



Evergreen

Foreword

This book has been created through a partnership between the Evergreen Centre, West Lane, Middlesbrough and Tees Valley Arts. Writer Laura Degnan and visual artist Joe Dunne worked with residents there to support them in creating this inspiring collection of stories, poems and artworks.

These young people are on a journey, and they have bravely chosen to share part of that journey with us. Their honesty and insight shines out from every page, and we hope it will comfort and inspire future residents of the Evergreen Centre, and everyone else who opens this exciting book.

Contributors:

Abby, Amelia, Amy, Connor, Gabby, Georgia, Hannah, Jess, Miriam, Natalia

Dear future resident,
I remember my first day at the
evergreen. You will probably feel very
scared and worried about being away
from home. I can't lie and say you will love
being here - it is a hospital - but all the staff
are very nice and supportive. They will do
everything they can to help you. They are
here to talk to whenever you need them

Dear future resident;

Just breathe and try to remember this is the start of your journey to recovery. You will be scared, lonely but soon it will feel like you have never been anywhere else.

Everyone (staff & patients) are nice. so just settle in and familiarise yourself with every thing and everyone.

It may be a shock to begin with, but that feeling will fade and so will your demons.

You will have ups & downs, highs and lows but whats waiting at the other end is worth it → a life of freedom!

a life of freedom!

Dear future resident,

The stay at the Evergreen Centre is in some ways good and not in some ways. The good things are that you can make lots of friends and the staff are very friendly, and whenever you are struggling just ask for help and they will do their best to help you. Also, you can get lots of visits from relatives when you miss them. The bad thing is that it is hard to be away from your family. The Evergreen Centre has lots of things to do, such as baking, arts and crafts, going for walks and playing in the garden. I really enjoy playing badminton in the back garden, see what you enjoy.

Thank you for reading this letter.

Measure out a litre of determination

Crack in some brown eyes

Grate in 30 minutes of Eastenders

Beat with brown curly hair

Stir in a piano

Leave to set with family and friends.

Add a heaped
tbs of sarcasm

Stir in a hint
of loyalty

Grate 12oz of
badminton

Beat well with
the jack wells catalog

Whisk in some
ambition and

leave to rise with
mum & dad.

100g of fashion

A pinch of silver dove feathers

2 ounces of freedom

Mix in with some passion

Add a dab of humour

Whisk some determination

Beat with spirit

leave for two weeks in the heart of the city



Mix an ounce of shyness with a
dash of sensitivity,
Stir in some crazy converse,



500g of kindness

A pinch of laughter

A sprinkle of fantasy

2oz of freckles

Grate in some happiness

Leave for 3 weeks on an exotic island

Stir in some blue eyes

Add in some blue colours



10g of blondness, mix with a tablespoon of
friendliness a ~~dash~~ pinch of pink glitter
Stir together with some happiness and
leave on a hot beach



Wild, untamed plaited
Hair with bright
colourful bows.
Stuffing gone, shows
love.



Yellow dog, worn, torn,
Long brown ears and dirty paws,
Snuggly and warm

Squeeze tight,
comforts me
Takes away any bad
dreams
Sleep tight,
cosy, warm.

Gorgeous fragrances
Cake baking crisp and golden
Eager to sample.

