

Children writing to grow smart

Stories written by
learners for the
2019 Eastern Cape
Growsmart Story
Writing Competition



Eastern
Cape
2019
Edition



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to grow smart**

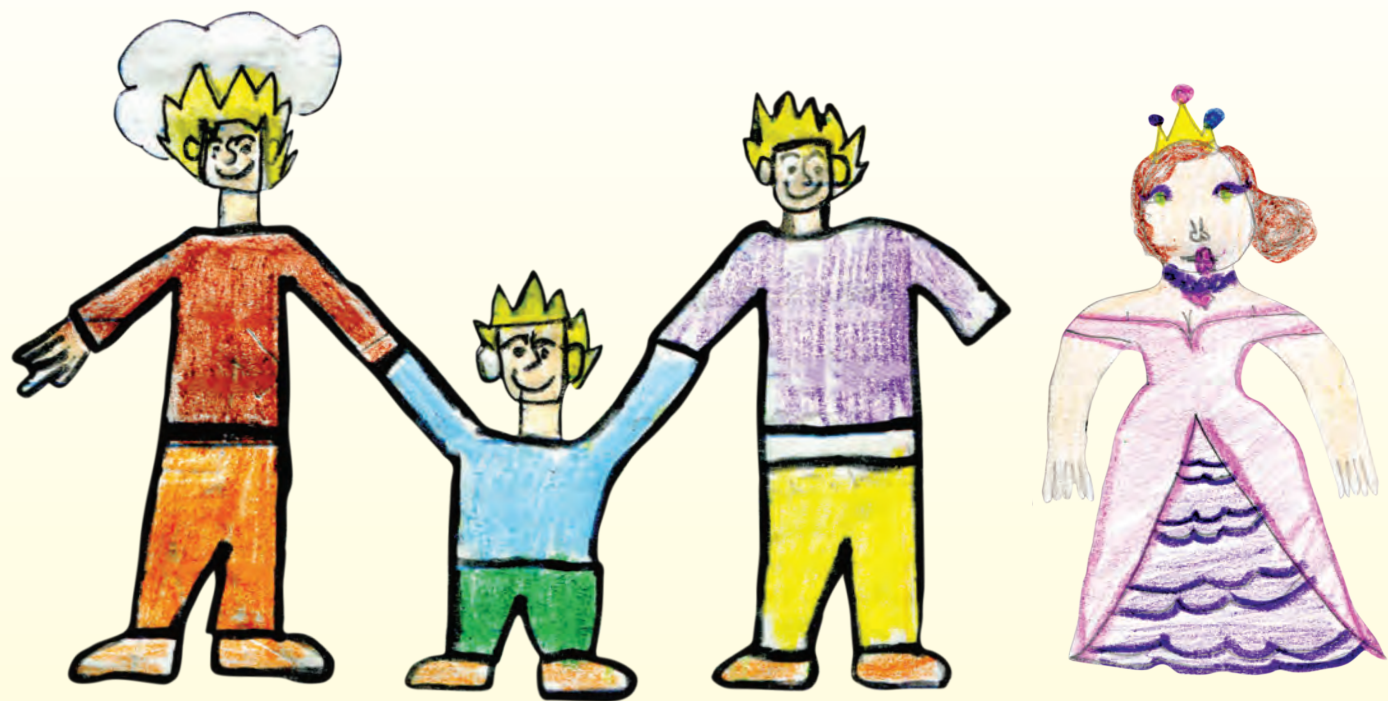


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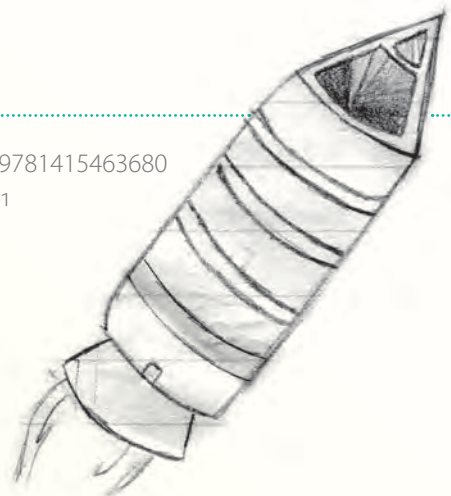




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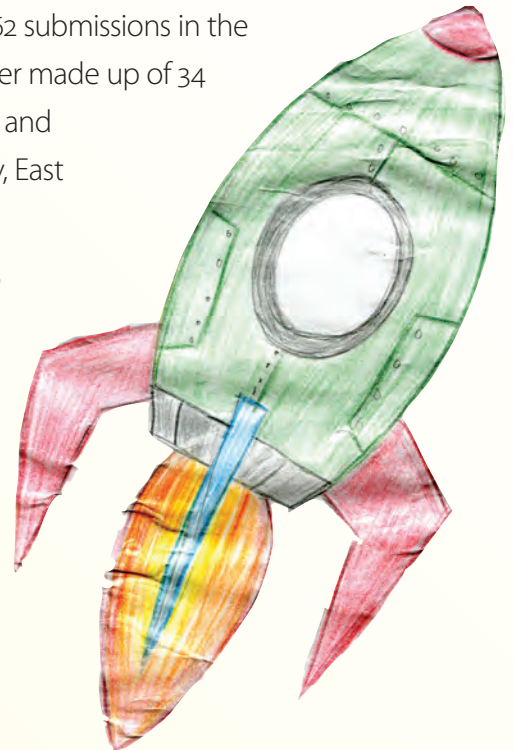
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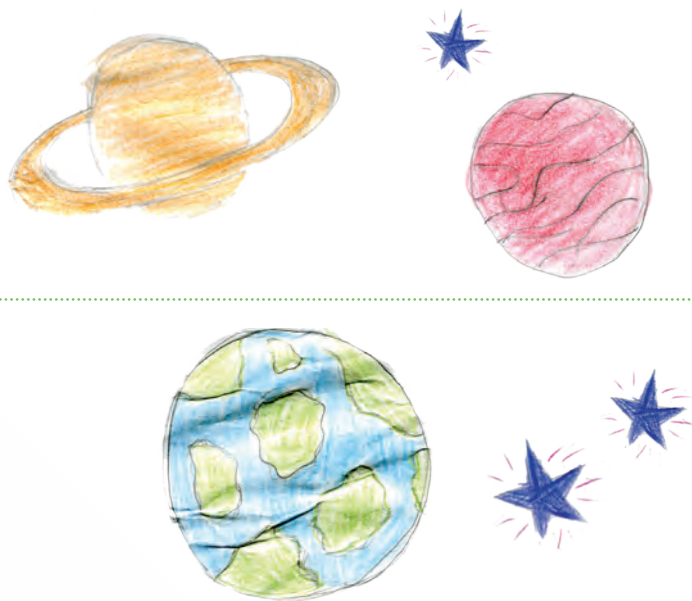


Stories have been around for as long as humans have been able to communicate. In fact storytelling is what ties generations to each other and ensures that we stay connected and remembered. This special book has a selection of wonderful stories, written by our very talented Growsmart Story Writers – all of them children. This book is a delightful representation of South African children (and their families and friends) and allows us to delve into their challenges, joys and experiences while growing up.

This year, we received an astounding 334 submissions in the Western Cape and 62 submissions in the Eastern Cape, with the latter made up of 34 stories from Port Elizabeth and 28 stories from Buffalo City, East London.

This 6th edition of *Children Writing to Grow Smart* comprises stories all written by learners in Grades 4 to 6, most of





whom come from previously disadvantaged communities and for most of whom, English is not their first language. This book celebrates these young authors (who wrote their stories without any assistance) and reminds us that even the young have important stories and messages to share with the world.

As Growsmart celebrates its 10th year, we are extremely proud to be able to continue to provide a platform for these talented children and continue to encourage them to grow, learn and thrive.

Estienne de Klerk, SA CEO

Message from the Eastern Cape Education Department



"I can shake off everything as I write; my sorrows disappear, my courage is reborn." – Anne Frank

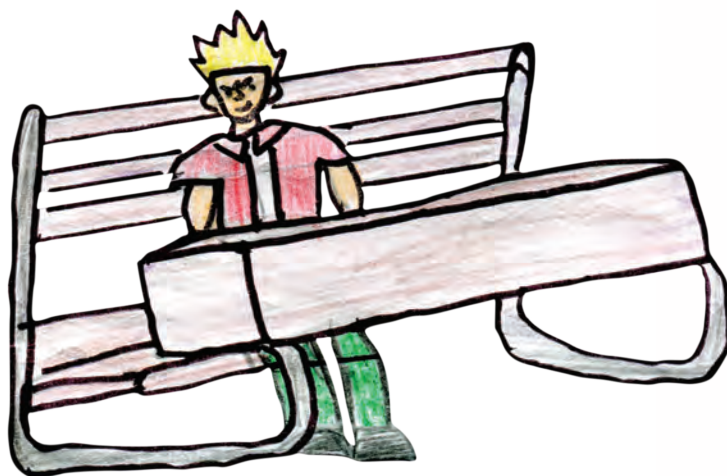
Writing is an important skill that enables one to express oneself, and articulate ideas effectively. Taking those first steps towards writing a story can be both a fun and daring activity for anyone. Through thinking up, planning and writing a story, children learn to put their thoughts into order and use written language to communicate their ideas in a variety of ways. Finding ideas and inspiration for writing a story can be quite daunting and demanding. But when children engage in this creative writing, their imagination is pushed and they are stimulated to 'think outside the box'.



The explosion of social media has completely changed the way people communicate with each other. While this communications boom may have its educational benefits, a possible negative side effect is beginning to take hold in our classrooms. Cyber slang and shorthand is suspected of damaging learners' writing acumen. However, in this collection it is refreshing to find that, despite ever increasing social media influence, learners can still write at length in a cohesive, structured manner to express their thoughts well.

When creating the stories, it was required of learners that they plan effectively and organise their ideas in a coherent and





well assembled way. They had to edit their first drafts and present a polished and interesting final piece which is unique and authentic.

Not only were their writing skills assessed, but also their ability to illustrate their stories in a vivid, clear and meaningful way, in the form of original drawings.

This resulting book provides learners with a sense of accomplishment. Completing and feeling good about a piece of writing that one has worked hard on promotes confidence. This is an essential element of personal growth and productivity in all facets of education.

On behalf of the Eastern Cape Department of Education, we thank Growthpoint Properties for inviting learners to participate in this creative writing competition. The learners who contributed their stories to this diverse collection come from primary schools in the Nelson Mandela Bay and Buffalo City Metro Municipality districts.

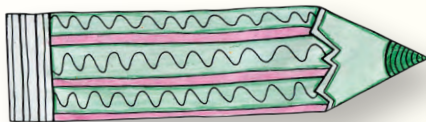
Well done to those schools who participated in this project. This is an ideal opportunity for improving learners' abilities to use writing as a mouthpiece for their thoughts, feelings and imagination.

It can be said, without a doubt, that the competition has brought to light several outstanding stories from aspiring young writers. The stories as well as the illustrations are diverse and rich, featuring various aspects of the lives of our young learners.

It is our hope that this collection will inspire other learners to write and develop the passion for storytelling. We urge their teachers to continue encouraging them to use written words to communicate their experiences and emotions competently to others.

Mr Temba S Kojana

Superintendent General: Eastern Cape
Department of Education





A message from Via Afrika



At Via Afrika, we usually work with educational texts that help teachers and learners discover the joys of education. It is our task to team up with the authors, editors, illustrators, book designers, typesetters and printers to craft one person's vision into a living object that benefits hundreds, even thousands, of others.

It has therefore been our privilege to work with Growthpoint, the ECED and these talented writers to publish this anthology of experience and imagination. We were presented with stories that moved or delighted; artwork that showed aptitude and insight; and a passion that invigorated us in our tasks – quite an achievement for a group of people with many years of experience in the educational book industry. We look forward to being able to participate in further projects of this calibre.

Christina Watson,
CEO



A message from Novus Holdings

Future Foundations, which is the Novus Holdings social investment programme, is firmly rooted in the belief that education is key to sustainable development. The programme aims to empower lives and transform communities by building strong foundations for future growth and development.



The Growsmart Story Writing project shares the same philosophy as Future Foundations as it truly empowers its beneficiaries by giving them a hand up and not a hand-out. For this reason we are honoured to once again be associated with this project with our print division, Novus Print, producing this remarkable book and proudly supporting this cause.

We would like to thank Growthpoint Properties for ensuring the continued success of this competition, and mostly for providing an enriching platform to our talented youth, thus encouraging them to learn and grow.

Congratulations to all the participants and winners of the competition. You have done us and South Africa proud.

Peter Metcalfe,

Group Executive: Sales and Marketing
Novus Holdings





Jean Gouws

Dalrose Primary

Grade 6

Age 11



The Day I Met My Real Family

Once upon a time there lived a girl who was given away by a family who was rich. The servant of the King, her father, put her in a basket. They put her on someone's doorstep and ran away. The next morning the lady opened the door and saw the cutest baby on her doorstep. The baby's name was Angelina. The lady who found her took her in the house. The lady dressed Angelina and put the most beautiful headband on her head. She decided that she would keep the baby because she could not have any children.

As Angelina grew up, she went to school and made two friends. Her friends' names were Jennet and Stacey. They had such a strong bond that they even shared secrets, made friendship bracelets and unforgettable memories.

One day she washed her back and saw a heart with a name on it. Angelina was very confused and could not remember where it came from.

She grew older and worked as a waitress at a coffee shop. Her friend Stacey was a designer and Jennet was a dancer.

There came a day that they decided to go visit a strange place. It looked like a garden, but it had a roof. They had to enter a secret code, but they could not find it. Angelina remembered the strange heart on her back with the weird name. She used it to get in. It worked, but the door was too small.

The King and Queen gave away their daughter, Angelina. She lived a normal life. One day she discovered a strange heart on her back. Angelina and her friends stumbled upon a strange garden and used the symbol on her back to enter. The mystical garden was a kingdom filled with fairies. The fairies told Angelina the story about the witch who stole the jewelled crown and captured the King and Queen. Angelina and her friends attended a ball at the castle, and this is where she reunited with her family.





Yet once the door opened, they shrunk and entered the strange place. They saw beautiful flowers, fairies and saw a lot of people who lived in the garden. Angelina spotted a huge castle, but unfortunately they could not enter it.

The guards who were guarding the castle made sure that no villagers could enter the castle and that only family was allowed in the castle.

Looking in, Angelina said, "Something is strange. Why are there two servants that are wearing crowns?"

The three girls realised how late it was and decided that it was time for them to go home. As they were leaving, they figured out that they were trapped in the garden. Some fairies approached them and asked them if they would like to stay



with them. The girls agreed to stay with the fairies. The fairies made Angelina and her friends beautiful flower crowns and delicious berry drinks.



The one fairy told them a story. She said:

"Once upon a time there was a King and Queen who lived in a beautiful castle made of jewels and diamonds. There was a strange woman that wanted to steal the magic of the secret crown. She used her powers to destroy the kingdom and stole the secret crown. Everything turned black and red. Ever since that day the city was hidden. The crown she took belonged to their daughter. The King and Queen gave their daughter away, because they were captured. Years later they were saved and have been looking for their daughter."





Angelina remembered that her mother who adopted her once told her that she was the daughter of a King and Queen.

The following day one of the guards came and delivered an invitation. It was an invitation from the Queen. She will be having a ball at the castle.

Angelina was worried. She asked: "How will I meet my parents?" The fairies made a plan on how to get them in.

That night the ball began, and everyone was dressed in beautiful dresses and suits.

When they entered the castle, it looked awesome. Everything was covered in jewels. Angelina spotted the most beautiful woman ever! This woman was her mother.

She ran to her and they instantly bonded. Angelina reunited with her parents and she was now the Princess of their kingdom. She and her friends decided to stay in the mystical garden forever. ■





**Muhammad
Zaakir
Cassim**

Soutpan Primary
Grade 5
Age 11



Be The Change

My whole life I've lived in the Northern Areas. I've always felt uneasy, but it wasn't until recently when my father was murdered that I realised we can't live like this.

Growing up wasn't easy but my mother, father and the rest of my family always took great care of us.

Even in school there is lots of violence. Many children are involved in gangs. Children get pulled in everyday and practise gang violence at school. It makes me sad and angry as we are often bullied, our lunch money stolen and we're threatened daily.

It's never fun not being able to play outside in the evenings and, at night while lying in bed, you often hear gun shots or noise in the area of people being killed over old grudges or money for drugs. Drugs to sell for cool takkies and clothes, leaving families with a huge hole in their hearts. But it wasn't until recently when I felt how huge the hole could be.

On the 3rd April my father was working late on this specific night. It was also Laylat al-Miraj, an important date on the Islamic calendar. On his way from his work he was followed by three men. After being paid he was confronted on a corner near a church, robbed of his money and tools. He didn't even fight back but they still stabbed him in the heart. There was one eyewitness who wasn't willing to come forward as he feared for his life.

For my father.

Be the change that you want to see – Gandhi.

After my father was murdered all I felt was anger and sadness. I wanted to find the three heartless men and get my revenge. Would it be worth it?





