

# 1770

**H**ave you ever felt that horrible feeling of time travel? Your stomach jolting back into the past? I have. And you are about to find out how.

It started like this:

Once upon a time...

Oops sorry, wrong story. This is how it really started. One day, Mum sent me out to get the mail. I didn't want dishwasher duty, so off I went without any hesitation.

Fortunately, there were no spiders in the mailbox.

But there was a letter, and it was addressed to me!

I'd never gotten a letter before. My fingers trembled as I carefully peeled open the sticky seal. The paper was blank! I looked more carefully at it. In the top right-hand corner sat some tiny digits reading '1770'.

"A date!" I said to myself. "But what does it mean?"

As soon as I said this my legs turned to jelly. I wobbled and toppled into the letter and disappeared.

I regained consciousness and looked around. I was in a place that looked oddly like the outback! I was in the middle of a huge gathering of people standing around me with spears raised. I was scared. I couldn't blame them for raising their spears though; I guess I had just appeared out of nowhere.

I started to piece things together. When I opened the letter back at my house, I must have somehow been transported to wherever this place

was. And the date at the top of the letter; it had read 1770. Maybe that was the year I was in now? But I couldn't be. There's no such thing as time travel.

Sadly, I had no other theories of how I could have gotten here, so I just had to believe it for now. And if I was in 1770, then I guess that the people around me must be Aborigines. One man stood out in the crowd. He had dark tanned skin, and had white paint smeared in strokes across his body, which none of the others had. I thought it was likely that he was their leader.

"Who are you?" the man boomed.

"I-ris Be-rry," I stammered.

As I said this, a young girl stepped forward, it looked like she was only 9 or 10 years old. She had hazelnut eyes and black hair. She wore a kangaroo skin around her shoulders, and a weaved skirt made of leaves.

"Father!" said the girl to the tribe leader (my guess was right; the man with the body paint was indeed the tribe leader). The girl continued, "Maybe she is the one we..." her voice dropped to a whisper, "sent for?"

"What do you mean... sent for? You knew I was coming?" I asked.

"Well, we did send for help," muttered the man.

"What do you need help with? Maths, spelling...?" I asked with curiosity.

And so, they told me what they needed. I was very wrong. They had much worse problems to deal with. A man was trying to steal their land, but they were determined to keep it.

I figured the man was Captain Cook and immediately asked where he was.

"Cook's at the other end of long island, in a cave," they told me.

"We better pop to it then!" I exclaimed. We all gathered some supplies and set off. It was sunset when we arrived, so we all decided to camp outside that night. Within minutes of my head hitting the ground, I was sound asleep.

The next morning, we marched up to the cave entrance.

"Good luck Iris!" called the leader's daughter, Kirra. I merely smiled and walked into the cave.

"What time do you call this General Jen..." Captain Cook stopped dead in his tracks.

"Who are you? What are you doing here?" Captain Cook yelled. "Guards!"

"Me???" I said, pretending to sound surprised. "I have come to deliver a message."

"What message?" growled Cook.

"These people have lost their land and you have set up camps there," I said gesturing towards the Aborigines.

"You're just a girl, you can't stop me," sneered Cook.

"Oh yes I can!"

Twelve grey guards ran forward with muskets aimed at Cook.

*10 minutes earlier...*

Twelve guards surrounded me outside the cave.

Please, don't hurt me!" I pleaded. "I can show you that what you are doing is horrible. History will prove you wrong. Fight alongside me!"

*10 minutes later again...*

"Share this land with the aboriginals!" I said with courage. "I'm from the future, I know your story. They are human beings like you! You must share the land!"

Captain Cook stared at me shocked.

"You're from the future?" He looked at me with a new interest. "So, tell me, if you really are from the future, you can tell me if I am remembered as a great explorer."

"I won't tell..." I stopped. I had just found a way to convince Cook into sharing the land. "I will only tell you if you succeed and become great, if you share this land with the Aborigines."

"It is agreed. We will take half this land."

"No, you will share the land, not halve, share!"

"We have a deal young lady," said Cook.

The next morning I woke up feeling homesick.

"Can I go home now?" I asked Malu, the leader.

"Yes, I will call the Kookaburras."

"Kookaburras?"

"Yes, the spirit Kookaburras," he explained. "They carried you here and will carry you home. Caw caw, ha ha!" he called. Two massive kookaburras landed in front of me. One picked me up and we drifted away.

"GOODBYE!"

I woke up in my own, cosy bed!

"Get up honey" called Mum. I pulled myself out of bed and wrestled on some clothes. At school, Mrs Wilson had an announcement.

"4D, we are starting a new inquiry topic. Aborigines! And today we will read some dreamtime stories.

Once upon a time, a young girl arrived from far, far away. She could see the future and had the power to change the past...