



Cover drawn by Ava Spiker



THE KIDS' CANCER PROJECT WRITE A BOOK IN A DAY

Parameters Form

Team Details

STATE: VIC
DIVISION: Middle School (Required word count 3500 to 5000 words)
SCHOOL/GROUP: Sandringham College (SANDRINGHAM)
TEAM NAME: SandyA
TEAM ID: 1242

Parameters and random words

Parameters

Primary character 1 Weather forecaster
Primary character 2 Weightlifter
Non-human character Pigeon
Setting Football game
Issue Shipwrecked

Random words

event
crisp
elastic
clumsy
bright

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

***Dedicated to the original Pixie, and to everyone
navigating the challenges of anxiety.***

***You are not alone. We believe in you, and so
does Pixie!***



Copyright

Published by Somnia Scripta, Sandringham College 365 Bluff Road, Sandringham, 3191.

Florence Archer

Daea Boulton

Kira Backham

Ava Spiker

Liat Zetzer

Lily Gray

Maya Perez-Kessler

Monique Howe

Nadia Besserd

Sophie Atkins

Scarlett Williams

Copyright© 2026 Somnia Scripta of Sandringham College

All rights reserved. This book is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under Copyright Act, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission. Enquiries should be made to the publisher.

Unknown number

Written by Somnia Scripta

Chapter One

I woke up with a jolt, the sun shining on my pale face. A feeling of dread entered my stomach. *'It was just a dream'* I told myself, although I didn't quite believe it. I put it aside, but I couldn't face having anything to eat. With my parents out of the house, I had no one to accompany me in my discomfort, but at least I have Pixie. I stroked her white, soft fur while staring out the cloudy window to meet the rainy, gloomy day outside. Raindrops of condensation gathered on the thin glass. Pixie meowed and I knew she understood my agitation. She always calmed my anxiety.

I got up groggily, the fuzzy carpet soft and comforting under my feet as I walked to my vintage mirror- the one I got at an op-shop when I was just a little girl. With an **elastic**, I tie my long, red hair into a ponytail, feeling my fingers run through the knots. *Will it always be this tangled? Do I have to cut it?* A sudden ring breaks my thoughts.

'DING DING DING!' I jump from the unexpectedness of it. I check my phone and sigh with relief, seeing my mum's familiar number flash on the screen. I feel the cold plastic of the cherry printed phone case on my skin as I pick it up and hold it to my ear. "Hi mum!"

"Hey! I just wanted to check on you Autumn, have you fed Pixie?" My heart calms when I hear her warm voice in my head.

"Yep! I just woke up from a dream..."

"Great! I had to make sure everything was alright - I'd love to chat Autumn, but I've got to go to a meeting now! You have the ticket for the footy right?"

"Yeah, I do! Thanks, by the way." I say.



“No problem honey! I have to go. I’ll call you later. Love you! Bye!” She says before abruptly hanging up. I sighed, deciding to jump up and get dressed. I chose to put on my favorite turquoise jumper, paired with my worn blue jeans, with my Richmond scarf as a final touch, before walking back out of the wardrobe.

Anticipation ran through my blood as I thought about the Richmond game coming up. I hope it isn’t too loud, but I can challenge myself. At least Pixie will be there with me.

I hear a thud and jump in shock, my eyes darting around to find the cause of the noise. I feel sick as I look at my window to see blood smothered around on it. The full identity of the figure appears. A pigeon. I looked at its bulging, strange eyes. One eye had no pupil, just a glassy, white, staring orb. I gagged and ran off as the room suddenly started closing in on me, I couldn’t breathe, it was suffocating. I made it out of my room, gasping for breath and staring at the eerie white, chipped door in front of me. Expecting to see a caved-in room, I stepped back, stumbling slightly against the wood stair railing. It was all there, fine and intact. *In and out. In and out. In and out.* I breathed deeply, holding my pale, shaky hands. “I’m okay, I’m okay...” I stood still for a while before making my way downstairs, Pixie following by close behind me.

