

Chapter 3 Good news and bad news

After what felt like an eternity of rocking, and a very loud roar, the plane came to a halt.

Jake stayed in the brace position. He was afraid to lift his head. Then he heard Maritska crying softly in the back and Pim say, "We're OK."

Relieved that both of them were still alive, Jake finally opened his eyes and sat up.

Ray had managed to fly the plane towards a large, soft bank of sand. Amazingly, this had slowed them down enough to stop the plane from totally breaking into pieces.

Jake shook Ray, but there was no answer. The man was clearly dead.

"Take his headset," said Pim. "Call for help."

Jake gently took the headsets off Ray and put them on.

"Can anyone hear me?" Jake said into the microphone. He couldn't hear anything in the ear phones – only the buzz of static. Jake played around with the switch he had seen Ray use to contact the tower.

"I smell something weird," said Maritska.

Jake and Pim smelled the air.

Jake knew immediately it was petrol. The smallest spark could make the plane explode. "We have to get out. Now!" Jake ripped off the headset and flipped open his seat belt. He managed to quickly kick open his door and jump from the plane. As he reached back to help Maritska, he saw petrol running out from the other side of the plane.

"Pim! This way. Get out on my side," Jake shouted.

Pim's face disappeared behind the seat. "I dropped my phone," Pim searched for it on the floor at the back.

"Leave it," Jake ordered.

1 **eternity** [ˈiːtəːnəti] Ewigkeit • 19 **static** [ˈstætiːk] statische Elektrizität • 23 **petrol** [ˈpetrəl] Benzin • 23 **spark** [spɑːk] Funke

Pim ignored Jake, he kept on looking. Jake ran round to the back of the plane. There was a giant hole where the tail had been torn away. "I think I see it," Pim muttered and his head disappeared below the seat.

Jake leant inside and grabbed hold of Pim.

"Leave off," shouted Pim as he wriggled away from Jake. "I need my –"

Jake didn't take any notice of Pim. He pulled him out of the plane and dragged him away from it.

Maritska ran after them as Pim tried hard to free himself. "Why did you do that, Jake?" she shouted. "You should have let him look –"

A huge explosion threw them all to the ground.

After a moment the three of them looked up and saw the wreck of the plane in a ball of flames.



"He said to stay with the plane," said Maritska as she shielded her eyes from the sun.

"We have to find shade. Remember that couple in the camper-van who cooked in the heat?" replied Jake.

4 to **mutter** [ˈmʌtə] murrneln • 10 to **drag sb** [ˈdræg sb] jmdn. zerren • 16 **wreck** [rɛk] Wrack • 19 **shade** [ʃeɪd] Schatten

“This is terrible,” cried Maritska. She looked around. They were in the middle of a red desert. There was a huge rock in the distance to their left. A few trees and bushes were dotted along the horizon. The burning sun was almost directly overhead. There were no shadows, so they had no idea of east or west. Maritska suddenly jumped to her feet. “I see my bag!” she shouted.

Jake couldn't believe that at a time like this she was interested in her clothes and make-up. But once she had rescued her bag from where it had fallen off the plane, Jake had to admit she wasn't so crazy.

“Here.” Maritska pulled out some baseball caps and a wide-brimmed hat. She put on the hat, handed one cap to Jake and one to Pim.

15 “I'm not wearing pink,” Pim said.

“Put it on,” Jake told him. “Or you'll get a sunstroke.”

Reluctantly, Pim pulled on the cap. Jake turned his cap round to keep the sun off the back of his neck.

20 “Do you think anyone heard the call on the radio?” asked Maritska.

“No worries,” said Pim imitating Ray's Aussie accent. “Luckily, I found this before you pulled me out of the plane!” He waved his mobile phone. “It's 3G. And it has got GPS. I was getting a signal a while back. All we need to do is call Mum and Dad for help or find a map to show us where we are.”

Jake and Maritska sighed with relief. Happy, for once, that Pim was such a techno geek.

30 Pim dialled and pressed the ‘call’ button. The smile on his face disappeared. He tried again. “Oh, no,” he said.

Jake and Maritska leaned forward. “What?!”

Pim hung his head, “The battery is dead.”

“I told you to turn it off!” shouted Jake.

5 shadow [ˈʃædəʊ] Schatten • 16 sunstroke [ˈsʌnstroʊk] Sonnenstich • 17 reluctant [rɪˈlʌktənt] widerwillig • 27 to sigh [saɪ] seufzen • 29 to dial [daɪəl] wählen

“You idiot!” screamed Maritska. “If you hadn't been playing around and wasting the battery, we'd be OK.” “I didn't know. Stop blaming me. I'm only a little kid.” Pim hung his head.

