

# A Silent Quest

Pixie Hollows





**THE KIDS' CANCER PROJECT**  
**WRITE A BOOK IN A DAY**

## Parameters Form

### Team Details

STATE: NSW  
DIVISION: Middle School  
SCHOOL/GROUP: Tumut High School (TUMUT)  
TEAM NAME: Pixie Hollows  
TEAM ID: 243

### Parameters and random words

Parameters		Random words
Primary character 1	Weather forecaster	ruby
Primary character 2	Dairy farmer	melts
Non-human character	Scarecrow	shiver
Setting	Simpson Desert	tasty
Issue	Lost voice	sponge

### Instructions

- Start no earlier than **8am**
- Write an original story:
  - based on all **five parameters** (above)
  - including all **five random words** (above) as written, and in bold type
  - with some identifiable **Australian content** (in theme or setting or characters, etc)
  - keeping within the allowed word count (remember every word on every page counts!)
  - include this parameters form in your book **immediately after the front cover**
- Remember: **Every** word on **every** page counts. This includes your front cover, back cover, blurb, acknowledgements and copyright form.
- **Be sure to give yourself enough time to submit your book and complete the following checklist before 9pm**

Log on to the Team Coordinator Portal to:

- Check the spelling of your team name and team members' names  
(how these are spelt on submission will be how they are displayed on certificates)
- Complete the Declaration
- Submit your finished book in **both** PDF and plain text format by 9pm

# Authors and Illustrators

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Published by Pixie Hollows, Tumut High School, 2/20 Bogong Pl, Tumut NSW 2720.

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-Shout out to the kids that love reading our story. Maddie and Mrs Dee that run Writers Club and Write A Book in a Day. Tumut High School for providing an education and fun memories. Thank You to all your sponsors who helped us achieve the ability to write the book. -

# Chapter 1

Carlos' POV:

"Mr. Dunford, You're on in three." I shoot him a thumbs up and go back to my pre-forecast preparation. I breathe in deeply and remind myself that I have done this before, nothing else is different. The hot cup of coffee burns my mouth as I down it and chuck the paper cup in the trash can next to my desk. Knocking over my eclipse mints on the way, I grab the script for today's weather forecast and read through it one last time before heading out my dressing room door.

Out in the foyer, people are running around setting everything up, almost ready for me to go on. I run my hand through my hair, loosening it and making it that kind of hot messy look. They turn to me and usher me up to the small rise of the stage before signalling that the cameras are about to go live. I look to the side of the camera, where a giant version of my script is in case I forget what I'm supposed to say. The light above the camera goes green and I open my mouth to start speaking, welcoming everyone to the forecast.

Or at least, that's what I'm supposed to do. Instead, I stand there, mouth gaping, not a sound coming out of my mouth. I look around frantically as people around start laughing from the audience and the crew. Some stand up and jeer while I see someone fall to the ground, unable to stop laughing. I know that I've made a fool of myself and I try to maintain my dignity by signalling a cut off of live streaming of the forecast all over Australia. It doesn't happen. The TV crew are too busy imitating me and rolling around on the floor from laughter. The whole thing has been all over Australia by now by no doubt. Basically everyone watches Channel 7 News.

I run down the stairs in an attempt to leave my ever growing shame of it. I end up making it worse as I trip down the stairs, landing on my gluteus maximus. People start laughing harder and I curl into a ball of ever-growing shame. I wish I could just leave this whole scenario. I start to whimper in pain, I hope that no one can hear it, but either it's louder than I think, or someone is really close to me because someone yells out about it and the laughing grows impossibly louder. I move around and lay on my back and try to stand.

I shot up and hit my head on the bedhead, sheets soaked in my sweat... or was it sweat? Either way I wasn't in the mindset to clean it. I scramble around in my bed for a minute, searching to check the time on my new iPhone 21. It's 4:23am. The library near my house would have opened almost half an hour ago. I scabble up and get dressed in my regular grey suit and blue tie, as if it was just any day. When I get to the mirror to make sure I look just as hot as always and remember the dilemma in my dream. I open my mouth and start to speak. Again, just like in the dream, or more like a nightmare actually, nothing comes out.