I heard a bing coming from my phone, which I had placed on the kitchen bench behind me. I walked over, as though in slow motion, my heart racing. No one ever messages me, I’m sure today is no exception. *Did I just imagine it? Is it my anxiety?* My hand reaches over to pick up my phone as worry courses through my veins. Finally I worked up the courage to look at what had disturbed the silence. There is a message in the message bank from an **unknown number**. The words make my heart sink.

The first message says “It’s done” followed by...

COLE KING. BRUNTON AVENUE RICHMOND VICTORIA. 3:23PM.



Chapter Two

My phone goes dark as I stare at my blank screen, I only think of the message, a name, an address, and a... time? My long red hair fell across my face as I sat on the couch.

What will be done?

My breath shakes, eyes blur, my heart beat quickens. 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4. *Counting, counting, counting.*

"Meow!" My cat presses her fluffy head into my leg. I jumped at the sudden sound, dropping my phone. I pressed my fingers into the soft, cloud-like, white fur as she cuddled up next to me. Her breath washed up against my leg and she purred in a slow rhythmic manner as my breath slowed down with her. I stroked her as she curled up in a crescent of fur.

As I watched the little droplets trickle down the window erratically, slowly growing faster as they made their way down the glass. I felt... peaceful. It was a dark day, perfectly suited to my mood.

What does this mean? Is it some kind of code? Or a riddle?

I slowly rose up off the couch and placed Pixie back where I was sitting as I dragged my feet, heavy, along the cold tiles of the kitchen floor. I opened the old worn out cabinet to grab the tin of milo. Milo's my favourite on a cold day like this. The metal tin lid popped open to reveal chocolaty goodness. I could smell it as I spooned two tablespoons into a glass. My mum always made me a hot chocolate when I was stressed... at least when she was here more often. My hands were tingling with a warm sensation that flooded up my arms. I wish she was here.

I walked back over to the couch where Pixie stayed, lying curled up in a little ball. She's so innocent. I don't know what I would do without her. Melbourne was always gloomy, the weather was always unpredictable, just like life right now.

Am I supposed to be here in this world or was I a mistake ?

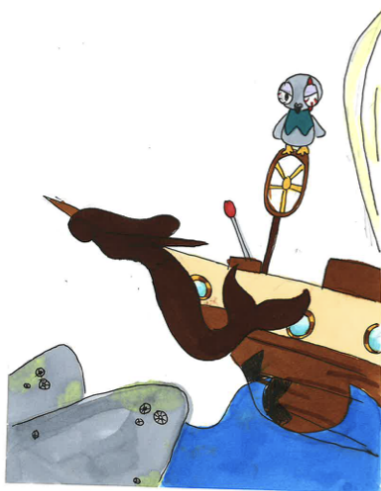
As I sank into the couch, it felt like a warm cocoon, just me and Pixie. The world stayed still in this calm frozen picture. As I looked at my phone, I realized it was 10:19 am. My eyes fell on the remote resting on the glass coffee table. I decided to watch TV to get my mind off the message. I put down my milo on the coffee table and switched the channel to 9 News.

The weather forecaster started to speak in her robotic voice. "Last night, at midnight there was a tragic accident in the Arafura Sea near Darwin involving a shipwreck." A

drop of cold sweat trickled down my forehead. I realized my breath was becoming shaky. I took another sip. The weather reporter continued...

"We believe that one of the trade ships got hijacked and steered towards the Darwin coast, where it further crashed into the rocky shoreline.. There were 15 people aboard, 5 people died and 7 were badly injured. The injured people are at the Darwin Hospital in stable but critical condition.

Police are still investigating what had happened. Here's Kylie reporting from the scene now. Thanks Kylie." I stared in shock, remote in my hand shaking. I scan the image of the shipwreck in the background, but something odd catches my eye. I pause the TV and notice the pigeon that was outside my window this morning. I instantly recognized the milky white eye. It's so distinctive. It can't have traveled all the way from Darwin to my bedroom window in a day. But there it was sitting on the railing along the beach, just behind the reporter. Staring into the camera. Staring at me.



Was this pigeon connected to the unknown message? Stop overthinking Autumn, that's ridiculous. Why would that happen? You're being an idiot. Just relax.

