

TO THE CITY



group 8b



team id: 78



Chapter 1

Adrian opened his eyes. Rays of the rising sun bathed his bedroom in a pool of gold. He flicked his dark fringe out of his face and looked out of the window, staring at the charred remains of the home paddock. Adrian paused for a moment. Lucky for him that the firebreaks were well maintained.

Adrian thought about January's bushfire while he got dressed and put his shoes on. He trudged over to the chickens in the chook shed and gave them the previous days' scraps. After eating his own breakfast and packing his lunch, he started making his way to the stable.

Adrian climbed up the ladder to the dusty hayloft. Streams of light peeked through cracks in the walls. This was his favourite place. If he pushed aside the hessian in the window frame, he could see the river where he swam laps. Adrian soon decided that it was time to go.

Passing the burnt grass trees on the way to the front gate, Adrian realised that today, he wanted to get to school early. Adrian decided to beat his record. He started to sprint.

The school bell rung just as Adrian arrived, but he still broke his record: 5 kilometres in less than 20 minutes. The school day whizzed by. Not because it was fun, but because he was worrying about what would happen if this year's crop failed. If it did fail, then his parents would be forced to sell the farm and move to the city. Adrian hated the city.

After a long and worrying day, Adrian went home.





Chapter 2

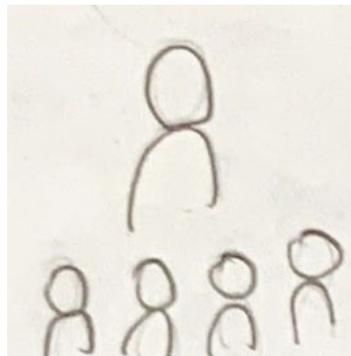
Adrian climbed up the ladder in the stable every morning and looked out the window. His favourite view in the entire world. The bubbly, but calm river nearby. It was as calm as usual. Far away in a distance, Adrian spotted a shadow on the ground. He focused in with his treasured binoculars, the ones his grandfather had given to him before he died, and looked at what had made the shadow, to see colourful streaks of parachute. A skydiver. Little did he know that this was the world-famous Garry Chong.

Garry Chong was a professional skydiver, whose parents were born in China but immigrated to New South Wales. Garry is a full-time skydiver, who travels to rural parts of New South Wales to provide knowledge and grant opportunities for aspiring skydivers. Garry is also an instructor and owner of the New South Wales Skydiving Academy (NSWSA). Garry often found himself at schools educating children about skydiving.

Garry also had a foundation to raise money for people in need and in trouble from the large bushfires that came and destroyed many parts of New South Wales earlier in the year. His foundation is mainly aimed at people who have or had farms and were affected by bushfires and droughts.

By the time Adrian went to bed, he had discovered that Garry was going to be hosting an incursion at his school tomorrow. As he laid in his bed, his head clogged up with visions of skydiving and dreams of possessing riches that he could only imagine.





Chapter 3

It was a Friday when Garry Chong took a step into the school hall. 51 pairs of eyes swept across the hall placing their gaze upon him. "This isn't going to be easy." He thought. He briskly paced to the raised podium. Sweat accumulated in his palm. His heart hammered away in his chest. He had done this many times. Why was he nervous? He took his place upon the podium. "Children of Sceptashire Primary School it is a pleasure to meet you." He boomed with that voiced he had practiced so many times "I am Garry Chong." Instantly, a ripple of mutters swept across the room.

"Garry Chong?"

"No way."

"Gosh, why is he here?"

"Today," Garry continued "I have come with an offer." Again, murmurs rippled through the hall.

"Offer?"

"What does he mean?"

"One child, of my selection, will come with me to my New South Wales Skydiving Academy, or NSWASA for short. I want to see heart, endurance, strength, and most importantly, determination."

As he gazed across the mass of students, he noticed something. A flicker caught his eye. He looked closer. It was a child. Face smeared with dirt. Tall and thin, yet, he saw something in him. Through the grubby red t-shirt and lanky frame, he saw something. He was built like a wrestler, but scarred by the bushfire. He saw someone who could have great potential. He made a mental note that he would keep an eye on that child.

“You will all be subjugated to a series of tests. But first, who wants to learn how to skydive?” 51 hands shot high into the air. Whispers erupted from the children. From excitement, or annoyance, he did not know. Adrian’s thoughts were filled with concern. “Will he accept me?” “Will he notice me?” Why would the famous Garry Chong accept me, an unimportant boy from a humble farm? This is going to take some work.