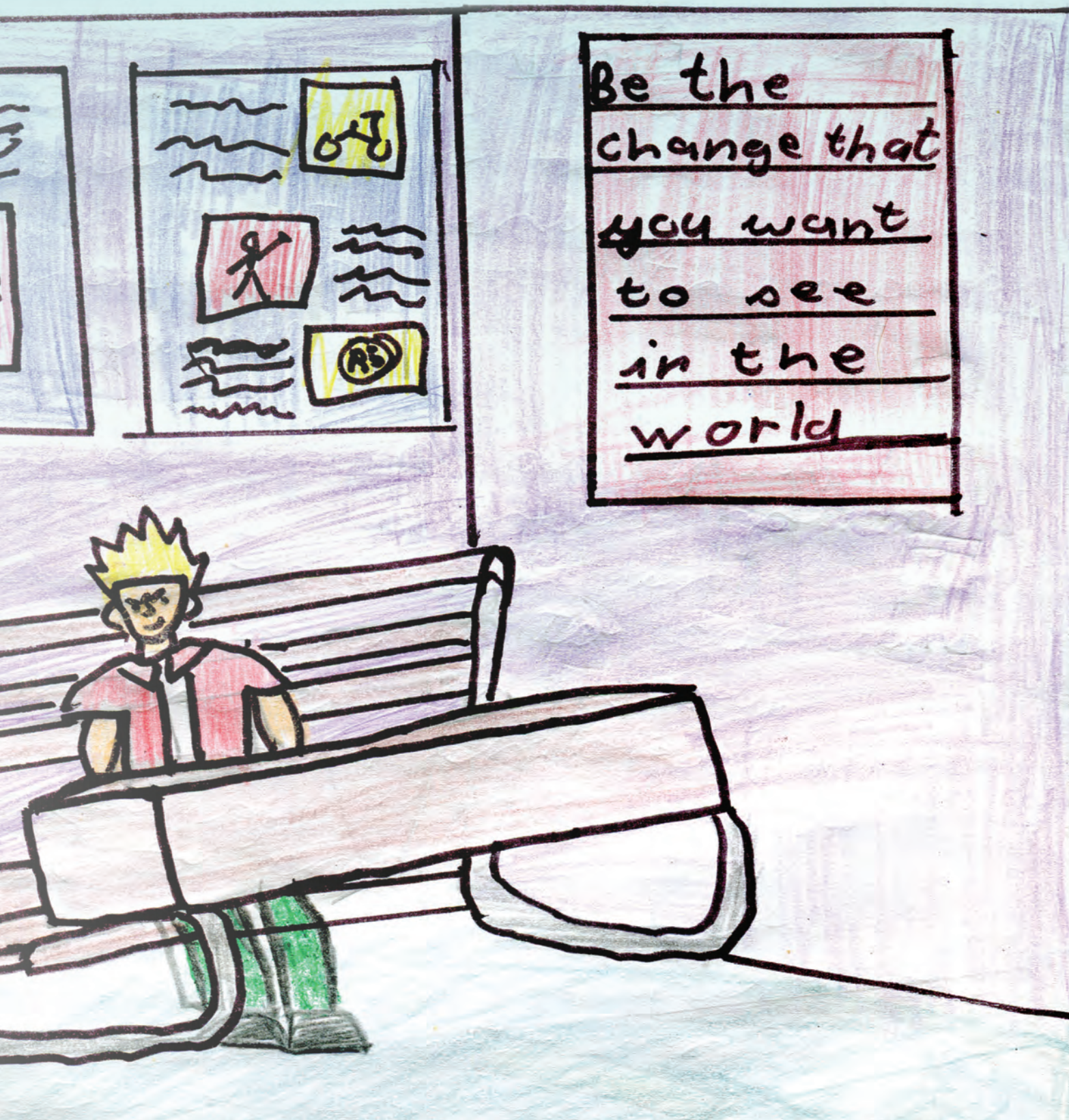
While we were waiting, excited for my father to arrive home on Laylat al-Miraj, he was taking his last breath after a hard, honest day of work.

He was buried the next day. We miss him every day. No-one should have to feel this.

At first, I was angry. I wanted revenge. I wanted to feel something other than this. Watching the sadness on my mother and younger brother's face, I had to do something, as I was now the man of the house. I wanted a knife or something and I wanted to find the evil people that murdered my father.

I had these thoughts all the time until I read a quote on my teacher's wall. It said, 'Be the change you want to see in the world.' Finding and fighting those men wouldn't make things better or bring back my father. It would only make things





worse. I had to be the change, the good change. But how, how could I make a difference?

I asked my teacher if I could use her classroom on a Monday and Thursday to start a safety club. Where other school children can come and feel safe. A place where they can talk about things that have happened to them and their families.

We could form a group that talks about going against violence, in assembly. We could try to convince the children to stay away from smoking, drinking, drugs and gangs. To choose the right friends and to love one another, to make the Northern Areas a better place. ■







**Sivuyisiwe
Oyo**

Sydenham Primary

Grade 4

Age 10



A Tough Girl At Two Years Old

Once upon a time there was a little girl named Sivuyisiwe Oyo. She was born on the 5th of February 2009, in Port Elizabeth, Mercantile Hospital. She lived with her mother, father and sister in Zwide.

Sivuyisiwe was a beautiful girl who was full of life. She started showing an interest in reading and writing when she was two years old. She loved it when her mom would read stories to her and loved scribbling and colouring books. Even though she could not write or read she would scribble on paper, books and walls and in her little mind she was writing and making sense. She could not wait until she went to pre-school. She always talked about how she will behave in pre-school.

Both her parents were working, and her older sister was in pre-school. Her maternal grandmother took care of her while her parents were at work and her sister was at pre-school. During the day her maternal grandmother took care of Sivu as she was not working. Sivuyisiwe and her grandmother loved each other so much and they had a strong bond. But when she was about a year her grandmother found a job as well.

Then her parents had to find a nanny for her. Her mother found a suitable nanny for Sivuyisiwe. The nanny stayed in the same area. Everyday her mother would drop Sivuyisiwe at the nanny's house. The nanny had her own grandchildren and

This story is true. Sivuyisiwe burnt herself with porridge and she was sent to Dora Nginza hospital where there is a Burn Unit. Now that she's older her wounds are fading away. She is not ashamed of what happened to her. This is a story for people who have gone through the same situation and it is also for people who like to read.



they were all in the school during the day. They always made marhewu in the morning for the grandchildren and her to eat when they came back from school.

One morning in October when Sivuyisiwe was two years old, the nanny made porridge, her marhewu as always. The nanny placed the porridge outside on top of the wheelie bin. The porridge was in a 10-litre bowl. As Sivuyisiwe was playing outside she bumped the wheelie bin with the porridge on top of it and the porridge fell on top of her. The porridge was very hot, and it left Sivuyisiwe severely burnt on the face and the upper body.



Due to the burns she was taken to Mercantile Hospital. One of the doctors advised her parents to transfer her to Dora Nginza Hospital. The reason for the transfer was that Dora Nginza has a Burn Unit.

She spent two and a half months in Dora Nginza Hospital, and she had two operations. Her operations involved cutting some flesh from her upper thigh and placing it on the wounds in the upper body. Every day she had to go to the theatre to clean her wounds and for blood transfusions. Throughout all of this Sivuyisiwe was still a happy, playful child. She almost spent Christmas at the hospital.

When Sivuyisiwe was back from hospital she had to learn how to walk again because of the operations on the thigh. Her parents had planned for her to start pre-school because she was turning three years old, but she couldn't go to pre-school because she was still recovering from bad things and her wounds.

The nanny was very remorseful about the incident, and prior to the incident, Sivu's parents were happy with the nanny. Her parents had no other choice but to send her to the same nanny.

Sivuyisiwe's maternal grandmother decided to quit her job and be there as Sivuyisiwe's full-time nanny while she was recovering from her wounds. Sadly, her grandmother fell ill and passed away after a short period of being sick.

Then her parents were forced to take her to pre-school. Sivuyisiwe was very excited to finally go as she had been waiting for a long time to start.





After pre-school she started Grade R at Sydenham Primary school in 2015, where she was one of the best students.

I am Sivuyisiwe and this is a story about my life. I am currently in Grade 4 and my class teacher is Ms Thomas. I love reading and writing.

When I grow up, I want to be a gynaecologist. I understand that I have to work hard and be dedicated to my education to achieve my dreams. I am fully committed to my books and I promise my parents I will work hard for my dreams to come true.

It was a tough situation for me when I burnt my face and upper body and I kept blaming the nanny, that she was the one who burnt me. But my parents tried to explain it, that I burnt myself. My father also, however, wanted to punch the nanny on the face.

Now I am all grown up and I love myself as I am, with my burnt face and upper body, and no-one can change that.

What ever happened to me, my parents were there for me. When the other children were teasing me my parents said to me I must be strong. The only thing that matters is their love for me. Now I am living a happy life with my family and my family's support means a lot to me. ■



**Osisipho
Ngoro**

Fanti Gaqa Senior
Primary
Grade 6
Age 11



What Ubuntu Means To Me

Ubuntu is a positive word that Africans use to describe helping each other. The kind of help that comes from your heart without expecting any favour or something in return.

Some people will explain ubuntu as helping with a hope of getting recognition or buying friendship but that's not ubuntu. We show ubuntu by helping a neighbour's kid when she/he is hungry and there is no-one at his/her home. Those good old days people used to say, 'It takes a village to raise a child' and that was ubuntu. The qualities of ubuntu are seen in someone who has a pure golden heart and can't bear to see people suffering.

In our days people are scared to practise the act of ubuntu, because they will end up getting killed, injured and critically hurt. Crime rate in our days is very high.

You will think you're helping but you're getting yourself in danger.

If we can unite we can put an end to crime. We can practise ubuntu,

like people say, 'Blessed the hand that is giving than the one that is taking,' ... forward with ubuntu.

Mothers are sleeping in tears because they raise their kids and their kids all end up being criminals. They cry because their young kids learn these things in their community or even at school. They take drugs, sometimes they die, or become sick and end up dying.

But they must not lose hope; they must become strong. If they can work together they can put a stop to this.

But I'm thinking, why aren't they doing this? The more I think about this the more I realise that criminals commit crime when they are out of jail. Because jail makes them worse. So something needs to be done about this. Maybe any other punishment besides jail.

Sometimes people get to jail because they work for someone, like drug lords. Most poor people become involved in crime because they want to feed their families. But they don't realise that they are putting their families in danger.

Moreover someone can come and burn your house because they want you to die. Taking someone's life has become a daily practice in our communities. Every time we watch news someone has died,







not naturally but by being killed. I'm asking myself, why are they choosing crime over their families, and being a bad example to the children? Because children can grow up and use drugs, dropping school and being alcoholics.

I always wondered how a parent will feel raising a thug. If only I could stop this it will be my last thing I do. I can get free – not only me but the whole of South Africa will be happy. And everyone can practise ubuntu.

My mom always tells me stories about the old days. She would always tell me that when someone is travelling with his horse, he would stop his horse at any house and ask for food. It didn't matter if the person was a stranger or not.

These days people are very cruel to each other to an extent that by helping someone you will be putting your life in danger. People in the olden days were not expecting anything in return. They had ubuntu. We believe in something that we think is ubuntu but it's not. We say: "If you say please, you can get what you want." But we do the opposite. If a criminal asks for something we get angry and shout at them.

But now I realise that we make them more furious and they do disgusting things. I hope after reading this you change your bad ways and make the people you love happy.

Let's make Africa a proud continent. I love you all. ■



**Connor
Potgieter**

Parkside Primary
Grade 6
Age 11



Adam's Mars Adventure



A boy named Adam always dreamt about visiting space. His dream somehow became a reality. A normal visit to NASA resulted in an adventure of a lifetime. An exciting adventure filled with magical discoveries.



"Rise and shine, Adam! You're going to be late for school!"

Adam sighed. "But Dad, I still have to sleep."

Adam's father said, "I have something to share with you but only if you get ready immediately. You can forget about the surprise if you are not ready."

"I'll be ready in a sec, Dad," Adam said.

Adam's dad works at NASA. He is a project manager in the science department. At the breakfast table Adam could not wait to hear what the surprise was all about.

Adam started shouting, "Tell me Dad, tell me!"

"Well guess what? We have a take your kid to work day at work next week," said Dad.

Adam shouted out, "Are you serious, Dad? That's so awesome. I can't wait to tell my friends. Wow, they're going to be so jealous." That day at school, Adam couldn't stop thinking about it. He told all his friends of this awesome surprise.

Later at home after supper, Adam couldn't wait to go to bed. He so badly wanted the



special day to arrive. He counted the hours, imagining how it will be like. The next day he woke up very early, unlike other days where his father practically has to beg him to get out of bed.

Arriving at his father's work (NASA), he was amazed at everything around him. A tour guide was appointed to all the kids to show them around. While the

tour guide was busy, young Adam wandered off to this giant rocket that fascinated him. Adam's curiosity got the best of him and he started pressing buttons.

Whooom! The door suddenly opened. Adam, without hesitating, stepped inside and bang! The door closed.

Then suddenly a countdown began: "10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5 ..." Adam didn't know what to do. "4, 3, 2, 1, lift off!" said the computer.

There was a loud noise that sounded like thunder. Adam was paralysed with fear. The rocket went so fast it warped into another dimension. In the rocket Adam felt weird, facing the sky.

It definitely doesn't feel like I'm in a car, Adam thought.

When he got to space, suddenly the rocket's door opened. Adam was welcomed by two Martians, who introduced themselves as Zoe and Zac. Mars seemed like an empty planet until Adam, Zoe and Zac walked over a hill and saw ... a whole city of Martians!

"Wooooow this is so awesome!" said Adam.





Because of the fact that there is no gravity, you do things differently in space compared to Earth. Zac announced that lunch will be served. Adam couldn't believe his eyes. The food flew everywhere so you could eat your food without using your hands. When you walk, you don't walk, you kind-of-float. It was really cool.

After lunch it was time to explore more of planet Mars. Adam jumped because of the excitement. "Wow, that's unbelievable!" he said. "I can jump three times higher than normal ... awesome!" Adam shouted.

Adam and the Martians went exploring in a type of vehicle designed to travel on Mars, called Rovers. Adam was very

curious and wanted to know all about the extraordinary vehicle. Zac explained that Rovers are controlled by robots. They have a communication system for sending and receiving messages. They even have built-in cameras to gather information. Zac told Adam that this specific Rover is known as Curiosity.

"Probably because he just wants to know ... What? Where? When? And How?" Adam laughed.

Adam was very amazed at Curiosity. It's about the size of a car, but travels more slowly. What an amazing adventure. They explored the whole planet and drove around on the rocky ground. Adam could not believe his eyes when Curiosity moved sideways in a kind of crab-walk style.

The day had come to an end.

After an exciting, yet exhausting day, it was finally time to have a good night's rest. Adam had to be strapped to his bed so he wouldn't float around. He got such a fright when the spaceship moved a bit and woke him up. Then he saw Zoe and Zac entering the room, telling him everything is fine and that he should go back to sleep.

During the night he had a dream. It was about a group of meteors showering and shooting straight at him. He struggled to dodge them all.





"Oh my word!" Adam shouted. One meteor headed straight at him. The meteor approached fiercely fast. Adam was unable to escape. Boom! Bang! It hit him straight in the face ... Adam started screaming, "Dad! Dad!"

Adam's father entered the room and discovered Adam on the bedroom floor. He must've fallen from the bed, his father thought.

"Adam, son, is everything ok?" his dad asked. "It's time to wake up. We running late. Did you forget, son?" his father asked. His father reminded him that the day has finally arrived.



Adam looked confused, then realised his amazing adventure was only a dream.

Arriving at work the first thing that caught Adam's eye was this giant rocket. Adam smiled and shook his head. He wanted to approach the rocket but decided he'll rather follow the guide. Let the tour begin ... ■



Drazene Chansen

St Teresa's (RC)
Primary
Grade 6
Age 12



I've Met An Alien

I grew up in a small village. I had tons of friends to play with, but when my father died in an accident my mother discovered a job in a big, beautiful city. We left the village leaving all happiness and memories behind. We travelled by aeroplane so it took about three to four hours to reach the city. Finally we reached the city. It was crowded and had huge buildings. My mom rented a house near the forest. It had big buildings and a garden.

My first day at my new school was horrible. The learners were staring at me with huge eyes when I entered the front gate. At that moment I felt scared and worried.

After school four girls appeared and followed me; they were the toughest girls in school. I ran so fast but could not get away. Those girls were fast. They blocked me in a corner and started beating me. My body was badly bruised.

I told my mom but she laughed at me as if it was a joke. I stepped out of the house, went to the garden and sat there on the bench quietly. I thought to myself if my father did not die, life would be normal.

The following morning, test day, I was scared and worried because I was not prepared. I had no time because I am always busy with something or the other. I stepped in the class and sat in my desk. At least the teacher gave us five minutes to prepare but that was not enough because we had to study the whole



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book. While I was reading the same four girls disturbed me. I said nothing to the teacher because I was scared she would say I like to complain. The teacher handed out the test. My stress levels were high. I picked up my pen and wrote my name on the test page. Suddenly I was blank – I knew nothing at all. Time was up and I was the last person to give my test in.

Later the test results were handed out. It was out of forty. When I heard my name I was trembling. Hearing the word 'fail' I did not cry but was scared of my mom. What would she do? She had already gone through a lot after my father's death. I forged my mother's signature on the page. Unfortunately she found out and I was scolded because I did the wrong thing.

I went to the library for a book to help me achieve better marks. I saw a beautiful book with all the stories in it. I took out the book and went home. I sat in the garden and read the book. I read a story about an alien. It was fun to read.

I did not realise it was 22:30. I took a bath and went to bed. It was already midnight and I couldn't sleep. I went to the kitchen to drink water and went straight back to bed. I looked out of the window because I was bored – and saw a spaceship. I couldn't believe my eyes. I stepped out of the house to see if it was really a spaceship or was I dreaming.

An alien embarked from the spaceship. I couldn't believe myself meeting an alien. I did not understand their language so they gestured. We had fun. I was so sad because it was time for them to leave. It was my best night ever.

The aliens communicated to me that even though I am in a different place and a bad thing happened, I must never change who I am. ■



Linathi Nyiki

CW Hendrickse
Primary
Grade 6
Age 12

I'm an African child born and raised in Africa. As young as I am my life is full of mysteries.

The Journey – Something That I've Achieved

Chapter 1: My Pride

I'm proud to be African:

'Africa has her mysteries, and even a wise man cannot understand them, but a wise man respects them.'

Those are the wise words of Mama Miriam Makeba, from the book, *Quotable Africa* by Julia Stewards, page 7.

She was a singer, civil rights activist and a mother to many. She lived her life fighting apartheid, and her music was banned because her lyrics were anti-apartheid. She spent most of her lifetime in exile away from her family, because the apartheid government labelled her as a terrorist.

Of all the books in my trainer's bookshelf, I found myself picking up this one over and over again and again. This book is full of notes from great men and women from all over the world. Mama Miriam Makeba's quote rings in my mind. Maybe I loved it because I loved her, or it had significance I have yet to understand. Also in Julia's book *Quotable Africa* this quote is the only one on the back cover summary. Even though her book has more than 500 quotes, she chose this one. It has a memorable statement from hundreds of speakers including great men like Nelson Mandela, Julius Nyere, Kofi Annan, Stevie Wonder ... the list is long. But still Mama Miriam Makeba's quote resides in me.

