

Jay's Story

Written by Libby Andrew

Illustrated by Elinor Archer

Dedication

Through the Remote Workforce Development Strategy managed by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment (Northern Territory Government), thank you for the scholarship that made Jay's Story possible.

The primary reason that this story was written was to teach Indigenous children, living in remote communities about the law, life and consequence. I hope this story will assist these children to make good choices in their lives.

For the non-Indigenous children, this story provides the same educational opportunity and also an insight into the lives of people living in remote communities 'in our own backyard within Australia'.

To the NT Police Service and its members, thank you for the wonderful career, the mateship and the fun. Without a doubt it is the greatest job any person could hope for. Jay's Story was an inspiration from a remote policing experience and the wonderful opportunity that the NT police provided.

To the three Aboriginal Community Police Officers in my career, RC, AS, & GB that taught me so much about the Tjukurrpa yara, their dreaming stories, their lives and most importantly how to survive in remote areas—thank you.

To the remote schools of Fitzroy Crossing (WA), Yuendumu and Yuelamu Communities (NT) and their staff for the assistance they provided me whilst undertaking the testing of Jay's Story—thank you.

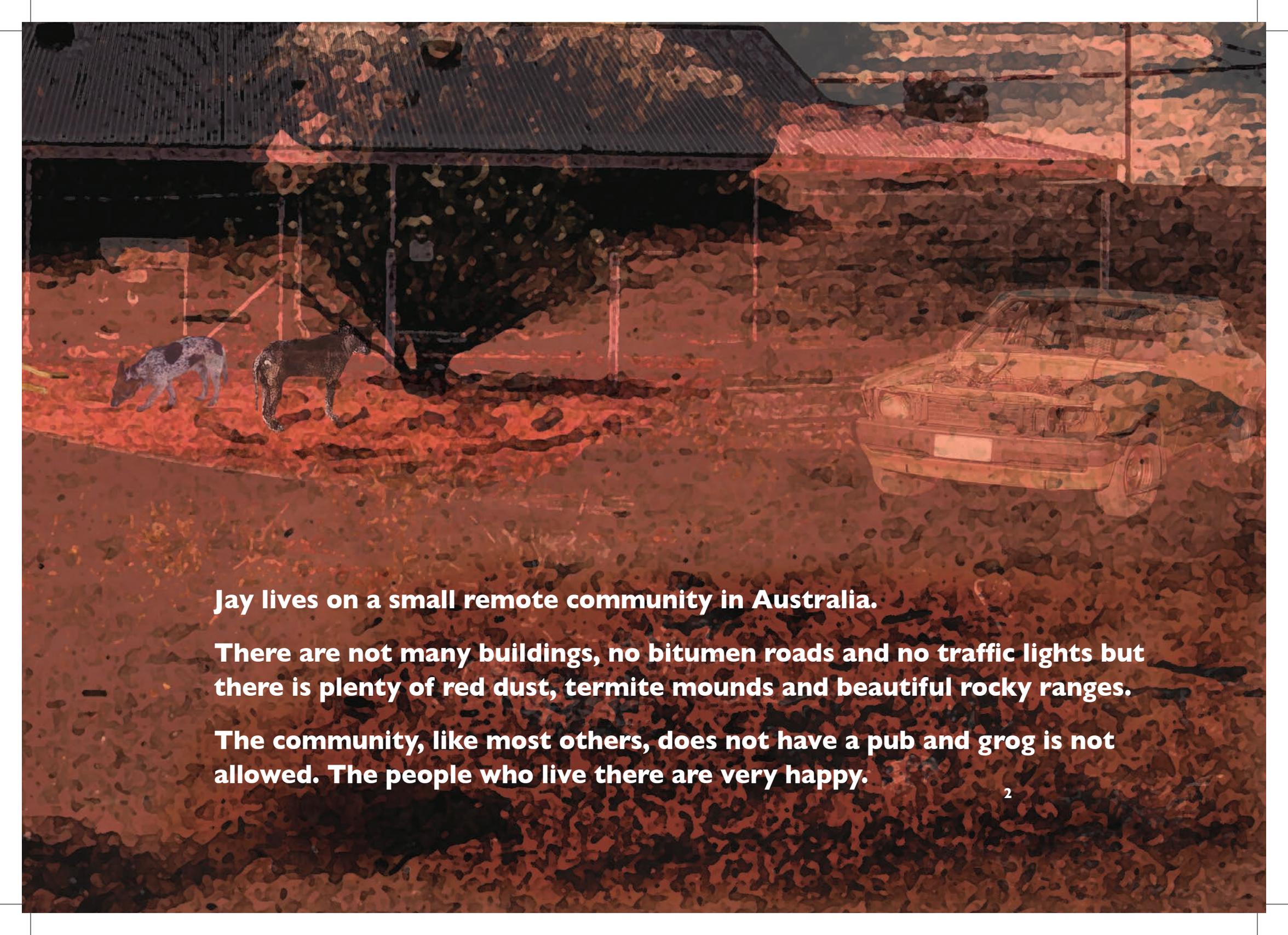
To Mouli MacKenzie of M Squared Design, my publishing expert, for her commitment to Jay's Story—thank you.

