

Hueber Lektüren

Broken Wings

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The pilot

Mr Desmond looked at Simon in the mirror. 'Have you been out to the desert before?' he asked.

Simon shook his head. 'No, sir. This will be our first time. Our parents only moved out to the gold mine a few weeks ago. We lived in Sydney before that. Dad was a doctor at one of the big hospitals.'

'And our mother didn't go out to work at all back then,' Angela added, without looking up from her drawing.

Mr Desmond smiled. 'I suppose they're finding the desert very different from living in Sydney.'

'Dad says there aren't as many cars out there,' Simon said. 'Life's different for Angela and me too – not being with our parents, having to live at school. When we were in Sydney, we all lived in a house.'

'Your family has seen a lot of changes, then,' Mr Desmond said as he began to slow down, then steered the car through a gate. 'Well, this is Geraldton airport. I'll find a place to park, then I'll help you inside with your bags.'

He found a parking space and stopped the car. Angela watched her twin brother. Simon was very interested in the small aircraft lined up on the other side of the high fence. *Sometimes he is such a typical boy*, she thought.

'What are you thinking about?' she asked him. She already knew, but she wanted to hear him admit it.

'I'm thinking about flying in one of those,' Simon replied.

Angela rolled her eyes. 'You soon will be,' she said. He was seven minutes older than her, but sometimes it felt as if he was seven years *younger*.

'No, Ange, I'm thinking about being the *pilot* in one of those planes.'

Angela laughed, but Mr Desmond saw it as an opportunity to be encouraging.

‘Keep working hard the way you have been in my Maths class and you can be, one day, Simon,’ he said. ‘Come on, we need to hurry. Your pilot will be waiting for you.’

They took their luggage from the back of the car and carried it into the airport terminal. ‘The pilot said he’d meet us near the café at two o’clock,’ Mr Desmond said, looking at his watch. ‘His name is Gus.’

‘I hope he’s a good pilot,’ Angela said as she quickly took out her notebook and began to sketch an old woman sitting nearby. She was always sketching in her notebook. It helped the time pass, and she enjoyed people telling her how much they liked her pictures.

‘I’ve heard that Gus is a very good pilot,’ Mr Desmond said. ‘I wonder if this is him coming over now.’

Angela looked up. She hoped that Mr Desmond was wrong, and that the man walking towards them *wasn’t* their pilot. She’d always thought that pilots wore clean white shirts, polished shoes, and caps. This man wore a dirty grey T-shirt, old shorts, and sandals on his feet. The sandals had black grease on them.

The man stopped in front of the children. ‘Are you the Smith children?’ he asked, scratching at his half-beard.

‘Yes, this is Simon Smith, and this is his sister Angela,’ Mr Desmond replied. ‘Are you Gus?’

The man shook his head. ‘No, I’m not Gus. Gus is in Esperance. There was a big storm down there last night, and he couldn’t fly back, so I’m going to take you out to the gold mine in my plane. My name’s Eric.’

‘Are you a real pilot?’ Angela asked.

‘Of course I’m a real pilot!’

‘You don’t really look like one, that’s all,’ Angela said.

‘Ange!’ said Simon.



Chapter 3

Mayday!

Angela screamed as the nose of the plane pointed down. The sky that had been visible through the windscreen had suddenly gone away, and in its place was the red and grey-green of the desert. She felt as if she weighed nothing, and as the plane continued to dive, bits of rubbish drifted around the cabin.

‘Angela! Angela! Help me pull him back!’ Simon shouted.

‘What?’

‘Eric’s leaning on the yoke! Quickly!’ Simon was holding Eric around the shoulders and was trying to lift him up from where he’d come to rest. ‘Help me, Angela!’

The plane was still in a dive, and was beginning to shake. A groaning sound came from somewhere above Angela’s head, near where the wings met the roof of the cabin. And the front window was still full of desert sand and bush, although those trees were getting bigger, and getting bigger quickly.

Angela reached forward and grabbed Eric’s shoulders with both hands. ‘Okay, now!’ she shouted, and together she and Simon managed to get his weight away from the yoke. Eric’s head hung forward and rocked back and forth as if it was held on by nothing more than a piece of string.

‘Now hold him there!’ Simon ordered, and as Angela struggled to hold Eric up, Simon took hold of the yoke on his side and pulled back on it, hard. Angela felt her stomach sinking and her limbs growing heavier as the plane started to level out, and through the windscreen the red and grey-green became blue sky again. Angela saw Simon sit back in his seat. The noise in the cabin had lessened as the plane had slowed from its dive.

‘Are you okay?’ he asked her.

Sounds in the night

Angela returned the luggage to the plane. Then, with a little help from Simon, she dragged Eric the twenty metres back to the plane too. Several times she wondered *why* she was moving him. Even if he did wake up in the night, or if he suddenly grew worse, what was she going to do? But Bob had said that they should stay near the plane in case they needed to talk on the radio, and she knew that she couldn't leave Eric all alone, even twenty metres away. So she dragged him.

When she'd finished, she sat down. 'That's hard work,' she said.

'Has he woken up at all?' Simon asked her, leaning against the side of the plane.