I am an African child, born and raised in Africa. As young as I am, my life is full of mysteries.

Chapter 2: My Culture

I'm from a Xhosa culture. Our culture on its own has its own mysteries. In our culture marriage is a big thing. It's not just a union of the two lovers, but that of their ancestors and families with a very big expectation of children to grow the groom's family.

The most painful thing on women across cultures is being infertile. That has no culture, no skin colour, and no borders. Women suffering from it are going through hell. In our language they are called 'idlolo', meaning barren. I HATE THAT WORD. I feel strongly that being a woman you have a right to choose whether you want children or not, and that's not the case in our culture, especially if you are married. It's like a man marries you for one reason and one reason only: to give him children.

When a young man wants to marry, his family sends delegates. Normally his father and uncles go to the woman's family to negotiate lobola. This delegation is called 'onozakuzaku'. The same delegation is the one going to be called to mediate if there's a problem between the wife and the husband during the marriage. As much as they are there to ask for the woman's hand in marriage, they are also there to build relationship between the two families.

The lobola negotiations are done at the bride's family home. During the old days they would bring cows, mqombothi (home-made African beer) and some sweets. In our days they bring money and bottles of brandy. The first negotiation is to ask for the bride price. If the delegates have



The bride price
for the lobola
negotiations

all the amount asked with them, they will pay it all. If not they will set a date of coming back to finish the payments. All of this must happen before the wedding.

This is a very joyous period. The bride's family is happy that their daughter is getting married, the groom's family is happy their son is bringing a makoti. As I have said in the beginning, they are with the expectations that the family is going to grow.

After this time the new wife is prepared by her family and sent to the in-law's home, with new clothes and other items, depending on the affordability of her family. During the wedding the bride gets a new name and guidance as a new wife, by the elders of the family.

Chapter 3: My Passage to this World

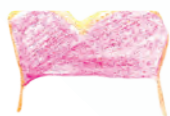
Delegates came to my soon-to-be-mother's family. Her name is Thandazwa Matebese, daughter of Ntombizodwa Nothulamile Matebese and Nopotosi Matebese. The delegates were sent by the family of Mzwakhe Nyiki, the son of Funiwe Nobuntu Nyiki and Koko Nyiki.

The negotiations happened the usual Xhosa way.

During the traditional wedding the families gathered and celebrated the new wife. It became a very big event. A sheep was slaughtered to welcome the new bride. The elders gathered around the new bride. She was given the name Asakhe, meaning 'build us' (in that family sense).

My grandfather said she is going to bring light into the family (meaning of light of the family will be in the next chapter).

The one thing that made this man's words noticeable was that he kept on saying them over and over, like it's the only important thing that needs to be said.



Because the celebration included some traditional beer and brandy, lots of it, and the known beers and other alcohol beverages, it was assumed that it's just his drunk mouth talking.

As tradition the new wife has to cook her first supper for her new family, washes the dishes and cleans the house before going to bed. So did my mother, with the help of her sister-in-law. During one of the conversations they had while washing dishes, her sister-in-law told her never to forget what that great uncle said.

After the celebration and years later my great uncle's words of my mother bringing light to the family were never forgotten. Today it's still one of the things they talk about when they recall my parents' wedding.

Chapter 4: I'm Here

A year later my mother gave birth to me. My parents named me Linathi, meaning 'luck is with us'. My mother gave birth to me in the eighth month. They did not know if I was going to make it, hence the name.

I grew up differently from other kids my age. I did not like playing outside with other kids. I like solitude. I never felt lonely but I was alone most of the time. At some stage I would feel sorry for my parents. They were always worried about me being alone all the time. It felt like people think I have a disease of some sort because it's not normal for a child my age to want to be left alone. I would even want to eat my supper in my room just to be alone.

By this time my family members and immediate family referred to me as the light of the family. I did not take this into consideration. To me it meant that I was the first child.

My calling

Since the day I went to the traditional healer I never lost my sight again. It is still a mystery to me how it all happened. After the 28th of December 2018, my family got together to discuss a way forward. Apparently someone with a calling dreams about the healer they are suppose to go for the training. In my case I couldn't even remember some of the dreams that were kind of weird. I us It became a very c to try and remember the

The pressing issue was if the school reopens sight again. It was agreed elders of the family and that I must be sent to that helped me with my parents consulted the healer agreed on the date to training. On the second of I was taken to the train to start my journey as a The day I got there I I belong, there were other beside the one that helped



It took my arrival for them to know that my parents can have children. As I've said in the beginning, that in our culture for a married couple reproducing off-spring is the most important thing.

I'm a happy child; my parents see to it that we don't lack anything as their children. I'm first. After me it's Yomelela; lastly it's Ongeziwe, all girls. The only thing that used to happen to me is dreaming. I would dream of late family members, sea water, rivers and animals, sometimes dancing traditional dances with my grandfather and other healers that used to visit his place.

One of my grandparents from my father's side was a traditional healer. His house was the only place I liked visiting. I was drawn to his drums and herbs. They made me feel like I'm in another world. I loved the smell of his herbs. The sounds of his drums were like music to my ears. When my parents noticed that, they made me visit him regularly. When he had gatherings of traditional healers there was no place I'd rather be. The singing and the drums made me feel very happy.

Chapter 5: The Light

The year 2018 I will never forget. In March I started hearing voices. Sometimes it would be like someone is calling me, sometimes it was just people having conversations I did not understand.

As months went by, I started losing my sight for a short period. My parents took me to our family doctor, Dr Nashaj. He saw nothing wrong with my eyesight. This kept on going. I was going back and forth to doctors with no luck of finding

a cure to my eyesight problem. Even on my birthday on the 16th of April 2018, turning 11 years old, all I asked for was my sight to be normal.

The whole year I was miserable. My parents were up and down with me from doctor to doctor. In November 2018 my grandmother suggested to my parents that they must go see traditional healers. We went to the first one but no cure. Same as doctors, we went in and out of traditional healers but nothing happened. My parents gave up.

After my black Christmas on the 28th of December, my father's colleague suggested another traditional healer. Her name is Gogo Galloway. By this time I was totally blind, couldn't even see my finger.

I remember feeling hopeless as they guided me up the stairs into her house. She told my parents that I'm not blind. I didn't understand. In fact I felt anger rising inside me. How could she say this and I don't even see her face right now? It was the first time in my life feeling anger that much.

She told them a light can never be blind. At this stage I got lost and confused! She told us to call upon our ancestors to open my eyes. Ask for forgiveness to them because we didn't know that the child has a calling.

My parents got a shock of their lives; so did I. She went on saying my ancestors have been sending messages through my dreams, but this was ignored. That's why they made me blind. I never thought the strange dreams I've been having since childhood meant something. To me it was because I enjoyed it.

She did a traditional prayer with my parents for me. It was like magic – my eyes opened! I couldn't believe that I could see that it was broad day light. My parents too were shocked. She told us that I will have to follow my calling or else I will be blind for good this time.

One thing I would never forget is that she said I am the light of the family. I am the chosen one to bring light to the family.

Chapter 6: My Calling

Since the day I went to the traditional healer I never lost my sight again. It is still a mystery to me how it all happened after the 28th of December 2018. My family got together to discuss a way forward. Apparently, someone with a calling dreams about the healer they are supposed to go for the training. In my case I couldn't even remember some of the dreams I used to have. The dreams were kind of weird. It became a very difficult task to try and remember them.

The pressing issue was that what if the schools reopen and I lose sight again? It was agreed by the elders of the family and my parents that I must be sent to the healer that helped me with my eyesight. My parents consulted the healer and they agreed on the date to start my training. On the second of January 2019 I was taken to the traditional healer to start my journey as a healer. The day I got there I felt like I belong. There were other healers beside the one that helped me.

Most of them were her trainees. The first night I never slept. I enjoyed the dancing, singing and the drums. The next day I was taken to the river, sea and the bushes. Whenever we reached each destination, we did a prayer to the ancestors. The strangest things to me were the answers of these



prayers. They came from nature in a form of animals and birds and even the wind and rain.

Strange things happened that day. But as they say, it's African mysteries and will remain so.

After the ceremony I went home on a third day. The dreams came back. I was given a healer's name in my dreams. My name is Gogo Khanyisa, meaning 'switch on the light'. This is a name I am called from now on.

Chapter 7: The Conversations

During my ceremony there were other trainees. In between the dancing and singing we chatted; they are very lovely people. I am the youngest amongst them, so you can picture the treatment, like I am a doll, something fragile and loved.

We don't work with human parts
and animals, healing needs a healed
soul to be able to heal someone,

Before me the youngest was Nangamso, also a young girl still doing Grade 12. I felt comfortable chatting to her, as she was the one closer to me, age wise. Her story is that when she got the calling she couldn't walk and the doctors were also not able to help her. There are other trainees in this practise who were mad and some were sick with strange sicknesses that couldn't be helped in hospitals.

I am still on my first step towards the training as a healer. It's an exciting journey. I know there are people out there thinking this is the devil's work. Yes, there *are* healers out there doing the devil's work.

Some people look down on you when you walk in town because they say you are the devil's child. It's not devil's work. It all depends on individuals. Like there are pastors and priests in churches doing devil's work. With our calling it's the same. The devil is always looking for a home. Once it finds that weak one consumed by greed, jealousy and

hatred it builds a mansion in that heart, and the rest is history.

We don't work with human parts and animals. Healing needs a healed soul to be able to heal someone. Those who are caught with human parts are the ones doing devil's work amongst healers.

I am talking about this because it was one of the things that scared me mostly when I was told that I need to be a healer. I couldn't picture myself cutting up a person to make a concoction, but all you hear on media is healers killing people.

When I became one, I experienced the most calming and positive energies around me.

I said this is a journey. There's still so much I need to learn. I'll be back. ■

I'm an African
child born and raised
in Africa as young
as I am my life
is full of mysteries



**Liyakhanya
Tshala**

Caritas Primary

Grade 5

Age 11



My Friend From Another Planet

Michaela always wanted to have a new friend. But this friend is not an ordinary friend. It is a friend from another planet. At the end Michaela gets disappointing news.

Once upon a time there was a girl named Michaela. She was about to relocate to New Jersey with her family. She had no siblings and knew nobody in the new city so the move was quite doubting.

Upon arriving at the new house she was tired and decided to get some sleep. Just as she was about to fall asleep she heard a strange sound: “bam! bam! bam boom!”

She jumped up to check what it was and to her surprise a strange looking creature had fallen on her balcony. She was frightened.

“Please do not hurt me,” she said.

The creature replied calmly “No, no. Relax, I am not here to hurt you. My name is Victoria.”

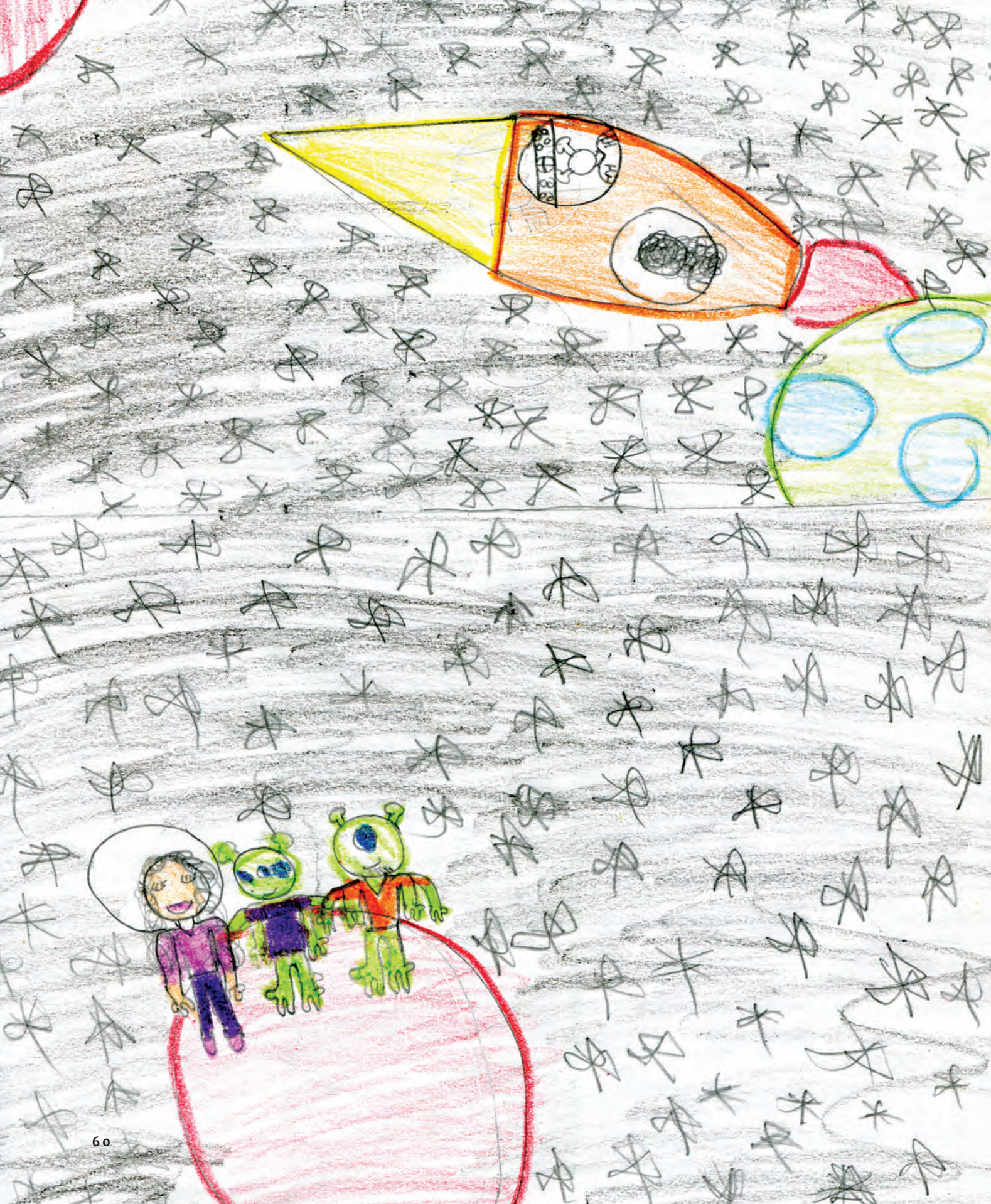
Michaela walked towards the creature to get a closer look at it. “What do you want?” she asked.

“I only want to be your friend,” replied the creature. “I am from the planet Mars and I have not met a human before,” said the creature.

Michaela was surprised and excited at the same time. This would be her first friend, she thought.

Michaela did not have any friends. Most people regarded her as socially awkward. Victoria excitedly agreed to be Michaela’s friend if she agreed not to tell anyone of her existence.





Michaela made a promise not to tell anyone about her. So they said their goodbyes until the next day ...

The following morning as Michaela was preparing for school, her mother told her she had called her cousin to walk with her. On the way Michaela was overly excited thinking about her new alien friend.

Her cousin ended up asking, "What's up Chaela? Why are you so excited?"

Michaela replied, "It's nothing. I just can't wait to see my friend today."

"But you are new here. You do not have any friends," her cousin said, laughing.

"Well last night I met a friend. Her name is Victoria and she is an alien from the planet Mars, but please do not tell anyone about her," she asked. "I promised her that I would keep our friendship a secret," Michaela said to her cousin, who had burst into laughter.



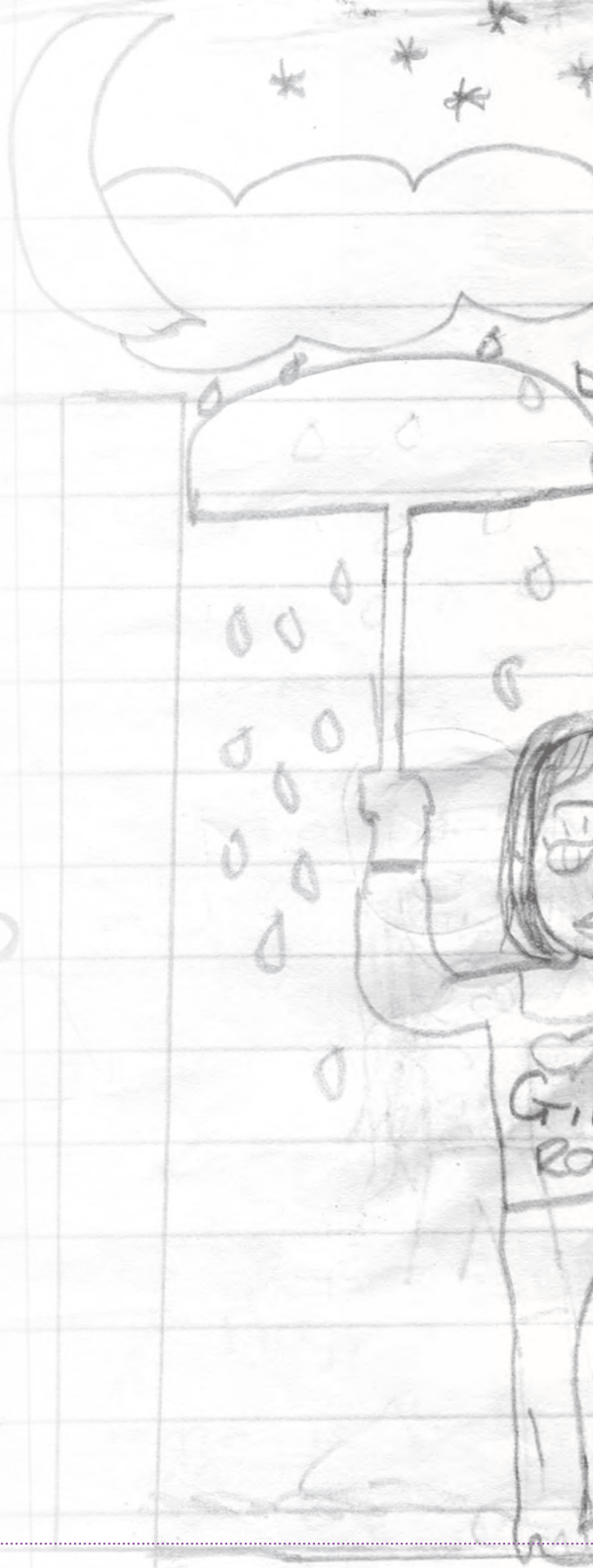
"I am so glad you said that to me because other people would have put you in an asylum right now, because aliens do not exist."