Finally to my own family—all of them—for their loving support and assistance in all that I continue to do. **Libby Andrew**

Jay's Story

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A photograph of a remote Australian community. In the foreground, a silver car is parked on a dirt road. To the left, two dogs, one spotted and one dark, are standing near a building with a corrugated metal roof. The background shows a rocky, hilly landscape under a clear sky.

Jay lives on a small remote community in Australia.

There are not many buildings, no bitumen roads and no traffic lights but there is plenty of red dust, termite mounds and beautiful rocky ranges.

The community, like most others, does not have a pub and grog is not allowed. The people who live there are very happy.

Each year Jay's community hosts a sports festival. Hundreds of visitors come from far and wide to play sports. Jay will be playing for the local junior football team. They have been training hard.

Most families have been cleaning their yards and homes. People working around the community have been making bough shelters and preparing the ovals for sport.

The different sports events bring prize money and trophies but most of all glory for the winning teams.







The first day of the sports festival had finally arrived. Jay saw a green sedan parked out the front of his house. He ran home to find that some of his family had arrived from a community far away. Everyone was happy and excited to see each other.

Jay ran off to the oval with some cousins to kick the footy. The ladies put the billy on the fire to make tea. They told stories while they made damper and nursed the babies. The men jumped into that green sedan and drove to the pub on the highway to drink beer and tell their own stories.



