BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

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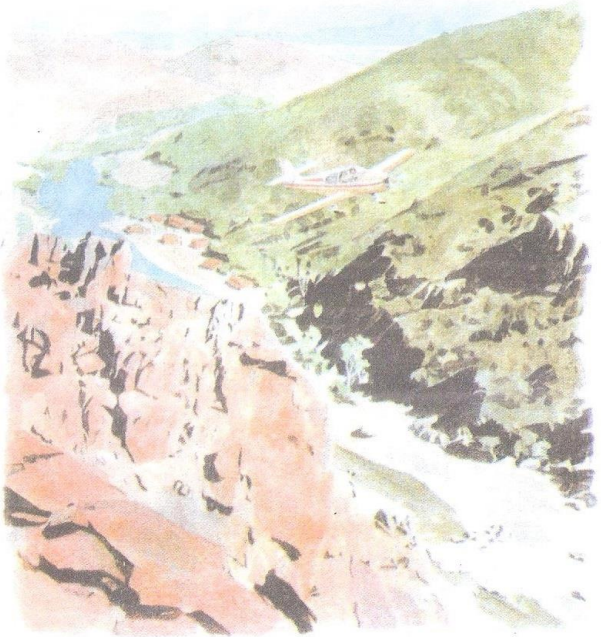
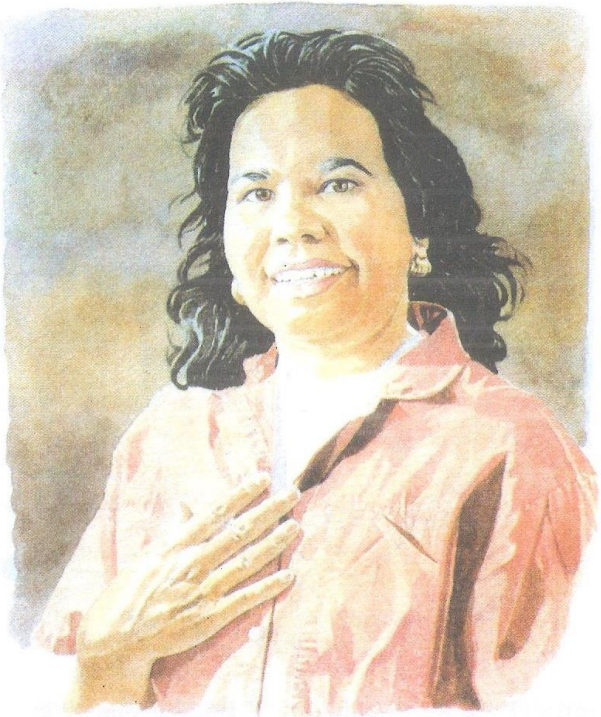
Joanna Jimbuku is a nurse. She lives and works in north Australia. Her boss is Bob Mills – a Flying Doctor. He and Joanna go everywhere in *The Bluebird,* Bob's plane. One morning in August, Joanna answers the phone. "Hello," she says. "Doctor Mills' office." Then ... "A baby? Yes, I see. And you're in Woomara. OK – we can be there in half an hour."



Five minutes later, Joanna and Bob are in *The Bluebird.* "How old is this baby?" asks Bob. "Eighteen months," says Joanna. After a moment Bob looks at her. "Woomara's near your home town, isn't it?" "Yes, that's right." Joanna smiles. "It's a very small place." She looks out of the window. "There it is," she says. "Can you see? Between those trees and the river."

Down on the ground, eight or nine people are waiting for the Flying Doctor. They take him and Joanna to a small house. The baby's mother – Jane – is inside it. Bob looks at the little girl for twenty minutes. Then he says, "I'm sorry, but Mary is very, very ill. It's her heart. She must go to a hospital in Sydney." "Sydney!" says Jane.



"Yes." Bob puts his hand on the woman's arm. "But it's OK – you can go with her." Jane looks sad. "How? I've got six other children. I can't just leave them."
Suddenly Joanna has an idea. "Wait a minute!" she says. "Why don't *I* go to Sydney with Mary? After all, I'm on holiday for two weeks after today." "Good idea," says the Flying Doctor. They look at Jane. "OK," she says.

Twenty-four hours later, Joanna arrives in Sydney for the first time. Two nurses are waiting at the airport. They drive her and Mary very fast to a big hospital. Then they take Mary into Room 308. A doctor is waiting there. "Hello," he says. "My name's Paul Griffin." Joanna smiles at him. "Hello." Then she asks the nurses, "Can I help?"

Joanna spends all day at the hospital. But after eight hours she is very tired. Paul Griffin sees this. "Why don't you stay with me and my wife tonight?" he asks. "Thanks," says Joanna. "That's really nice of you."
At six o'clock she and Paul drive to his house. There, Joanna meets Paul's wife, Fran. She meets their daughter, too. Her name is Polly.

After dinner, Paul shows Joanna to her room. Joanna sits on the bed. "Is Mary going to be OK?" she asks. "I don't know," Paul replies. Then he says, "But we're going to do everything we can."
After that, Joanna goes to the hospital every day. She helps the nurses and sits beside Mary's bed. For three days nothing happens.

Then one afternoon, Joanna is reading a book in Room 308. Suddenly she hears a noise. "What's that?" she thinks. Then she hears it again: "Mama!" She stands up and walks to Mary's bed. "Mary, it's you! You're sitting up. You're *talking*."

She runs out of the room and finds Paul. "Quick, Doctor Griffin," she says. "It's Mary. Come and see."