Fluffy and comfy
A safe place to rest my head
Where my dreams are made

Fluffy as can be
Cuddly and very special
Half a foot missing

Black, round button eyes
Soft to cuddle tight and hold
My first teddy bear



All pretty and bright
Holding special memories
Tropical landscapes

Fluffy baby clothes
Cute and bold, little and bright
Old-fashioned and old

Opportunity

Experience a new life, fresh start,

, do something new

turn yourself onto the right path

-grasp with both hands

Opportunity - knocks

new chance,

an open window

someone giving you a chance to prove yourself → reach your full potential

trust to be independent and do things for myself. for me its when I am given

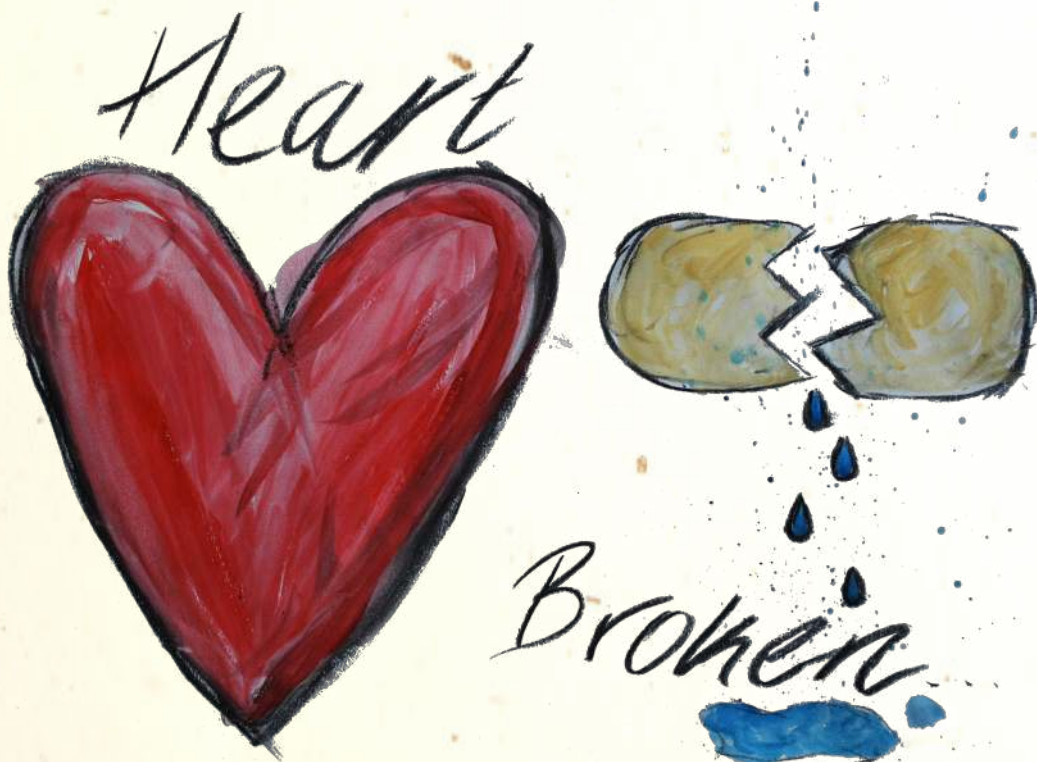
Emily is 35-years-old and tall with wavy blonde hair. She is natural and only wears a slight amount of make-up. She's most comfortable in jeans and trainers. She is quite shy around new people, but very friendly and kind in nature. Emily is a veterinary assistant.

She's in love with one of her best friends, John, but has never had the courage to tell him. Emily is wearing the shoes she wore to her friend's wedding and wishes she was not alone.

Emily has a life-threatening illness and is worried about leaving the world without experiencing true love. Emily hasn't told anyone about her illness, as she doesn't want people to think differently about her or to worry about her.

She wishes that she could pluck up the courage to tell John how she feels; for there to be a cure to her illness; for her to get married and start a family; and that she could have the confidence to go back to university to train as a vet.

Emily is in a hospital waiting room. She's looking for her book, but she left it on the bus on the way to the hospital. She sees long coats, hears ambulance sirens, watches a couple holding hands, smells disinfectant. She picks up a magazine to distract herself. Alone and afraid, she wonders how her life will turn out.



"Courage is strength"

Standing up for what you believe in,

Brave willpower,

Hero, facing challenges.

Courage – honour,

Facing your fears and not being afraid to be yourself.

Brave lion & winning strength

Speaking in front of a huge crowd. That's when I have courage.

Ashley is 20 years old. She's neat and tidy, with a unique sense of style. She's shy and quiet, and popular amongst her friends. She has short, layered, straight hair, which is naturally auburn. She has green eyes and pale skin. She's tall and slim. She has a close circle of friends. She's sporty and works hard at university, but also has a job.

Ashley has a secret. When she was 16 years old she witnessed a murder and has been in protective custody ever since. Her real name is Rose. She has a tattoo of a rose on her foot so that she will never forget who she really is.

Murder

She's worried that the person she witnessed committing a murder will be released from prison and come after her for revenge.

tattoo of a rose... Never forget who she really is...

Ashley is in a disused hotel that has been closed for many years and is falling apart. She's on the 3rd floor landing. She's looking for a room with any sign of life: a yellow light shining through a crack in a door, voices, anything.

