



Unlocking the Future

Charlie was born in a small Queensland town called Emerald. When he moved to Brisbane he tried to forget it, but forgetting Mum and Dad was impossible.

With the help of his friends, Charlie discovers his Future is full of exciting possibilities.

56 pages, 6000 words, 8 black and white illustrations

Chapter 5

Looking for Sapphires

To take advantage of the cool morning air, they left the campground at sunrise. The afternoon would be hot, so they planned to visit Lake Maraboon later in the day.

As soon as they left the campground, Omar said, "You still haven't explained how we find sapphires Charlie."

"I'll show you when we get there," Charlie answered. "It'll make sense when you see how it's done."

Aunty Kim parked the car, thoughtfully choosing a spot where it was shaded. "I know it's not hot yet but we're going to need drinking water and sunscreen," she said. "The sieves and shovels are in the boot. And don't forget your hats and sunnies."

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Chapter 9

The Gems

The wooden box was similar in size to a large shoe box and the word 'GRAINGER' was painted in faded red across its lid.

Charlie lifted the little key on its string over his head. He held it firmly and pushed it into the keyhole of the box.

Pae gasped. "YES! It fits!"

Everyone stared.

"This is so cool!" Omar whispered.

The key turned easily. The lock clicked. Charlie waited for a second and then opened the lid.

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Everyone leaned forward and peered inside the box as Charlie carefully removed the contents. He found coin-sized rocks wrapped in colourful fabric squares. Smaller stones were folded in paper packets and layered inside margarine tubs. Several used matchboxes held dozens of tiny rock fragments. Charlie carefully laid everything on the table.

"Stones? Is that all?" Pae asked. "No money?"

Al sucked in a deep breath and then laughed. "This is better than money, my gill! These stones are worth thousands!"

"You're kidding!" Mia screeched.

Omar suddenly grabbed Charlie, lifted him off the ground and spun him around.

"Omar! Put me down!" Charlie laughed.

Uncle Al gave Aunty Kim a high five. "Ripper!" he cried. Then he placed three

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