Now I have something more important than weird dreams. How am I supposed to communicate with hot girls and rizz them up if I can't speak? I start to run to the entryway to grab the keys to my car and head to the elevator when I fall over. Again. I get up and dust

myself off and remember that I am in a nice neighbourhood, with nice houses and that I live in a penthouse apartment.

I head through the non-existent traffic and head to a coffee shop first and pick up a **tasty** coffee with a quadruple shot and a chocolate croissant that **melts** on my tongue like ice cream in the hottest of winter. I arrive in the library after I've downed my coffee and head inside. The library is giant and I get lost easily, but with no voice I brave it on my own.



## Chapter 2

Carlos pov

As I sit in the mythology section of the silent dusty library, I remember a story my father once told me, the story about Brook the Scarecrow. I try to remember her power. I slowly stood up, trying not to disturb the 80's book club in the corner (although that shouldn't be hard with no voice), and made my way to the computers to look up Brook. The book was located in the 577-613.2 section. Whilst I was walking to my required section, of course making my day a whole lot better, I trip over the foot of a whiteboard. "Amazing," I thought. "Just amazing".

I quickly scrambled up, trying not to draw attention to myself and made a quick get away, ducking behind the aisle. I immediately found the book about Brook the Scarecrow. It was the biggest book there. I snatched the book off the shelf and slammed it on the table. I flipped it open. I sat and read that book for hours on end, not realising what the time was. I found what I was looking for. Brook the Scarecrow can return a lost voice just like mine. I all of a sudden had the urge to run. So I did. I am running and not thinking about where I am going, and before I could take proper notice of where I'm running my vision blurs and when I return to clarity. I'm on a train? Heading to the middle of nowhere. The train pulls to a stop and I bolt out of the train, not looking back.



## Chapter 3

### Carlo's POV

Foot after foot, I can hear the clicking of my buffed leather shoes echoing through the barren landscape. I had been walking for days with nothing in sight. I had been sleeping by the roadside, there had been no cars passing by. Nothing but bugs. All night I could hear the buzzing of bugs around my head and each morning I would wake up covered in mosquito bites, my face so swollen that I could barely see. At night I would stare up at the stars, wondering what had become of my life and the fact that I went from being a successful 28-year old weatherman earning 6 figures and 1600 girls to a madman on the side of an abandoned highway. I have mud caked shoes, a designer suit with unfixable rips and stains and a probably-destroyed reputation.

I hold my phone above my head running around trying to find a signal. The world slows down as I see myself trip on my own feet, my brand new phone falling out of my hand and into a ditch by the side of the road. I try to scream in anger but no sound comes out. Running over to the edge of the ditch. I reach out to grab my phone, shaking the mud of it checking to see if there was service.

I look up and cannot believe it, because on the horizon I can see an old rundown service station. It's a fluorescent orange sign standing out in the dim twilight, inviting me into the safe haven. I begin to run like my life depends on it. My personal trainer would be impressed. I seized the door handle, swinging it open. The hottie lady at the counter began to stand, stopping as she brushed her eyes over me and pausing at the ripped suit and dirty tie. I flash my most charming smile, showing off my chiselled jawline. I begin to open my mouth, trying to think of something dashing to say. "Can I help you?" she said, intercepting me, her angelic voice making my worries melt away.



I move my mouth but once again no sound comes out. "Are you okay?" she says without a trace of worry in her voice.

I wave her off and head back outside after checking if any of the service station has any phone service. Spoiler alert: it doesn't.



## Chapter 4

Carlos' POV:

It is now dark. The service station is exactly the same as earlier, although it is a little easier to see now, with the sun rising over the horizon. I look around and realise that the servo girls' car is around the back. I run over to the car, expecting to have to break a window or two to get in, but soon realised there was none. I climb into the car, looking down at the gearstick wishing that I knew how to drive a manual.

At least she was lazy and naive enough to leave the key in the ignition of the car. I figure that the manual car is pretty similar to an auto car. I turned the key, the engine started to choke and splutter at me before the engine revs and I hit the accelerator. The wheels spinning underneath me, I turn off the handbrake, flying out of the servo and spinning onto the road. The girl from the servo must've heard, because she comes out of the servo and yells at me. I can't really hear her over the engine.