She can't get to the room she's looking for because there are so many rooms. A staircase collapses.

She's wearing the same clothes she's been wearing for a week. She hears the faint sound of a harsh, cold voice in the distance and a quiet, muffled sob. There's an old vase on a rickety table. She can smell cold and damp. She reaches out and touches an old, rusty, gold door handle and slowly pushes the door open. She enters the room. It's empty apart from a small, crumpled girl in the corner.



Like a door opening, but no one entering,
Like apple juice after brushing your teeth



Like a dark forest at midnight,

Like the vicious growling of a dog,

Like the smell of a fire burning,

Like the alarming taste of blood,

Like the cold, harsh cracks of a stone.



Like a dark alleyway,
Like the sharp ringing of a child
screaming,
Like the smell of burning paper.
Like a lonely book,
Like an owl howling,
Like a strong petrol smell,
Like bitter lemons,
Like ice cold snow.



Like a lonely book

Like bitter lemons

Like an owl howling

Like a strong petrol smell

Like ice cold snow



Like an unusual design,
Like a ringing in your ear and not knowing
where it's coming from,
Like a mixture of spices,
Like a taste of something different,
Like grains of sand running through your toes.



unknown

alone

no one to help you

"Like a lost puppy"



lost - TV show, negative emotions (frightened, scared)

Lost Boys (film), confusion, solitude

confused,

to many numbers

worried,

causes you to feel a lonely, confused and the overwhelming fear that consumes your mind and body.

to many words

alone,

danger

Lonely,

Like a flickering tongue of a burning flame,

Danger,

Pain,

Stop.

"Seeing red"

Blood

Danger, a warning

Stop, think, look. Do not go any further.

Love.

Love



Beatrice's shoes are bold and bright – you could never not notice them. The soles have been worn down but they are resilient and fight back against the many surfaces they have walked across. The shoes are heavy, with thick laces that keep the shiny, lime green leather together. Despite being a few years old, their condition is surprisingly good and their only wounds are a few scuffs and scrapes. The tongue is bent and never stays in the right place, hiding behind the side of the shoe.

Beatrice is 18-years-old. She is certainly unique, with a flare for fashion. Her clothes don't reflect her personality: she's quiet and keeps to herself. However, what she wears hits you in the face. Her hair is jet black, which contrasts with her ivory, porcelain-like skin. She has delicate features and bold green eyes, hidden behind inches of black eye make-up. She is of a very slim build and above average height – wishing she was smaller so she would not have been the giant of her school.

Beatrice is outspoken and passionate once you get to know her, with a witty sense of humour. Her favourite thing to do is sit in her extensive garden, drawing and painting the beautiful landscape, but at the same time listening to her favourite heavy-metal band. Beatrice loves music, regularly visiting festivals and concerts with her few, close friends. Beatrice is selective with her friends: most people like her but don't understand her, and she trusts very few people at first. Beatrice's friends are like her – same taste in music, same political views, and a similar dress sense, though their clothes are not quite as bold.

Beatrice has a secret. She is going to drop out of university. She's doing a law degree and wants to follow her passion for art. Her fear is that she will let her family down. They're already ashamed of her appearance, as she does not fit in with her family's circle. She is constantly weighing up the pros and cons of leaving university.



Beatrice wants to be a successful artist with her own gallery, so that her parents can be proud of her. Beatrice wants to be able to travel the world, documenting what she sees in her artwork.

