



C A T A C H Y S M



Write a Book in a Day



**THE KIDS'
CANCER
PROJECT**
Science. Solutions. Survival.

PARAMETERS FORM

TEAM DETAILS

STATE: VIC

DIVISION: Upper School

SCHOOL/GROUP: Catholic Regional College Melton (MELTON)

TEAM NAME: CRC Melton Senior Team

TEAM ID: 1283

PARAMETERS AND RANDOM WORDS

Parameters

Primary character 1 Librarian

Primary character 2 Cyclist

Non-human character Suitcase

Setting Cafe

Issue Saving an endangered species

Random words

Tiptoe

Fresh

Community

Delight

Bruised

INSTRUCTIONS

- Start at 8am
- Write an original story:
 - based on all **five parameters** (above)
 - including all **five random words** (above), 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

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PROLOGUE

The human crowd were now surrounded by the SOAR agents, their screams of terror silenced by the masked soldier mech suits. Suddenly, they all faced the military aircraft that landed mysteriously just moments ago. Kronac stepped slowly out of this vessel to face the frightened crowd, his boots clicking loudly on the steel walkway. His mech suit's tall, wide frame was starting to become visible through the wall of fog. His helmet retracted back with a whir of mechanical panels, revealing the gruff feline face underneath. His battle-damaged whiskers stuck out from his scarred fur, a red magnifier lens over his injured right eye. With a mighty roar he commanded the people. The mass of people cowered in fear, the bright lights of the SOAR land rover reflecting in each terrified eye. He stepped back into the doorway of the vehicle, his intimidating henchman, The SOAR agents, pushed back the crowd and herded them towards the carriers. Eclipse kept her head down at the back of the pack, keeping a watchful eye over these few humans left in The Underground **Community**. Her people needed a miracle to have any chance against Kronac and SOAR, the Specialised Operations Attack Regiment. There had been a lingering dread for years now without any sign of hope, but it couldn't persist, it mustn't persist, something needs to happen to change the course of history. Eclipse edged into the shadows and mounted her cycle, Moonblade, racing off into the night.

CHAPTER I

A haze of dust clouded the air as the chillingly cold man, who went by the name of Stanley Bookington, unenthusiastically dusted the dirty bookshelves inside of his small bookshop. Very few had entered the bookshop as the man's fierce temper was what kept people away.

In the small rustic bookshop there was no one but him and his trusty feline companion Coco. Suddenly a young girl in her early teen years entered the bookshop with the latest iPhone in hand. The chimes of the doorbell made his cat Coco perk up and he scurried towards the door frightening the young girl.

"Ew! whose pest is this?!" The girl exclaimed.

The sound of the customer made Stanley's eyebrows furrow in the middle of dusting and so he marched towards the entry of the shop and growled.

"Sorry but we're closed. I advise you to leave now." He stated.

The girl looked disgusted at him, then sharply retorted, "Whatever, this place is a dump anyways."

Storming out of the shop, the young lady shut the door with a deafening slam, the sound echoing around the building. Stanley firmly locked the door of his shop, leaning against the door and released a breath of relief. Rubbing the creases of his forehead, Stanley dragged his feet to get through the small building.

The hot-headed man made his way to the backroom, which was hidden through the spaces between the two bookshelves he had previously finished dusting.

Stanley reached for the wooden door, twisting the smooth handle and stepping through with a screechy croak of its hinges.

His cat rubbed his face against his legs with a purr as he walked through the door. As Stanley stepped into the cluttered room of boxes and books the dust was so immense that he ignited a loud explosive sneeze. Coco jumped.

"Sorry Coco," offered Stanley.

Coco responded with a simple 'meow'.

Stanley crouched down to move boxes to sort them out, but what caught Stanley's eye was a large box with a note stuck on it which had 'DO NOT OPEN' written on it.

But Stanley thought nothing of it. He pulled the box towards himself, dusting off the lid.

Stanley opened the box and found a black suitcase. Taking the suitcase out of the box he was unimpressed.

