

## This belongs to me...

By Gibson Clothier, Scone High School.

"This belongs to me!! Don't touch it ever again." I scream in frustration, waving my notebook in the air to emphasize my point.

"Well, stinkbrain. Don't leave it lying around for me to take ever again." My little sister, Sophia, snaps back.

I go into my room and sit on my bed. I open the notebook and search through it to make sure everything was still there. I sigh with relief when I find that nothing was ripped out.

"And who's Abigail? What is she, like your girlfriend?" she yells out for the world to hear.

I let out a frustrated sound and go to my door and slam it closed. Truth is, Abigail is not my girlfriend, but I have had a crush on her for as long as I've known her. Thing is, though, I am practically invisible to her. She is basically top dog of the high school I go to. I, however, am the new kid, even though I've been going to that school since the end of Year 7 and am now nearing the end of Year 11, which everybody knows. Everyone is yelling out my name even when I want peace and quiet. All I hear is "Hey, Chase, you mad lad, how you doing?" every second person I pass. It's funny because even though everyone seems to like me, I am always getting picked on. People always think I can take more hits than a freakin' punching bag.

"Hey, Chase." Sophia says opening my door and standing in the doorway, much more serene by now. "Why do you think we were left alone with Aunt *Adelia* of all people? Why couldn't Mum or Dad ditch us with Steve or something?" Steve is

our awesome cousin with a cool comic collection and some awesome stories that he always tells us.

"Yeah, I don't know, Soph. Maybe they thought Aunt Adelia was wiser and would actually look after us 'properly'." I reply.

Sophia laughs. "Well, this is most unbecoming of you children. When I was younger there was no such thing as fun. We were taught how to behave properly.' Yeah, when you were younger, you walked out in the backyard and got swooped by a pterodactyl during nesting season instead of magpies." She says giggling. My sisters got a cute giggle, for a girl in Year 9.

"Well, this *is* most unbecoming of you." I hear Aunt Adelia say in a most disapproving tone. I jump and whirl around until my eyes focused on the rather widely built frame of my terrifying Aunt sitting in a dark corner of my room.

"Talking about your caregiver seemingly behind her back. *Terribly* unbecoming."

"Aunt Adelia!! You scared half the life out of me. Don't do that." I say with a distressed tone. "How long have you been sitting there?" I ask

"5 minutes or so. Am I really so old that I was around when the dinosaurs were around?" she asks, raising a questioning eyebrow at Sophia.

I see Sophia's eyes widen in fear. "Oh no. I was just joking around."

"Hmmmm. I don't want to ever hear you talking like that again, young lady."

Adelia says, getting up and leaving the room.

Later that day, I was down getting groceries when I spotted Aaron, the main school bully, at the checkout. I snapped my eyes down and kept my head low.

Too late, he's spotted me. I look up and see a slow smile of triumph on his face. I see him pay for his shopping then walk out. I know what he's doing. He is going to wait outside the shop, then when I am alone and on my way home, he is going

She smiles "I said 'Are you alright?'" she repeats

"Can I get back to you on that?" I ask in reply. I hear her laugh. Her laugh is sweet like honey. She holds out her hand.

"Do you need a hand up? I could move you over to that bench over there." She asks.

I hold out my hand and she grips it and heaves me up, puts her arm around my shoulders to steady me, and guides me over to the bench. On the walk over to the bench alone I got stars dancing across my tunnel vision. I sit down and sway a bit. I feel her strong hand under my shoulder to hold me steady.

"Thanks." I groan.

"Why was he beating you up like that?" she urges.

"I don't even know. I just paid for my shopping and walked out and he was there and beat the living life out of me. I guess that is how it is with bullies." I reply.

"Well it shouldn't be that way." She replies with some aggression. "I think I am gonna report him to the principal."

"What's that gonna do? Provoke him even further." I reply. "I'll be dead before the week is out."

I sigh, and we have a few minutes silence between us.

"You know," I say slowly " I have, um, sort of had a crush on you since the moment I first laid eyes on you."

"Really? I'm not even that pretty." She replies with a hint of disbelief in her voice.

I laugh, wincing as my ribs flare up with pain. "You are probably prettier than all the girls in my year."

"Well, how about the girls in Year 12?" she asks, leaning in close to me

"By far you are prettier." I say with every ounce of confidence.

"Well, I am flattered, I must say." She responds "Do you need someone to walk you home, Bruises?"

"Hey, that's rude. I think I might need a lift home." I say softly

"Can you even walk?" she asks

"Probably." I reply

I get up slowly, with stiff muscles. I start to walk and she falls in step with me, and laces her fingers in mine. *"This could be the start of something nice"* I think as I walk with her to my house.