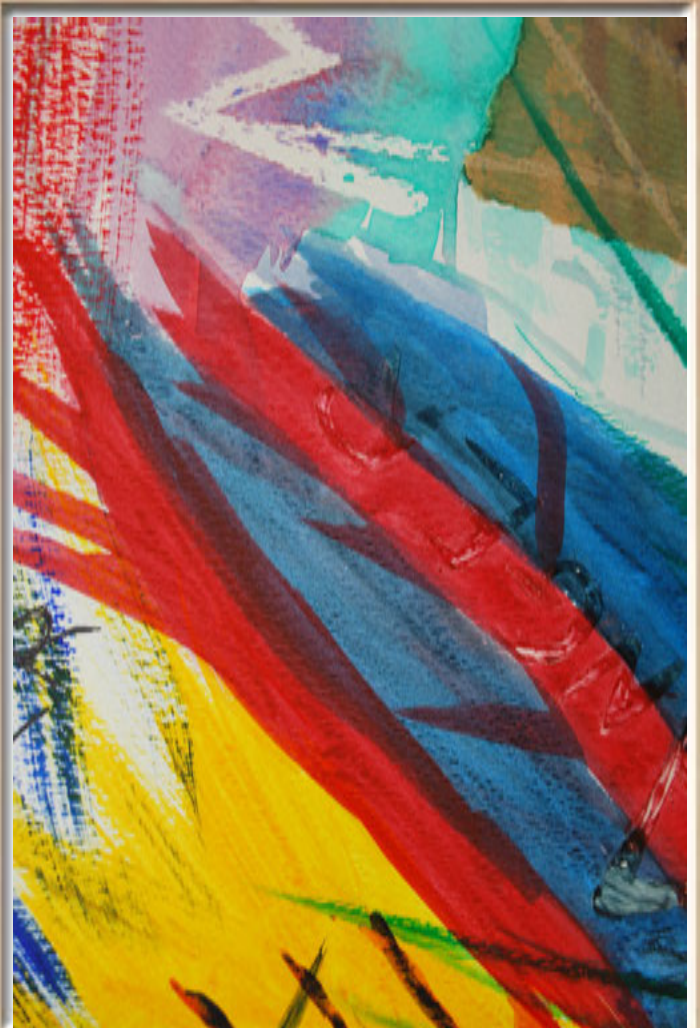
In her pocket Beatrice has a tiny, worn down eye-liner, which she feels exposed, vulnerable and naked without. This is her mask that she wears to transform into her true self, not the pretty, 'angelic' girl she hates being: the person her parents wish she was.

Beatrice's grandfather was the only person in her family who understood her and knew what she wanted to be. On his deathbed, he told her to follow her dreams and let no one stop her. However, her mother is traumatised by her father's death and Beatrice must stay home and try to bring her mother back to life. Her sister Harriet has just gotten married and is so in love with her husband that she fails her mother, too afraid to be away from him in case he cheats on her.

Beatrice's father is too occupied with work and feels it's Beatrice's job to care for her mother.

Beatrice sat, gazing at the wonder of the summer's day sunset that was happening before her. Paint hit the canvas like blood splattering up walls. She was at peace, expressing her emotions and had forgotten the dull reality that awaited her when she returned home. It was nearly dark and time to get home: if not her mum would worry.

Beatrice could not have been walking the dog for more than an hour, as her mum knew how much Horatio irritated her.



Change

Change is inevitable

The unknown. Scary, difficult unknown.

"The key to change is to let go of fear"