'It's just a plain old suitcase,' he thought. And so he grasped the zip of the suitcase, slowly unzipping it little by little, until the suitcase burst open on its own, releasing an intense light which blinded Stanley and seemed to pull him out of this time and place.

CHAPTER II

Suddenly, Stanley found himself tumbling down an unforgiving asphalt road, all his senses immediately blindsided as he scrambled to regain direction. The air was colder and denser, the sky a blanket of storm clouds. Mechanical marching rang out from behind him. He turned to see the imposing silhouettes of a squadron of armoured soldiers with the letters 'SOAR' branded on their shoulders.

Between their padded feet were striking claws jutting through encased metallic boots, their armour more advanced than anything he had seen before. The suitcase which seemed to be the catalyst of Stanley's transport seemed further than the mere metres it actually was. The largest among the mechanical soldiers reached down and fetched the black suitcase, which appeared small in the grasp of its large paw. There was a sense of impending doom as Stanley realised that the only way home may be through that suitcase.

An array of coloured leaves raced against the road, littering the tan rubble with orange and red. The screeching of turning tires leaving marks of ashy black, a fog of lingering dust trailing behind. Atop a cycle with the name 'Moonblade' painted across it was a sleek rider dressed in ragged clothes that blended into . Before he could react, Stanley was whisked away by the bike and hung on to the ride for dear life. He looked behind him to see the squadron chasing after them.

A fast paced leap came from the front of the squadron when Stanley felt a sharp nail from a cat's paws. Its grip slipped, and the second attempt also failed to get a grasp of Stanley. An abrupt turn from the unknown biker managed to keep space between the pursuers and themselves. The bike was unstable. Stanley lost balance, his weight shifted to the left while his foot dragged against the rutted roads. Managing to get a hold of something to balance himself, he was oblivious that what he had grabbed onto was something furry, something muscular.

There was a sudden realisation that he had grabbed a cat's paw. The cat dived while its two front teeth attached to the side of Stanley's neck. His pupils dilated and his breath became short. Stanley pulled back and transferred himself closer to the cyclist. The cyclist grabbed a knife from her boot and took out the feline's eye, striking it down.

Glancing to the right, the glare of a window caught the cyclist's eyes, her hideout up ahead. Ensuring the bike was going at maximum speed, the cyclist travelled across the barren road, the steep incline proving a challenge. The soldiers struggled to regain the pace they were on as multiple were injured as they stumbled around the fallen agent. The cats glossed past the massive array of city buildings, failing to find them. Meanwhile, Stanley and the cyclist carefully ran over the crisp sound of the autumn leaves to find themselves in front of a worn door.

CHAPTER III

The cyclist burst through the door and pushed her bike inside, quickly locking the door behind the two of them and frantically double-checking the doors and windows are properly boarded up.

“What the hell is going on here?” Stanley exclaimed.

“Not a sound until I know the SOAR agents are out of earshot,” the cyclist said while staring through the holes in the boards.

They took off their helmet, a girl with a determined scowl stared back at Stanley. She covered his mouth and pulled both of them down behind the window ledge, sitting very still as the SOAR soldiers moved past the building. She then stood up, conducting a brief sweep of the perimeter, and once satisfied, let out a sigh of relief.

Stanley finally had a chance to breathe and look around at the mysterious woman’s hideout. It almost appeared to be a cafe, centuries ago. His eyes dart around the room as he sees a sign dressed in a thick layer of dust, with his sleeve he brushes it off to reveal this had once been The Jolly Miller. In these display cabinets there was once **fresh** food for humans to buy freely a far cry from the rationed blocks of nutrients that the girl started to pull from her rucksack to offer to Stanley.

“Where am I?” he finally sputtered.

The girl turned back to him with an exhausted sigh, saying “The better question is, when are you? Did you walk out of the year 2000?”. Stanley was deeply confused, as she continued.

“The name’s Eclipse. And this place here was a cafe. You know I still find it strange that you were just sitting there in the middle of the road, what were you doing out there?! That’s literally suicide! Do you want to be killed?”

Eclipse trailed off while she organised supplies around the room, scrambling with technology beyond Stanley’s comprehension, including strange looking firearms.