5 Maritska looked at the black smoke rising from the crashed plane. “Maybe someone will see the smoke?”

“When we don't arrive, Mum and Dad will come and look for us. We just have to wait,” said Jake.

“I'm thirsty,” complained Pim.

10 Jake checked his watch. It was just after two o'clock in the afternoon. He realized they had had nothing to eat since breakfast on the plane. “I think we should head for those trees.” Jake pointed to the horizon.

“We should stay near the plane,” said Maritska.

15 “It's the middle of the day. We must get out of the sun,” said Jake.

Maritska reluctantly agreed and picked up her bag.

The kids began to walk. The sand was so hot they could feel it burning through their shoes. Jake's lips were dry.

20 He realized that without water they'd be in trouble pretty soon. But right now he was grateful for one thing – they were all alive and unharmed.

Chapter 4 Cries in the wilderness

Minutes felt like hours as the kids sat under the trees and watched the sun slip across the sky.

25 Jake stared into the distance. Shadows formed on the big rock as the sun started to go down. “At least now we know which way is west,” Jake said watching the sunset.

Maritska got up and wandered around the trees. “I think someone was here before.” She pointed to strange

3 to blame sb [blaɪm] jmdm. die Schuld geben • 9 to be thirsty [ˈθɜːsti] Durst haben • 19 lip [lɪp] Lippe • 21 grateful [ˈɡreɪtful] dankbar

criss-cross patterns on the earth. "It's like someone has been drawing in the sand."

"Why would anyone come here to draw in the sand? You're stupid," said Pim. They had found Jake's bag and Pim's computer bag as they walked to the trees. Although it was extremely heavy, Pim had insisted on taking the bag with him. Now he kept playing with the laptop's keyboard in the hope it might come to life.

Jake saw the trail of a large passenger jet cut across the sky.

Maritska ran from under the trees and waved her hands in the air. "Maybe they'll see us," she said hopefully.

"Maybe," replied Jake. He was certain they wouldn't. Every so often they heard odd sounds. Birds rattled through the branches overhead. Some animals howled. They sounded like dogs. Crickets and lizards made strange sounds in the distance.

"It's getting dark," cried Maritska. "I'm so tired."

"We'll have to sleep here," said Jake.

The sun was sinking fast. The trees made long shadows across the sand.

"This sucks," moaned Pim. "I'm thirsty. And hungry." Jake's stomach was rumbling, too. He could hardly keep his eyes open. They'd been travelling for nearly two days without a good night's sleep. And jet lag was kicking in, too.

The sun disappeared behind the big rock. Night fell almost at once.

"I can't spend the night here. I want to go home. Help! Someone, help us!" Maritska shouted in the darkness. Her fear upset Pim. He ran to his sister and stood next to her. "Help!" he shouted with her. "Help us! Please!"

1 criss-cross pattern [ˈkrɪskɪks pætn] kreuz und quer verlaufendes Muster • 6 to insist on sth [ɪnˈsɪst] auf etw. bestehen • 15 branch [brɑːnʃ] Zweig • 15 to howl [haʊl] heulen • 16 lizard [ˈlɪzəd] Eidechse • 22 This sucks! [ðɪs ˈsʌks] Zum Kotzen! • 23 to rumble [ˈrʌmbəl] hier: knurren

Maritska and Pim's cries died away. The howls of the dingoes in the distance grew louder, as if in reply.

"I hear something," Maritska suddenly said. She was shaking and told them all to be really quiet.

They stood in silence. They couldn't see anyone, but they heard the soft sound of footsteps in the sand.

"Don't move ..." came a voice from the darkness.

The kids froze in terror.

There was a whizzing sound. A white stick flew past their faces. It disappeared into the darkness and landed in the sand with a thud.

Jake turned round.

A figure appeared. The moon had risen and its pale light reflected off the dark skin of the person coming towards them.

"Stay still," said the figure.

At first Jake thought it was a boy. But as the figure walked past them he saw it was a girl. She had thick, wavy black hair, was dressed in a bikini made of brown animal skins and carried a pack of white sticks on her back.



8 to freeze [friːz] hier: erstarren • 9 to whizz [wɪz] flitzen • 11 thud [θʌd] dumpfer Schlag • 13 pale [peɪl] blass

Maritska and Pim held on to each other in fear. Part of them was relieved to see another person, but another part was scared of this strange being.

“Nice,” they heard the girl say in the darkness.

“Who are you?” shouted Jake. “Can you help us?”

The girl came back to them. She held a giant snake in her hands. The white stick which had shot past them stuck out of its dead body.

“I already have,” she said and smiled. Her white teeth and sparkling eyes shone in the moonlight. She held the snake out to them, “I just saved your lives.”

Chapter 5 Marks on the earth

Maritska stared in horror at the dead snake.