Chapter 4

The feet of the school kids bursting out from the assembly area sounded like thunder to Adrian. The younger kids were making a mad dash for the oval, screaming at the top of their lungs. Adrian thought he was going deaf from the noise they were making. He walked onto the oval and formed up in a line where Garry had allocated. Adrian slowly made his way to the line and pivoted to face where Garry was. Garry called out for silence, and the gossiping of all the school kids slowly faded into silence. As he paced down the line, heads swivelled to face him, like sunflowers to the sun.

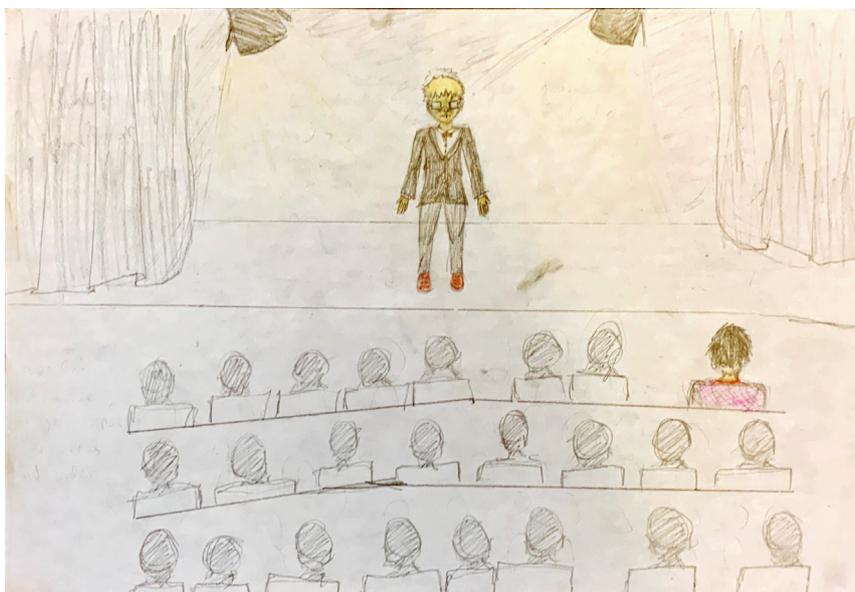
“Firstly, I would like to give a massive thanks to the principal for allowing me to come and do this seminar with you.” Garry said. The older kids groaned, expecting this. “Now, who wants to get started?”

The juniors yelled ‘Me, Me, Me!’ And were doing their best to ruin Adrian’s hearing. “Alright,” Garry said, his voice booming over the junior’s yelling, silencing them. “To start off, we will be testing your endurance. Could you all line up here?” He signalled a line with his arm, prompting the school kids to rush to the line. Once they had all lined up, Garry opened his mouth to speak again. “You are going to run one lap around the oval.” Garry instructed. These orders drew grunts from some of the kids. “Got it?” He inquired. Several kids nodded. “When I blow the whistle, you will all start running. Ok?” Ready, set, FWOOP!

51 pairs of legs started moving and slamming on the ground. Most of the older kids took the lead at the start. Adrian, who was jogging, overtook most the juniors, who made the mistake of running straight off the blocks. The juniors and some seniors were beginning to fall behind. Adrian counted five people ahead of him, hungry for a place in the skydiving school. He moved ahead as one got a stitch and slowed down. He was halfway through the lap. Adrian kicked up his pace, overtaking two. The third was slowing as he was running short of breath. Adrian was in second, snapping on the heels of the person in front of him. He was on the final straight. His muscles were begging him

to stop. He ignored their pleas, drawing on his last ounce of strength. Adrian quickened into a full-blown sprint, catching up to the person ahead of him. He ducked his head forward across the line.

Garry was astounded. The boy in the red t-shirt had won the race. He had started at the back and won without even seeming out of breath. In fact, it looked like he jogged most of it. He certainly showed endurance, and he looked quite strong. 'So, I was right,' Garry thought. There was something special about this school. Something special about the boy with the red jumper.



Chapter 5

Subsequently, Garry congratulated the boy in red for his unexpected victory. Garry was extremely proud of Adrian's true sense of athleticism, agility and strength. Through this, the winner of this offer was determined by Garry. He walked over to Adrian and whispered in his ear, "I might present the offer to you next week in the assembly."

"Wait! Really?"

Adrian was in shock. Garry Chong nodded and departed Sceptashire Primary School leaving in contentment.

He hopped in his new, but second hand car, tried to start the engine and BOOM! The car engine exploded, the bonnet detached and ashes distributed across the floor. He was in great grief and despair. All the students heard the huge noise and rushed over to the gate near the car. The

headlight's plastic had melted. Even the sunroof had a hole in it. Adrian was the most upset out of all the kids because of what Mr. Chong had just offered him. He asked Ms. Green, Adrian's teacher, if he could go and help out Garry. The teacher replied, "Certainly Adrian!".