I keep driving through the desert as the sun rises in the sky, making sweat drip from my face and down my neck along my sculpted abs. The sun glares in my face, reflecting off the dashboard, making it hard to see the road in front of me. I hear some strange moo's nearby, but I think nothing of it until suddenly I look up and see hundreds of black and white cows in front of me. Only using instinct I change gears and swerve the car to the side, narrowly avoiding the giant herd of cows.

The car flips and rolls through the air and my stomach goes along with it. When it lands it continues to roll and I open the car door and stagger out dizzily. Running on adrenaline, I get away from the car quickly. I couldn't have done it sooner, as it explodes behind me. The ball of fire burning the hairs on my legs and the back of my neck. The sound temporarily deafening me and the shock wave causing me to fall on my face. Lying on the ground I try to stand before stumbling back to the ground as the cows moo in amusement.

I raise my head enough to see a worn-out pair of cowboy boots centimetres from my face. He lowers his hand for me and I grasp it, feeling the calluses under my soft skin. He helps to hoist me up to my feet and get stable. I look up to see perhaps the most handsome guy I've ever seen. Other than me, of course. He had a curly brown mullet going to his shoulders and a worn leather cowboy hat. He had a light dusting of freckles across his face with deep emerald green eyes and thick dark eyelashes. He had a sleeveless leather jacket over the top of a blue flannel shirt.



## Chapter 5

Bob James POV

I'm not entirely sure what happened to be honest. One minute I was herding Bessie 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, ect, to go get milked and the next there was a distressed looking business man in a rusty red ute driving like a bat out of hell towards my prize winning cows. Then SKIRRRRRRRRT! He veered to the edge of the road, nearly ending Bessie 26 in the process, and out he tumbled. I got a proper glimpse of his appearance; a fairly average man with blonde curly hair and a suit that I couldn't tell whether it was purposely brown or just covered in mud or... no- just no- Before I could ask him if he was okay, the car that had continued driving exploded, engulfing him in thick black smoke. I ran to check on him then saw that he was laying on the ground. I grabbed his hand, lifting him to his feet. He opened his mouth to say something, then looked extremely annoyed when he decided not to speak. Instead he just nodded. "WHAT IN THE WORLD WERE YOU DOING?!" I boomed suddenly. The city fellow looked taken aback. "You could've killed yourself, or worse, my cows!"

He looked awfully ashamed, then gestured for me to follow him to the side of the road. I was halfway in the process of herding my cows before he rudely interrupted. I handed it to him (at this point I was sort of just rolling with it). He took it and started writing in the sand. The words formed together, reading "I'm sorry. I was heading for the Simpson Desert. I lost my voice and I need to find Brook the Scarecrow to get it back. My name's Carlos." Carlos tapped the sand where he had written the words, then looked up at me. I thought I saw hope

glinting in his eyes. "I'm Bob the dairy farmer. Brooke the Scarecrow, you say?" I said to him. He nodded. "Where did you hear about that?"

He mimicked opening a book with his hands. "So...you read about it."

Carlos nodded again, and I stared at him curiously. "Why do you need to find this scarecrow anyway? Fame? Money? A hottie girlfriend?" I demanded. Carlos seemed stuck up and ridiculous. I wasn't sure if I could trust him with the myth. He rolled his eyes, and tapped his mouth. "You can't speak."

He gave me a thumbs-up, then wrote a word in the sand; "curse". The final piece clicked in my mind, and I gave a toothy grin. "Let me get this straight. You got cursed so you can't speak, and now you read about Brook the Scarecrow and think it can remove it. Am I right?"

I said. He nodded, giving me a sceptical look like he wasn't sure I was being mature about the situation. I pointed to the direction of the cows. "Jump on Bessie number 69. She should be calm enough for you." We both headed towards the group of cows, and Carlos couldn't even figure out which cow was Bessie number 69. Such a rookie. After I helped him up onto her back, I jumped on Bessie number 47. Then we rode off towards Simpson Desert.



