

SECTION 223 – Bush Poetry AGE 14 to 18

AVOIDANCE

© Brenda Joy

I live upon an outback farm
where everything can do me harm.
Away out west of everywhere
I know I have to be beware.
With spiders, rats and robust bull,
with barbs and burrs and paddocks full
of snakes and huge meat-eating ants,
with poison bearing trees and plants.....

.....there's only one way to survive.
My special plan to stay alive
and not to have my nerves destroyed....
is to ensure that I avoid –
all things that whine or grunt or howl,
all things that screech or moan or growl,
all things that prick or bite or sting,
all things that crawl or use a wing...

...all things that are too small to see,
all things of greater size than me,
all things that travel fast (or slow),
all things whose names I do not know,
all things with feathers, scales or claws,
all things that live their lives outdoors,
all things that come into the house
and anything that's like a mouse...

...all things with excess shock of hair,
all things that fly up in the air,
all things that sway or move or swell,
all things whose names I cannot spell.
I could go on but with the thought
of all those critters – I'm distraught
so I'll just make a cup of tea
and hope they're just as scared of me.

OR

SONG OF THE RIVER

© Colleen McLaughlin

I am swinging to the northward, I am
curving to the south,
I am spreading, I am splitting, running free.
I am creeping past the sandhills,
going steady as the land fills,
for all my channels lie ahead of me.

Through the grasslands and the mulga,
past the rocks, eroded bare,
I will cover up the secrets, buried deep.
For if man thinks he can beat me,
I will tell him come and meet me,
but the signs to show the way are mine to
keep.

Because I am Diamantina, and I rule the
great outback,
I'm its heartbeat, I'm its keeper, it's my
land.

With my channels full and flowing,
and the grasses green and growing,
I'm the power that man must learn to
understand.

I will take your heart and hold it, I will
commandeer your soul,
if you listen to my voice and stand up tall.
If your ears can hear me singing,
and your answer comes back ringing,
then I'll know that you have recognised my
call.

For this is my direction, as the sovereign of
this land,
I will whisper to you secrets of its ways.
But for you to know and share it,
do not take its heart and tear it,
for I tell you now – the loser always pays.

Listen hard – I'm Diamantina – and the
sandhills and the plains
need my water as their lifeblood – it's my
land.

Should my channels cease their flowing,
then with dusty, dry winds blowing,
I will know you have not learnt to
understand

SECTION 224 – Bush Poetry AGE 11 to 13

CAMPING WITH MUM

© Caroline Tuohey

In Spring each year we camp with Dad,
We go out bush – it's really rad....

But this year things went all astray –
Dad broke his leg and has to stay
at home on crutches, stuck in bed.
We have to camp with Mum instead!

My brother Joe said, "*Let's stay home;
Mum doesn't like to run and roam.*"

The trip is off – I have no doubt.
Mum likes to keep the outdoors out!

She doesn't cope without a loo
and toileting is what you do
behind a tree in dead of night,
while trying not to shake with fright.

We spoke to Dad and voiced concern,
but Dad said, "*Guys, she wants to learn.*"

So Mum began collecting stuff
She thinks we need to live life rough.

She packed the car and off we went,
quite unaware we had no tent.
We found a nifty camping site,
and quickly got a fire alight.

We boiled a billy, made some tea,
then heard Mum say, "*You're kidding me!*"

It seems the tent's still in the shed.

We'll have to sleep outside instead.

*"And sleeping on the ground's not fun.
Let's think about what should be done."*

Her face lit up, she gave a smile.

"We'll try Plan B – let's camp in style!"

We packed the car and headed back,
along the bumpy country track.

She drove us to a posh hotel –
we booked in to The Sofitel!

(NB. For competitor's information: Sofitel
is a chain of 5 star hotels)

BUSH TUCKER

© Jenny Erianger

I prise it from its woody nest,
examine it up close.
I never, ever would have guessed
a grub could look so gross!

It's such an ugly, pudgy grub,
a truly horrid sight –
repulsive rolls of squishy flub
decked out in ghostly white.

The kookaburra up above
is getting itchy feet.
I know for sure she'd dearly love
to snaffle up this treat.

I'll only have to turn around
head back along the track,
and she'll be swooping to the ground
to snatch her scrumptious snack.

The grub is wriggling back to bed
to tuck itself away.
The kookaburra cocks her head,
eyes fixed upon her prey.

No grub has ever hit my tum –
the notion makes me sick,
But Kookaburra's thinking yum
marshmallow on a stick!

OR

SECTION 225 - Bush Poetry AGE 10 & under

PANCAKES

© Marco Gliori

She runs to the kitchen and begs, begs, begs
for milk and flour and eggs, eggs, eggs.

She stirs and whirs in a big fat bowl
then into the pan where, bless my soul,
they sizzle and bubble and smell so sweet –
we just can't wait to eat, eat, eat!

With a pat and a flip and a scoop to the tray
we lick our chops and cry "HOORAY!"
Add a drip of honey and a splatter of cream
and a great golly gosh – it's a pancake dream.

OR

TEEF!

© David Campbell

I've just had a *toof* out,
and now my *mouf* hurts.
I cannot talk *pwoper*,
just mumbles and *bwurts*.

I had an injection
that made my *mouf* numb,
and now where my *toof* was
is *nuffing but gum*.

I cannot eat *sumfing*
too cold or too hot,
in case I start *bweeding*
where my *toof* is not.

My dentist must love me,
despite all my *gwief*...
he's making a fortune
from my *wotten teef*!