Michaela was hurt by what her cousin Lindi said, so she simply said, "Let's just leave this and continue walking to school."

After supper that night Victoria came to visit Michaela again. Michaela was jumping up and down with joy. They spoke and played games. Victoria also promised to take Michaela to Mars on her next visit. Michaela enjoyed having a friend, even though it was an alien, and she had to keep it a secret.

On the next visit, as promised, Victoria took Michaela to Mars. She was in awe of how beautiful the galaxy was. She met other aliens for the first time. After their visit to Mars they took a gaze at the stars and moon. Michaela was having so much fun with her new friends but it was time to go home. But just as the spaceship landed ...

Michaela woke up. Much to her surprise she was in the car with her parents, in front of their house. She had been dreaming this whole time. Michaela met an alien ... but only in her dream. ■







Entle Nyathi

Sydenham Primary

Grade 5

Age 11

Nobuhle is a young girl with albinism. In high school everyone made fun of her. Will she ever get friends and peace?



Be Comfortable In Your Own Skin

In a village of the Eastern Cape lived a young girl with her mother and two siblings. The girl's name was Nobuhle (meaning Beauty). The name was given to her by her grandmother because of the beauty she saw in Nobuhle's eyes and skin, and so she was treated like a beauty queen.

Growing up in a village was not a problem for Nobuhle because that's all the life she knew. In the four years she'd been alive for, she was with people that loved and showed her love.

Even starting pre-school and primary school was not a problem because the kids she went to school with were her friends from the village. Her teachers knew she was different, but they still gave her the same treatment the other kids got. Every day after school she would find her mother waiting for her at the school's gate to walk her back home. Also waiting for her at home would be a warm meal and most of the time it would be her favourite: 'umphokoqo'. Her family didn't have much but they still gave the world, because in their eyes she deserved it all.

Yvonne, Nobuhle's mother, would remind her every day that she's beautiful and she should feel comfortable in her own skin. She knew that there was something different because everyone around her had darker skin, including her own family. But it didn't raise any problem because of her





mother's words: "You're beautiful and God made you beautifully different!"

Nobuhle was born with a skin type called albinism. This meant her skin would be lighter and her eyes would be blue even though her parents are black. In her village there was only one person with the same skin type she had. Mam' Nyathi was a 60-year-old woman who had albinism and played a big role with Nobuhle being proud in her own skin, and Nobuhle took her as her best friend.

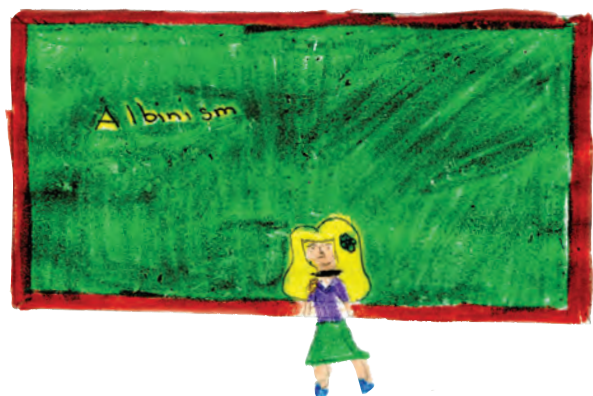
Years went by and the time came for Nobuhle to start high school. This meant a new life for her, new friends and new teachers. Like any other child she was super excited to be in Grade 8. Even her Grade 7 farewell speech was all about the new, exciting life waiting for them in high school. Little did she know that the world outside her village was not as she imagined it.

Mam' Nyathi had passed away a few weeks before school started, and this meant she had no-one to warn her about what to expect. This was a new start for Nobuhle and she was excited. Her mother on the side was worried that she wouldn't get the warm welcome she always hoped for.

The schools were set to open on the first Monday in February. On that day she woke up at 4am filled with excitement and all ready for school, went to her mother's room to wake her up but her mother wasn't as excited as she was. You could see from her eyes. Before she left for school, her mother sat her down and told her to never let anyone's words bring her down and she should be proud of her skin colour.

The bell rang as she entered the gate walking alone, with no friend next to her. Her mind and heart were filled with

confusion when she saw how the other kids looked at her. She didn't pay much attention to that. While standing in assembly three kids started calling her "inkawu" (an insulting Xhosa name for albinos). She stood there with tears in her eyes and said nothing.



For the first time in her life she was ready to go back home but the hours were moving really slowly, and she hated every second of it because her new classmates were making jokes out of her skin condition and no-one was there to talk to her.

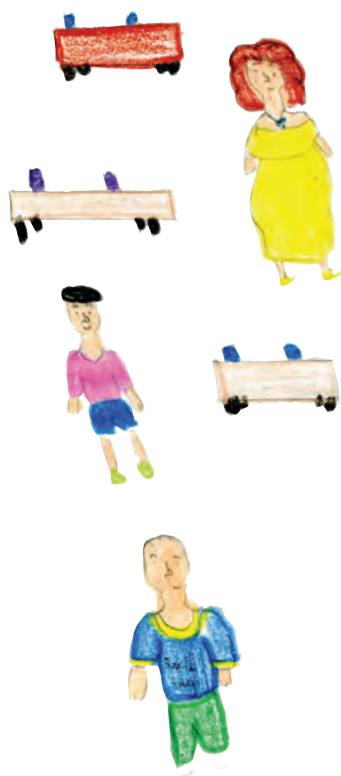
School went out, insults continued and what hurt her more was that Mam' Nyathi was not there to advise on what to do. She had no-one to talk to at

school, until her class teacher noticed that she always stayed behind during break and sat alone.

Her teacher sat down for a talk. She told her teacher about how the other kids treated her and the name calling she gets from them. Just talking about it made her cry because this kind of treatment was new to her.

With the fear of Nobuhle quitting school, the teacher sat the class down to educate them about Nobuhle's condition and how mistreating her will result in her failing or even dropping out of school.

The last step she took was to call a parent's meeting and she spoke to them about albinism, teaching them that being an albino is only a genetic defect, not a curse or a walking muthi waiting to be killed for money. This was done so that the parents would teach their children that albinism is normal.



After a few days a change was visible in the way the other kids treated her, and this showed that the treatment she received before was from not being educated about albinism.

Today Nobuhle has friends at her new school and is getting her old happy personality back. She's comfortable in her own skin and has accepted that not everyone will treat her the same. ■





**Kedibone
Pienaar**

Young Park
Primary
Grade 6
Age 12



Chris's Journey

Chapter 1: The Beginning of Chris's Journey

Once upon a time there was a village called Sherwood. Every night the villagers would tell a story around a camp fire. The story told was about the legendary Tree of Life. The legend said that the golden apples from the tree could give you eternal life without even aging, but the legend also said that if you abused its powers because of your own greed, you would be cursed forever. The only way to lift this curse was to unite the four magical roses of the different seasons. The three magical roses would be found at each obstacle, and one more at the top of the mountain.

Getting to the Tree was a dangerous journey and one had to pass three obstacles while climbing the mountain. Every person brave enough to try, never made it back to tell the tale. As you can imagine, it probably ended up horrific.

A young man, named Chris, found out about the Tree of Life. He was so determined to go up the mountain and come back alive. Chris set his mind on proving that the story told was more than a legend.

So that night Chris packed his bags and left while everyone was sleeping.

A girl named Fiona saw Chris leave and she thought this was her opportunity to finally find her mother, so she followed him.

A young Chris sneaks out of his village to go on a journey, and is followed by Princess Fiona. They embark on a dangerous yet exciting journey up the mountain to the Tree of Life. Will they go past all the obstacles or will they perish and be forgotten like the others that took this journey?



They felt hungry, so Chris took out some food, but it wasn't enough. After eating Chris went hunting and Fiona went to gather some sweet, wild berries, that would be their food for later. While walking through the deep forest, Fiona and Chris got a bit terrified because deep in the night they heard a lot of creepy sounds. Snakes were hissing, owls were hooting, and bats were flying in and out of trees. Three full weeks of walking finally brought them to their first obstacle.

Chapter 2: The Wall of Doom

The first obstacle was the Wall of Doom. The Wall was so tall that Chris could not see what was on the other side. It was covered with many dangerous objects, like sharp glass and metal pieces. Chris got cold feet and so did Fiona. They imagined what would happen if any of those objects had to hurt them, but then they remembered why they were going up the mountain. Chris started to worry about how Fiona was going to climb the wall and he thought about the danger that lay ahead.

After thinking long about it, Chris asked Fiona to go back to the village, because he thought this journey was too dangerous for a woman.

Fiona responded bravely by revealing, "I am the Princess. I don't have to listen to you. I know when my life is in danger."

Chris froze on the spot with shock on his face. He started asking himself, "Was I travelling with a princess all along?"

But there was no more time to delay. Chris took out his rope and climbed the wall and luckily, he made it up safely. He threw the rope down so that Fiona could climb up. On the way, she slipped and cut her leg as she fell on one of the glass pieces but fortunately, she made it to the other side.

Later Fiona couldn't walk further because her leg was bleeding and in pain. Chris wrapped his extra shirt around her wound and he carried her until they found a perfect place to rest for the night. He made a fire to keep warm until they ate. It was a long dreary time and Chris took out his blanket, put out the fire and they slept under the starry sky.

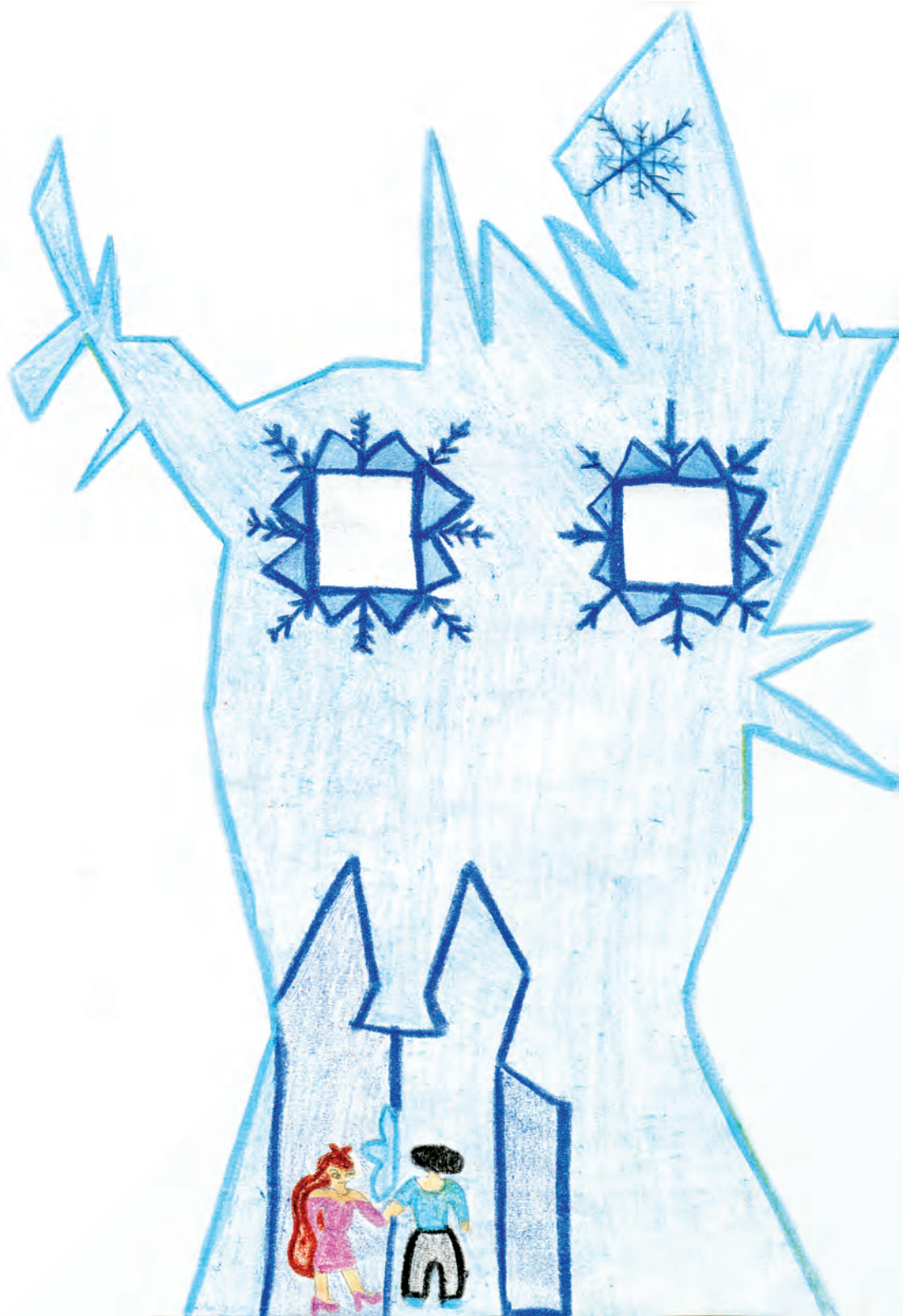
Chapter 3: The Ice Dragon

Before the sun came up the next day, a cold breeze blew on Chris's face, which woke him up. He started shivering as the breeze became stronger. He woke up Fiona and they packed their stuff, to continue their journey up the mountain.

They then spotted a huge castle that was made of beautiful crystals, with a big blue door which was covered with ice. Their eyes were filled with amazement as they walked around the castle. The doors creaked as they opened it up to see who lived there.

The inside of the castle was as quiet as a mouse – until they heard a loud roar. It couldn't be a lion because the sound came from the highest room in the castle. The breeze started coming even stronger as Chris and Fiona stood in the middle of the castle's foyer. Then Chris felt an icy wind on his neck and he turned around. To his astonishment he saw an Ice Dragon. The Ice Dragon was one of the greatest symbols in their history which frightened them tremendously. Chris remembered the legend about the Dragon was to melt it.

So, Chris and Fiona had a brilliant idea. They made a huge fire and they burnt all their belongings so that the heat of



the fire could melt the Dragon. Then the Dragon started to melt and melt.

The fear they had, was that once the fire would die out, the Dragon would take its shape again. Chris and Fiona had to move really fast in order to escape. So, they quickly ran out of the Dragon's fortress and up the mountain they went, wondering what obstacle they would face next.

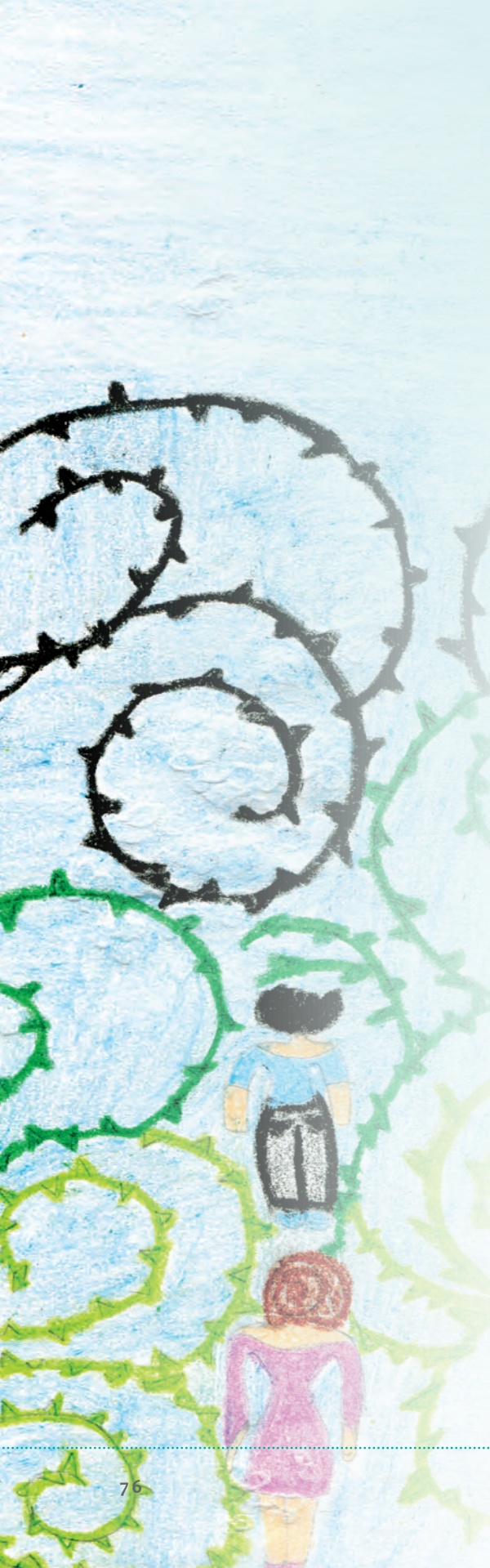
Chapter 4: The Thorny Seas

Chris and Fiona finally arrived at their last obstacle called The Thorny Seas. It was called Thorny Seas because the thorns formed a wavy passage like the waves of the sea. And to pass the thorns, you had to be very careful. Chris went first and Fiona followed his movements since she had been hurt already.

Chris was only scratched on the sides by the thorns and not on the ground where he was stepping on. This was a tricky path. Then he accidentally stepped on a sharp thorn while walking. His left foot started bleeding but going back or stopping was not an option. Chris was in pain, but he had to remain strong for Fiona. They had to keep on moving forward. The end was near yet so far.

It was a huge struggle to get to the top of the mountain but finally they reached the end of their destination. They were filled with excitement although by now Chris's leg started to swell up. Fiona saw that Chris was in pain, then she took off her belt and wrapped it around his bleeding foot.

At the top of the mountain, they got confused because there were four different trees and one of them was chopped down. Chris started asking himself where the other three trees came from. The legend only informed them about



The Tree of Life and not about other magical trees. So, Chris and Fiona went near the magical trees to look for a perfect place to sit and rest. It was then that Fiona started telling Chris a little more about the new magical trees.

Chapter 5: The Last Hidden Part of the Legend

Fiona asked Chris not to tell anyone about what she was going to tell him. It was the royal family's secret. She began, saying:

"There is a part of the legend you don't know. It says that at the top of the mountain there are four trees but one of them was chopped down. The first was for wisdom, the second one was for eternal life (that's the one you know about), the other for power and the last was for beauty (the one that was chopped down)."