## Chapter 6.1

Bob James The Dairy Farmer's POV

It's unbelievably hot, the sun is beating down on my old hat. This city folk had decided to try and find the scarecrow in the hottest part of the day. That was a mistake, I could feel it coming on. We had no water, we had no food, we had nothing. Yet here I was helping this total stranger. Not only was he a stranger he also was a city folk. He was upon his cow in his muddy suit. Everything suddenly turned black. I slowly opened my eyes to find a searing pain in my back. I jump up off the sand and hop back on the cow.

Carlos is signalling to me, trying to ask if I am ok, but suddenly my attention is diverted. I edge the cow on towards what appears to be water and think about how much Rusty my kelpie would love to play in the water. I scramble off the cow and fall to the ground again.

"RUSTY!!!!" I yell. "RUSTYY!!"

I trip over my feet, but somehow manage to stay upright. I start to turn in circles, looking for where Rusty went. Carlos jumps down too to stop me from falling over, but the cows run away, basically as soon as he hops off. I look up to the horizon and see something that looks kind of familiar. "It's the scarecrow!" I exclaim. Carlos just shakes his head and motions that I am crazy.

## Chapter 6.2

Carlos' POV

As we trek through the boiling desert, my skin feels like it is going to peel off like a snake shedding. I look beside me and see Bob James doing the same, if not worse, than I am right now. I try my best to peer up to the sky to see where the sun is. I can only peer so high without half blinding myself though. With the constant shifting of the cow underneath me, my tush has started hurting too. What could go worse today, because it feels like so far that's the only thing that's happened. Stuff went wrong. As if whatever gods exist heard me, Bob James falls off his cow.

When he stands up he winces, like he'd hurt his back. I try to signal to him to see if he is ok, but all he does is look into the distance, as if seeing something I can't. Out of nowhere he starts to scream the word 'Rusty' and scrambles off his cow again. He spins around, stumbling over his own feet. I decide to hop down and get him to stop spinning before he falls over. The moment I hop off my cow though, both cows run away. Oh well, I started walking in the desert, I can finish walking through the desert.

"It's the scarecrow!" he yells, turning to me to see my reaction. I shake my head, because it's become obvious to me that the heat is messing with his brain. The cows have stopped so we should catch up to them soon.



## Chapter 7

Bob James POV

"It's real," I yell. Beginning to run towards the shadows. I mounted back on my cow. We set them off at a full gallop. We were crossing the sand at a record breaking pace. It wasn't long before we were squeezing in between two canyon walls. Suddenly after squeezing between a particularly narrow part we came out into a magnificent oasis. With a crystal clear sapphire blue lake which sparkled in the late afternoon light. Rocks lined the border, peaks of marble rock with layers that look like they have been built up over 1000's of years. Tens of thousands of tiny shrubs and plants disperse throughout the clay soil . Palm trees lined the edge of the lake. Quokkas and rock wallabies drank from the edge of the small lake. Birds fly around the top of the palm trees. Native bees buzzed around **ruby** native flowers blooming throughout the oasis. A cool breeze filtered in from the south cooling us both. Suddenly my vision focused on a silhouette in the distance catches my eye. I look over to see Carlos jumping up and down with excitement. "There it is," I whispered in amazement, not wanting to disturb the peace and solitude in this oasis. There it was raised on a rock, looking over the oasis like a guardian angel keeping the animals and life there safe from the outside world. I had grown up on country my whole life but this was the cleanest, nicest place I had ever been. There was an unnatural golden glow surrounding the scarecrow's tattered clothes and hat. I slowly approached the scarecrow bowing down at the bottom of its stake. Carlos timidly followed.

"You are both brave for coming here. You knew the risks, Bob, yet you still helped this stranger," said a mysterious voice. "Carlos, you have learnt something from this experience, you may not admit it but you have learnt your self worth and that there is more to you then just your looks. You don't always need to talk, sometimes listening is just as beneficial as talking if not more so! I know life hasn't always been the easiest but your ego has grown as you have become more recognised. You need to remember where you came from and not to doubt people because of their background. Out of everyone I thought you knew that the most. You were given those opportunities even though you grew up in poverty." Carlos's head lowered as he began to reflect on his childhood.