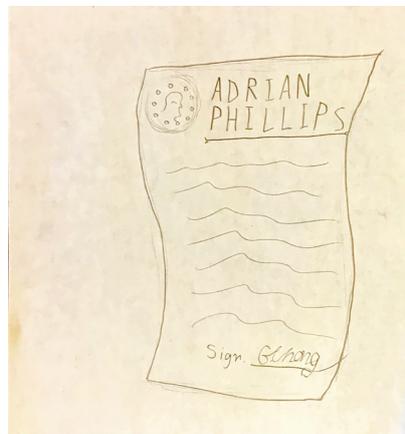
He took a glance at the car's unpleasant state and was saddened immensely. He offered Garry, "Sir, would you like to use the money for my scholarship and repair the damages from the car?".

"Oh Adrian, I will never break a promise" Garry replied.

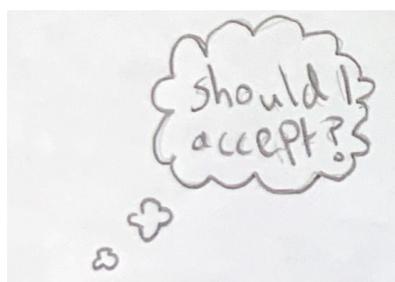
"It's alright sir, this can be an exception." Adrian persisted.

Garry insisted.

Throughout the following week, Garry purchased a new car and picked up the cheque for Adrian's scholarship. One week later, Mr. Chong turned up to Sceptashire primary school, ready to present Adrian his scholarship.



In the hall, Garry passed Adrian a glimmering sheet of paper. It read, 'Adrian Phillip's Scholarship for New South Wales Skydiving Academy'. He was ecstatic and jumped for joy! 51 pairs of hands stroked against each other, *clap* *clap* *clap*. The cheering continued repeatedly.



Chapter 6

The new reality took a few seconds to sink in.

"Of course you don't need to make the decision now, you can discuss with your parents and have a good think about it yourself", Garry said "also please notify me as soon as possible when you have made your final decision because I will be leaving in the next 3-4 days, is that okay? ".

Adrian nodded

“The sky diving academy is very fun you know, please come along”, Garry said. “I will make sure I do”, Adrian replied.

For the rest of the day instead of doing his work Adrian was daydreaming about how life would be if he moved to the academy. As the school day came to a close, Adrian strolled out of the school onto the beaten dusty track. “Should I run or just walk home”. Eventually Adrian decided that it would be best if he walked home and have a think about his future skydiving life. He began to walk along the track to home.

Six kilometres from home Adrian accidentally stumbled over some rocks and fell to the ground. Orange dust instantly arose from the track. Adrian got up and assessed his body for injuries. Much to his relief he only found a minor cut on the lower part of his knee with little droplets of blood seeping out. He grabbed a used tissue from his bag and bent down to wipe his leg up. As he was wiping his leg, he saw something flying through the sky out of the corner of his eye. He instantly looked up and saw what seemed to be a man with a parachute attached flying through the sky. Garry Chong. Adrian stood up and looked in awe at Garry’s skills of controlling a parachute. Then a question dawned on him. If Garry Chong who was a professional skydiver trained multiple times a day how much would he need to change to get to his level. That feeling of dread instantly disappeared though knowing that he would be taught by the best in the business. Still, the butterflies in his stomach were evolving into stampeding elephants.



Chapter 7

Adrian was filled with joy. Thinking about life with luxuries, with a TV. Ahead, he saw a brighter future. As he leaped through the door of their farmhouse, he saw his mother cooking a delicious smelling chicken broth in a large iron pot. His father, fixing a table that they picked up. He was filled with so much excitement that it took him a whole 5 minutes to regain his dignity. “Mother, father, guess what!” He said.

“You found 200 dollars?” Adrian’s mother asked.

“You finally found a cheap tractor?” Adrian’s father suggested, sarcastically.

He was deflated by his parent’s lack of interest, but Adrian didn’t give up. “I’ve got an offer to the New South Wales Skydiving Academy.”. Adrian’s mother dropped her spoon. Adrian’s father dropped his electric screwdriver. “How...” she stammered “how are we going to pay for it?” His father sunk into a nearby chair. The chair groaned into protest. “I got a scholarship!” Adrian exclaimed. He could see himself learning how to skydive, working his way to fame, bringing his parents to the places they could only dream about before. Then, he saw why his parents had paled. Without his help on the farm, they would struggle even more than before. After all, it was him that sowed and harvested most of the crop. “Adrian,” his mother called “please, could you leave the room.” As he paced toward the door, he could already hear his parents arguing.

