

WRIT-BITS 2018

Creative Write-it Anthology

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Introduction

Ben Pearmain



Welcome to Writ-Bits 2018, our fourth Creative Write-it Anthology. The following pages feature action-packed adventures filled with Faustian pacts, natural disasters and alien invasions, thrilling tales of intrigue and horror, celebrations of friendship and self belief, and meditations on nature, sport and life itself.

The mixed bag of themes and writing styles reflects the 162 authors who created the stories, poems and comics featured in this year's anthology. These talented young writers range from the six year olds who are just beginning to master structuring a story and adding some details, to teenagers who are experimenting with advanced narratives and complex themes.

They were asked to choose their favourite piece of work from 2018, and with the help of their Workshop

Leader they edited, typed, and submitted their work for publication, just like adult authors. Put together, their pieces present the assorted flavours of Creative Write-it — an image beautifully represented by Aries Cheng on this edition's front cover.

Thank you to all of the kids for your amazing ideas, your eagerness to learn new ways to express them, and your willingness to Get Back To Work.

Finally, thank you to my talented, hard-working colleagues whose passion for writing and helping young writers express their complex, hilarious, and sometimes gross, imaginations.

Bon Appétit!

Ben Pearmain

Studio and Publications Manager

The Night Eagle

Delphi Turner



The desert stretched far and wide, lonely and desolate. Where the only stream runs, the only trees grow, the only animals live, there sits a house. It rests under the shade of one of the only trees, where they can seek shelter from the sun that burns relentlessly.

Sky sighs, her face pressed against the warm glass of the window. Life in the desert is hard. Harder than what she is used to.

May places a hand on her little sister's back. "I miss them too," she says softly, her voice quavering. Then she stands up and abruptly makes a statement. "It's nearly time for dinner. Go outside and play for a while."

Sky exhales, and steps out onto the sandy terrain. The sun has almost set, and its dying light sends shadows dancing across the earth.

The Night Eagle

Sky misses her parents more than she has ever missed anything. No matter how hard she tries, her thoughts always stray to her mother, lying pale in the hospital bed, her father shaking his head gravely at his daughters. Now that they are living alone, May, being sixteen, is in charge.

The evening sounds fill the air. The gurgling of the stream, the calling of an eagle, the wind in the gum leaves above. The moon has just started to rise, silver and luminescent. *One week is enough*, Sky thinks, and throws a pebble across the dirt. She remembers last week when her father drove them here in his Ute. Breaking into her thoughts is a rustle in the leaves above her. Startled, she stands. She can just make out the shape of a bird, sitting in the branches of the gum. Flying down, it perches on the rock beside her. Warily, Sky examines it. She can see that it is an eagle. A black one. It cries out to her, and touches its beak to her hand.

“Night Eagle,” she whispers to it and it gently squawks. She watches it as it flies away and disappears into the moon.

The next morning, the sun spreads its heat across the land, and Sky searches for the eagle. At dusk, she goes again to the rock, and meets Night Eagle. It jumps onto her arm, talons drawing scarlet blood.

“May!” Sky calls to her sister one morning, presenting to her the claw marks on her arm.

“What happened?” May exclaims, horrified.

Delphi Turner

“It was the Night Eagle. The bird I go see every night. He sits on my arm. Black as the night sky he comes from. He is my friend.”

“Sky, listen to me.” Her face changes, and her eyes leak tears. “Mother, is gone.”

“No! May, no, please...” Sky’s eyes shimmer with tears.

“Will father come?”

“No, Grandma too, now is ill.”

For the rest of the day, the two sisters sit together and weep.

The night comes, as dark as the Night Eagle’s wings. Sky and her eagle stay up all night, staring and forlorn till sunrise. Her eyes are red and raw when she steps inside, and falls asleep.

Five days pass, and always Sky visits the Night Eagle. “Oh precious friend, I’ll never leave you. I want to be with you forever. I love you.”

One night at eleven PM Sky is awakened by May, running into her room.

“Sky! Wake up! It’s coming!”

“What is?”

“The Worst Wind! It’s called that because it carries a deadly pollen. It comes from across the sea.”

Sky’s thoughts are with her eagle. She runs outside and calls for him.

The Night Eagle

May grabs her arm. “No! We must leave. Now!”

“I’m not going.”

“You have to! You’ll die!”

“I have to find the Night Eagle.”

“A bird of your imagination! Look, you can see it coming already.”

“No.” Sky breaks free from her sister and runs calling to her eagle.

The wind is closing in and May must leave. She has no choice.

Five hours later, May emerges, mask over her mouth. She is searching for her sister.

Under the gum is where she finds the bodies.

“Sky?” Her voice cracks.

A black bird is butting her sister’s body with its head. May knows this is the Night Eagle.

That night she sits on a rock, grieving. Then two birds appear. Night Eagles. They sit on her arm and nuzzle her hand. May places a hand on the smaller eagle’s back.

Her eyes fill with tears as they fly towards the moon, and disappear.

ABOUT CREATIVE WRITE-IT

Creative Write-it is a studio for young writers, based in Melbourne, Victoria. With the aim to inspire and encourage young writers, we run creative writing workshops for young people from our studios in Balwyn North, Fitzroy North, and at schools across Victoria.

www.creativewriteit.com.au