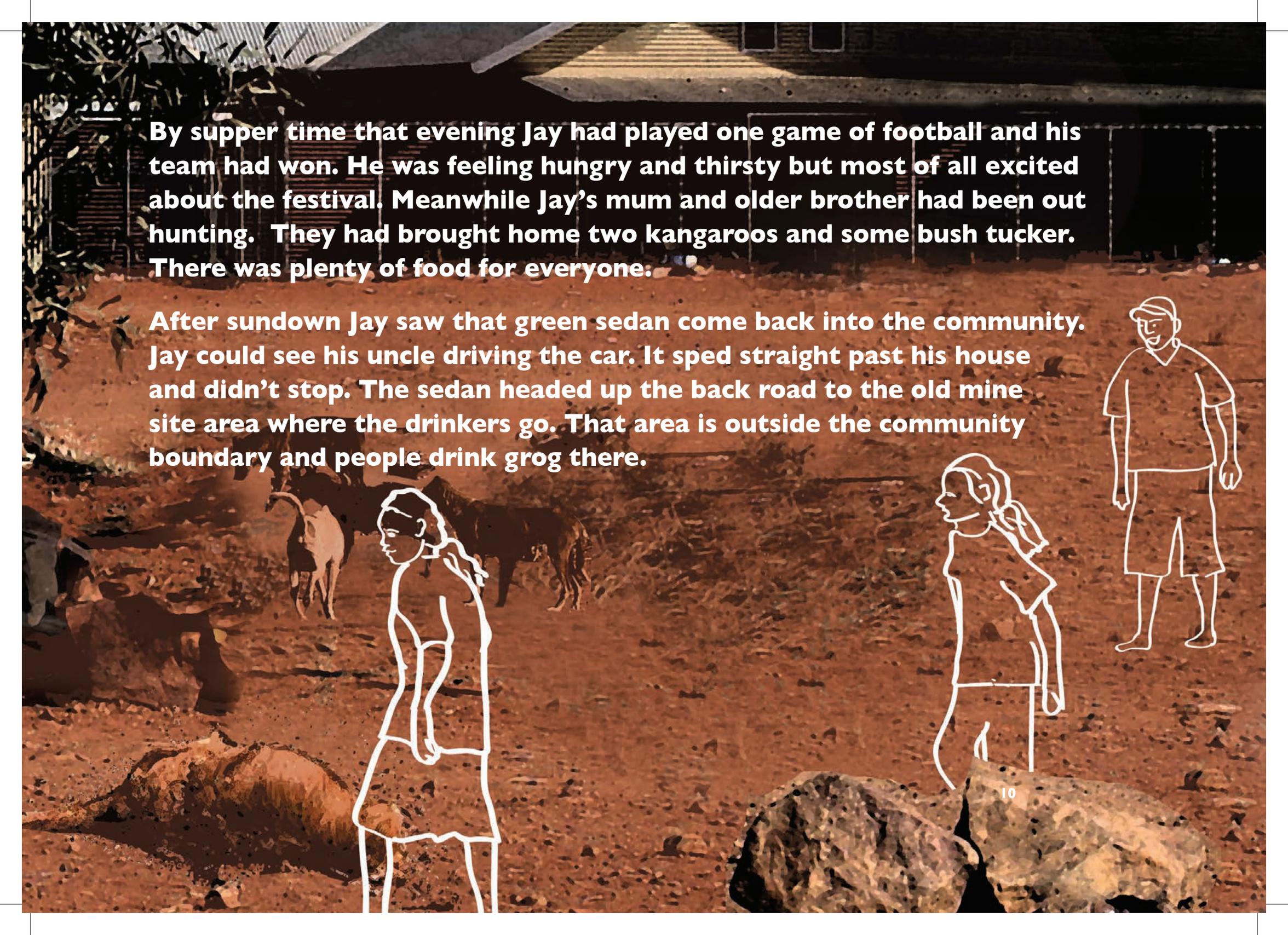


On the boundary, outside Jay’s community, there are large signs that say “NO GROG”. The signs have lots of large printed words which tell everyone that it is against the law to bring grog past the sign. Everyone knows this law and wants to keep grog and trouble far away.

Last year the community ran their own competition to make some other “NO GROG” signs. This was to remind the locals and visitors not to bring in grog. Lots of kids from school entered that competition and the winners had their designs printed in colour on big signs just like the government ones. These signs can be seen along the road into Jay’s community.







By supper time that evening Jay had played one game of football and his team had won. He was feeling hungry and thirsty but most of all excited about the festival. Meanwhile Jay's mum and older brother had been out hunting. They had brought home two kangaroos and some bush tucker. There was plenty of food for everyone.

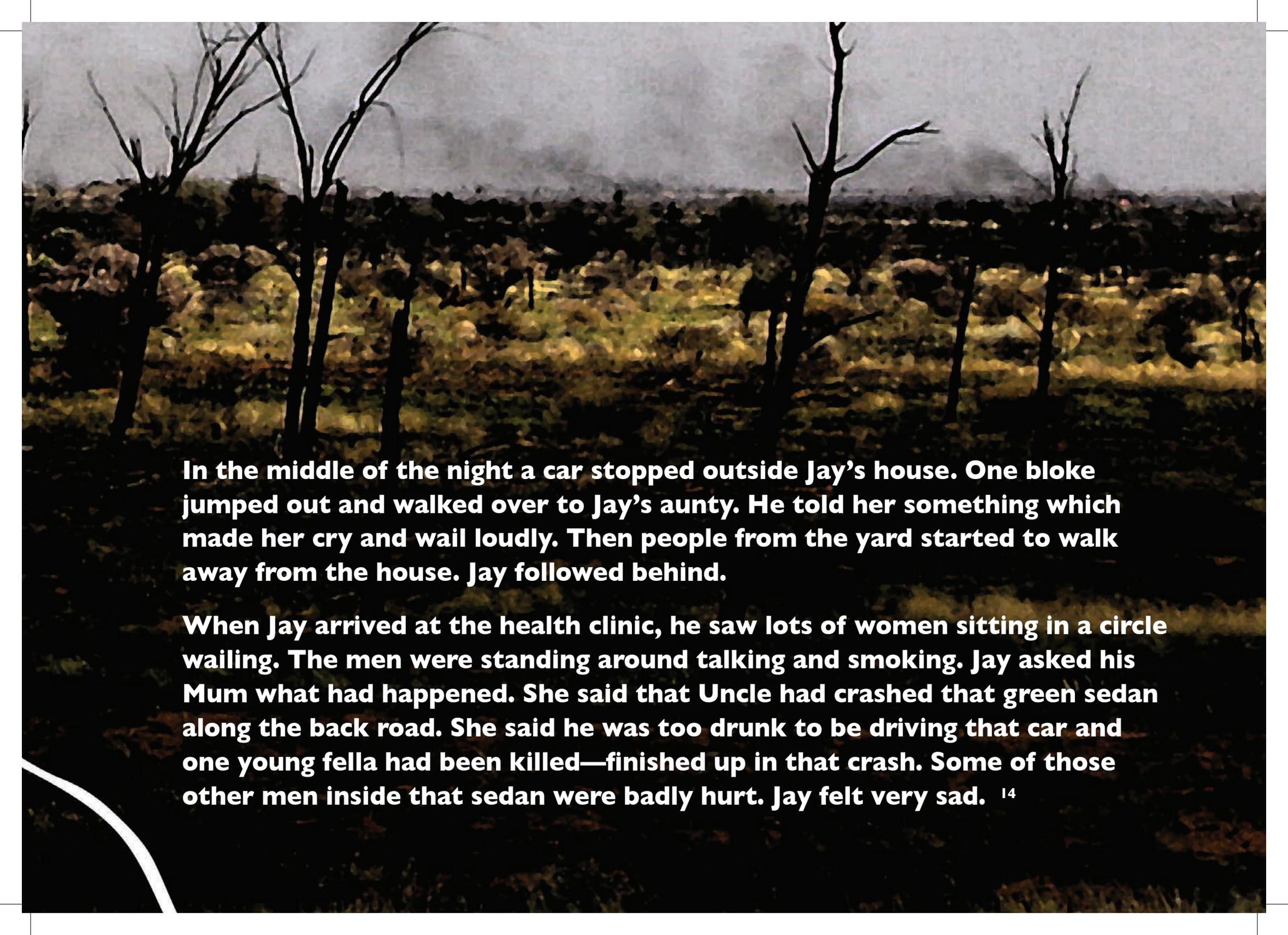
After sundown Jay saw that green sedan come back into the community. Jay could see his uncle driving the car. It sped straight past his house and didn't stop. The sedan headed up the back road to the old mine site area where the drinkers go. That area is outside the community boundary and people drink grog there.



