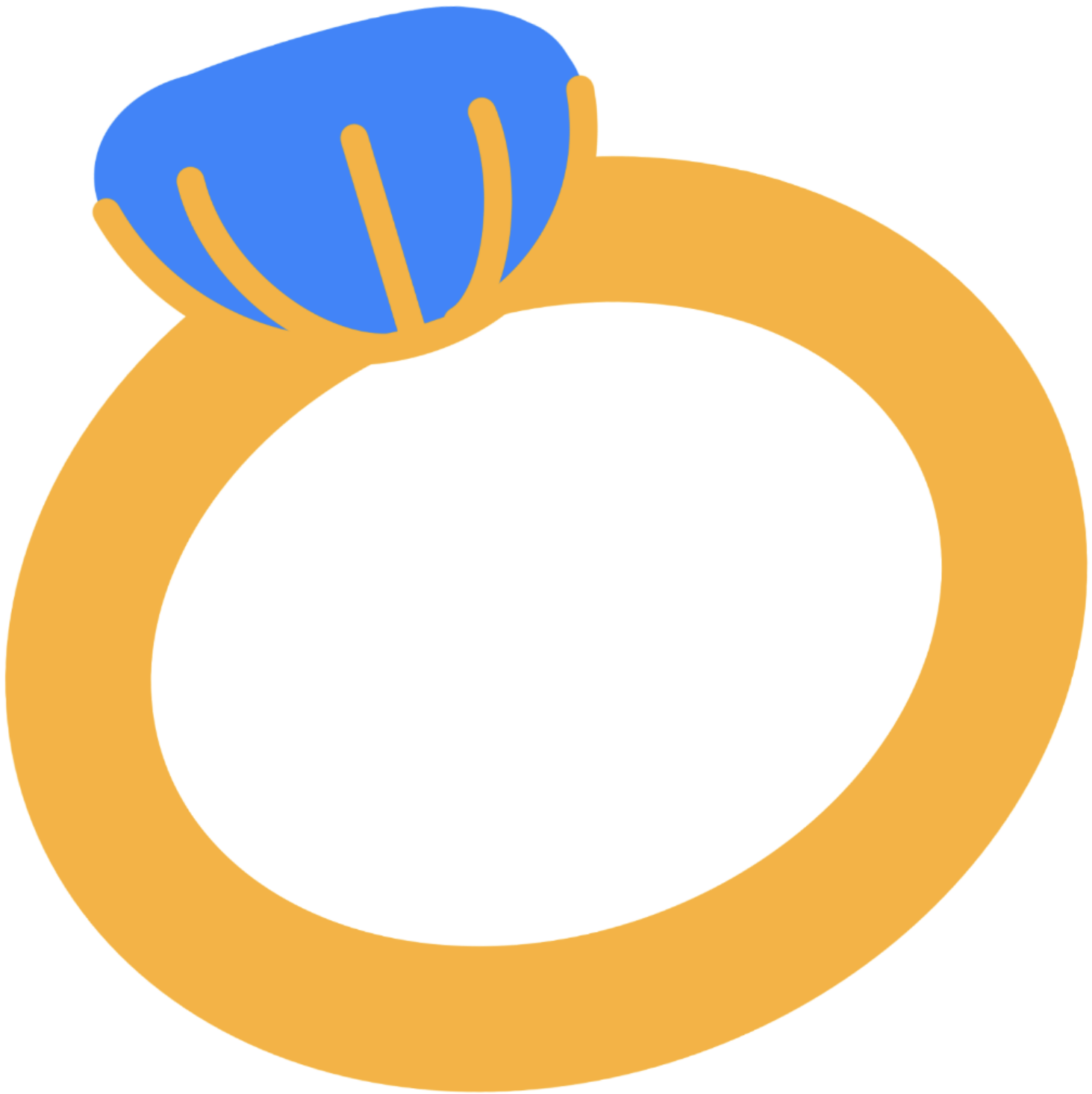
Marcus nodded.

"Why?"

Marcus reached into his pocket and pulled out a folded piece of paper. "Because I needed a way to tell you how I feel."

Jade stared at him, completely confused. "What does that mean?"

Marcus took a deep breath, "Just let me explain."



Chapter 7

Marcus sighed. “Yes, Jade, I have been following you. But not for the reason you think.”

“Sure,” Jade laughed sarcastically. “You definitely *aren’t* here for the treasure I’ve been looking for.”

“But I’m not,” Marcus said, almost defiantly. “If you’ll just let me explain-”

“Go on then, I want to hear your excuse.”