As the news switches to something else, I turn off the TV, the screen fading to a black the sound drowning out. I pick up my cup and take a sip of the warm milky liquid. It trickled down my throat and made me feel warm inside. I placed it back down but Pixie jumped onto the table making me jolt and spill it everywhere. " Oh my gosh, Pixie you **clumsy** cat."

As I looked at my watch I realised it was almost 12pm. I grabbed Pixie and my Richmond Scarf and beanie. As I placed my hand to turn the wooden doorknob, the

door gave a cold chill up my arm. I swing open the door to reveal the harsh wind of the outside. I push the door close behind me and I lift up my head and walk to the bus stop, bracing myself for the loud crowd at the MCG.

The iconic orange bus pulls up, Crowded with people I brace myself for the noise knowing this will only be a fraction of the footy game. I couldn't hear myself think , Pixie was in my arms snuggled up her head swinging around to take everything in. My stop was announced, I squeezed through all the people with pixie in my arms as I hopped off I saw the massive MCG.

Chapter 3

I finally collapsed into my seat, the smell of hot chips and meat pies drifting into my nose, as I adjusted my yellow and black scarf and swept my hair out of my face. The **bright** lights lit up the ground as I watched Richmond and St. Kilda players warming up. The buzz in the stadium was deafening and I could barely hear myself think. My heart pounded loudly in my chest. The lights were too bright. *Should I really be here?* I thought to myself, *maybe I should leave? Maybe the **event** is too much.* I feel Pixie jump up onto my lap, and she puts her head into my hand, offering a possible pat. I stroke her soft head, feeling my body relax. My heart slows and I breathe a sigh of relief. The siren sounds, and I sink into my plastic seat, watching the game unravel.

The half time siren sounded, and everyone began to get out of their seats. I stood up to allow the family to my left to pass, then sat down again, pleased that Richmond was in front by three goals. I sit back down in my seat, watching a stage be set up on the ground. One with an abundance of weights and a foam pad. With this I can gather enough information to guess that someone is here to showcase an unneeded skill set of lifting weights. I prepared myself to leave before the crowd got to the food first before me but something made me want to stay and watch. A feeling that something bad would happen. I didn't know why or how but it had just felt wrong.

I wait for the half time show, and look around the huge stadium, before something catches my eye. A pigeon, with the same milky, unseeing eye. It flips its head around, focusing its one beady orange eye on me. It couldn't be right. I'd watched the exact same pigeon fly straight into my window and die this morning. It glared at me before flying off, no sign of injury. Even if it had survived, no way could it have flown off. Something wasn't adding up. I pull my water bottle out of my bag and took a slow sip, before an announcement came on.

"And now! Presenting! Cole King!" The voice echoed through the stadium and a big buff man- Cole King the Weightlifter- entered, trying to hype up the little remaining crowd of people, most of which were at the snack bars or getting drinks. I still remained at my seat. A feeling of dread crept up at my spine, wasn't that the name from the strange message? I watch in silence, Pixie's heartbeat vibrating on my legs. Cole King lifts up the weights with no sign of struggle on his face, until something shifts and he'd looked more distraught than proud and enthusiastic, he'd looked like he was in trouble, like a kid getting detention for the first time. A huge weight moves- only slightly- but enough to see it change. It slid off the bar slowly as he tried to maneuver the weight so it wouldn't hit him. Time seemed to slow down as the spotters raced towards him. The weight came down crashing into his head, and it seemed to sink into his skull. He went limp instantly, coming down straight into the foam mat. Medics rushed in immediately yelling orders and commands.

A stretch of silence washes over the crowd as Cole King is strapped onto a stretcher and carted off the ground. I could hear my heartbeat thumping in my chest as pure panic swells in my stomach. My vision blurs and I can barely feel Pixie rubbing her head against my chest. An MCG official pulls me out of my panic. "Miss please come with me" he said and placed a firm hand on my shoulder grounding me, though my heart still ached in my chest. I ran a hand through the side of my hair. I allowed myself to be pulled out of my seat, I picked up Pixie and I walked through the concourse to the sensory room. I pulled out my phone with a trembling hand. The time on my lock screen read 3:23. Same time as the message .The same person, Cole King. The same address.