Later that night Jay went to the Blue Light Disco at the recreation hall. He danced for hours and had a great time. Afterwards Jay walked to the local park and listened to the band playing loud rock music until it was very late. Jay felt happy but exhausted as he walked home.







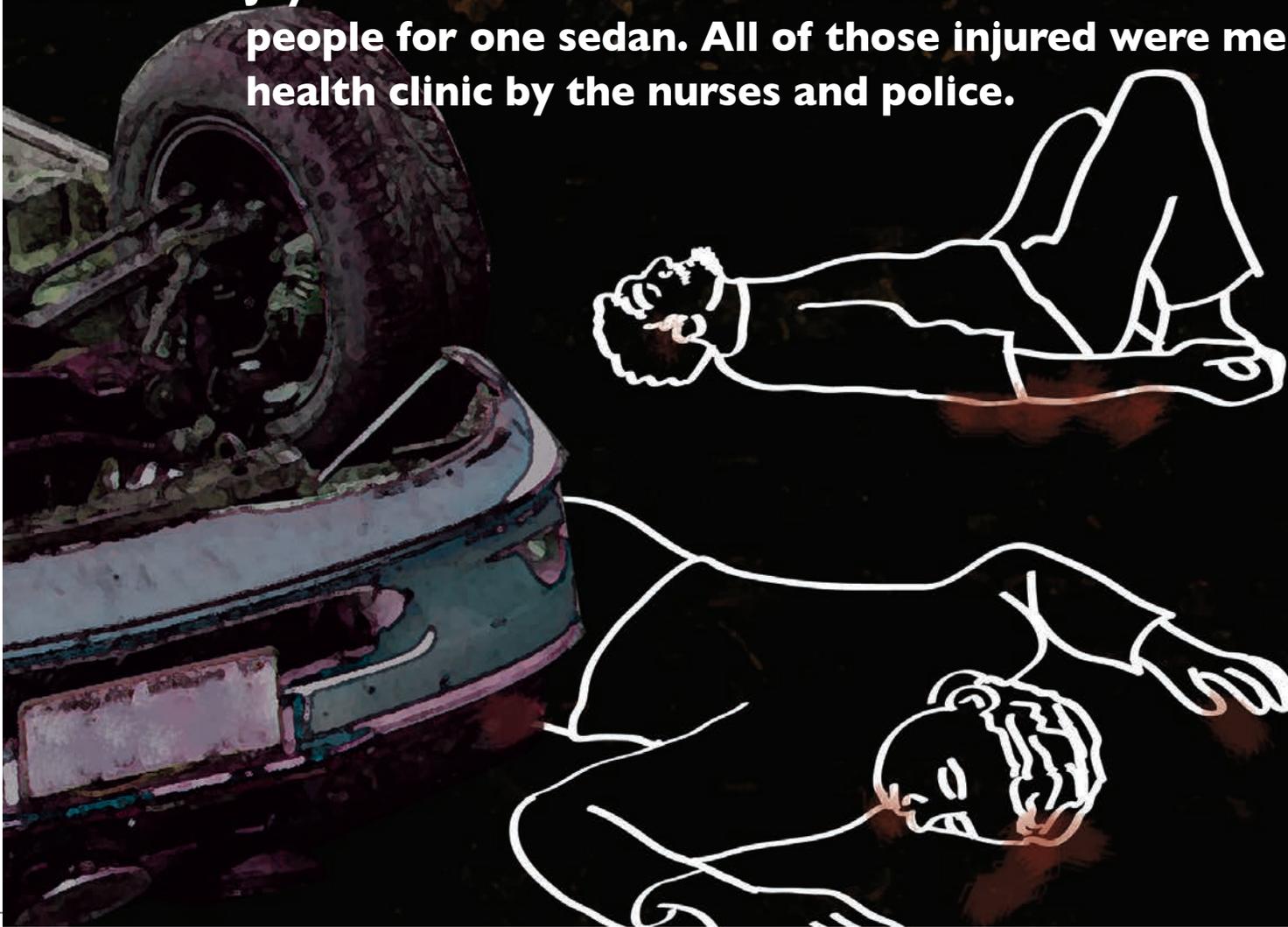
In the middle of the night a car stopped outside Jay's house. One bloke jumped out and walked over to Jay's aunty. He told her something which made her cry and wail loudly. Then people from the yard started to walk away from the house. Jay followed behind.