Marcus pulled out a piece of paper from his pocket and handed it to Jade. She took it and opened it with slight aggression. It read;

You’ve followed every clue and made it here, but our journey together is far from over, do not fear.

“There’s something I’ve been wanting to tell you, Jade. You mean more to me than you know, and I can’t imagine my future without you. So, I have one final question.”

Jade felt flushed. Her heart was racing; it was only then that she realised she was deeply in love with Marcus. Overwhelmed and flustered, she looked up at him.

“Jade, will you marry me?”

Jade’s crystal green eyes locked onto his deep brown ones. She saw Marcus kneeling before her. She gasped.

“Jade, I have loved you for a while now, and I know, well I hope, you feel the same way. I hope that we can be the happiest couple on Earth.”

She glared at him with happiness and shock. The beautiful sunset behind them, the cool breeze whipping their hair around, everything was so perfect. People passing by had stopped to witness the moment. Jade couldn't stop staring at his face. The look in his eyes was still hopeful.

“Yes!” Jade gleamed. “Yes, I'll absolutely marry you!”

Marcus blinked at her for a moment, almost as if he hadn't heard her properly, though he had, for he was filled with joy and excitement.

"Really?" He asked, his voice barely above a whisper.

Jade laughed through her tears. "Of course, really!"

A huge smile spread across both of their faces as Marcus slipped the ring onto her finger. Before he could say another word, Jade threw her arms around him and hugged him tightly. The crowd that had gathered around them erupted into cheers and applause.

"I can't believe you did all of this," Jade said, pulling slightly away from their embrace so she could look at his overjoyed face.

Marcus chuckled. "It was hard work. Do you know how difficult it is to hide clues all over Sydney?"

Jade folded her arms. "So that's why you kept showing up everywhere."

"Well, I had to make sure you actually found them."

"I thought you were stalking me."

"I was supervising."

"Marcus!"

He laughed and held up his hands in surrender. "Okay, maybe it looked a little suspicious."

Jade shook her head, smiling. "The clues, the gifts, the bracelet... all of it was you?"

Marcus nodded.

"Every clue was connected to a memory we shared. I wanted you to revisit the places that meant the most to us before I asked the biggest question of my life."

Jade glanced down at the sparkling ring on her finger. "So, this whole treasure hunt was just a proposal?"

"Just a proposal?" Marcus repeated dramatically. "That took me six months to organise!"

Jade laughed so hard she nearly cried again. Before she could respond, a familiar squeal interrupted them.

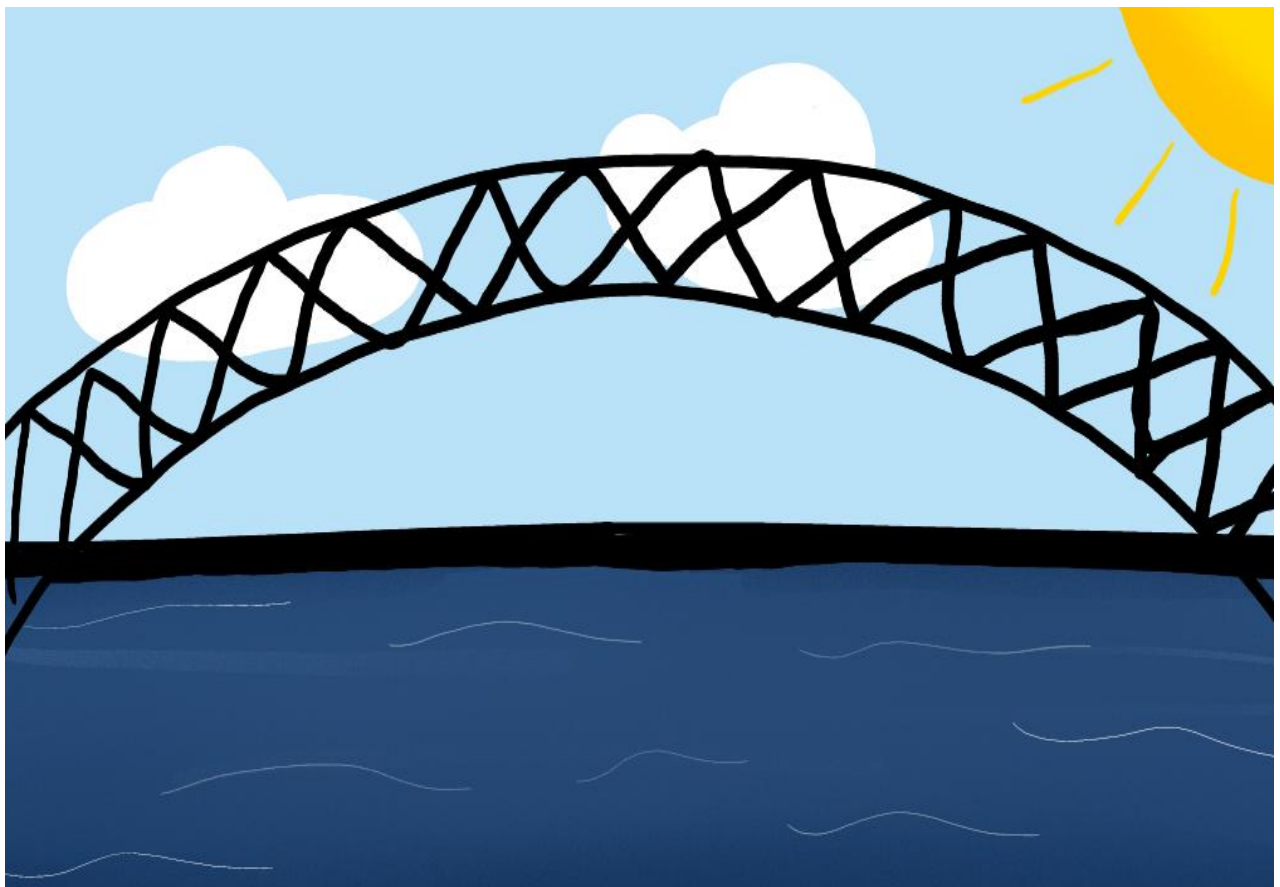
"Oink!"