“Someone like you shouldn’t be here, Kronac’s master plan seems to be more reality than myth.”

Stanley continued to sit there with a bewildered look on his face.

“He stole the device that brought you here. If he can pull you years into the future, who knows what more he is capable of.”

Stanley felt the enormity of the situation hit him all at once, as the realisation finally landed.

His voice trembled as he spoke, “What year is it?”

“3022”.

Stanley took a deep breath in and held his head in his hands. Eclipse walked over to Stanley, to try to help him make sense of this future.

Stanley finally spoke in a trembling voice, “What happened?”

Eclipse sat down beside Stanley and spoke in a low voice.

“In 2484, The Sphinx arrived on Earth. They are the god of all cats, prophesied by ancient human cultures. With their power, and the human’s lack of resources, there was nothing stopping them from overpowering my ancestors.

Stanley felt a deep existential dread, deep in his soul. The feeling of helplessness that Eclipse felt all became crystal clear to him.

He finally muttered another question, “How many people are left?”

“Not nearly enough.”

There was crashing outside as the entire cafe shook violently. Stanley and Eclipse braced themselves as the front wall of the cafe was knocked down in a whirlwind of wood and bricks. SOAR agents rushed into the building and swiftly pinned down Stanley and Eclipse, preparing to take them to the Eureka Tower.

CHAPTER IV

The two sat in one of the many cells that confined them. To Eclipse's despair stood the array of other cells surrounding their own, manifesting the entirety of her peripheral. People like herself, some of her community and other innocents, are laying in the same scenario of captivity. Realising the failure that was their break in, she sunk herself to the floor. She knows of their fate, as do the rest of the prisoners. Stanley looked out the window of their cell, peering down on seemingly endless floors below them and above them. Panic started to sink in and his chest tightened; it was his first time in prison, and this was what it was like. Being alone yet surrounded by what he understood was the remnants of mankind.

"Hey, Eclipse." He turned with a tremble in his movement. "What now?"

Eclipse remained crouched, her head buried in her knees. Stanley knew enough of what would happen to them just from this. Defeated, he leaned to the wall, waiting for their inevitability.

"You look a little familiar..." A strange voice queried.

Stanley looked up from his slumber to a strange figure: a lanky silhouette with strange fur surrounding his cheeks. His eyes adjusted to meet a cat-like figure, appearing substantially more tame than the squadron that took them in.

"Ah, that's it! You look just like Stanley!" The figure exclaimed in **delight**.

Stanley retreated in a state of shock. "I'm sorry but how is it that I can understand you, you're a cat?!"

"Through the years we evolved, and we were able to establish ourselves on the foundation of the humans." Answered Tom dutifully.

Stanley, still confused by the circumstances, just accepts this to be fact and chose to address an earlier comment. "Stanley you said? That happens to be my name."

The figure answered. "Wow, what a coincidence. You look just like him too!"

Stanley thought they seemed nice. He smirked. "Who might you be?"

"Me? My name is Tom."

"And... how do you know about me?"

“Well, I don’t know *you*, but our family actually has ties to a guy named Stanley Bookington. He was supposedly a good owner that loved our ancestor, Coco. One of the only ones we would ever consider to be a ‘good human’.”

“Hold on... Coco, you said his name was?”

“Yes. He had a locket that had the guy's face on it. It’s basically all that we know about him. In fact, I think I have it on me this time.”

Tom rustled his paw around his pockets, finally producing a locket of times forgotten. A string of presumably outdated numbers and a name laid on the metal that surrounded the central focus: Stanley’s face. He raised it to eye level and made comparisons for himself.

“Stanley gave this to my ancestor. You know, now that I look at it, you guys seem exactly identical. Are you sure you’re not related to him?”

“Well of course I know him. I am him.”

Tom stood in surprise. He chuckled to himself.

“Surely not. There’s no way that this Stanley from over a thousand years ago is suddenly in front of my eyes. The one that took in my great great grandfather Coco at their time of need, tending to their luxuries and paving the way for his descendants. The one deviant from the rest of humanity, always at Coco’s side unlike those that left their subjects for hours on end. The one that kept him sheltered until his eventual demise. That Stanley Bookington.”