When Jay arrived at the health clinic, he saw lots of women sitting in a circle wailing. The men were standing around talking and smoking. Jay asked his Mum what had happened. She said that Uncle had crashed that green sedan along the back road. She said he was too drunk to be driving that car and one young fella had been killed—finished up in that crash. Some of those other men inside that sedan were badly hurt. Jay felt very sad. ¹⁴



Jay's Mum told him that a kangaroo had scared Uncle along the back road. Uncle swerved to miss the roo but he lost control of the sedan and it rolled over a few times. The sedan was all smashed up. Uncle was driving without his seatbelt fastened and because of this he was thrown out of the windscreen and onto the road. Uncle was badly injured but he was alive.

Jay's Mum said seven other men were inside that car. That is too many people for one sedan. All of those injured were men. They were taken to the health clinic by the nurses and police.



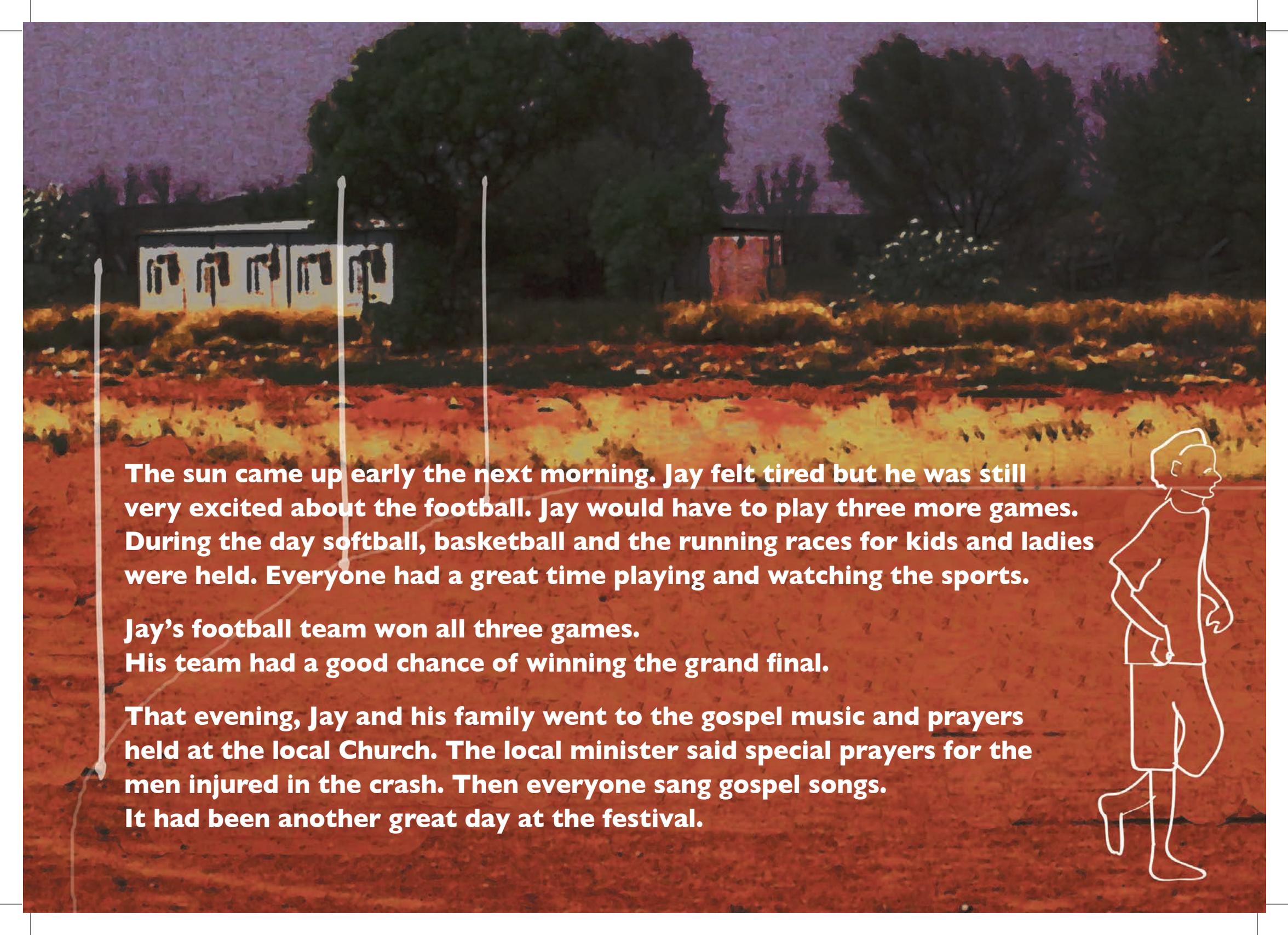


Later the Aboriginal health worker and the Aboriginal community police officer, who is Jay's grandfather, came outside to talk to the family. They said that four of the men, including Uncle, would have to go to town in the flying doctor plane because their injuries were so serious.