“I want him to get a good job. This will be his chance!”

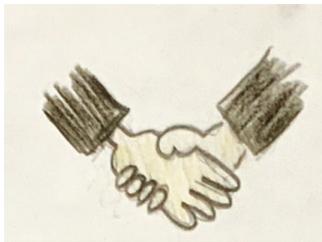
“No, what will be of us?”

“We don’t matter anymore; all I care about is my son.”

“It is too far away; I want him to be with us.”

“How dare you! All you think of is yourself comfort.”

“Quiet it, I am calling the shots here.” Adrian slumped onto the wall. Conflicted by the choices at hand. Going to NSWSA meant a brighter future for himself, but not for his parents. Not going would result him in being a farmer until his timely death. Tears ran down his face as he struggled to decide.

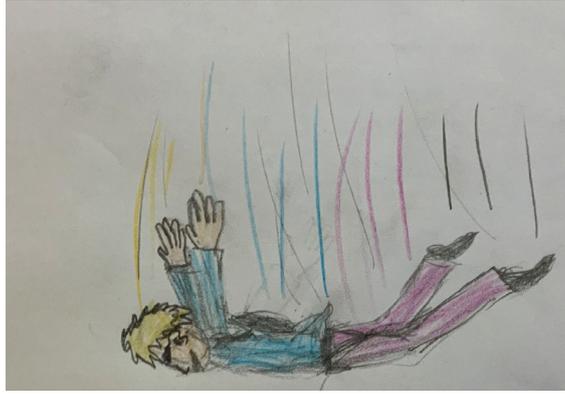


Chapter 8

Adrian spent a lot of time in the stable in the following days. Contemplating whether he should go or stay. He finally reached his decision. Adrian weighed out the pros and cons. He could learn to skydive, but he would have to sacrifice helping on the farm, and if he didn’t help on the farm, then his parents will be forced to sell the farm. And that will mean that Adrian will leave the stable, his favourite place. No amount of luxuries will fill the hole that that will make.

A voice piped up. “Maybe you could give the scholarship to someone else.” Adrian looked around in his surprise. There was no one there. “Down here,” the mysterious speaker replied. He stared down from the hayloft. The ladder was jiggling around. “Who’s there?” Adrian inquired. “It’s me, the ladder” “ladders don’t speak” Adrian replied, sceptically “normally, but since you are under so much stress, your subconscious mind has developed a sense of life for inanimate objects” the ladder seemed to say. “I have no idea of what you just said.” Adrian was confused. “It doesn’t really matter, you already know it.”

“Anyways,” The ladder continued, “we have a choice, and you can negotiate with the academy, maybe an arrangement like FIFO,” Adrian was puzzled. “What’s a FIFO?” The ladder seemed to say, “FIFO is an abbreviation of Fly In Fly Out, and it is basically you go there for two weeks, and stay home for two weeks.” “Did my subconscious really know that, and that sounds expensive.” “It is, but you’ll survive” the ladder replied. “Ok... This situation is starting to get weird.” Adrian climbed down the ladder. “Ouch! You are really heavy!” The ladder cried. “Ok, Bye” Adrian said as he leaf the Stable. The ladder called out “And remember – a ray of gold is a light heart to the hopeful, wait no, A heart of gold is a ray of light to the hopeful!” Adrian shouted back “THAT DOESN’T MAKE SENSE!”



Chapter 9

Adrian walked through the dusty red sand for the last time. Dust making clouds with every step. He took a deep breath, inhaling the cool crisp air. "I'm ready" he said. He walked out into the warm light blanket which was the sun and ascended the stairs of the Cessna Caravan. He was greeted with the smiley face of Garry Chong. "Ready?" He asked Adrian nodded. He looked out of the black tinted glass and saw his mother and father. Tears running down their faces, waving. He waved back. This was too much for her. She burst into a cascade of water world. Adrian chuckled. He waved as the plane rose into the sky and into the fiery sun of the Australian outback. "Are you up for the challenges that lay ahead?" Garry asked Adrian. "Adrian nodded." He would. He had to. For the future that his parents sacrificed so he could have a brighter future.

A heart of gold is a ray of light to the hopeful.



Adrian Phillips is a young athletic boy who lives in a rural town near Wollongong. One day he is granted the opportunity of a lifetime. To leave his childhood in rural Australia behind and attend a prestigious skydiving academy in Sydney. As much as Adrian wants to go and attend the academy he loves rural Australia and his life on the farm. Follow Adrian as he discovers the real world and learns some of life's most important lessons.

recommended for 11-14