The legend said that the last tree was chopped down by an evil witch but what it didn't say is that the witch was Fiona's mother, the former Queen. Fiona said when she became one of Sherwood's royals, she was told the last part of the legend. The Queen's greed to become the most beautiful woman in the universe, pushed her to go up the mountain and risk her life just for the magical plant. So, she chopped down the magical tree. The Queen then was cursed by the tree and it hasn't grown back since.

After the Queen's death she was buried next to the tree that she chopped down.

This is the reason why Fiona followed Chris up the mountain: so that she could see her mother's grave for the first time. Fiona and Chris realised that going up the mountain actually brought them together. They unwillingly fell in love while on the journey, despite their differences.

Chapter 6: Back Home

After their exciting journey, they went back home to their families they were separated from for a while. Fiona told her father to cancel the arranged marriage ceremony because she had fallen in love with Chris.

Her father was furious and shouted at her, "How could you get married to a man who is not a prince?"

She knew that this was against the royal rules, but Fiona was determined to fight for her love for Chris.

A few months later there was an announcement about a royal wedding of Chris and Princess Fiona. They got married and not long after the marriage, Princess Fiona gave birth to beautiful twins, a boy and a girl, and their children were named Jackie and Felicia.

They lived Happily Ever After.

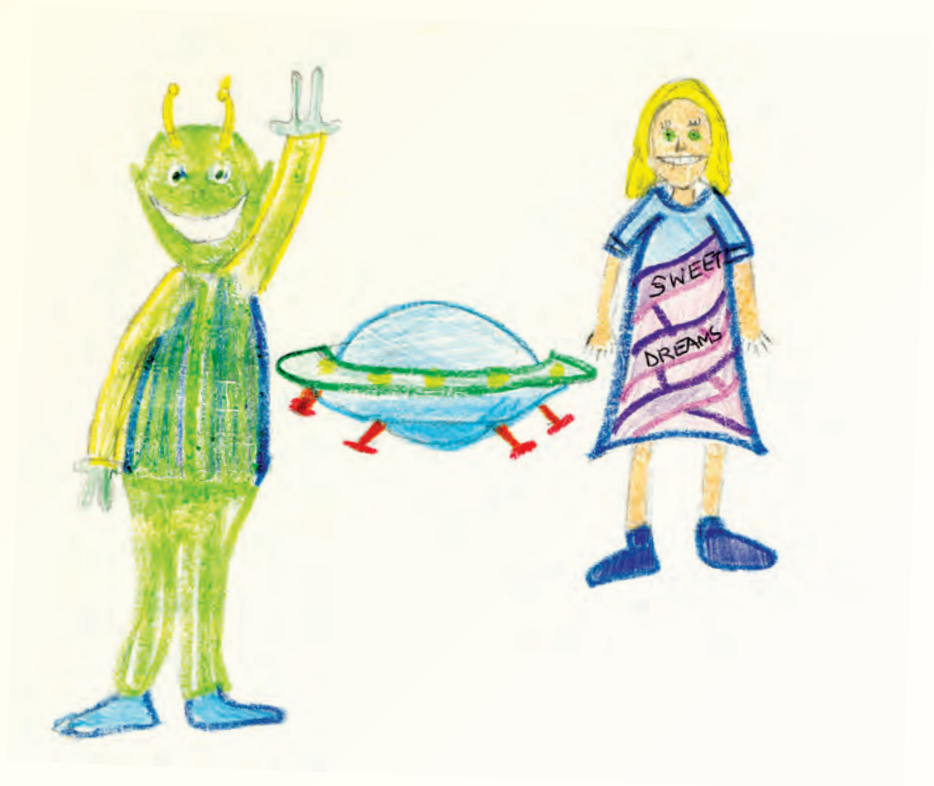
But will it last? ■





**Shamirah
Witbooi**

Dalrose Primary
Grade 6
Age 12



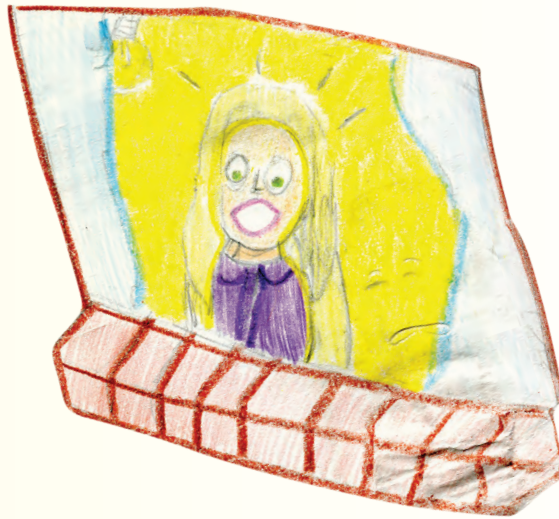
Mickey The Alien, And I

The story takes place on Halloween. A little girl met Mickey, a neon green alien, when Mickey's spaceship ran out of gas (ice-cream) in little girl's backyard. At first, she hid Mickey in her room. They grew closer. Her parents met Mickey when two bad aliens tried to kidnap her, because of her parents, who were the King and Queen in their universe. They managed to fight off the aliens. The little girl and her parents said goodbye to Mickey.

It was Halloween. It was a little windy. I was watching a Halloween movie. The house was quiet, because my parents and brother were already sleeping. I could not sleep because the movie was scary, but nice too, and got my full attention. It was a funny movie as well.

I never thought that I would experience what I experienced that night. I switched off the television and went to my room to get ready for bed. My bedroom's light was on and suddenly I heard a knock on my window. I got a fright because the movie had some very scary parts too.





My initial thought was to call my parents, but my childish curiosity led me to open my curtains. To my surprise, somebody dressed in an alien costume stood at my window. I asked: "Trick or treat?"

In a small, robotic voice it said: "Excuse me?"

I repeated: "Trick or treat?" and I could see this person was confused.

The robotic voice said: "Please help me. I am lost." I opened the door and sneaked out to see who or what this was. To my amazement I saw that it was a real alien.

I stood in front of the alien with wide eyes, staring at her. She introduced herself as Mickey. She said: "I am an alien from Mars. I am on a mission to travel to Pluto, but my spaceship gas ran out and I landed in your backyard."

At first, I didn't know what to do. Then I told Mickey that we must hide her spaceship in our garage then she could come

and sleep in my room. I was worried because I knew that I shouldn't talk to strangers, but Mickey really needed my help.

We managed to hide the spaceship and then went to my room. Mickey was a neon green alien with glowing antennas. She spoke funny, but understandable English. She said she needed 20 litres of ice-cream to fill the spaceship's engine to go back to Pluto.



She didn't tell me that she ate half of the ice-cream and that is why she ended up in our backyard!

My parents didn't hear anything yet. I told Mickey that I will sneak out the next morning and buy the ice-cream at the nearby shop.

The next morning, I came back with the ice-cream and tip-toed to the kitchen to put the ice-cream in the freezer. The time arrived for us to refuel the spaceship. We waited for it to get dark and then Mickey and I sneaked out.



Just as Mickey was about to take off another bigger ship emerged and was floating alone. Two big male aliens came down and Mickey jumped into my arms. I screamed with Mickey because I was afraid. My parents heard the commotion and came outside. They were astounded and asked what was happening.

Mickey told my parents that she was the child of a king and queen in their universe and that the other aliens wanted to kidnap her and demanded her parents to step down as king and queen.

My parents fought off the bad aliens and they disappeared. I apologised to my parents for not telling them about Mickey from the start.

After all the dust had settled, my parents and I said goodbye to Mickey. Before she left, she told me to look up at the sky every night. She will send a shooting star to say goodnight to me. This happened since the day she left until this day.

That was the most exciting experience I have ever had. ■





Anathi Gqozo

Môrewag
Laerskool
Grade 5
Age 11



This story is about Nia, a very strange, but special girl, but her life is in a crisis due to her family problems. Her dad decided to clear up the air, so he takes them on a trip to Huawei in the Hawaiian Islands. There she discovers a truth she could have never dreamed about. Will she be able to handle the truth?

Underwater Life's Secrets

Chapter 1: A Special Girl

Nia is a strange, but extremely special girl. Her parents have separated due to circumstances. Nia is the only child in her family, but she wishes she had both her parents in her lonely life. She knows that could never happen because her father is already engaged. And whenever Nia's mom, Heather, and Anna, Nia's soon-to-be-stepmother, are in the same room there is a lot of tension and awkwardness.

Nia's parents have no issues with each other – it's just her dad's fiancé. She is always agitated and dislikes Heather. Anna also despises Nia as much as she despises Nia's mom, Heather.

One summer morning, Nia's dad, Frank, decides to take Nia, Heather and Anna on a trip to the Hawaiian Islands. Nia and her mom think it is a splendid idea, but Anna hates a place where it is big but with very few people. Heather wants to take advantage of that moment when Anna said she hates trips. She says, "You are such a spoil sport. Oh, I forgot you are a princess. Nothing pleases you."

Anna gets so angry and her tiny cheeks turn red due to Heather's absurd statements and she immediately agrees to go on with the trip.

Heather runs into her and Nia's huge bedroom and within a blink of an eye she is back with their luggage and they set off to Frank's house. He comes out within a flash, but Anna takes over three hours in packing her clothes. Frank squeezes the luggage into the mini-van but obviously it did not fit in because it seemed Anna brought the entire house along with her. Anna has more than six bags, so Nia and Heather have to sit uncomfortably with Anna's six bags and suitcases.



Chapter 2: In Hawaii

Fifteen hours go past, and everyone is quite bored, except for Anna. She's doing her make-up throughout the whole journey and finally they reach their destination.

"Wow. Hawaiian waterholes look much more beautiful in real life," says Nia.

Heather takes out her and Nia's luggage and goes into the big, luxurious house and starts preparing lunch.

Nia rushes into her new and improved bedroom. She takes out a floral swimsuit and she runs outside to the sandy shore and she dives into the cold water and starts swimming. Nia loves swimming; it's her favourite sport.

"Don't go near the waterfalls!" yells Heather.

Heather loves the Hawaiian Islands, but she also knows it is dangerous past those wild waterfalls and a big, deep secret lies there that could change Nia's life forever.

"Get out of the water! Nia, it is five o'clock now," yells Frank.

"It's dinner time!" yells Heather.

"Wow," says Nia.

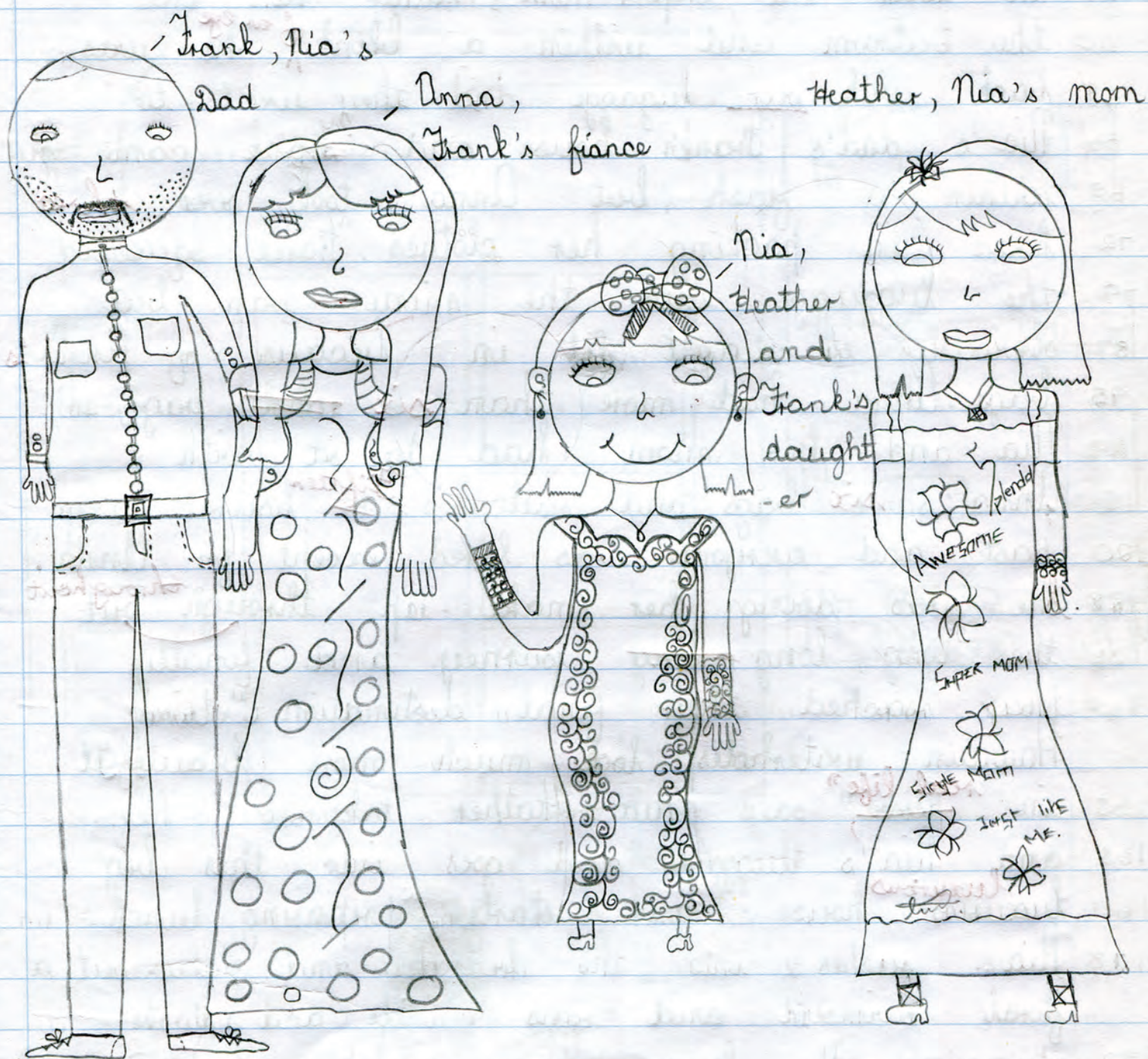
"It's been a long time since you cooked a full meal. Yuck, is this a proper meal? I mean, nothing here is of my high meal standards," says Anna disgustedly.

"You foolish woman! Don't you eat anything other than these tasteless veggies? You'll turn into a carrot one day," says Heather rudely.

"You better mind your tongue when you talk to me and never mind, I'll make myself a delicious salad," replies Anna.









Everyone goes to bed after eating dinner. That night was normal for everyone else, but for Nia it was outrageous. Nia dreams of mermaids. She dreams she is a mermaid, a beautiful mermaid.

She wakes up immediately and runs towards the shore and starts swimming past the waterfalls and just as she turns to go back home, she sees a beautiful and long tail, but it didn't look like a fish's tail. It looked quite different.

"Such a huge discovery. I have got to tell my mom," says Nia to herself. Nia quickly swims back home, and she gets out of her old wet pyjamas and wears her new pyjamas. She wonders a long time about this dream of hers but finally snaps out of it and goes to sleep.

Chapter 3: The Truth

"Get up, everyone! Breakfast is ready," yells Frank. Everyone rushes downstairs and Nia eats up her breakfast and just as she stands up to leave, she recollects what happened last night.

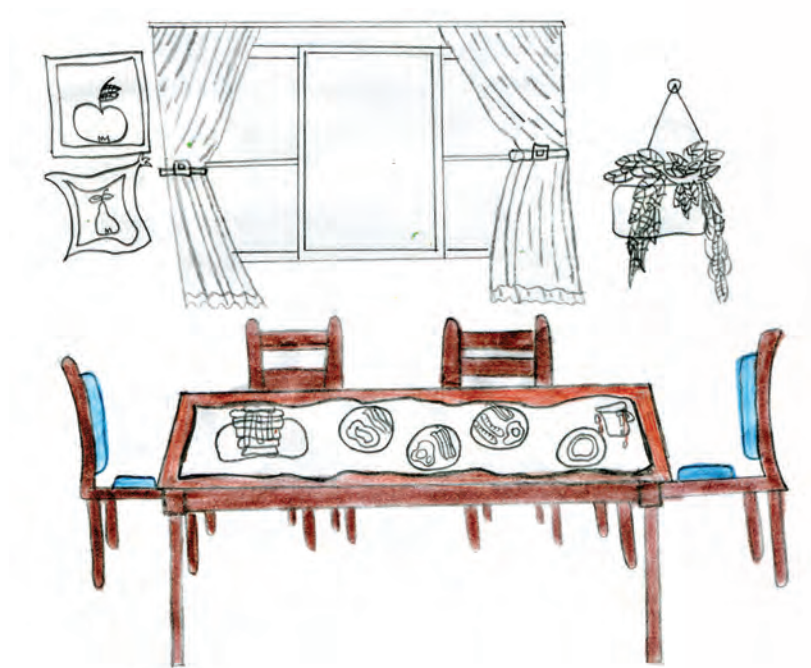
"Mom, last night I saw something really extraordinary," says Nia proudly.

"I am sure you saw imaginary unicorns," says Anna trying to tease Nia.

"Don't you ever dare try to insult my daughter!" shouts Heather furiously.

"Well, like I was saying, I saw something extraordinary," says Nia. "I saw a tail. It looked like a mermaid's tail," Nia continues.

Nia's parents glare at each other and Frank says, "It's time to tell her the truth about our identities."



Heather took Nia into the, “Heather’s bedroom rocks,” as she has been calling her bedroom ever since they arrived, because her room is so luxurious.

She said, “My real name is Candice and your dad is Romania. We are mermaids from Huawei here in the Hawaiian Islands. I am an emperor’s daughter and your dad’s a guard’s son. Our lives were different because our backgrounds were completely different. I was from a wealthy family and your dad was from a middle-class family.

“One day I fell in love with a fair-skinned charming boy, who was your dad. He was standing at the big entry gate guarding the palace. After that I kept on making excuses just to go outside and speak to him. Just speaking to him made me feel like I was on cloud nine. I loved your dad more than anything, so three years later I ran away with my late mother’s locket, which grants the power to turn into a mermaid and turn into a human as well. It was magical.