Grandfather said that all of the men were very drunk from drinking too much beer. He said that Uncle should not have been driving while he was drunk. If Uncle had been wearing his seatbelt he would not have been thrown out of the car and injured as badly. The police, health workers and nurses had to work all night looking after those men. Grandfather told all the people to go home to sleep.

Very late that night Jay woke up at the sound of the flying doctor plane coming into the community. He hoped that all of those injured men would be alright.





The sun came up early the next morning. Jay felt tired but he was still very excited about the football. Jay would have to play three more games. During the day softball, basketball and the running races for kids and ladies were held. Everyone had a great time playing and watching the sports.

**Jay's football team won all three games.
His team had a good chance of winning the grand final.**

That evening, Jay and his family went to the gospel music and prayers held at the local Church. The local minister said special prayers for the men injured in the crash. Then everyone sang gospel songs. It had been another great day at the festival.







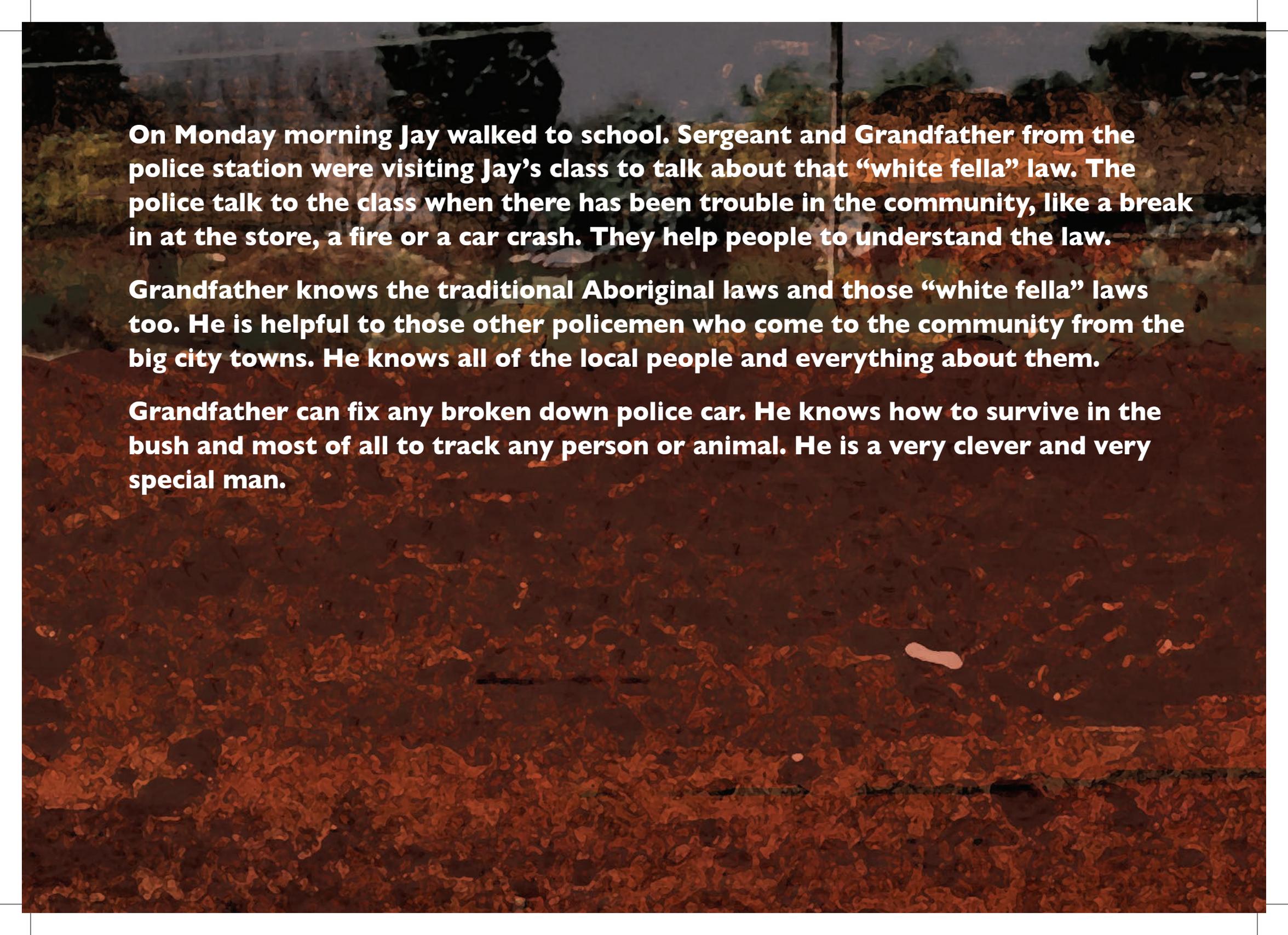
Early on Sunday morning Jay walked to the football oval. He arrived early for the grand final and warmed up with his team. Jay's team won that final by ten points. Each player was given a ribbon and Jay received the team trophy. He was very happy.

