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To the city!

Saturday morning

Evie Clark waited beside the car. She looked at her phone – again. ‘Hurry up, Mum!’ she called. ‘We need to go now.’

Her mother came outside.

‘Where’s Harry? Evie asked.

‘He’s not coming to the station.’

‘Why not?’

Mrs Clark said, ‘Please get in the car, Evie. I’ll tell you on the way.’

They drove away. ‘Your brother isn’t happy,’ said Mrs Clark. ‘Now he’s in high school, he’s meeting new kids from other towns. They laugh about his scars and call him Scarface.’

Harry had scars on his face and on his arms and legs. Evie had scars on her hands, and on her legs too.

Evie said, ‘I’ll find those kids and talk to them! They won’t call him Scarface again.’

Mrs Clark smiled and said, ‘You’re a good sister, Evie.’

Evie, Harry and their mother lived in Seaview, a small town beside the sea. Seaview was about 300 kilometres south of Sydney. Evie was in the Seaview High School choir. She loved music and singing. Today she and three other students were going to the city with their music teacher, Ms Keating. Evie, Mike Rennie, Jess Smith and Clare Littleton were the best singers in the choir and often sang as a group. The four of them were going to sing with the Wattlegrove School choir at Wattlegrove’s one-hundred-year birthday concert. Ms Keating was an old Wattlegrove student. Her best friend was now the music teacher there.

Evie said, 'Mum, I don't want to go away.'

Mrs Clark said, 'Aren't you happy about going to the city for the concert?'

'Not really. The choir will be full of city kids. They'll look at me and laugh at my scars.'

'You'll be okay. Your friends will be there with you. And you and Mike are both staying with the same family.'

Mrs Clark stopped the car across the road from the railway station. Ms Keating and the others were already there. The students' families were there too.

'You're late, Evie,' said Ms Keating.

'I'm sorry, Miss,' said Evie.

Ms Keating said to everyone, 'Remember, we'll be in the city for four nights and you'll be staying with families from Wattlegrove School. I gave you their names last week. You need to sing well at the birthday concert. Then the school will ask Seaview High students to return next year!'

The train came and the Seaview High group got on. Everyone called goodbye. Jess and Clare sat in one seat. Ms Keating said, 'Sit with Mike, Evie. Or you can sit with me.' Evie liked Ms Keating but no one wanted to sit with the teacher!

The train left the station. Mike and Ms Keating read, Jess and Clare talked and Evie looked out of the window.

An old man and his wife sat in front of their group. The woman read a newspaper. 'Oh, listen to this!' she said to her husband. 'A man went to the shops and left his dog in the car. A thief took the dog and sold it for a lot of money.'

'Did the police find the dog?' her husband asked.

She looked at the newspaper again. 'Yes. They found it and gave it back. Remember my friend Mavis lost her dog in the summer? She never found it. Maybe a thief took it.'



On the ferry

Tuesday afternoon

It was the last day in the city for the Seaview students. Lou stayed home with them. At lunchtime, they walked to the café near the ferry wharf. They took Millie with them.

Mike went into the café to get their meal. The girls sat at a table on the footpath. Millie was tired. She went to sleep beside the table.

Lou and Evie watched a video of the Wattlegrove concert on Lou's phone.

'We were really good,' said Evie. 'Can you send this to my phone? I want to show Mum and Harry.'

Lou sent the video and they watched it again on Evie's phone. They laughed and talked.

'Millie's quiet,' said Lou.

They looked down. Millie was gone!

Lou screamed. 'Where's Millie?'

They heard barking and looked around.

'It's that woman,' said Lou. 'Robyn Bird!'

Robyn Bird was at the corner with a big black bag. Millie barked again. Robyn Bird walked away fast.

'Millie's in the bag!' Lou shouted.

Mike ran out of the café.

Lou shouted again. 'Mike, Robyn Bird's got Millie!'

Robyn ran then. She was a big woman but she was quick. Mike ran quickly too. The girls followed. People at the café watched. Some got up to help.

The red car was in the next street. Robyn ran to it. Jim jumped out and took the bag from her. Mike jumped on to



Activities

Chapter 1

Before you read

A. Look at the picture on page 6 and circle the correct answers.

- How are these people travelling?
a. by bus b. by train c. by plane
- What is the old woman doing?
a. sleeping b. talking c. reading

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

scar choir teeth blood

- There are 56 singers in the school _____.
- I hit my nose, and now _____ is coming out of it!
- That dog has very sharp _____.
- I fell out of a tree when I was younger. Do you see the _____ on my leg?

C. Listen to Track 3 and answer these questions.

- Where did Evie and her family live?
a. in a small town b. in a big city
- How many students were going to the city?
a. three b. four
- Which school was having a concert?
a. Seaview High School b. Wattlegrove School

After you read

COMPREHENSION

A. Circle the correct answers.

- Where did Evie's mother drive Evie?
a. to school b. to the station c. to Sydney
- Where were the Seaview students going to stay in Sydney?
a. in a hotel b. at the school c. with Wattlegrove families
- Who did Evie sit next to on the train?
a. Jess b. Clare c. Mike
- What did the woman sitting in front of Evie talk about?
a. people taking dogs b. her own dog c. a concert

Chapter 4

Before you read

A. Answer these questions about the story so far.

1. Who drove the red car that Evie, Mike and Lou saw?
a. Alex b. Ms Gibson c. Jim, the man from the café
2. Why were lots of people sending emails to Gina?
a. because they wanted to buy Millie's puppies
b. to sell dogs to her
c. because they wanted to come and stay

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

bolt cutters fingerprints alarm torch

1. Before you go out, please turn the _____ on.
2. It's dark outside. Take a _____ on your walk.
3. We need to cut this chain. I'll get the _____.
4. Joe ate chocolate. He's left brown _____ everywhere!

C. Listen to Track 5 and answer these questions.

1. What time did Evie wake up?
a. one o'clock b. nine o'clock
2. What did she think about as she looked out of the window?
a. the Andersons b. her family in Seaview
3. What did she hear?
a. the dogs barking b. a car, and a car door closing

After you read

COMPREHENSION

A. Circle the correct answers.

1. When Evie woke at 3 a.m., what did she notice first?
a. The streetlight wasn't shining. b. The gates were open.
c. The dogs were barking.
2. Who did Evie go and wake up first?
a. Lou b. Gina c. Mike
3. What did Alex hear in the garden?
a. the dogs barking b. a car c. a police car
4. Who did Gina call?
a. Evie's mother b. the police c. Ms Gibson