The girl pointed to the marks in the sand which Maritska had thought were drawings. “That’s how you tell when snakes are around. If this had bit you, pretty soon you’d be dead.”

Jake shuddered. If they had gone to sleep there, it was likely they’d never have woken up.

“We’ve got food now too,” she said and took out her knife.

“Eat that?” asked Maritska.

“If its bite can kill, how can we eat it?” asked Pim.

In one quick move the girl cut off the snake’s head. They looked at it in horror. The girl saw their disgust. She hid the head behind her back. Then she quickly brought it back and waved the dead head at them.

Pim and Maritska jumped back because they didn’t want any blood to drip on them.

6 snake [sneɪk] Schlange • 10 to sparkle [ˈspɑːkl] funkeln • 13 mark [mɑːk] Spur
15 to bite [baɪt] beißen • 17 to shudder [ˈʃʌdə] schauern • 24 disgust [dɪsˈɡʌst]
Ekel • 28 to drip [drɪp] tropfen

The girl laughed. “The poison sacks are up here. The rest of it is good to eat.”

Jake smiled; it was fun to see someone tease Pim and Maritska for a change. “Who are you?” Jake asked the girl.
“I’m Kyeema,” she answered. She was busy collecting sticks and piling them up.

“Wow. Are you going to show us some magical way to make fire?” asked Pim.

Kyeema’s eyes opened wide. “Yes. Very mysterious. I make fire with a gift from my ancestors. Watch closely.”

The kids leaned forward, eager to see how she was going to do it.

Kyeema reached into the pack with her spears. She whipped out a small, red plastic object. She flicked it open and a flame shot out. “It’s called a lighter,” she said and set fire to the sticks.

It didn’t take long for the fire to take hold. The kids sat around it and watched Kyeema cook the snake. She gave the first piece to Jake. Not wanting to look like a wimp, he took a big bite.

“Is it OK?” asked Pim.

“I’d prefer a Big Mac, but it’s not bad,” said Jake.

Kyeema gave Pim a piece of snake. He made a face as he ate it, but he was so hungry he was glad for anything.

Maritska only tried a little bit of hers. “It’s disgusting. I can’t eat this,” she said and put her piece of snake meat down.

Kyeema shrugged. “No worries, all the more for us.”

After they had eaten, Kyeema said she’d find them some water. She hacked a branch off the tree and set the end on fire. She walked forward, bent down and stared at the sand.

“What are you looking for?” asked Jake.

5 Kyeema [kaɪˈiːmə] Speer • 13 spear [spiː] Speer • 15 lighter [ˈlaɪtə] Feuerzeug
19 wimp [wɪmp] Waschlapfen, Angsthasen • 31 to bend down [bend ˈdaʊn]
sich bücken

"Animal tracks," she replied. "See," she pointed to small dents in the sand. "Dingos. All we have to do is follow where they went."

The moon was bright and, away from the fire, the kids' eyes got used to the dark. They could see the animals' tracks quite clearly.

They only had to walk for ten minutes or so before they reached a small valley surrounded by grass. In its middle, the moon reflected in a pool of water.

10 Pim and Maritska ran down to it happily.

"Is it good to drink?" asked Jake.

"If it's good enough for dingoes and roos, it's good enough for us," said Kyeema and ran after the kids.

15 "How come this is here?" asked Pim as he drank water from his clasped hands.

"The rain fills all the low parts. This will dry up soon," Kyeema explained. "Then the animals go somewhere else."

20 After they had drunk all they needed, the kids made their way back to the trees. Kyeema threw more sticks on the fire.

Pim and Maritska were so tired, now that they had had something to drink, that they fell asleep within seconds.

25 Jake and Kyeema stayed awake and stared into the flames. They told each other how they had ended up here.

"You're from Holland?" asked Kyeema. "If you're Dutch, how come you speak English so well?"

30 Jake explained that his family had lived all over Europe because of his parents' work. Between them the kids spoke four languages and could argue fluently in all of them.

Kyeema wondered why Jake and his brother and sister looked so different from one another.

2 dent [dent] Vertiefung • 8 valley [væli] Tal • 8 surrounded by [sə'raʊndɪd baɪ] umgeben von • 15 to clasp [kla:sp] hier: zusammendrücken • 24 awake [əweɪk] wach

"I'm adopted," he said. "And Pim and Maritska are half brother and sister. I joined the family when they were young. Our parents gave me the biggest bedroom and they've hated me ever since."

5 Kyeema's parents were dead, too, and she had been living with her sister. She told him about the settlement where her people, the Yolngu tribe, lived. She told him about the conflict between their old ways and the modern world. The government believed Aboriginal kids were missing out on education and work opportunities. Some of Kyeema's 10 friends had been sent to live with white families a long way away in the hope it would improve their futures.