“One day I pulled the gorgeous purple necklace out of the drawer and I put it on my neck. I started swimming to the shore. When I swam to the shore I quickly turned into a human and started walking, but it was hard as my legs were still numb. After weeks and weeks of trying to walk, I finally walked. So, the next day I told your father and I started taking him along with me on walks in the so-called ‘human world’. I never liked it there; where the humans lived it was hard. I only stayed for about forty minutes and I would then return home.

“One day I found out that I was pregnant, and I told your father. We both panicked a lot, but we decided we would run away to the Outlands, which are our sea rivals, so I had to disguise myself.



"Months later, I gave birth to identical twins, but my father soon found out where we were hiding and sent his whole army to look for us. So your dad and I decided to flee and go to the human world.

"Later we arrived home to only see that the one twin was missing and a note was next to the other twin, which was you.

"I read the note and it said: 'You must be wondering who it is who wrote this note. Well I am Mariah. I have kidnapped your other beautiful twin. Do you know why? Well don't guess – I'll tell you. I secretly took her, because my daughter, Marinda, had threatened to commit suicide, because Romania would not accept her love for him.

'So, listen up, here is the plan if you don't want me to kill your child. Firstly, you will have to part ways with Romania, so that

Marinda can be Romania's "love". I don't mind you going out of this sea city. I think you are wondering how I know about you and the secret about the human world. I am also fine if you want to involve your child in Romania's life.'

"After reading that letter, I cried my eyes out, my face was so pale, and my eyes were as red as blood. I could not stand the sight of Marinda, but I had to listen to her orders as your twin, Mia was with them.

"So, the next day we left, and we went to the human world. Your father has been living with Marinda – who is actually Anna. They have been living with each other for fifteen years, but only engaged," says Heather, telling Nia about her sad life.

"Wow, I am a mermaid!" yells Nia.

"Speak softly," says Heather. "I think you are forgetting that Anna is our enemy and if she hears what we are saying she will definitely conspire against us. Our mission is to reunite you and your sister."

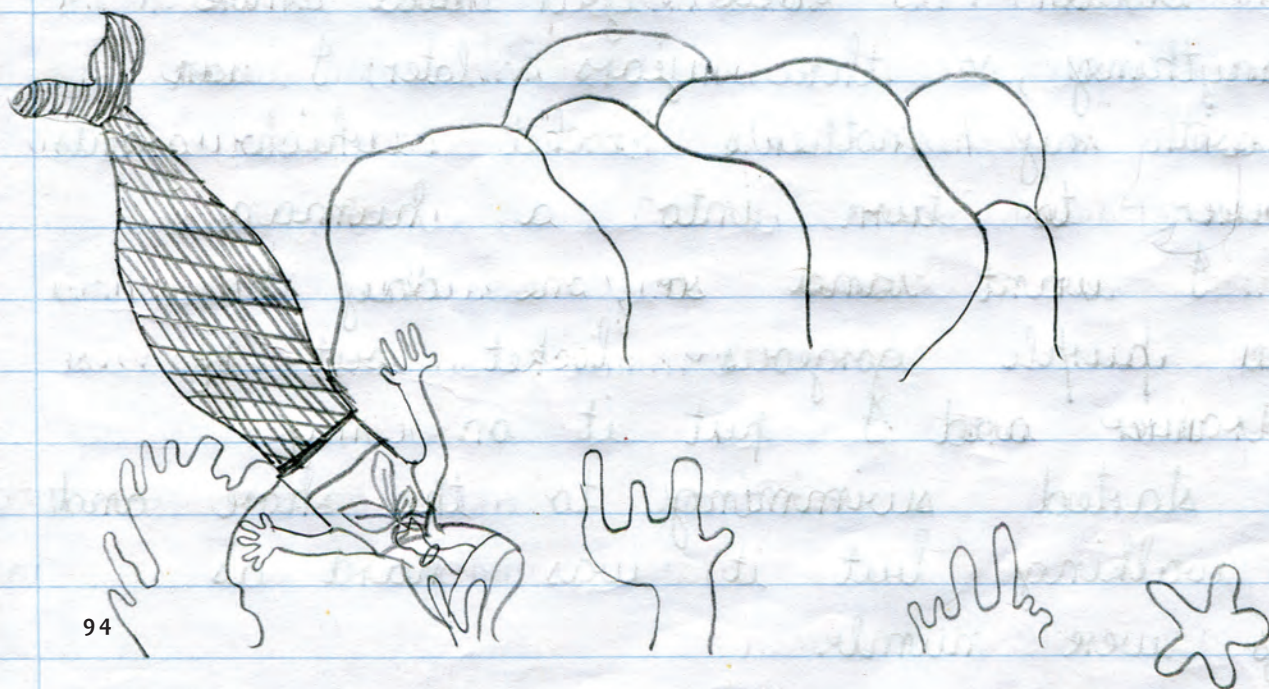
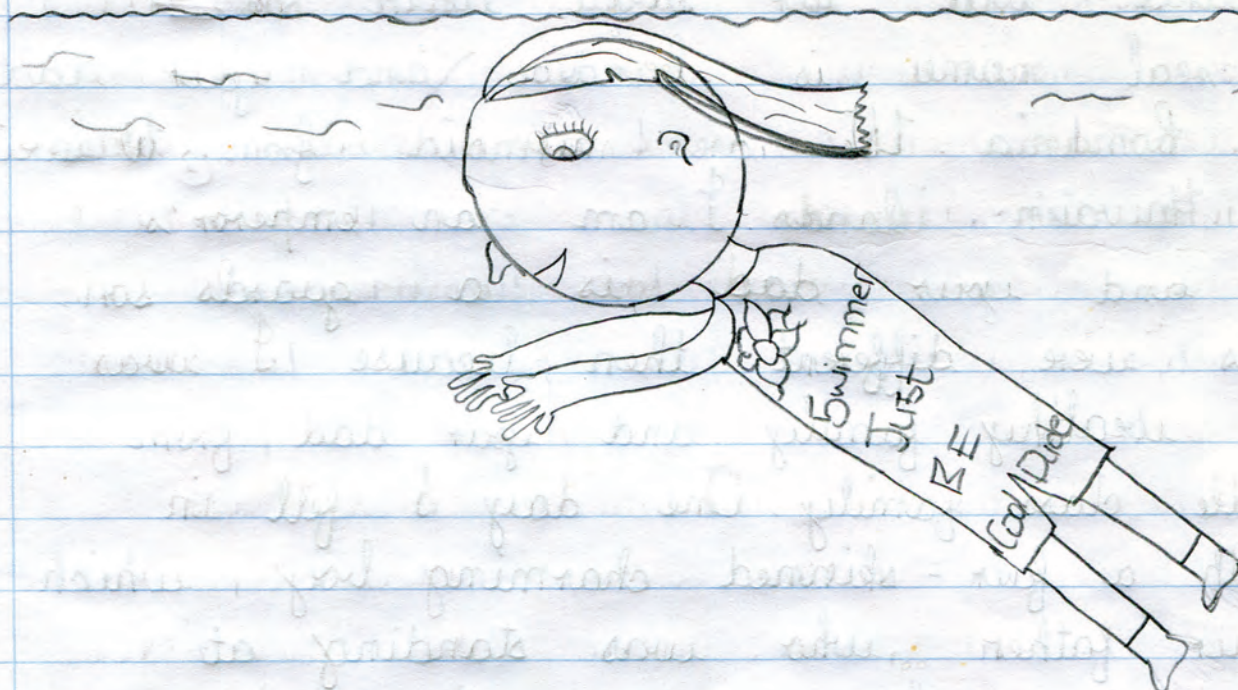
Heather gives Nia the locket that grants her powers to turn into a mermaid at any time she wants. Nia runs outside and quickly dives into the water.

"Wow, I look so beautiful," says Nia. She swims all the way to the Outlands and when she turns around, she sees her identical twin.

Just when she approaches her sister, Mia yells "Nia!"

"How do you know me?" asks Nia, confused.

"I know you because my stepmother, Mariah, keeps badmouthing you and when I asked her about you, in a fit of rage she answered: 'She is your nasty twin and I hate her!'"



Chapter 4: A Plan

Nia and Mia devise a plan to destroy Mariah. The next day the twins go to a butcher and tell him about Mariah's evil plans.

"Oh my gosh!" says the butcher in a loud and bold voice. The butcher devises a plan to destroy Mariah.

So, the next day they call a priest. The ancestral priest plays a flute which immediately disturbs, in a strange way. As the priest plays the flute Mariah turns into a yellowish, long and thick snake. It hisses closer and closer to get the old priest, but the priest stands fearlessly. It hisses louder and louder to get the priest's attention. Nia is very scared and screams and the snake grows bigger and bigger.

"Do not get frightened. If you fear it, it will get bigger," says the priest in a soft and slow voice. This is such a nail biting scene. Everyone glares at the snake, fearlessly. The snake shrinks quickly, smaller and poof! It turns into a tiny lizard. The priest takes the lizard and puts it in a small jar.

The twins are happy to finally be reunited. They swim back home, and Nia introduces Mia to Heather and Frank.

"Mom, where is Anna?" asks Nia, confused.

"Well, my child, it turns out that Anna was an illusion and she just disappeared into thin air and never came back."

"Wow! Look, we defeated all our enemies," says Frank, proud.

"Sure, we did," says Mia.

Frank and Heather finally got married to each other and they all lived happily together. ■





Thomas Augustus

Papenkuil Primary

Grade 6

Age 11



The Weird Guy He Met On Mars

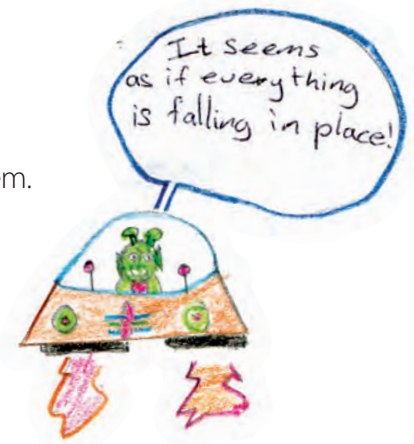
There was a guy that went by the name Altron. He wanted aliens to invade Earth. He captured three boys to help him. Instead they did the opposite and turned everyone back to humans. Leaton gave the people a special water so that they could prevent becoming aliens.

Long ago, in the early 1900s, an alien known as Altron decided to kidnap some humans to help him steal information from the leaders of each and every country. This was in order for the aliens to invade Earth.

The day came when the aliens from Mars were searching for three very intelligent boys. One moment they saw three boys playing in the park together so they decided to teleport the three boys to Mars and keep them hostage. The

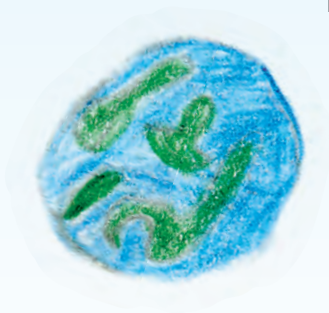
three boys did not know what was happening to them so they shouted for help even though they knew that there was nobody to help them.

Then Altron, the leader of the aliens, started threatening them by showing them how many planets the aliens have already invaded.



When Altron stopped threatening them, Deano told his friends that he wanted to jump out of the spaceship to play video games.

"Enough," replied Leaton. "You're thinking too much about yourself and not your friends."



Then Gerald came up with a plan and replied saying, "Since we look like aliens in their eyes, we could just scare them off."

They tried by making scary faces that they saw in movies, but that didn't quite work out.

Not long after they tried to scare off the aliens, they suddenly just fell asleep and one of Altron's men woke them up and asked them a tricky riddle. The alien knew that these boys were very intelligent.

The first riddle was: "What were the first words the ruler used to gain the trust of the people?"

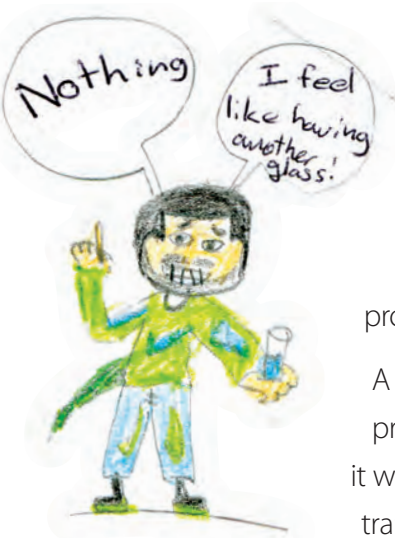
All the boys replied, "I really don't know."

Then Altron came up with a plan. The plan was to blend rotten gorilla flesh, dead alien skin and carbon dioxide to form a liquid. Then when the process is completed, they must place the water in the tiny particles of a water filter and then to name the water filter, "Fresh from space". The moment the customers drink from it they will develop a tail.

A lot of people tried Altron's product, but not all. The three friends decided they would tell Altron that they would grab the attention of the people to buy these products. He agreed.



what's on your back?



While coming to Earth, they were planning out something. The plan was to do the opposite of what they told Altron. Instead they told the customers what the product was made of.

A lot of people did not buy the product after they heard what it was made of. The alien who transported the three friends saw what was going on.

After Altron heard the news, he decided to invent a toxic gun, using the same ingredients. Altron made quite a number of toxic guns in order for his business to speed up.





As the aliens were invading Earth, the boys saw what was actually going on. They decided on a plan where Leaton made a special water to prevent the people from becoming aliens. The intelligent boy invented this easily, helped by his friends.

Everyone saw whose great idea that was and gave him a reward of R75 000. He even changed the aliens from Mars into humans, and they lived happily ever after. ■





**Owethu
Kewuti**

Machiu Primary
Grade 5
Age 11



John And The Kingdom of Blooms

Once upon a time there was a boy named John. His family Mr Dlamini, Mrs Dlamini and Tinky, his two friends Melissa and Jordan, went hiking in the Nature Park. While walking, John fell off a big rock and broke his leg. The Park Ranger took him to the hospital. At the hospital, the doctor and nurses spoke about operating on Johnny's leg. Tinky and John's mother came to the hospital and gave John a fruit basket.

When he was discharged from hospital, people were there to welcome him. All the family and friends were there for the welcome home party and they even gave him a gift.

"A doll's house? What a silly gift! It is just for girls!" said John.

Tinky said, "It is not just a doll's house. It is a great place to play in."

When they opened the door, they found a glorious world. It was a world of little people, little buildings and little houses. It was a magical place. It was the Kingdom of King Mater. King Mater was the ruler of the entire little kingdom inside the doll's house. The magical place was called Kingdom of Blooms.

The Kingdom was in danger. King Redman and his thieving army wanted to take over the Kingdom of Blooms. He wanted to turn it into a Stone Kingdom and not one of Blooms. This evil King wanted to see stones everywhere.







King Mater could not allow that. They got prepared for battle. Everyone had to wear armour, even the horses. They received sharp swords and shields.

When King Redman and his army came, it was time for battle. Both kings cried out, "Attack!"

The clang of sword and shield could be heard while the battle raged. Everyone who was able was fighting to death. There was blood on the ground. There were swords in dying hands.

Then King Mater shouted the words to banish King Redman: "Lightening of Bloom!"

There was a huge explosion and King Redman and his band of kingdom thieves were gone!

After the battle, the King thanked the children for their help during the battle. "Your help can't be measured," he said.

Swords, shields, and brave soldiers lay on the ground. King Mater gave the order to clean up the Kingdom and remove all trace of King Redman. King Mater, as a reward, asked someone to show them the way back to the door, so that they too may go home.

They were escorted to the doll's house door and exited. Outside the doll's house, they all looked at each other without saying anything. They knew nobody would believe them if they told anyone about the adventure with King Mater. ■





Siviwe Tsana

James Ntungwana
Primary
Grade 6
Age 12

The day I learnt about what ubuntu means to me was after judging my cousin who is mentally disturbed. I realised that I was wrong for judging someone else. I should not judge other people because I am also not perfect and nobody is perfect. You must show respect to others because they are also human. In order for me to value ubuntu, my father told me a story of his upbringing. That is what made me respect Kwanele, for who he is as a person, and apologise.

Ubuntu

'Ubuntu' is a word which might mean nothing to most countries, yet it means a lot to Africans, especially when practised. Ubuntu is when people become kind, tolerant, understanding, sympathetic and generous to one another. A tool that South Africans can use to build the rainbow nation, as the late South African President Tat'uNelson Mandela had always dreamt of.

