

The Golden Tower

By Belinda Murrell

Publisher: Puffin / Penguin

ISBN 9781760897093 SCIS: 1999388

\$16.99

Blurb:

In her wildest dreams, Sophie never thought she might be kidnapped by a cat and taken to a world of flying horses and wonder – but also magic, mystery and danger!

Transported to the land of Tuscia, Sophie accidentally saves the daughter of a wealthy family and is swept along on their journey to the Golden Tower.

Now she is the only one standing between sisters Isabella and Bia and the terrible fate their stepmother has planned.

Sophie doesn't think she is brave enough, but with the help of a talking cat, a stableboy and some very tiny mischief-makers, she might be able to save the day.



Lamont Review:

Thirteen-year-old Sydneysider Sophie has dyslexia and is bullied at school. When Sophie goes to spend a few weeks at her Nanna's in England, the last thing she expects is magic and mystery!

With her Nanna's encouragement to go off on an adventure, and a mysterious cat showing her the way, Sophie suddenly finds herself in Roman times in the land of Tuscia.

She is soon caught up with the daughters of the wealthiest man in the land, as they are called by their stepmother to leave their Nonna and join their father in his Palazzo.

The stepmother is evil and has enchantments and magic potions to make everything go the way she desires. But the stepmother goes too far when she demands that her stepdaughter, Isabella, must marry.

Isabella is only a girl, and when Sophie sees what is happening, she must act quickly and bravely to stop the evil stepmother in her tracks...

This is an inspirational story of a girl finding her way and realising that she has inner power to face her fears and do what she knows is right.

It is best suited to readers 10—14.

Reviewed by Rob

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.

The Detective's Guide to Ocean Travel

By Nicki Greenberg

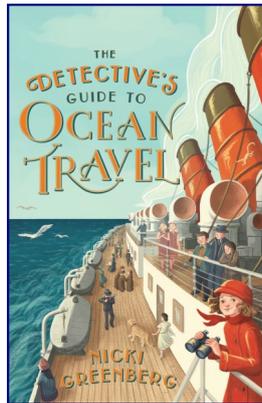
Publisher: Affirm Press

ISBN 9781922400673 SCIS: 1999442

\$17.99

Blurb:

The first middle-grade novel from award-winning author Nicki Greenberg, this book is a classic whodunnit mystery set aboard a grand ocean liner in the 1920s. With first-class glitz and glamour and a deliciously plotted intrigue featuring an uppity stage star, a missing diamond, a leopard and a loveable cast of child sleuths, *The Detective's Guide to Ocean Travel* is an exciting romp on the high seas, perfect for fans of *Murder Most Unladylike* and *The Good Thieves*.



Lamont Review:

Pepper Stark's Dad is Captain of the luxurious ocean liner Aquitania, and so he is only home for a week at a time.

Pepper recklessly decides to try to stow away, and when her father finds out just before the ship sails he is furious.

Eventually, her father relents and takes Pepper on the voyage to New York with him.

Adventure and mystery follow, as a famous diamond is stolen and Pepper and her new friends from the ship decide to investigate for themselves. Can they figure out who stole it?

This is a wonderful 'whodunnit' mystery that will keep readers thoroughly engaged. It's fun, fast-paced and full of amazing characters, including a trained monkey!

Will suit readers in Year 5 and up, especially those who love a good mystery.

Reviewed by Michelle

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.

My Australian Story: Six Seconds The Newcastle Earthquake

By Alan Sunderland

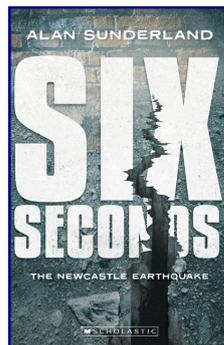
Publisher: Omnibus Books / Scholastic

ISBN 9781743838235 SCIS: 1993734

\$17.99

Blurb:

I could hardly see. There was dust and smoke everywhere. I was falling, sliding down into a gap that had opened up between parts of the collapsed building. It was dark and silent. All I could hear was the sound of my own breathing, and my beating heart thumping in my ears. Then I heard the cry again: the cry for help. Growing up by the beach in Newcastle in 1989 means footy, sandcastle competitions and school. Michael's dad's a journalist and his small world gets bigger as he starts to pay attention to the news. His interest turns into anxiety and obsession as Michael begins to see the world as a dangerous place that is fast collapsing around him. When the Berlin Wall comes down, most see it as a sign of change and freedom but Michael isn't convinced. But when an earthquake hits his home town, Michael discovers that the worst that can happen is not always as bad as your fears.



Lamont Review:

Michael and his family live in Newcastle and Michael spends his time going to the beach, school and following the new rugby league team. Michael starts to follow stories in the news, but he only remembers the bad ones. He starts to become anxious, and worried about everything being dangerous.

When the earthquake hits and Michael realises his Grandma is in danger, his fears are forgotten as he rushes to help her.

Set in 1989, Michael is a wonderful character, and this story gives readers a glimpse into a different time in Australia, and the fears that existed back then.

The six seconds of the earthquake seem to last forever, but Michael shows amazing resilience to help rescue his Grandma, despite the danger to himself. It proves that our fears for those we love will inspire us to do more than we thought we could.

A great story about overcoming your fears, and the love of family and friends. This will be perfect for readers in Year 6 and above.

Reviewed by Michelle