Kyeema had always wanted to discover more about the world. But she didn't want to be sent to the city before she 15 had experienced all she could in the outback. She had decided to go and try out for herself the things she had learned by watching the older members of her tribe. She decided to go on a walkabout.

"I thought only boys did that," said Jake.

20 Kyeema immediately flew into a rage. "You sound like them! The old ones don't like change. I can do anything a boy can! I hunt. I follow tracks. I know most of the words to the songs. I have the right to prove myself as much as a boy. What should I have done? Sat at home and waited for some guy to come along and marry me?" 25

Jake raised his hands in defence, "Sorry. I didn't mean to be rude."

Kyeema shook her head. "You're all right, mate. This gets me mad sometimes. Our people have got a lot of history. But I've never wanted to live in the past. I've always wanted 30 to learn from the past so I could build up my own future!"

"Whatever the reason, I'm glad you decided to go on a walkabout," Jake said. "Lucky you came by when you did. If not, we'd probably be dead."

7 Yolngu [jɔːŋɡu] • 18 walkabout [wɔːkəˈbaʊt] rituelle Wanderung • 20 to fly into a rage [ˌflaɪ ɪntə ə ˈreɪdʒ] sich in Rage reden • 22 to hunt [hʌnt] jagen • 26 defence [dɪˈfens] Abwehr • 28 all right [ɔːlˈraɪt] (schon) in Ordnung

Kyeema stared at Jake. "It wasn't luck, Dutch."

Their eyes met in the sparkling firelight.

"Paths cross for a reason," said Kyeema. She looked over to where Pim and Maritska slept under the trees. Jake leant back and used his jacket as a pillow.

"How do you know which way to go?" he asked sleepily.

"Everything that happens in life leaves a mark in the world," said Kyeema. "There'll be a scar on the earth where your plane crashed. The tree will show a wound where I cut off the branch. Those are recent things. Our songs tell stories from when the world came into being during the Dreamtime. You see that big rock on the horizon? That's where the lizard ancestor was buried after he died on his walk to the sea."

"But that's just a story."

"After our lives have ended, what's left but stories people tell about us? I want someone to tell a story about me one day. I want to make a mark on the world and change it for the better. I don't want to be forgotten. Get some sleep, Dutch. We've got a big day tomorrow."

The fire crackled. Jake's eyes closed. Kyeema and the outback disappeared into blackness and he fell asleep.

Chapter 6 Kyeema's song

Jake had strange dreams. One minute he was on a plane, the next he was falling through the air. One second everyone was congratulating him for doing something good and the next moment people were blaming him for doing something bad. For one second, just before he woke up, he dreamt his real mother and father were still alive.

1 Dutch [dʌtʃ] Holländer/-in • 8 scar [skɑː] Narbe • 9 wound [wuːnd] Wunde • 13 to bury ['beri] begraben • 21 to crackle ['kræk] knistern • 25 to congratulate [kən'græteɪtʃ] gratulieren

Jake opened his eyes and blinked. The sunlight was shining directly into his face. "Kyeema?" he sat up and looked around. They had all gone. Jake panicked. Where were Pim and Maritska? Suddenly he was scared that they had all run off and left him alone.

"Ow!" Jake cried out. Something hit him on the back of the head. He picked it up and saw it was a round, red fruit.

"Got ya!" he heard Pim shout.

"Good shot," came Kyeema's voice. Jake turned to find Kyeema, Maritska and Pim running across the sand.

"Eat it fast. We've got to get moving," shouted Kyeema.

Jake bit into the fruit. It was a bit like a peach, with a hard stone in the middle.

"It's called a 'quandong'," Pim said confidently.

"Fruits which are red are usually good to eat," said Kyeema. "You mustn't eat any yellow things. And any fruit which doesn't look good to eat probably isn't."

Maritska finished her quandong. She threw the stone away and picked up her bag. "I've had enough of this. Let's go and get rescued."

Pim picked up his bag of computer stuff.

Kyeema stared at them like they were crazy. She shook her head gravely, "You must leave it all behind."

Maritska and Pim insisted they bring their things with them.

"It took me years to save up for this," Pim said and held up his Playstation.

Maritska held her bag of clothes and make-up tightly.

"Which would you rather have," asked Kyeema, "your life or your possessions?"

"I want both," replied Maritska.

Her honesty made Jake laugh. "Come on," he said.

"See how Kyeema travels. She only has what she needs."

1 to blink [blɪŋk] blinzeln • 13 peach [pi:tʃ] Pfirsich • 14 stone [stəʊn] Stein • 15 quandong ['kwɒndɒŋ] essbare Frucht • 24 gravely ['ɡreɪvli] ernst • 31 possession [pə'zeʃn] Besitz • 33 honesty ['ɒnɪsti] Ehrlichkeit