Inside the sensory room the lights are dim and the loud sounds are muted. I made my way to a small bean bag near the corner where I tried to steady my breathing which took longer than expected. My mind raced and it kept replaying the scene of the weight lifter collapsing onto the foam pad and the weight falling on top of him, I tried to block it out but it never stopped, it was on a never ending loop no pause button or replay just the image of a falling weight and an unsuspecting man. My phone buzzes and I pick it up, expecting my mum or dad, but instead, the words Unknown number flash on the screen. I tapped on the text and gasped. A photo of Cole King, unconscious, from just behind where I was sitting, and a text underneath. Enjoy the game?. I watched as three dots appeared underneath, and frozen, I waited for it to come through. **STEVIE WINTERS. 4.46PM. 13 ANTUKA ROAD ROCKINGHAM.**



Chapter Four

I gasp in shock. Stevie. Winters. My best friend from Perth. “No, no, no.. this can’t be happening...” Tears welled up in my eyes as I struggled to catch my panicked breath. “It’s not true... it’s not true!” I sob and burrow my head into my knees, incredulous to the fact that my one and only friend might be tied to death. It is inevitable.

“Are you alright, miss?” The loud voice of an official makes me raise my head. Kind eyes, dirty blonde hair and aged, wrinkled skin looks down at me. I get up clumsily.

“Oh! Um.. I’m fine! Just heading home now!” I replied to him in a shaky voice.

He shrugged, casting a concerned glance at me as I shoved my phone in my pocket, scooped up Pixie and left, joining the crowd through gate 6 and walking down the street to the train station. I tapped my myki and, my breathing heavy, walked up the ramp to wait for the train. All I wanted to do was get out of here, back home.

The train was filled with people who had left the game prematurely. I forced the image of Cole King out of my mind and held on tight to the sticky bright yellow railing. I stopped at St. Kilda station, walked down Gray Street and arrived at my house, still unoccupied.

When I reached home I opened up my phone to frantically contact Stevie - but as I found her contact an urgent news alert appeared on my phone.

Teenager Dead After House Party Takes A Drastic Turn.



I didn’t need to read the following name to know who it was. But I did it anyway. Stevie Winters. My only friend from where I used to live. I didn’t cry, I just felt sick. I trembled and put my phone away, not trusting myself to look at it any longer. I didn’t

have anyone in the world, only Pixie and my parents. What had I done wrong? I should have contacted her, should have told her I still wanted to be friends with her all along. It wasn't fair. I heard a ring from my phone, this time it wasn't surprising. I picked it up, and heard my mum's voice, all muffled. "Sweetie? I just saw the news, are you okay?" I tried to speak but my tears trickled down my face and I was only able to say a couple words.

"I'm ok. I'm just...shocked."

I heard more static on the phone. "Honey? Are you still there?"

"Yeah."

"I have another meeting, I can't skip it, but I'll try to get home early, okay Autumn?"

I nodded, before remembering I was on the phone.

"Yeah, ok. Love you."

The phone hangs up and I'm once again left alone.

Chapter Five

Click... I locked the front door

Tap.

I froze

Tap. Tap.

Slowly, I turned toward the window...

The pigeon stood perfectly still on the windowsill, its feathers ruffled, his beady eyes red with fury fixed on me.

I stumbled backward in shock.

“H-how?!”

Tap. Tap. Tap.

The pigeon tapped its beak on the window.

Hands trembling, I dialed ‘000’.

“Hello?”

“Hi, this is the St Kilda police station, what’s your emergency?”

“I think someone is threatening me.” Trying to keep my voice steady, I continued. “I have proof on my phone; my name is Autumn White, I’m 15 and my address is 255 Carlilse street.”

“Okay, do not panic, we are on our way. Dispatch is 5 minutes out.”

“Thank you.” I hung up and took a shaky breath.

A sharp knock on the door shakes me out of my spiralling fears.

I open the door in a rush; the **crisp** air burns my lungs.