By five o'clock all the finals for all the games were finished. Cars were fueling up at the local store and heading for their homes a long way away.

Jay felt pleased about his football but sad about the crash involving his Uncle and those other men. His Uncle still had not returned from the hospital and the green sedan could not be used to drive the family back to their own community.

The car stayed on the back road where it had crashed. It was rubbish now.





On Monday morning Jay walked to school. Sergeant and Grandfather from the police station were visiting Jay's class to talk about that "white fella" law. The police talk to the class when there has been trouble in the community, like a break in at the store, a fire or a car crash. They help people to understand the law.

Grandfather knows the traditional Aboriginal laws and those "white fella" laws too. He is helpful to those other policemen who come to the community from the big city towns. He knows all of the local people and everything about them.

Grandfather can fix any broken down police car. He knows how to survive in the bush and most of all to track any person or animal. He is a very clever and very special man.



Sergeant and Grandfather talked to the class about that car crash on the weekend. They said that drinking too much grog is no good for our bodies. It ruins our livers and can cause all sorts of other problems for family and the community.

Grandfather said that nobody should drive a motor car after they have been drinking grog. It is against the law to drink and drive and it is very dangerous. That law was made a long time ago to keep all people safe on the roads.

Grandfather said that kids should never get into a car if the driver is drunk. Lots of crashes are caused on our roads because people drive when they are drunk. Some drive too fast and others drive too slow. For lots of different reasons people die on the roads from drink driving.





Sergeant explained why the judge punishes people who drink and drive. He said sometimes people get a fine, sometimes people lose their driver's licence and sometimes when it is really serious, drivers get sent to jail where they are separated from family and the community.

Then Grandfather talked to the kids about wearing seatbelts. He said you should buckle up as soon as you sit on the seat, even before the car has moved. He said to never stand up on the seat while the car is moving. Don't sit on someone's lap if there are no seats left and never travel in the boot space of a motor car where the shopping and spare tyre is supposed to go. All of these things are dangerous. Grandfather said that lots and lots of our people pass away on the road every year because they don't wear their seatbelts. He said we must all follow this law if we want to live a long life.







After the talk in the classroom Sergeant and Grandfather put Jay and all those kids in the cage of the police cars. They made the lights and siren work to show the kids what happens in an emergency.

Jay learned a lot about that “white fella” law and why we have these laws. They keep us safe and make our communities good places to live. Jay made a promise to himself that he would always wear a seatbelt when travelling in a car and that he would never drink and drive when he grew up.

Jay started to think about the sports festival that his community would host next year. He was looking forward to it already.



