

A Perfect Storm



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Enviro-Stories

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by Peekdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

www.envirostories.com.au

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A Perfect Storm

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Sarah was busy feeding her cattle and getting all the eggs from the chicken yard. She had to do everything around her farm and it was a really busy day.

Sometimes she wished she wasn't a farmer because you always have to do so much and also battle the different weather conditions. Sarah felt very lonely.



Sarah had to feed her cattle hay as the months of drought had destroyed their feeding pastures. She noticed that her cows were behaving differently today and couldn't understand why.



Suddenly there was a massive crackling sound coming from the sky. It was only then that Sarah noticed there were dark, grey clouds swallowing the sky and flashes of lightning striking at different objects.



When the big water dropped on Sarah's head it made her hair feel all soggy and disgusting, but a huge smile crept onto her face.

She knew it was going to rain and hoped it would be enough to help the feed grow and the wheat develop.



Something cold and hard hit Sarah on the head. Unfortunately it started to hail. This is not what Sara needed as she was worried the hail could damage her wheat crop.

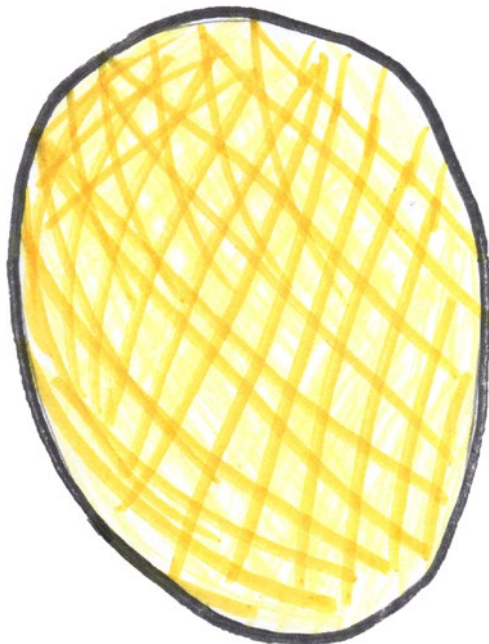
There was absolutely nothing she could do to save it, so she focused on getting her cattle somewhere safe. As she was rounding them up there was an enormous crash as lightning hit one of the gates. This scared the cattle and caused them all to run as fast as they could in all directions.

Sarah just could not catch a break in her bad luck.

Sarah really needed to find the cattle as she was worried something terrible would happen and they would get hurt.

She knew her wheat was going to be damaged but now she felt she was going to lose her stock too.

Sarah felt ghastly and worried. Everything she had worked so hard for was disappearing and being destroyed before her eyes.