A middle-aged man in a police uniform is standing in the doorway, another woman in the same uniform just a step behind. He rakes his calloused hands through his dark, short hair and addresses me.

“Hi, we are the St Kilda police, someone under the name of Autumn White called us to this address?”

“Yeah that’s me. I called because I got a message on my phone.”

“May we see the message?”

“Yeah, my phone is in my pocket.” I grab my phone, and unlock it to see... nothing. Where the messages once were, there is a blank screen.

“C’mon, show us this message.”

“I... the message is gone. But it was just there, I swear!”

“You’ve wasted emergency resources,” the officer said. “If there was never a message, you shouldn’t have called.”

“I promise you! It’s true!”

“Well if you don’t have proof, there’s nothing we can do for you,” the officer responds bluntly. “Good day.”

The door slams shut.

I stare blankly at myself in the mirror

Why has this happened to me? What have I done wrong? Why does no one trust me?

I feel my heart speed up as the world spins around me and I stumble back to my melancholy room. Pixie wounds around my legs, purring comfortably.

“Aww Pixie, what would I do without you?”

“Meow.”

“I know it’s scary without mum and dad here. Let’s go get your food, shall we?”

Tap.

I freeze. My eyes slowly drift towards the window.

Nothing.

I let out a nervous laugh. “Probably just a branch.”

Tap. Tap.

Pixie freezes for a second.

Her ears prick up.

“What is it, Pix?”

The house feels different without Mum and Dad. Too quiet.

I grab Pixie’s bowl and scoop some food into it. She immediately starts eating, purring happily as her tail flicks from side to side.

“See? Nothing to be scared of,” I whisper, mostly trying to convince myself.

I turn towards the sink.

Tap.

I freeze.

My eyes slowly drift towards the window.

Nothing.

Tap. Tap.

I turn around, expecting the pigeon at the window staring back at me.



Instead, it’s sitting on the light.

Inside.

Pixie suddenly hisses, arching her back and puffing out her tail.

I jump backwards.

“Pixie?!”

The pigeon doesn't even flinch.

It just keeps staring.

It's looking at me.

“Ahhh!!!! Get away! Shoo!”

The pigeon tilted its head to peer at me, and ice spread through my veins.

“What do you want?”

The pigeon continues to stare as I slowly walk away. With my back against the wall, I feel a buzz from my phone.

It's no longer blank.

In front of me I read another message.



“Why did you tell?”

“You’re next. - **AUTUMN WHITE, 5:36PM, 255 CARLISLE STREET**”

Tap Tap Tap.

Acknowledgements

Firstly we thank the original Pixie - a beloved dog, but quite a scaredy-cat at the same time. We acknowledge the Indigenous people, the first to tell stories on this land. Thank you for all of the teachers you have inspired our love for writing and gave us the opportunity to do this. Thank you to our parents for supporting our crazy love for books - both writing and reading. Finally we also would like to share our appreciation for our fellow team members Ava, Daea, Florence, Kira, Liat, Lily, Maya, Monique, Nadia, Scarlett, and Sophie.

