

THE TALENT QUEST



Chapter 3

'That Neville is so naughty! I can't believe all the tampering he did to the flags at the naval base.' Aiden said, exasperated.

'He really is a nuisance, messing up all the protocols to get the media's attention,' agreed Laleh. 'I can't believe the navy official had to cut the flag Neville tampered with into small unrecognisable pieces and place it in a sealed bag before binning it. Who would have thought there was a flag disposal protocol as well?'

'I know, and what a waste of a perfectly good Aussie flag. Neville has a lot to answer for!' Aiden said, looking annoyed.

'At least we stopped his attempt to get his name in the spotlight for the second time,' responded Laleh. 'Now we just have to solve his final clue and work out where he is now. I'll read it again ...'

*'Letters and parcels, so much mail.
Catch me quickly, or the posties will fail.'*

'I think this is an obvious one. He must have gone to the post office and plans to do something to stop everyone's mail,' said Aiden.

'Yeah I think you're probably right, but which post office? There is one in almost every suburb. How can we narrow it down?' Laleh moaned. 'We don't have time to visit them all'.

They plonked down on the grass and stared at the clue, both needing to catch their breath after a crazy morning.

'I think it must be a big one, Neville never does anything by halves. If he is going to sabotage the mail then he'll try to do it from the place likely to get the most

attention,' observed Aiden.

'Then it has to be the GPO in the city. The General Post Office. That's the biggest and it also gets loads of visitors every day,' Laleh said, agreeing with Aiden's logic.

'It's only a few blocks from here. We can make it in about ten minutes; five if you had a skateboard,' Aiden teased.

They set off through the streets until they spotted a grand and beautiful old building made of sandstone. Even though the buildings around it were huge, fancy new skyscrapers that went on forever, the GPO had character and it stood out proudly.

Aiden and Laleh didn't need a riddle to work out what the numbat had done this time. Crowds of postal workers stood in front of the building looking concerned.

They were pointing to the large Commonwealth Coat of Arms mounted above the post office doors. Hanging

over the place where the emu normally stood was a large full-colour photograph of Neville. The picture was of him in his shades posing in a way that he probably thought made him look cool.

'What's going on?' Aiden said to a confused-looking worker.

'This nutty numbat has disrespected our Coat of Arms,' the man said. 'Look at it! Not only has he hung this very uncool poster of himself over our emu, he's gone and changed lots of the important parts of the Arms itself. He left a note and some clues. The Coat of Arms is important to us. We just want it fixed.'

'I think that's our cue,' Laleh said, jumping in. 'Don't worry sir, we've stopped his animal antics up to now and we won't let this one get past us! Can you show us the clues?'

CLUE 12

*It had 7 points and 14 sides,
But it's much better now, so which shape hides?*

CLUE 13

*My allergies can't cope with trees,
So I've swapped it out, sorry bees!*

CLUE 14

*My family's regalia is so much better,
What do you think of our matching sweaters?*

CLUE 15

*Numbatia has such a delightful ring,
Let's rename our land, and make me King!*

CLUE 16

*Congratulations kids, you solved my clues.
But hurry back fast, or you'll still lose!*