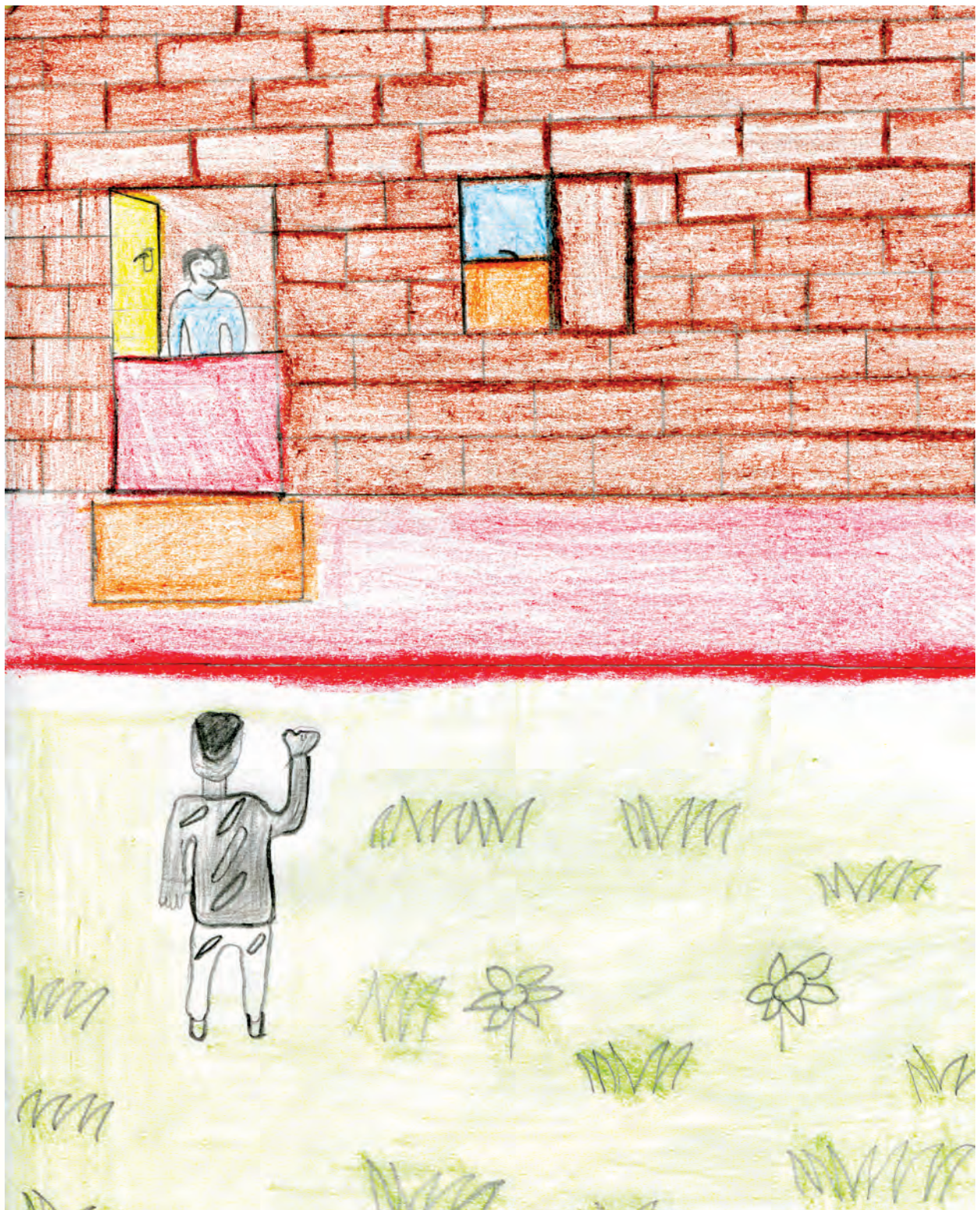
As a child I once behaved in a manner I am not proud of. One morning I was in the kitchen, preparing lunch for my dad and I, when I heard a soft knock on the door. Without even facing towards the door, I knew who it was: Kwanele. He is a cousin of mine who is mentally disturbed and a son to unemployed parents whose priority is nothing but alcohol.

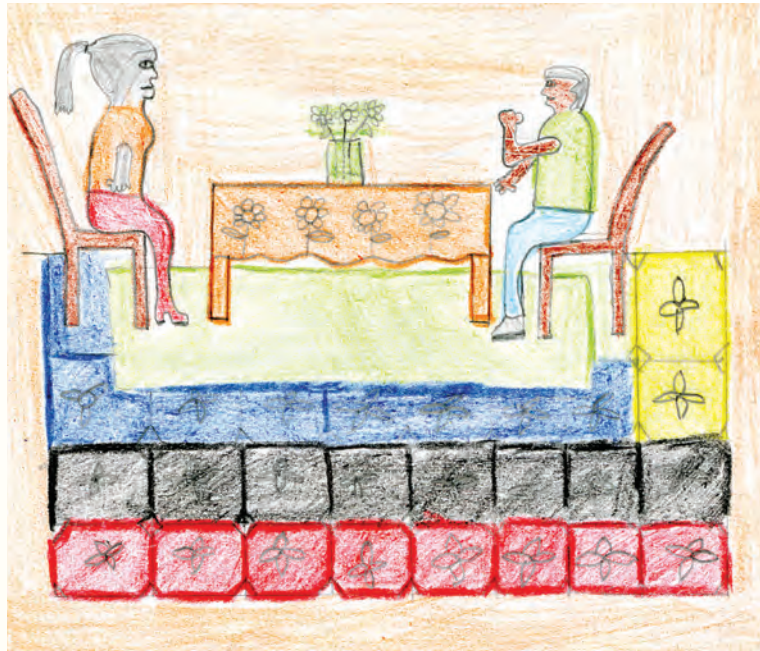
He entered and he just stood there smiling, with his big eyes, brown legs, black jacket and white pants. I immediately said to him, "Go away. We do not have food." I shouted and he stood as if I said nothing.

My father approached the kitchen, and I could tell by how fast he walked that he did not like what I had just said and how I used an angry tone to answer Kwanele.

He stood next to me and asked, "Ntombi yam, buphi ubuntu bakho?" Which meant 'My daughter where is your humanity?'

My father then went to the dining room where Kwanele followed and asked for food. My father then said, "Don't worry





son, you can have mine." My father told Kwanele to sit in the dining room while he ate.

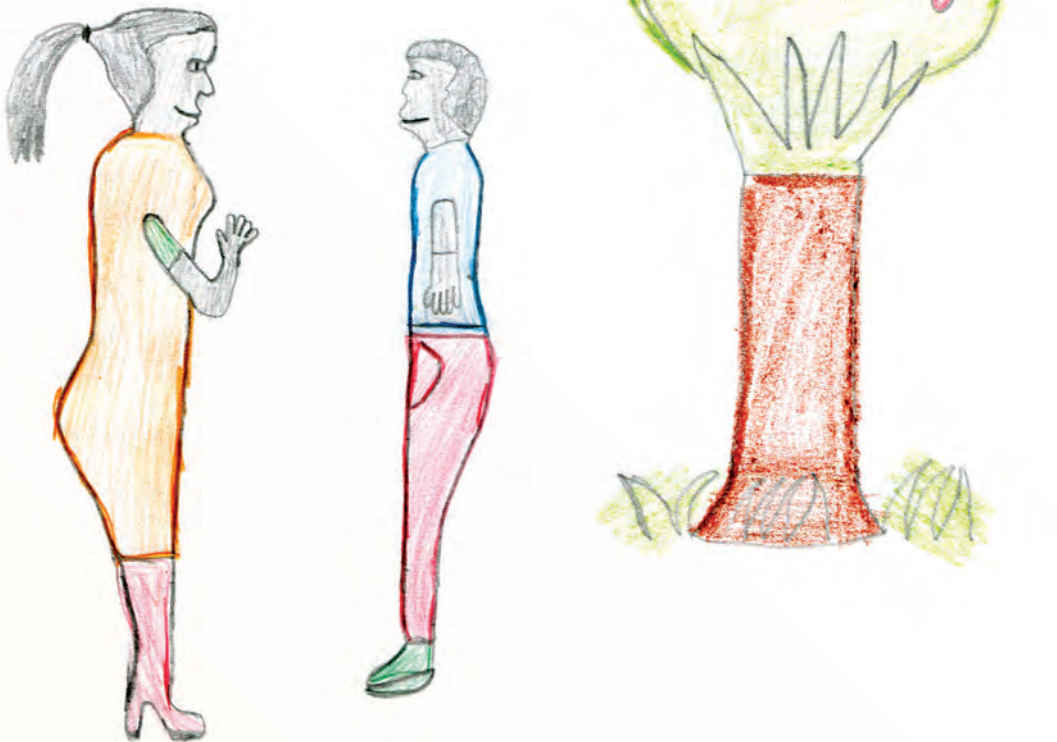
He held my shoulder and said, "My daughter, allow me to share with you." I could tell by the tone of his voice that I was about to receive a lesson of a lifetime, but I just nodded my head and my ears were wide open. He said, "Today you may see me as a dignified father, simply because I have an income and am able to provide for my family.

"The truth is I was once a boy, who was raised by an unemployed, single mother. We were extremely poor, to an extent that I would walk to school barefoot, wondering when will I get my next meal. Because of a good Samaritan called Mr Khwitshana, a local businessman who gave me a full bursary to further my education, I can proudly say I am where I am in life because of someone's humanity and my hard work."

I did not know what to say. Somehow his story left me speechless. I must admit when I first heard the word 'ubuntu' it meant nothing to me, until my father demonstrated its significance. It's a lesson I will always be grateful for.

I then apologised to Kwanele because I had to clear my actions, which were a result of my lack of knowledge. To say the truth, I am not the only person who is misinformed, because it is then I realised that people tend to deliberately disrespect those who are less fortunate than them.

Different religions and cultures teach us kindness, love and respect towards one another. If people could practise ubuntu the world will be a better place because nowadays we do not treat each other like brothers and sisters. ■





**Bonga
Maposa**

Sydenham Primary

Grade 6

Age 12



What Happened At 10 pm

One Sunday morning, the Thomsans were moving to a new house in Spookville. Katie was scared to live in Spookville and tried to convince her parents not to move there. But the parents did not pay attention to her.

The next day their parents had to go to a party, and they could not find a baby sitter for Luke and Katy, so they left them home alone.

Time went by and the clock struck 10pm. Luke and Katie were watching a movie when the lights started flashing.

"What was that?" Katie asked.

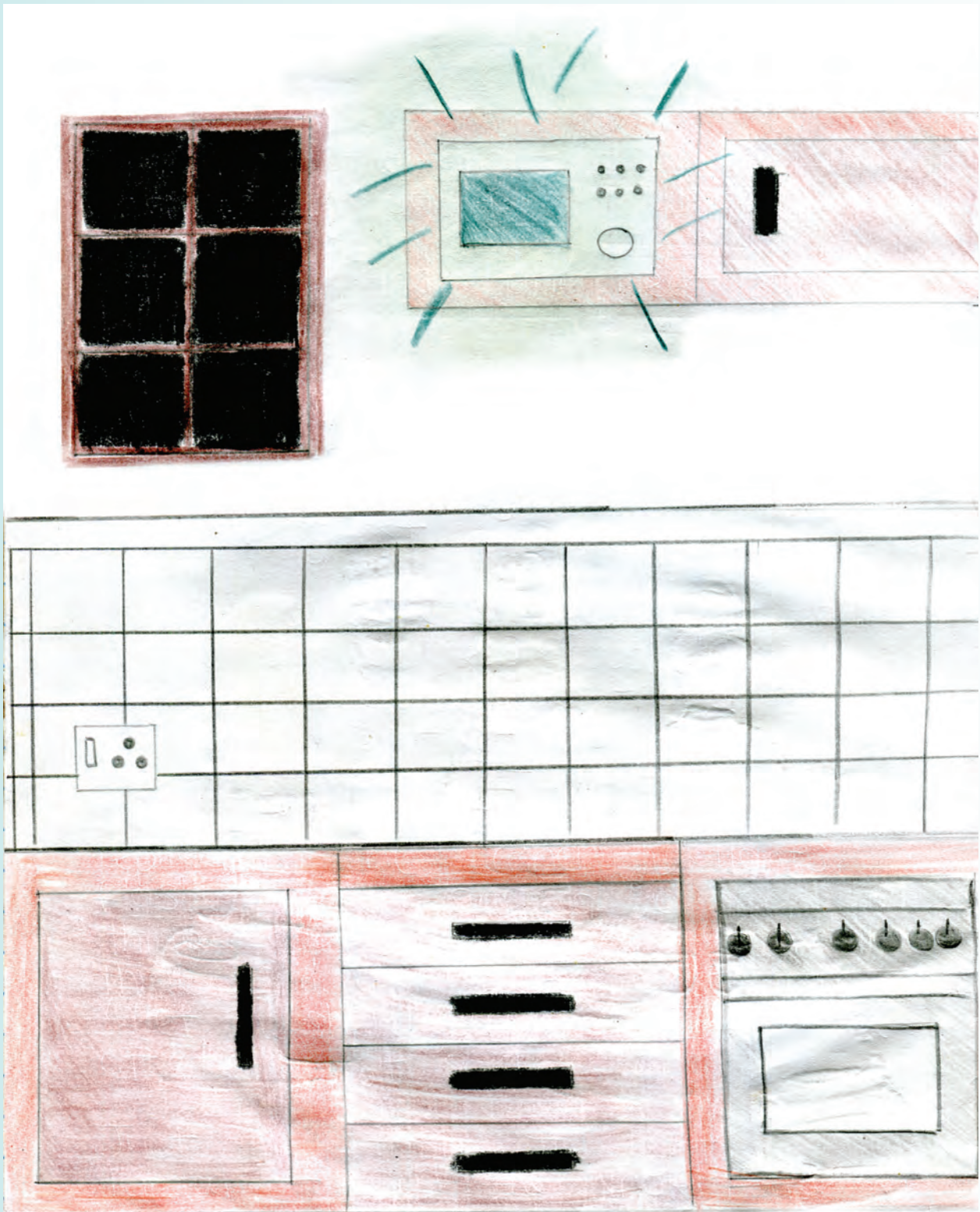
"I'm sure it was just the bulbs. I'll tell Mom and Dad to buy new ones," Luke answered.

Not so long after that happened, the windows and doors started opening and closing. Katie screamed and hugged Luke tight. "What was that?" she asked.

"I'm sure it's just the wind," Luke answered. "If you're so scared let's go check it out. And I will prove that there is nothing to be scared of. Let's go," he added.

Luke walked fiercely in front of Katie. Katie was so scared that she carried a bat in her hand. Luke pointed at the microwave and said, "Look, its glowing green." Luke touched the glowing microwave and he started to glow. Katie screamed, ran upstairs and locked herself in her room.





"Ooo I'm a ghost," Luke said, trying to scare Katie.

"Stop it Luke!" Katie said. "It's not funny," she added.

"Ok, I will stop," Luke said.

Something appeared behind Luke.

Luke turned around. "Aaaah!" he

screamed. He ran upstairs to

Katie's room. "Open up! Open up

please!" Luke cried. Katie opened

the door for him and quickly

closed the door after him.

"What did you see Luke?" Katie asked.

"I saw a ghost," Luke replied.

"I told you this place is haunted. We have to

move out of here. I told you," Katie said.

"Stop panicking," Luke said.

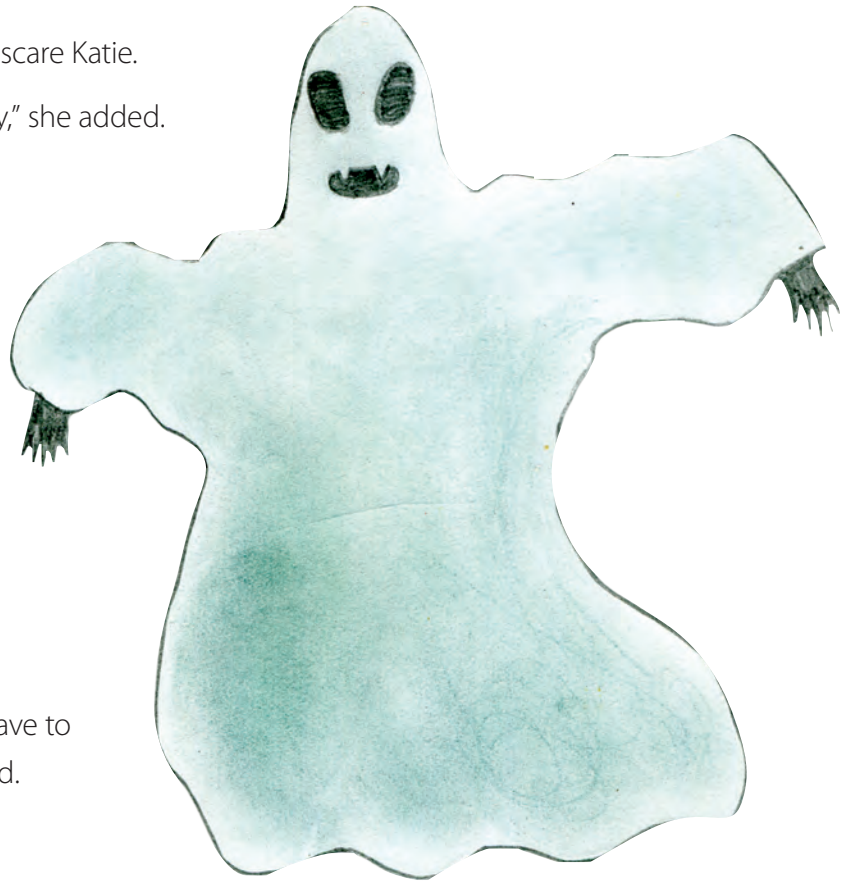
"Cling cling!" The door started sounding as if someone was picking it. "Bam!" the door slammed open against the wall. Then a green ghost appeared. Luke and Katie screamed. The ghost picked Luke up.

"Aaah! I'm floating. Get me down!" Luke screamed.

Katie took the bat and hit the ghost on the head. It turned around angrily and picked her up too. The ghost said, "Get out of my house!" The ghost put them back down and floated around the house laughing evilly. "The Boo is back baby!" the ghost said.

"Ding dong!" the bell rang.

"It's Mom and Dad!" Katie shouted. Luke and Katie ran downstairs and told Mom and Dad about everything. While





they were telling Mom and Dad about everything the ghost disappeared. Mom and Dad laughed and laughed. They laughed and laughed so much, until Luke and Katie went to bed.

The next day Luke and Katie walked together everywhere they went because they were scared of the ghost.

When the clock struck 10pm a creepy sound went, "Ooooh".

"Really Luke and Katie, stop trying to convince us that there is a ghost in this house. It's not working," said Mom.

"It was not us," Luke and Katie replied.

In one second the lights flashed green and a big green thing appeared. "You think I'm a joke!" the ghost said. "Let me show you what I'm made of," it said.

Just in a flash the lights turned off and the whole house was black. No-one could see except the ghost. The ghost threw tables, chairs and pillows all around the house and said, "I own this place and if you want to live here, you have to live by my rules! Do you hear me!"

"O ... ok," everyone replied.

Luke ran outside and called the police. Then five minutes later the police arrived and asked, "What's your emergency?"

"There is a ghost in the house," Luke replied.

"Look kid, this is not a joke. We have a really important job and you can't joke about it," the police said.



"I'm not joking. Come and see it yourself," Luke said. The police went in the house and ... nothing.

There was just a normal family sitting on the couch. "Argh. I knew that there was no ghost here. Let's go," said the police. The police left the house saying, "No-one takes us seriously in this job."

Mom started packing their things. "What are you doing Mom?" Luke asked.

"We are moving out of this place," Mom answered.

"Where are we going to move to?" asked Dad.

"We are moving in your grandma's house until we find another place to move in," answered Mom.

"Leave and never come back," the ghost said.

"We won't even step foot in this stinky house again," said Luke.

"Excuse me, what did you just say? Don't forget you're still in here and I can do whatever I want to you!" the ghost said.

"Sorry Mr Ghost Sir, sorry," Luke responded in a scared voice.