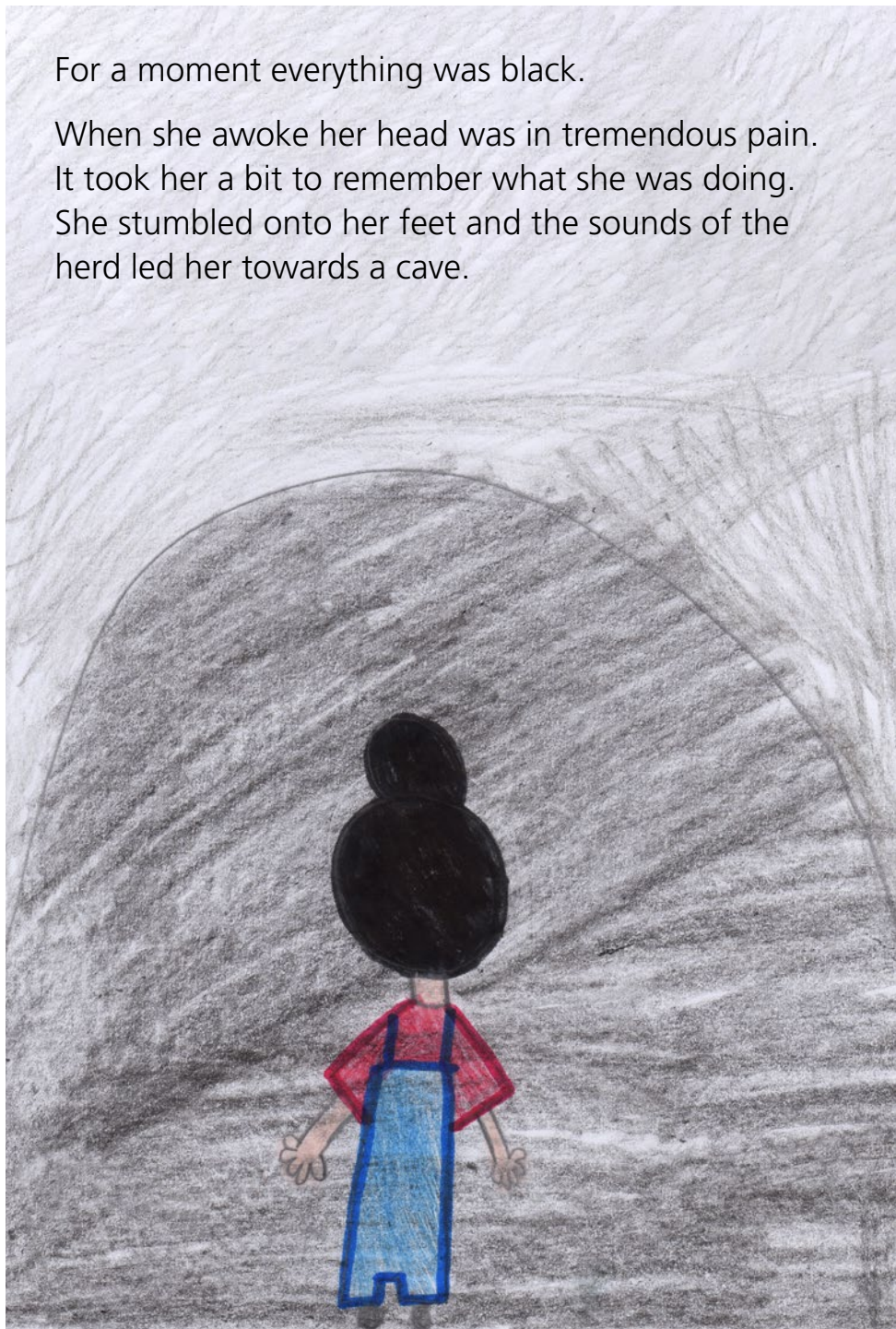


At the point where she felt she was going to give up, she heard one of her cows bellow.

Sarah couldn't see the cow that was bellowing as it was too windy and all of the dust was swirling around blocking her view. Sarah started sprinting towards the sound but tripped over a big rock and hit her head.

For a moment everything was black.

When she awoke her head was in tremendous pain.
It took her a bit to remember what she was doing.
She stumbled onto her feet and the sounds of the
herd led her towards a cave.



She ventured into the cave and noticed one of the cows was lying on the ground and looked quite ill.

Sarah mustered the cattle back out of the cave and then returned to the sick cow only to find it had passed away.


This devastated her and she walked back through the paddock, softly weeping. It was only then that she noticed all the Rock fern weed and realised this must have been the reason for the cow to become so sick.





Sarah immediately transferred the rest of the herd to another paddock and knew she had to begin preparing the chemical to eliminate the weeds as soon as the rain stopped.





Three
Days
Later,

After three long days the storm finally passed and the earth had begun to dry up.

Sarah immediately sprayed the weeds to try and stop them spreading and making more of her cows sick.

She went to check on her wheat crop and her worse nightmare had come true.



The hail had completely destroyed what was left of her wheat.

Sarah was out of ideas to save her farm and began making plans to sell it for a price that would not do it justice.

That night she saw on the local news that lots of farmers in the area were also struggling. The news said that there were community support services in town to help farmers in need, just like her.

They could provide emotional support, farming advice and even some financial support due to fundraising events being held around the country.

Sarah decided for her own mental health and wellbeing that she needed to reach out to these people for help and advice. She may even be able to put her name in the ring for some money to help her farm recover. All she could do was try and hope for the best.



The following day Sarah nervously went in to see if she could get some help. The community support services listened to her story and how she was really, really struggling.

They made her feel much better by talking about her problems, provided her with valuable advice on the best things she could do to save her farm and even how to make her tasks easier in the future. They also found a volunteer worker to help her get started.

Sarah was also successful in being granted some money. Her hopes were renewed as she could finally get some feed for her cattle and buy some sorghum to plant over the summer.





Sarah was relieved that with this help she would be able to stay on the farm. She appreciated the kindness of the community support services and all the people who donated money to help farmers during tough times.

She promised that one day, when she was back on her feet, she would do whatever she could to help others in her community that were in need.



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