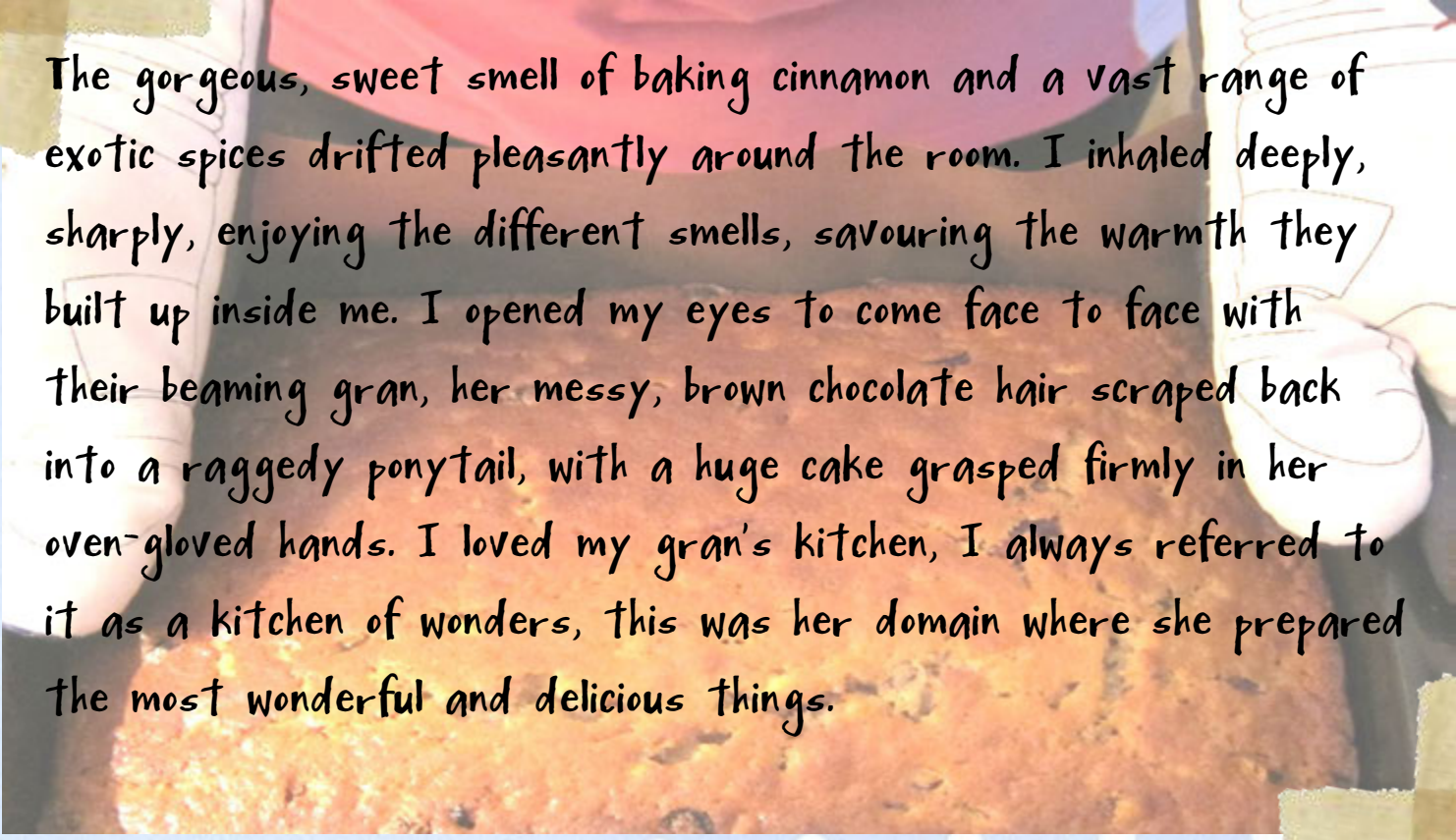
Out with the old, in with the new.

Life-changing


Teenage years and life-events happen for a reason.

Could change for the better or worse.

The seasons causing the world around us to become more beautiful.



The gorgeous, sweet smell of baking cinnamon and a vast range of exotic spices drifted pleasantly around the room. I inhaled deeply, sharply, enjoying the different smells, savouring the warmth they built up inside me. I opened my eyes to come face to face with their beaming gran, her messy, brown chocolate hair scraped back into a raggedy ponytail, with a huge cake grasped firmly in her oven-gloved hands. I loved my gran's kitchen, I always referred to it as a kitchen of wonders, this was her domain where she prepared the most wonderful and delicious things.



I remember all the lights and wires and bean bags and a water bed with my family, with music on and lots of sparkly lights. A massager it reminds me of a quiet room to relax in and it is a good memory. It had a touch keyboard and all relaxing music and we played tic and there were toys. There were lots of bright colours in the room, and musical instruments, and flashing toys that felt funny.

Family

People you love,

like a bundle of love, compassion

Home, happy,



Unconditional love,

People who share a part of you and always support you no matter what

you can choose your friends but you can't choose your family

so learn to deal with them

Love

Shelby is a 16-year-old female with flawless, ivory pale skin. She's 5'8. She has long, flowing, golden blond hair and dark, emerald green eyes that reflect her malicious personality. One of her eyes has a tint in the pigment. She has a faint, thin scar on her cheekbone, caused by an accident. Her frame is fragile and lacking in muscle. Her appearance is defenceless and under-nourished. She has many ear piercings.

Shelby is manipulative and likes to control other people's actions. She's intelligent and uses this as an advantage. She's reclusive and never properly interacts. She's fashionable and creates her own style, avoiding following the rest.

Secretly, Shelby worries about being alone; about the way others perceive her; and about losing the people who are closest to her.

She hopes to meet a boy that she likes. She would like all of her family problems to go away. She would like to never have to feel self-conscious again; to have a successful career; and to live in California, because she's always loved the beach.

Zines

WHEN YOU'RE FEELING DOWN

Remember that you're a star!