So, the Thomsans moved out and never stepped foot in Spookville ever again. And the ghost stayed alone in his haunted house. ■





**Dwayne
Boesak**

Uitenhage Primary
Grade 6
Age 12



The Hospital: What's In The Dark Side?

Chapter 1

In New York, America, there was an old hospital that nobody recently used. It's believed that this particular old, abandoned hospital is haunted with ghosts. People say that it is all the dead bodies that died in this hospital long ago. Years ago, before this hospital was abandoned, it was the most achieving and expensive hospital that you could find because it could give you all the help you need.

A few years had passed and investors from France University came looking for the next big hospital for their top medical students. The investors found this hospital. They heard of its history and loved it – although the people warned them that it's haunted. There was also a dark part of this hospital – it was called the Darkside.

The University of France fixed this hospital and made it a new and improved hospital. When the students came people told them about its history, and that it is haunted. They were really scared but they still had to work there. The medical students didn't like the Darkside of this hospital; they thought that it was creepy.

But as time went by people started visiting this hospital as it helped you greatly with all the things you need. One of the students became one of the top ten brain surgeons in the world. People with brain tumours came there to hear

This story is basically about the Darkside of a hospital and how people are murdered when they go in there. Later one person was in the Darkside and managed to get out because the Monsters and the Demons were fighting, but after that, the evil ones teamed up and got more powerful. Then they wanted to rule Earth but failed because a family stops them.

The Hospital

Author:
DWAYNE BOESAK



What's in the
darkside

their diagnosis. But as more people came to this hospital the Darkside would get bigger and bigger.

Chapter 2

The room where they kept the brains and all other organs became part of the Darkside, so they needed to get a new organ room. One of the doctors was working nightshift and she thought to herself, "I really want to see what's in the Darkside."

As she went in she met one of the Demons and he told her, "I'm a Demon and my name is Sata. Tonight you're going to die!" He ripped her apart piece by piece. There was blood everywhere.

In the morning they looked for her but couldn't find her. The doctor's family opened a case and told the police, "It is the ghosts that killed her."

They thought that the family were crazy because this was a new and improved hospital. This family wouldn't leave it just there. They thought that they are going to look for the ghosts of this hospital. They would bring one person that could see the ghosts. But one family member thought that they were crazy.

When they came there the person that could see ghosts saw that it was this haunted hospital and he ran away with the one scared family member.. The rest just went on.

As they entered the Darkside, Sata saw them and called his friends. He and his friends thought that it was magnificent, because it was a lot of food for them. Sata and his friends ran to them and ate them piece by piece. The more people they ate the bigger and bigger and more powerful they got.





They opened gateways for all the other Demons and now there also came Monsters. The Demons told the Monsters, "You're our slaves. We are in charge." They did not agree with that, but pretended to agree at that moment.

The Monsters made a secret plan to take over the Darkside. One of the Demons overheard what they said and told all his friends.

The Demons stormed to them and told them, "You want a fight you will get it!"

They started to fight and they made a lot of noise. The people heard the noise now and wondered what was happening in the Darkside. It was loud noises such as "Boom! bang! pow!" over and over.

Chapter 3

Doctor Ethan Anthony was so curious to see what's in the Darkside, making that noise. He entered and saw all the Demons and Monsters fighting. He was shocked. One of the Monsters saw him. When he saw that the Monster was looking at him Dr Anthony ran away out of the Darkside so that they couldn't rip him piece by piece.

The Monster screamed "Stop!" and told them all what happened because of their fighting. They were really mad at themselves. They thought of a plan so that both Monsters and Demons could rule the Darkside. They would run the Darkside together.

After a few days they made the Darkside bigger and after that they took over the whole hospital. They also ate everybody in it. After that they came out of the Darkside and started to take over the whole town.





They murdered people every day, but Doctor Ethan Anthony knew it was coming so he had hidden his family in a spot just out of town, underground. After a while the whole city was now turned into the Darkside.

Chapter 4

The people got less every day. The Demons and Monsters were upset with this. They didn't like it a bit. They thought of a brilliant plan to take over the whole country but first they had to get more powerful. They opened their last two gateways to other dimensions where the King of Demons, known as Ramakata, and the King of Monsters, known as Trita, existed. They told them about their brilliant plan to take over the United States.

The Kings asked, "Now why don't you do it!?"

They said, "We need your help to do it."

They replied, "Let's do it!"

When the Kings of Demons and Monsters came to Earth's dimension, they saw each other and asked themselves: "What is *he* doing here?"

They started fighting each other. It was awful.

The Darkside Demons saw what happened and told them, "We don't want it to happen again. Can you please stop fighting, and if you rule the country together you will have twice the power."

The Kings said, "It's true."

After that they tried to rule the United States but after a while they thought, why not rule the whole world? Time went by and they started to rule other countries.

Doctor Ethan knew they were at some point going to take over the whole world, so he set up a plan that he and his family could save the world.

A few weeks passed, and they had all the things that they needed for their brilliant plan to work. The Anthony family started to kill people – not one or two, they killed dozens – and by every person they killed they left the name, ‘monster-demon’.

The Monsters and Demons heard of this and thought, “Should we include them into our team?”

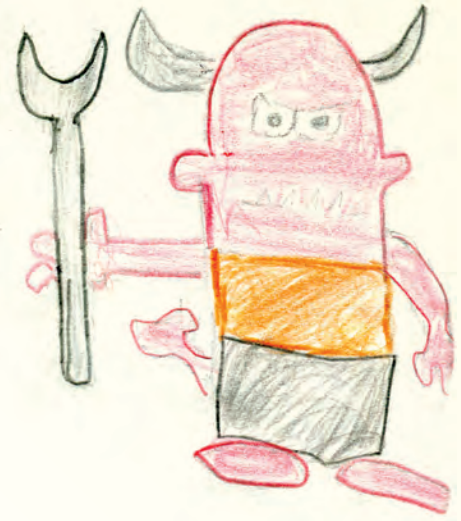
It took a while, then the Monsters and Demons decided to include the Anthony family in their team. They tracked them down and asked, “Do you want to be in our team?”

They said, “Absolutely.”

The Anthony family went to the secret home of the Monsters and Demons. This was only the first part of their plan. As they stayed, they found out what the weaknesses of the Monsters and Demons were. There was one Demon that thought there was something fishy, but after a while they became friends.

The Anthony family started to use their weaknesses against them because they knew nobody suspected anything. They made the Monsters suspicious of the Demons. They again started fighting and destroying each other. This time they did not stop.

After a while, there were no more Demons and Monsters on Earth. Earth went back to normal and everyone was happy again. ■





**Nonzaliseko
Mjo**

Vérité Primary

Grade 6

Age 16



The Scar On My Leg

On Saturday 22 September 2014, my mother was packing the picnic basket. We were planning to leave around 10 o'clock for a picnic near the river in East London.

When everything was ready, we loaded the car and we were on our way. My father stopped at the garage to fill the petrol tank. My father also bought some fruit and snacks for us to eat along the way.

When we arrived at our picnic spot, my father unpacked the car and found a cosy place under a tree. We spread our blanket, unpacked the picnic basket and we enjoyed a delicious lunch. After lunch we played games on the lawn and splashed in the river.

Later that afternoon we were on our way back home when we met with an accident. A drunken driver had knocked into us. Our car rolled down the cliff. My four-year-old sister knocked her face against the windscreen. My head hit the passenger window and my legs got stuck under the back seat.

My spinal cord was also injured. I was hospitalised for three months. While in hospital I underwent a procedure to my back and received physiotherapy. I was not able to walk and was placed in a wheelchair. The doctors told my parents that the seriousness of my injuries caused that I would not be able to walk again.

The author says, "I am older than the other children because I was sick for 3 years and then I came back to school." This story highlights a challenging/difficult personal experience when the author was involved in a serious car accident. She describes the difficulties she needed to overcome to get her life back and to start doing the things she could do before the accident.

Your scar can be healed.

Splashing in the river



My parents were very sad and when I eventually left the hospital to go home it was an extremely difficult time for me. Firstly, our home was not suitable for a wheelchair as we lived in a flat and I had to move up stairs. Secondly my parents tried to keep me away from people because it was difficult moving me up and down the stairs and they also did not want people to see that I could not walk.

During this time my parents would argue as my mother blamed my father for the accident and my injuries. One day while they were still arguing I started crying and both of my parents started crying and hugging me.

This brought the change in our family and we all started to learn to accept and to cope with my disability. My parents started to make the house more wheelchair-friendly and I was able to move and socialise with others.

One afternoon my aunt and cousins were visiting at our home, and my uncles were sitting around the fire and drinking. One of my uncles was so drunk that he started telling me to get up from the wheelchair. I felt so scared and afraid knowing that I would not be able to stand on my legs.

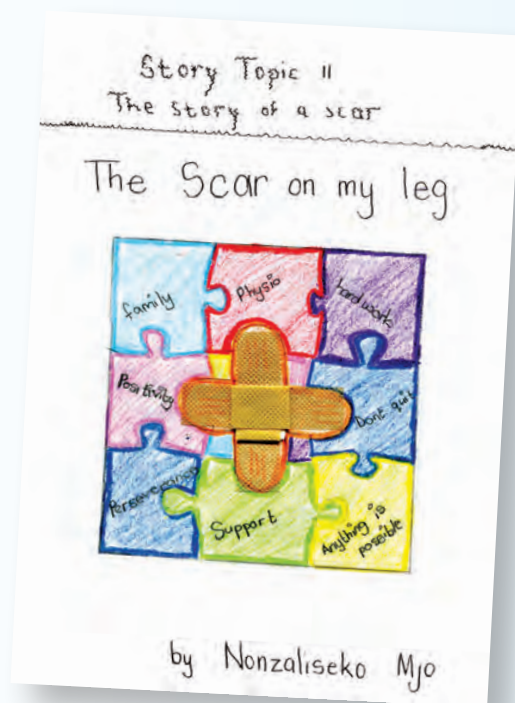
My drunk uncle came over to pick me up from the wheelchair and made me stand on my own for a few seconds. The rest of the family started cheering for this small step that I was taking.

After that day, my mother regularly did some exercises with me. When I left the hospital, I did not get any physiotherapy, so my mother was my physiotherapist. Every day my mother helped me with some kind of movement exercise. She would stretch my legs and help me to stand. Eventually I was able to stand and take a few steps.

This was improving until I was able to slowly move on my own. I was able to go back to school. Today I am in Grade 6 and the accident occurred when I was in Grade 3. I can't imagine what other emotional scars I would have suffered had it not been for that uncle who was persistent that I should stand.

Today I still have the scar on my leg as a reminder that through perseverance I was able to get up and walk. I thank God for the miracle in my life and I pray that I can be used to heal the scar in another child's life.

My motto is that if you have family support anything is possible. Work hard and don't give up! ■





**Saskia
Naidoo**

Malabar Primary
Grade 6
Age 11



This story is about what the South African flag means to me. The story is about a unicorn that earns all the colours of the flag by seeing how people do good and I believe that by doing good we all can be beautiful.

The South African Unicorn

In the year 1999 when unicorns roamed the earth they came in all the colours of the rainbow.

But one unicorn stood out from the rest. She had a white body, yellow hair, big blue eyes and red hooves but her horn stood out the most because it was plain and grey. Her name was Twilight.

She was kind, loving, smart, brave and beautiful. One day she went down to the river side for some water. Suddenly it became windy and it started raining. A big, black hole

appeared in the sky and a strong wind uprooted trees. It even flooded rivers. It pulled Twilight in. It spun her around. Then it threw her out in a land she had never seen before where trees grew big and strong and the grass was green.

She was so scared. She saw creatures that walked on two legs. They came in different colours: black, white, brown. Then a creature walked towards her. The creature picked her up and carried her home. She did not know it was a human child.

The child's name was Erica. She had long hair and blue eyes. Twilight felt scared then Erica gave Twilight some milk. She drank the milk. She felt a bit sleepy.

Erica said, "Hi." Twilight felt even more scared. Then Erica made a bed for Twilight and put her down to sleep.



Soon after Erica went to bed Twilight also fell asleep. The next morning when the sun rose Twilight smelt the most delicious aroma; it smelt like fresh honey. Then Erica brought Twilight some pancakes and milk.

Twilight began to eat the pancakes. Then Twilight's horn got two colours, red and yellow. It meant love and help. Her horn looked beautiful even though it only had two colours.

Twilight began speaking and said, "What are you?"

The creature said, "I'm a human and my name is Erica."

Suddenly Erica's mom shouted, "Erica don't forget to take out your costume for the Freedom Day celebration."

Twilight asked, "What is a Freedom Day celebration?"

Erica answered, "It is when people with different beliefs come and respect each other." Erica loved Freedom Day because you can dress up as someone else. She was going to dress up as an Indian.



Evening time came. Erica and Twilight went off to the Freedom Day celebration. Erica and Twilight were enjoying themselves. Suddenly Twilight's horn got three more colours: white, green, and blue. It meant peace, respect and friendship.

They were shocked. Twilight saw she had almost all her colours, but they carried on with the party.

Then a storm hit. She remembered the storm that brought her there could take her back.

So, Erica asked, "What's going on?"

Twilight said, "Something is missing from home."

Twilight and Erica looked at each other. It was Twilight that was missing from her home. Twilight did not want to leave Erica, but she had to because the storm was uprooting and destroying houses.

She started running into the storm. While she was running, she got her final colour, black. It meant bravery. When Twilight got home, she was the most beautiful of them all. She was forever known as the South African Unicorn. ■





**Faith-Lynne
Titus**

Seagull Primary

Grade 6

Age 12



A Lifetime Scar

Timothy joined the rugby Derby sports weekend. They were super excited because they won all their matches and decided to celebrate at a friend's house.

They arrived at Shannon's house and settled in. They were braaiing, chatting and having fun. It started to become cold and most of the guests decided to move the party indoors.

"Oh, how boring," said Peter.

Timothy, Ryan and Peter decided to sit at the cosy fire. Ryan went inside to get some drinks. He heard screaming and rushed out to investigate. He saw someone frantically running in circles. At first, he did not have a clue what was going on, but he soon realised that Timothy was set alight.

With utmost shock Timothy managed to jump into the pool. He eventually dragged himself out and wiped his shaking hands on his burning face. As he did that the skin on his face started to peel off. They were all so shocked and stood there in silence.

Shannon picked him up and rushed off to the hospital. The shocked parents followed after receiving the phone call.

Would their son make it? They expected the worst. Then the worst days of Timothy's life began. The following 28 days and nights were long and dreadful. He went through such pain, agony and heartache, but his parents were always hopeful.

Timothy is a fun loving, sporty guy. One day while at a party something devastating happens to him. His whole life changes.

Will he ever be normal again?





"Mother! Help!" Timothy screamed. She could not help him. It affected everyone in the family. Nobody knew what to do. They just prayed.

"God will make a way even though there seems to be no way," said his mother.

The unexpected happened... The doctors surrounded Timothy's bed. Something was wrong. Tears streamed down his mother's face when the doctors said that her son needed blood, otherwise he would not survive.

"Use my blood," said his father.

"Or mine," cried his mother.

One of them had to be a match. There was a light at the end of the dark tunnel. His dad was a match.

After a few days Timothy was strong enough to go home.

"I am happy that you are home my son," said his mother with a warm smile on her face. She could not believe that he was still alive. He would be his old self again. But this was not the case. He was in so much pain. The medication did not help.

He stared into the mirror. He could not believe that he was looking at himself. He was a monster. Slowly but surely Timothy's wounds started to heal. He stayed indoors because he was afraid to face the world, especially Peter. He was safe inside.

"Why is Peter not in jail? Did he do this?" asked the nosy neighbour.

"For a long time that is what we wanted to do but that would not change anything," said his mother. "One should forgive and forget."

It was an accident. There was no-one to blame. She felt sorry for the boy.

As time flew by, Timothy thought that he should start to be positive, so he went off to the shop across the road. The people who saw him were so surprised and happy to see him.

"Hi, Timothy, it's good to see you again," said his old friend.

"Wow you look good."

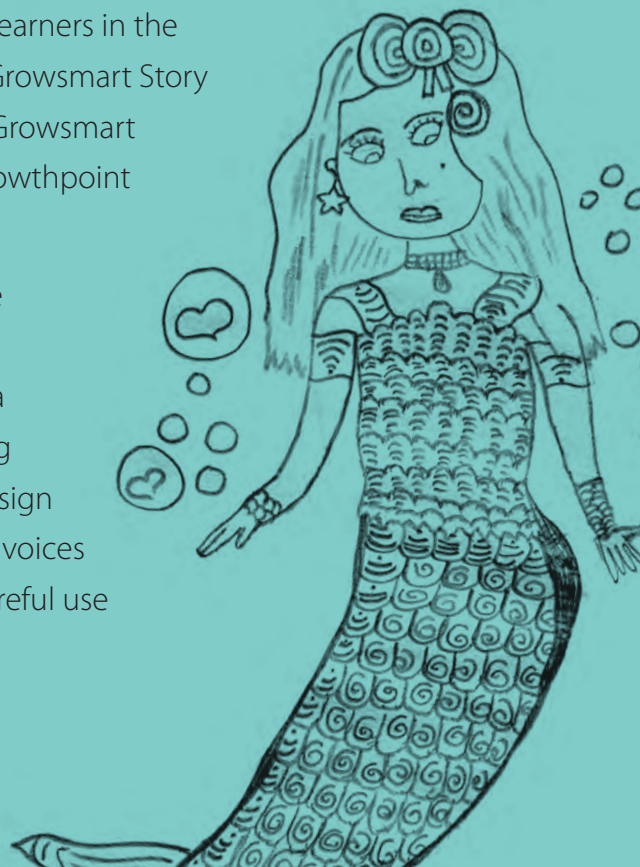
So Timothy felt that nothing was wrong. Nothing had changed. His scars remain but he is better. He was still Timothy, the brave boy. ■



Children writing to grow smart

This collection represents a sample of the stories written by learners in the Eastern Cape for the Growsmart Story Writing Competition. Growsmart is a CSI initiative by Growthpoint Properties.

These stories share the creativity, experiences, hopes and dreams of a diverse group of young people. The book's design showcases the writers' voices through layout and careful use of their illustrations.



This
 book is
 not for
 sale.