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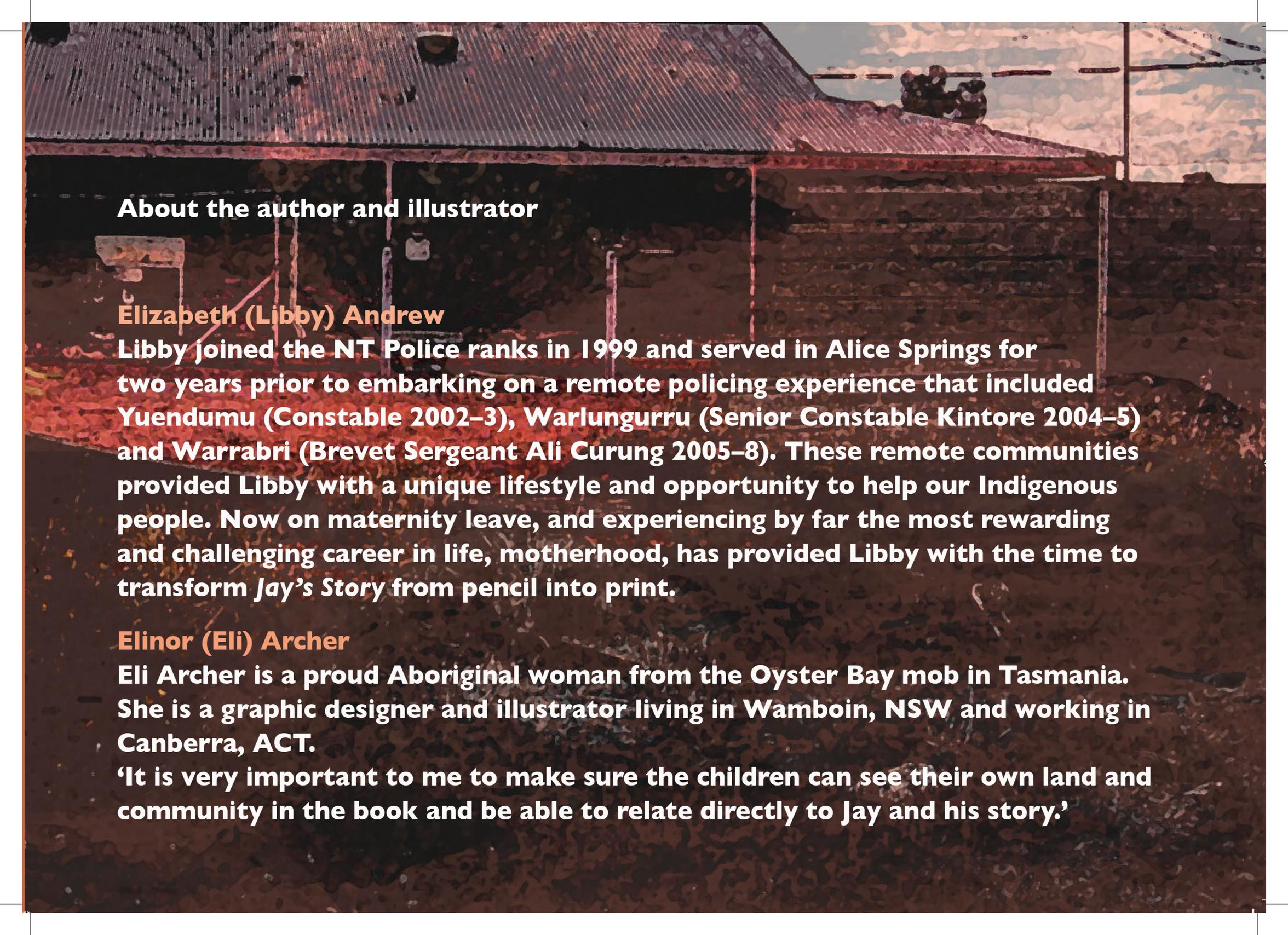
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A photograph of a dilapidated building with a corrugated metal roof. The building appears to be made of dark, possibly brick or concrete, and shows signs of significant wear and tear. A person is sitting on the roof, and the sky is visible in the background. The overall tone is somber and gritty.

About the author and illustrator

Elizabeth (Libby) Andrew

Libby joined the NT Police ranks in 1999 and served in Alice Springs for two years prior to embarking on a remote policing experience that included Yuendumu (Constable 2002–3), Warlungurru (Senior Constable Kintore 2004–5) and Warrabri (Brevet Sergeant Ali Curung 2005–8). These remote communities provided Libby with a unique lifestyle and opportunity to help our Indigenous people. Now on maternity leave, and experiencing by far the most rewarding and challenging career in life, motherhood, has provided Libby with the time to transform *Jay's Story* from pencil into print.

Elinor (Eli) Archer

Eli Archer is a proud Aboriginal woman from the Oyster Bay mob in Tasmania. She is a graphic designer and illustrator living in Wamboin, NSW and working in Canberra, ACT.

'It is very important to me to make sure the children can see their own land and community in the book and be able to relate directly to Jay and his story.'



Jay's Story

An annual sport carnival is held in a small remote Indigenous community, located several hours from a main town in Australia. The community is a unique place where the red dirt and ranges stretch through the desert. A young boy called Jay has an experience this weekend that will remain with him for his entire life, in more ways than one. This story teaches Jay about the “white fella” law and the consequences of breaking it. The best and worst experiences of life and sport come alive within these pages.