Tom looked into Stanley’s stern face. He mirrored his expression.

Stanley met Tom’s eyeline and said solemnly to him, “I’m lost in this new time, centuries away from where I’m meant to be. Time travel and all that, quite frankly, hurts my brain. But somehow, I’m here right now, in the flesh.”

Tom wanted to confirm his final few suspicions. He desperately wanted to believe his every word.

“Well then, what do you think of cats taking over humans?”

Stanley noticed Eclipse jolt slightly, her head still buried in her arms atop her knees.

He was unsure of how to answer this. He peered to the rest of the cells surrounding Tom, with dishevelled humans pondering their fate.

“If I were a ruler, I would show more love and care for my subjects at least.”

Tom smiled. “I would agree with that. The holy Sphinx

He pulls out a key, clanking through what seems to be a pocket full of metal items. He unlocks the cage, setting the duo free.

“I personally don’t like humans. But you show more care to anything. I still can’t be so sure that you’re him, but you’re the closest thing this world will ever get.”

Stanley tried to hold back a smile, only to concede once gratitude leaked in. “Thank you” he says, “Coco would be proud.”

Eclipse raised her head, her face shocked at the development. Stanley was their mediator between vengeance and peace, the one to bring harmony to everything.

CHAPTER V

Now freed from their cell, the two along with their new found feline friend began to scale Eureka Tower. As they moved through the hallways, Stanley and Eclipse soon realised that although they had made it this far, they weren't sure how to secure the suitcase.

“Tom, what are we supposed to do? We need the time travel device but have no idea where SOAR has taken it.”

Hearing this Tom lowered his head and let out a long defeated sigh.

“I know where it is, it is under the Sphinx's watch at the top of this tower, to go there and face them would be far too dangerous. That is if we were to make it through the many floors guarded by Kronac's soldiers. I don't see a way this is-”

Suddenly Eclipse interjects, “We don't have time for this! How do we get to the rooftop?”

Tom refocused himself and continued, “For the most part we should be able to navigate through the shadows, ventilation systems and such. But to reach the rooftop we will have to pass through the sleeping quarters. To be discovered there would be less than desirable.”

The humans stand there and process the intel given to them. Stanley looked to Eclipse for confirmation only to see her murmuring to herself.

“Alright, Alright, so once we get past the sleeping quarters it is a straight shot to the roof?”

Tom looks at her and nods. They once again began their advance through the tower. True to Tom's word they were able to navigate through ventilation and elevator shafts. There were a couple of close calls as foot soldiers patrolled the halls, but they managed to remain hidden. But their greatest obstacle was rapidly approaching.

They had reached the vent and quietly removed the cover and crawled out into the sleeping chambers. They lift their head and are placed in awe at the utopia they discovered. The floor had been littered with toys and cat beds, cardboard boxes stretched to the ceiling and scratching posts acted as fauna. Most concerning is the way the cats populated the area, though thankfully asleep. Stanley and Eclipse looked at each other fearfully, but Tom assured them it'd be fine as long as they followed his lead.

“I will lead the way, all you need to do is **tiptoe** behind me and follow the same path, alright?”

The two nod and they begin to move. Tom moved swiftly among the sea of cats maintaining an extreme level of caution. Eclipse followed with confidence in her steps as Stanley's leg trembled anytime they had met the floor. They had made good progress through the sleeping

quarters when mid step, a cat shifted, causing Eclipse to stumble forward. Stanley clutched her jacket, only just keeping them balanced as they lean over the sleeping cat warriors. They were finally able to make it to the other side of the room, entering the stairwell that led to the roof. Opening the stairwell door lets in a flood of light from outdoors, as the group braces themselves for the final challenge.

CHAPTER VI

Dusk begins to creep over the horizon as the party make their final advances to the rooftop. Every step taken is coated in grime and worn by the passage of time. As they draw closer to the Sphinx, Stanley's chest begins to tighten, before his meddlings with the suitcase the most action he had seen in a day was dealing with a group of young delinquents causing disorder in his humble bookshop. This differed from Eclipse as determination burned brightly within, so much so that standing beside her would cause perspiration. Tom crept behind the two with his head lowered.