'No. I think he might be going to die, Simon.'

'Don't say that.'

'I think we're all going to die.'

'No, don't say that, Ange,' Simon repeated. 'They can find us now, thanks to your rock bridge. If you hadn't seen that we wouldn't have had any hope at all.'

'But do you remember how small it looked?' she asked him. 'In this great big desert, it was so tiny. And we're just a little plane half buried under a big pile of sand.'

'It might take two or three days, but they'll find us,' Simon said, but he didn't sound very confident. 'We just have to make sure that we use our water carefully. Did you find any food?'

Angela shook her head. 'No. I think Eric ate it all.'

Just then they heard a hiss, and a tiny voice coming from the headphones. Simon reached in and picked them up. 'Hello?' he said. 'What?...Yes, I'll get my sister.' He handed the headphones to Angela. 'They want to talk to you about Eric.'

Activities

Chapters 1 and 2

Before you read

A. Look at the picture on page 16 and circle the correct answers.

1. How many people do you think this plane can carry?
a. only one b. four c. more than ten
2. What kind of land is the plane flying over?
a. mountainous land b. forest-covered land
c. flat, dry land

B. Find these words in your dictionary. Use them in the sentences.

diabetes cabin level shrugged

1. He _____ and said he didn't know the answer.
2. Things keep rolling off this table. We need to _____ it.
3. Max has _____, so he's careful about what he eats.
4. The _____ of the boat had built-in beds.

C. Listen to Track 3 on CD 1 and answer these questions.

1. Who sat down in the back of the plane?
a. Angela b. Eric
2. What did the inside of the plane smell like?
a. old clothes b. old food
3. Where would Angela see Mr Desmond again in two weeks?
a. back at school b. back at the airport

After you read

COMPREHENSION

A. Circle the correct answers.

1. What city did the twins' family use to live in?
a. Geraldton b. Esperance c. Sydney
2. What was Eric wearing on his feet?
a. boots b. sandals c. shoes
3. What time were they due to land at the gold mine?
a. two o'clock b. four o'clock c. six o'clock
4. What did Eric drink?
a. soft drinks b. beer c. water

B. Circle T for true or F for false for these sentences.

1. They drove all night. T / F
2. Angela leaned on Simon. T / F
3. Margaret used a telephone to talk to Doctor Howard. T / F
4. There was insulin at the clinic. T / F

C. Complete these sentences.

1. Angela said their accident wasn't a crash, it was a _____.
2. Angela was so tired that she felt sick in the _____.
3. At the clinic, Angela talked on the radio to her _____.
4. The helicopter's blades threw up clouds of _____.

D. Write short answers to these questions.

1. Which direction would Simon have gone in if they hadn't been rescued?

2. Who or what licked Angela on the cheek when she was asleep?

3. What did Simon have to drink in the clinic?

4. What form of transport did they leave Yallidoo in?

LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

A. Write the correct prepositions in the spaces.

down towards through from

1. They bumped along _____ the desert.
2. Bert jumped _____ from the pick-up truck.
3. Margaret couldn't get a response _____ Eric.
4. Simon nodded _____ the radio.

B. Use these letters to make words from Chapters 7 and 8. The first letter is given for each word.

1. trkcu: t _____
2. neapl: p _____
3. chnema: m _____
4. cptroehile: h _____

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Listen to Chapters 7 and 8 on the CD. Describe the relationship between the twins after their desert adventure. Do they get on well?

Glossary

adj. adjective; *n.* noun; *v.* verb

aboriginal /,æbə'ri:dʒn(ə)l/ *adj.*

der Ureinwohner
Australiens, den
Ureinwohnern Australiens
zugehörig

Aborigine /,æbə'ri:dʒəni/ *n.*

Ureinwohner(in) Australiens

a couple of /ə 'kʌpl əv/

einige, ein paar; zwei

bandage /'bændɪdʒ/ *n.*

Verband, Binde

blade /bleɪd/ *n.* (of a propeller)

Propellerblatt

blink /blɪŋk/ *v.*

blinzeln

bump /bʌmp/ *n.*

Bö; Unebenheit; Stoß

v.

holpern; stoßen

clinic /'klɪnɪk/ *n.*

Klinik; Ambulanz

cross /krɒs/ *adj.*

sauer

diabetes /,daɪə'bi:tɪz/ *n.*

Diabetes

diabetic /,daɪə'betɪk/ *n.*

Diabetiker

adj.

zuckerkrank

distinguishing feature

besonderes Kennzeichen

/dɪ'stɪŋgwɪʃɪŋ 'fɪ:tʃə/ *n.*

(in a landscape)

EPIRB /'i:pɜ:b/ (Emergency

Notfunkbake (*sendet ein*

Position Indicating Radio

Notsignal, das über

Beacon)

Satellit empfangen und an

Rettungsdienste

weitergeleitet werden

kann)

frown /fraʊn/ *v.*

die Stirn runzeln

gauge /geɪdʒ/ *n.*

Anzeige

gentle /'dʒentl/ *adj.*

sanft

groan /grəʊn/ *n.*

Ächzen

v.

stöhnen