Remember your Greatest Achievement and relive it in your head



BELIEVE IN YOUR SELF



REMEMBER THAT YOU'RE NEVER ALONE!

WATCH THE SUN RISE WITH YOUR FEET IN THE SAND



Alfie is in his early 20s. He's reasonably well-off and has a good sense for fashion. He enjoys the summer weather and sport. He has casual hair that is slightly receding with a rough texture. He has piercing brown eyes and a

fair bit of stubble. He's of average build, around 5'10. He's hard working, but enjoys time off with his family and friends.

Alfie is an undercover agent for MI6. Danger lives on his doorstep and he worries for the long-term security of his family. What will happen if he is badly injured or killed? Over time he has built many enemies: what happened if one of them comes back for revenge? He's conscious of his actions, and thinks things through, unlike the hot-blooded teenager he used to be.

Alfie hopes for his family to be safe; to not be trapped in his job; to be able to enjoy life more and be less tense; and to be there more for his family.

There is a gun in Alfie's pocket. Even on holiday he can't feel safe and is always on edge. There is also a small charm – he doesn't believe in luck, but carries it as he believes it carries weight against the heavy burden of the gun.



Alfie wants inner peace of mind that his family are safe. He's unsure whether his mind is playing tricks on him, or if something bad is actually happening. He hears a small scream from one of his young children. He looks into the mirror opposite, questioning himself. He can smell his own sweat, a mixture of tension and hope.

SAFETY

DANGER

Safety Danger Security Tension Kindness

Threatening Loving Violent Responsibility Uneasy Happiness

Water

Relaxing

calming

free

Blue

at ease

water

Flowing freely

unknown

Making jagged rocks smooth

Tranquil

calm

fear, drowning - amazingly powerful
can wash away anything bad.

Running water, what are you running from?

Lilly is 15, of average height and build, slim with curly blonde hair and aqua blue eyes. She is friendly, shy and calm. She wants to have a career as a hairdresser. Her 15-year-old cousins are her closest friends and they love art. She loves pets and making new hairstyles.

Lilly has entered her dog into a pageant and would love to win the 7000 prize. Ultimately, Lilly aims to get a job at a really good hairdressing salon. Lilly wears a special perfume that reminds her of her family because she believes it brings her luck.

Lilly goes to the pageant show and a new dog, Copper, arrives: a dog with the shiniest coat ever, smoothly trimmed and beautifully cut. Her quest is to have the neatest and most fashionable dog.

Instead, Lilly's dog develops a crush on Copper and becomes distracted in the days before the pageant. Lilly attempts to separate the dogs and to teach Dolly how to remain focussed.



This is the big day. It is the morning of the pageant. I'm very nervous, but up for the challenge. Dolly understands how much pressure I'm under and she's being very well behaved. I blow dry her hair and dress her in a beautiful body warmer. Then I fix pretty clips in her hair. Dolly is ready to compete.

No matter what happens with the competition, we'll always be very close.

Walking to the competition, I feel really happy. This is such a great opportunity for her! I feel worried and nervous, and trip on a stone. I stand in the crowd and watch as Dolly enters the field. My heart pounds in my chest. I'm so proud of her, she looks stunning.

As I watch though, Dolly gets distracted by another dog, Copper. And Copper gets distracted by Dolly! As the crowd and the judges watch, the dogs run off together. Disqualified! But the audience is smiling and the judges are grinning and I am grinning, as the dogs walk away with big grins on their faces.

It was only a competition...



Fairytales

Magic

Provides us with an escape from the mundane day-to-day life we must experience

Fantasy

Harry Potter, Disney, sleight of hand

Goodness, one

Magic makes us dream of new lands new people and gives us hope of a more exciting world

Old magicians same tricks

Magic yourself away

Zines

A guide to living LIFE

brilliantly

Make sure you travel the world



LOVE Wildlife

(because it loves you, really!)



ENJOY THE JOURNEY



TO MEET A NEW ANIMAL EVERY DAY...

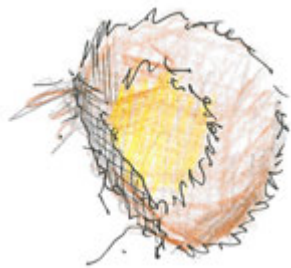


I can fly!