Stanley began to doubt himself again, nervously suggesting, "Are we sure about this, we can't possibly do this can we? No, we can't. We just-"

"You don't get to be scared, you've been here less than a day, what about those who've been oppressed since birth? This is for my people."

Stanley was taken aback by this, he knew he couldn't let fear plague his mind. Although new to it this is the reality that he now faced and would have to fight for or he'd be there to witness the demise of humanity. So with an audible gulp he looks to Eclipse.

"You're right, you're right. I'm sorry... let's do this."

Now they were at the foot of the door, once the handle had been turned there would be no turning back. For a brief moment they look at each other, searching for confirmation. The steel resolve of Eclipse assures Stanley this fight is worth it.

The door swings open and before them lies the Mighty Sphinx. A large creature perched on top of the Eureka Tower, about the height of 8 men. Its body resembled that of a lion, with a large frame that established its dominance with the wings of an angel that felt as if they spanned the entire sky. With the head of a cat its eyes crept open and spotted the humans along with Tom. He rises and as it spreads its wings the sky went clear, speaking in a voice that shook the foundation that they stood on.

"You have the gall to stand before me with the wretched beings that you had betrayed me for?" questioned The Sphinx.



Tom looked back at the Sphinx with immense fear.

The large beast backhanded the now trembling Tom sending him flying through the air before landing with a loud thud on a nearby building. The Sphinx leapt into the air using its wings to maintain the high ground.

“Eat this you yarn lover” yelled Eclipse as she pulled out dual laser pistols and aimed at The Sphinx’s head. She began to fire on the beast, singeing its fur with each blast. The Sphinx needing to stop this landed on Eclipse with its full force creating a large crater around her body, the floor falling out from underneath the mighty Sphinx’s foot, trapping one of its legs.

Stanley rushed towards her, “Are you okay Eclipse?”

“I’m alright, a little **bruised** but I’ll be okay, the helmet kept me safe.” she responded.

The Sphinx now stuck and tired of this tomfoolery, grabbed Stanley in its multi metre long paw. And said

“Young man you will now serve the purpose that you were brought here for... to be my snack, and prove that we can bring those from the past to calm our hunger.”

As the half metre long claws started to come out of the Sphinx’s paws, Stanley, in a rush of panic, grabbed the only thing he had left in his pockets. He pulled out his keys and noticed it had Coco’s favourite toy, a small laser pointer attached to it. Now accepting his fate Stanley held the toy tightly as the beast opened its mouth wide. **CLICK**. The beast dropped Stanley and pulled its foot out of the hole. Stanley opened his eyes and noticed that The Sphinx was chasing after the small red dot as his shaking hands moved it from one side of the rooftop to the other.

There was now only one thing to do, he dashed for the suitcase as The Sphinx chased the dot to another building. The Sphinx, realising that it had been fooled, flew at full speed over to Stanley slicing him in half. In agonising pain, with the last of Stanley’s strength he opened the suitcase sending them both to a time unknown where the Earth had been long destroyed.

EPILOGUE

The people of The Underground emerge from their stacked bunkers for homes in the bright light of the morning, to look out for the first time at a world free of the oppressive cat god Sphinx. The remaining cats were divided between those who still followed the will of their fallen deity and those who wished to make peace with the humans. Some conflicts still arose between the two species as they were destined to but as a populus they could live among each other like they had many centuries ago. Eclipse had erected a statue of her fallen friend Stanley which she and others visited daily. No longer was life a constant fight for survival, for now she could ride her bike freely with the brave Tom who had helped.



**Your everyday librarian,
working in his passion:
Books.**

**A mysterious girl
fighting against the
most terrifying things in
her world:
Cats.**

With humanity reaching extinction, the journeys of these two unlikely worlds start to collide once a mysterious suitcase makes itself apparent. Plunged into a world of chaos, this duo strives to bring peace, all while meeting strange fiends and foes.

For Ages 10+