Later that day Joanna telephones Bob Mills. "Yes – that's right. Mary's going to be OK," she says with a big smile. "I can bring her home next week."

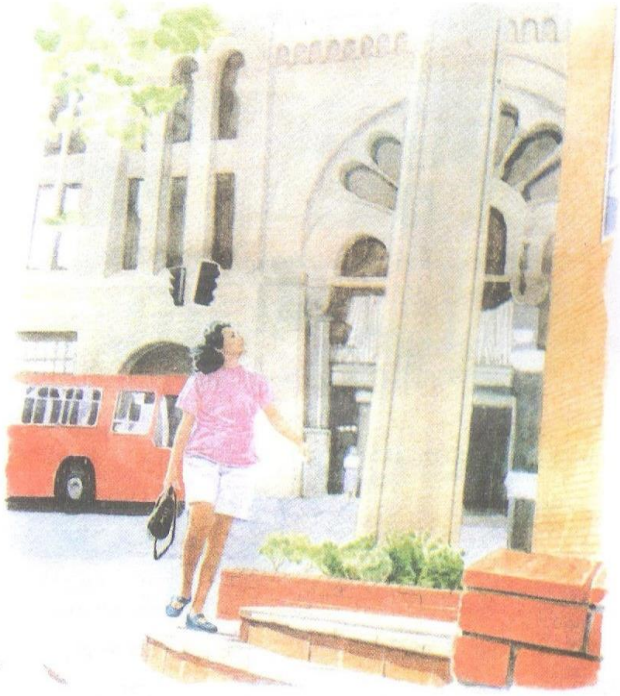
That evening the Griffins take Joanna to an expensive restaurant. Joanna sits next to the window. Outside, she can see the lights of Sydney. "This is beautiful," she says.

Next morning at breakfast Paul says, " Joanna, you can stay here at home today. After all, Mary's OK now."
"No, thanks," says Joanna, "... I want to be with her."
At the hospital, Paul sees Sister Clark. "One of my girls is leaving next week and we need someone new," she says. "What about Joanna Jimbuku? She's a very good nurse. Do you think she wants a job here?"

"Me?!" says Joanna that evening. She looks at Paul.
"Why not?" he says. "After all, Sister Clark's right ... you're a very good nurse."
Joanna is quiet.
"Don't say anything now," Paul tells her. "Just think about it. That's all I'm asking." He walks away, then turns. "But not for too long, OK?"

The next day is Saturday. Joanna goes to the hospital and sees Mary. "Hello, little one," she says. "You're going home on Monday." Then she thinks, "Or are *we* going home?"

Two hours later, Fran and Polly meet Joanna for lunch. "Oh Joanna, you *are* going to stay in Sydney, aren't you?" says Polly. "I don't know," says Joanna.



Later in the afternoon Joanna goes for a long walk. The weather is hot. She watches the people in the streets. She looks at all the shops, cinemas, museums and theatres, too.

"Sydney's great," she thinks. "It's very beautiful, and there's a lot to see and do. But do I really want to *live* here – that's the question."

Across the street there is a shop window. Joanna turns and looks in it. She can see a big painting of some red hills. "Wait a minute," she thinks. "I know that place. It's near Woomara."

Ten minutes later a man comes out of the shop. "Are you OK," he asks. Joanna smiles. Her eyes are wet. "Yes," she says. "I'm fine. Really – I'm fine."

Two days later Bob gets into *The Bluebird.* Joanna is with him. She waves goodbye to Jane and Mary. Bob starts the plane and pushes his hat back. "Listen – thanks for everything, Joanna," he says. "In Sydney, I mean. It's a beautiful city, isn't it?"

Joanna looks at the red hills of Woomara. Then she smiles, too. "Yes," she says. "But it's good to be home."

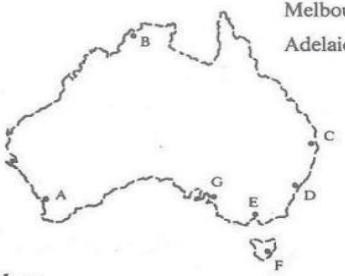
Questions

1 Which part of Australia does Joanna work and live in? (*page 1*)
2 What is *The Bluebird*? (*page 1*)
3 How old is Mary? (*page 2*)
4 What's wrong with her? (*page 3*)
5 Who is Paul Griffin? (*page 5*)
6 Where does Joanna stay in Sydney? (*page 6*)
7 How does she know when Mary is well again? (*pages 8 and 9*)
8 Why does Sister Clark need a new nurse? (*page 10*)
9 Does Joanna take the job in Sydney? (*page 15*)

Puzzle

Look at the list of Australian cities on the right. Where do they go on the map? Write A, B, C, etc in the boxes.

Melbourne ☐ Sydney ☐ Perth ☐
Adelaide ☐ Hobart ☐ Darwin ☐
Brisbaine ☐



Ideas

1 Make a Sydney wall poster. Here's how: a) Collect photos of Sydney from magazines, newspapers and travel brochures; b) stick them on a big piece of paper; c) put the poster on your bedroom or classroom wall.
2 It's one week after the story ends. Write a postcard from a) Joanna to Paul, *or* b) Paul to Joanna, *or* c) Jane to Joanna.

Jonna Jimbuku is a nurse in north Australia, where she works with a Flying Doctor. One day a baby is so ill that Joanna has to take her to hospital in Sydney. Will the baby live? And will Joanna accept an unexpected job offer in the big city?

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