Jimmy trotted between them, looking extremely pleased with himself. Marcus gestured at Jimmy.

"None of this would've happened without my sidekick."

Jade bent down and scratched Jimmy behind the ear. "Then I suppose we owe you a thank you."

Jimmy squealed proudly. As the last rays of sunlight disappeared behind the Sydney skyline, Jade slipped her hand into Marcus's grasp. For years, he had been her best friend. The person who made her laugh, supported her through everything, and knew her better than anyone else. Now he was going to be all of that and more. And Jade couldn't have been happier.



Chapter 8

(1 Year later)

Jade had been waiting for this day for years. A day where she would be surrounded by her closest friends and loving family, ready to begin the rest of her life with her lover. She couldn't wait to spend every day with him. Jade's father, Henry, and her sister, Eleanor, had travelled from Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, where they had been living with her grandmother for the past three years. Jade was preparing to marry Marcus, with her supportive family by her side. She wore a beautiful, classic lace dress that flowed perfectly over her. Delicate jewellery and elegant accessories that Marcus had carefully placed all around Sydney for her a year back completed Jade's stunning look. Eleanor carefully fixed the last few strands of Jade's hair before stepping back with a proud smile.

"You're ready," she whispered.

Jade took a deep breath and smiled. "I can't believe this is actually happening."

As the soft music began, Jade held tightly onto her father's arm. The large doors opened, revealing the beautifully decorated aisle covered with delicate flowers. She slowly, elegantly stepped forward. Everyone turned to look at her. Marcus stood at the end of the aisle with the same warm old smile as he watched her walk towards him. His eyes never left her.

"You look beautiful," Marcus whispered.

"So do you," Jade replied, laughing softly.

The ceremony began, but Jade barely noticed the words around her. All she could think about was how she was standing beside the person she had loved for so many years. It felt like all the years they had spent together had led to this exact moment. When it was time for their vows, Marcus gently took her hands in his.

“I promise to always be there for you, through the good days and the difficult ones. I promise to make you laugh, to support you, and to love you for the rest of my life.”

Jade smiled through her tears. “I promise the same. You have always been my best friend, and now I get to call you my husband.”

The wedding officiant grinned. “You may now kiss.”

Marcus leaned towards Jade, and they shared a gentle kiss as their family and friends cheered around them. Jade looked around at the smiling faces she loved most. For Jade, it was everything she had dreamed of. After almost years of waiting, she finally married her best friend- and it was all thanks to a proposal on a bridge.



Jade's ordinary day takes an unexpected turn when a mysterious bottle washes up near the Sydney Opera House, containing a strange note and a riddle.

Curious, Jade decides to follow the trail, leading her all around Sydney. Each clue leads her somewhere new—and each stop seems to hold a connection to her past.

But there's something Jade can't ignore: Marcus, her old friend, keeps appearing wherever the clues lead. Is it really 'Just a coincidence'?

With a mysterious trail to uncover, unexpected surprises around every corner, and a final clue waiting at the end, Jade must follow the clues to discover where they lead... and why she was chosen to find them.