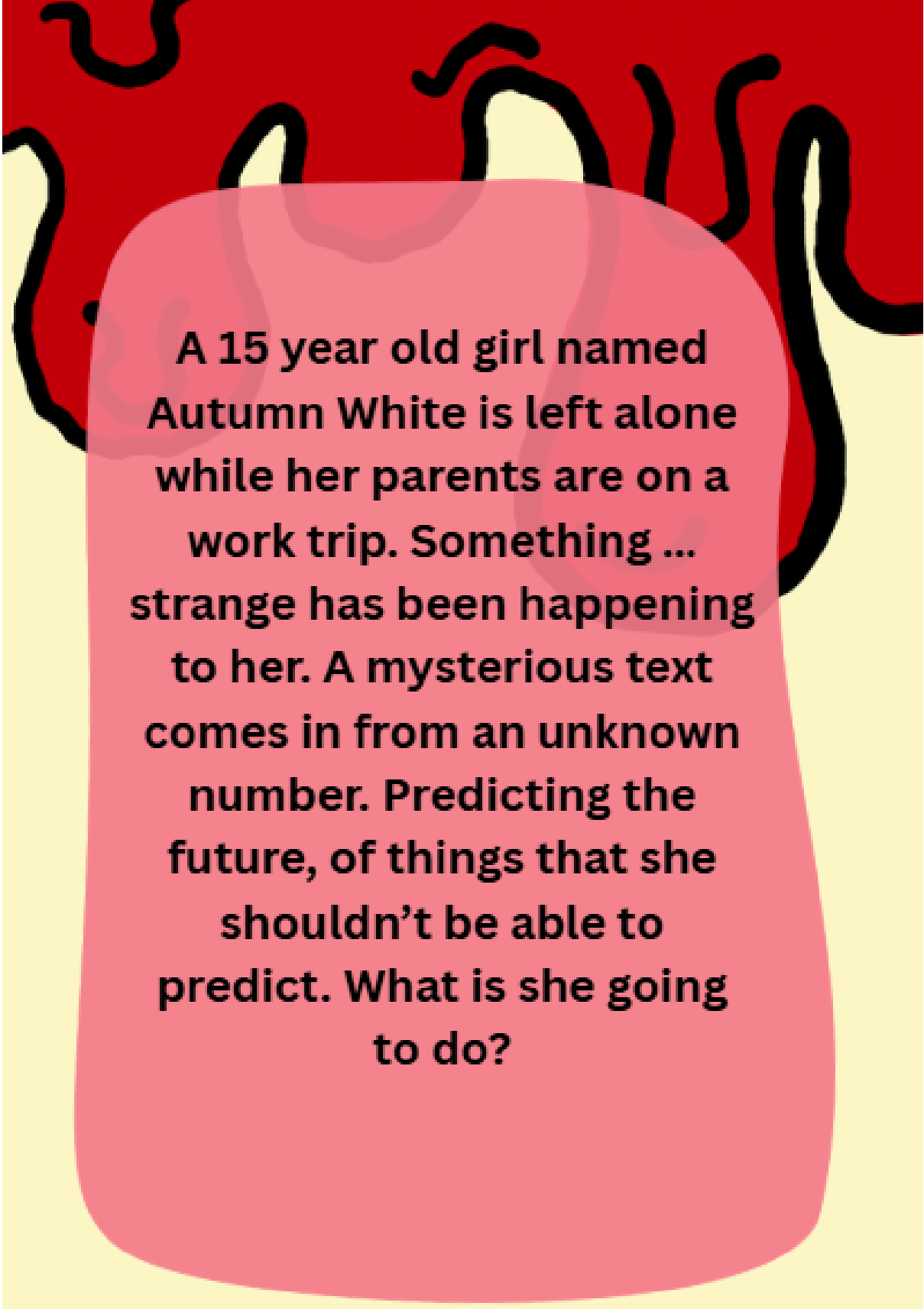
Authors note

The story of the unknown number is mainly based around metaphors. For example Autumn is a victim of anxiety. She is consumed by anxious thoughts and questions which control her life and decisions. Many characters in this story represent things anxiety can do to you. Cole was representing how anxiety can ruin things you do by overthinking. Autumn felt the excitement drain out of her after the weightlifter was killed and it took her focus off the thing she loved, like the footy. Stevie represents how anxiety can ruin relationships by isolating yourself or over-thinking things such as friends and social life, while Autumn's mother shows how by reaching out you can talk to someone about your problems even if you feel like you can't. In total the story is about raising awareness for kids, especially teens who struggle with anxiety. We hope that all teens can reach out and talk to someone to help them approach life. Thank you so much for reading. We hoped you enjoyed it.

Sincerely Somnia Scripta — *Written Dreams*

Illustrators- Maya Perez Kessler, Nasia Bessard, Ava Spiker





A 15 year old girl named Autumn White is left alone while her parents are on a work trip. Something ... strange has been happening to her. A mysterious text comes in from an unknown number. Predicting the future, of things that she shouldn't be able to predict. What is she going to do?

Writers- Sophie Atkins, Scarlett Williams, Lilly Gray, Monique Howe, Liat Zetzer, Daea Boulton, Kira Bakham