Katie hopes that her mam will be happy again. She's not sure why she is unhappy and often blames herself. She hopes that her older sister's will stop fighting and her family will be reunited – and that her dad, who she barely remembers, will return from his 'mysterious' job and whisk them all away to the happy place he used to tell her about at night.

In her pocket Katie keeps the last remaining ear off her favourite bear, Pudsey. He was given to her by her dad before he went away and is all she can remember of him.



Katie is worried about what she saw down the muddy bank yesterday. She was on an adventure with her favourite doll when she tripped, throwing the doll out of sight. As she looked for the doll, Katie saw something through the trees in the woods: something familiar and terrifying.

She discovered a small locket necklace down by the lake. The locket is worn and rusted, and Katie has not yet managed to prise the metal hearts away from one other. When she does finally manage to prise the locket open, she discovers her father's photo inside.



Katie also has a tiny, silver, metal key that she discovered in the same place where she scuffed her shoe. The key is an unusual shape and very small. There is an address attached to the key-ring. After an argument with her

mam and sisters, she and her friend run away in search of the address. They are on a journey to discover just what the key unlocks and what lies at the address. She is intent on discovering her father's secret.



Katie stood smiling, looking down at her new, shiny, black school shoes. She shuffled her feet from side to side so that the shoes squeaked a little. In her small, neatly ironed grey pinafore, she stood ready for her first day at school. After getting ready just ten minutes ago, her curly brown hair was already beginning to drop out of the two bobbles on her head. Her blue eyes glistened as she smiled, so that the little path of freckles on her cheeks complimented her fairly pale skin tone. She looked down again at her shoes and the excitement suggested through her wide smile began to fade as she remembered the secret adventure she had been on just yesterday – down the muddy bank through the woods. Her shoes still wore the scar of this.

The Future

Climbing up the walls
Shades of green taking over
Beautiful ivy

Busy and noisey
Deadline catching up on me
My dream coming true

Bright colours and trends
Cameras flashing, she strikes
A pose and saunters

See the clear, blue sea
Glittering in the sun
Dazzling, white

Fluffy and comfy
A safe place to rest my head
Where my dreams are made

What will this day bring?
Writing, typing my dream job,
Not a 9 to 5.

A bright melody
Treble clef and music notes
Sounds of piano



Like a rambunctious young puppy,

Like the cries of a delighted child,

Like the fragrance of baking
cinnamon and spices,

Like the sweet sensation of exotic
flavours,

Like the soft, gentle feel of delicate
animal fur

Like a pair of comfy slippers.

Like a pair of comfy slippers.

Like the sound of gentle waves

Like the smell of clean washing

Like the taste of strawberries

Like the touch of a soft blanket.

Like the touch of a soft blanket.

I can remember walking up the long, steep stairs leading up to the common room. I stumble in, panting with exhaustion due to my heavy bag full of books weighing me down. Then the stench of cup-a-soup courses my nose, it's overwhelmingly unpleasant. The noise of chatting bounces off the walls and echoes through my mind as I search for my friends and a comfortable place to sit. Once seated I join into a conversation, there is laughing and I feel at ease - surrounded by warm, familiar faces.

The walls are covered with photos of happy memories we once shared and it brings back the good times we have had. I think to myself how the common room provides us with our own place and an escape from the rest of the school.

I can remember walking into a friend's house which had a distinct smell, which I didn't know what it was and still to this day I cannot put my finger on what the smell was. This smell was then also there once when I went on holiday to Portugal and I remember thinking at the time I've smelt this before and then the memories came flooding back of when I used to go to that friend's house when we were young and how we used to have so much fun.

Beautiful and bright, the brightest star

The centre of the solar system

Hot fire, warmth

A warm glow that lights up the sky and brings new life to the world

Holiday Bright Happy life

The sun has got his hat on

Crowded train station, cheerful heat

Sun

Happiness

Happiness is egg-shaped

Having no worries

Smiles, laughter,

Doing something you love Holiday,

Health, hope, happiness

I am truly happy, just for that split-second when you just wake up and reality has not kicked in yet

You feel at peace and free of worry

.... and moving forward

I might be getting Discharged
Soon and i am Feeling Proud
but nervous at the same time
because i have made some
really nice Friends on the ward
and i will really miss them
and the Staff have been really
helpful. It has been a tough but
Fun adventure for me and i am
Delighted to go home (if i can) but
i will also miss the ward.