"Are you going to give him his voice back, or at least let us leave? I have a fiance who I would love to spend the rest of my life with. Please give us mercy!" said Bob.

"I will grant Carlos's voice back, if he understands that he needs to give everyone a fair chance no matter where they come from, how much money their family owns, their religion or ethnicity! Those things don't change the person they are or could become."



## Chapter 8

Carlos POV

-Two Days Later-

I take a deep breath in, feeling a little **shiver** of excitement vibrate through my body. I straighten myself up, trying to regain a sleek, professional posture. A dutiful titter came from the audience as they waited, but I brushed it off. Today was the day. The cameraman nodded at me, mouthing “Three...two...one.” Then I stepped into the view of the camera, presenting myself to Australia.

“Hello Australia, I’m Carlos Dunford, bringing you your local weather from Channel 7...”

I read the weather report off the script, flying through it as easy as breathing. After the introduction, I sort of lost control of reality. I read through the script perfectly - of course I did; I’m just naturally perfect- but my mind wasn’t completely on the weather... my mind was on Bob James and his fiancée, Bessie number 69 and Bessie number 47, Brook the Scarecrow and the hottie lady at the rundown servo. In a way I was really glad that all this had happened, because besides the enormous amount of ladies always swooning at my undying beauty, I have to admit that deep down, I’ve always felt slightly lonely - okay, unbearably lonely. But although this journey was extremely annoying and disgraceful, I felt like I finally found a real home instead of my penthouse full of riches. I had a heart full of friends.

Before I knew it, the stream was over and the whole room was glinting with smiles, smiles of even more people who had finally recognized me suddenly compliments echoed off the walls and I felt warm and happy.

“Hey, Carlos! Are You coming? We’re celebrating your promotion!” called my colleague. I could never remember his name, but he was one of the main reporters on the channel. I shrugged. “I dunno...” I muttered hesitantly. As much as I loved the idea of being ceremoniously showered with undying attention, I wanted to go back and hang out with Bob, his fiancée and Rusty.

“There’ll be **sponge** cake...”

“Alright,” I replied coolly. The reporter frowned. “See you there!!” he chirped, grinning.



## Epilogue

Bob James' POV

Standing next to Carlos as my best man, after three years of waiting for the date, Eleanor and I would finally be getting married. I am so excited that I feel as if I could burst out of my skin in happiness. I couldn't wait for the new chapter of Eleanor and I's life, where we would be legally bonded for life, through sickness and health. The music starts playing and she strides down the aisle, as eager as I am to get to each other. The lace of her bodice is detailed to be almost as beautiful as her. The slit in her dress about thigh high showed off glistening white cowboy boots with shiny decorations. I barely have time to take all that in along with her. She is as beautiful as ever, if not even more beautiful.

We stand less than a metre away from each other, my hands itching to hold hers. I subconsciously block out the talking from the priest until it is time to say vows. Everyone around us starts to cry, myself included. Finally the priest says the thing everybody is waiting for: “You may now kiss the bride.” I pull Eleanor in and we share the kiss that symbolises the start of something new.

During the celebration, Carlos comes over to me and ruffles my hair, the same way he used to ruffle his own before he fixed his ego.

“I knew you could do it, it only took you three years, bud.”

THE END :)

A vibrant, hand-drawn illustration of a landscape. A large, multi-colored rainbow arches across the top left. Below it, a blue body of water is surrounded by yellow and orange textured ground. Several green palm trees are scattered throughout the scene. The overall style is artistic and colorful.

## Blurb

**Carlos is a clumsy self absorbed city boy who loves his hair. On the day of a big weather report he loses his voice! He hears a myth that if you went to the middle of the Simpson Desert, you would find a scarecrow named Brook who would give him back his voice. On the way he crashes a car and meets a dairy farmer who joins him on his journey. By the end of the story Carlos works out that business suits and good hair styles are not everything in life. This story is recommended for 10-16 year olds.**

**By Amella Bye, Anna Stuart, Bridey Hollis, Tasma Pentland, Tallara Smith, Elle Wedding-Lazarus, Monica Brimmer, Evelyn Woodward.**