

words we know

bruise	cruise	pursuit
triumph	triumphant	triumphantly
squad	squash	squatter
exhausted	excited	exported
efficient	sufficient	deficient
immediately	desperately	fortunately
length	area	volume
conscious	consciously	consciousness
rescue	rescuing	rescuers
eccentric	honest	precious
gymnasium	gymnastics	gymnast
coherent	correctly	co-operatively

STORY 55

old sound

ear as in earth

earn early learn rehearse
heard pearl yearn earth search

new sound

y as in myth

cylinder myth rhythm Sydney
typical bicycle symphony physical
sympathy mystery crystals

special words

beautiful buildings cello colours
vapour decisively capsule
celebration Beethoven

Before attempting to read the story,
learn how to say each special word. If necessary, check its
meaning. Make up a sentence using each special word.

FITZROY READERS STORY NUMBER 55

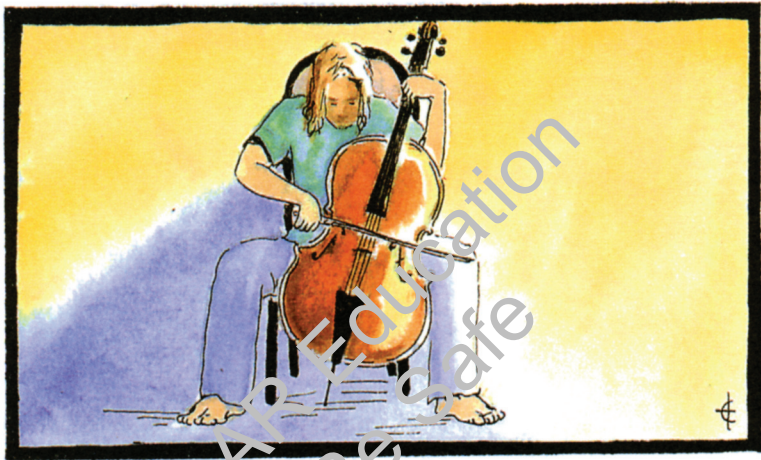
Transported

~ a science fiction story ~



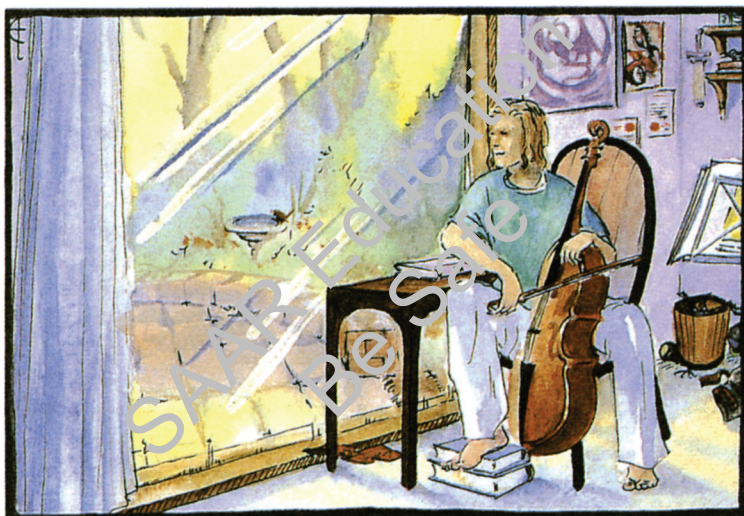
Created by Faye Berryman & Philip O'Carroll
Illustrated by Elise Fowler

From as early as he could remember, Chris had been learning the cello. He liked the cello. He liked the sounds it made — deep, strong and beautiful. These sounds brought him peace, they relaxed him.



He knew that some of his friends thought he was a bit weird. Some of them thought it wasn't "cool" to learn an old-fashioned instrument, particularly the cello. A trumpet or guitar might be allowed. The funny thing was that their opinion didn't bother him. He usually took great notice of what others thought of him — perhaps too much. But when it came to the cello, nothing, it seemed, would put him off.

Chris got up early every morning to practise. He had learned from experience that this was the best time of day to avoid interruptions. After school there were other things to do with his friends, like football and skate-boarding. Another good thing about the early mornings was watching the sun rise while he practised.

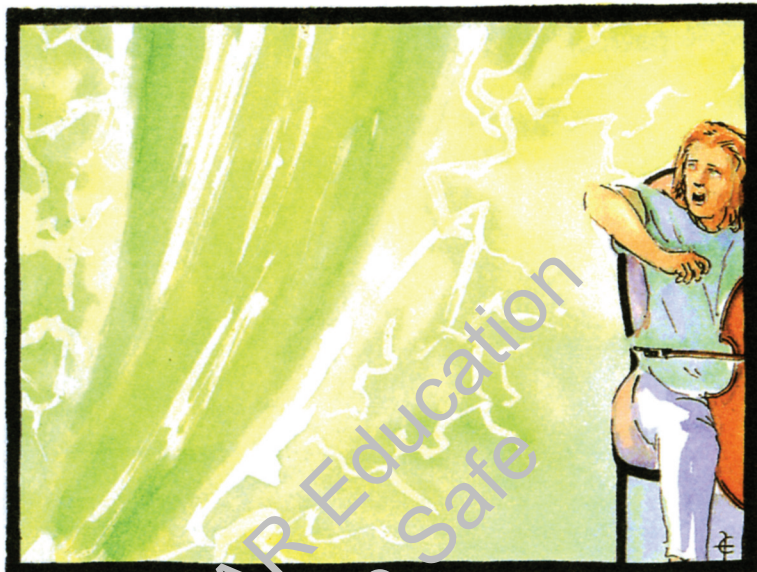


At first, everything was dark grey and black. Next, outlines of trees and buildings became obvious. Then, everything became a pearly colour. Finally, as the sun rose higher, warm golden colours appeared. Chris learned to tell the time by the cycle of colours.



Right now, Chris was working hard. He had an important concert coming up. He had to rehearse three times a week with a pianist and get up a bit earlier each day. Today, he seemed to be practising for ages before the regular golden glow lit up the garden outside his window.

This morning he was grappling with a new piece which had a difficult rhythm – five beats where he was used to four.

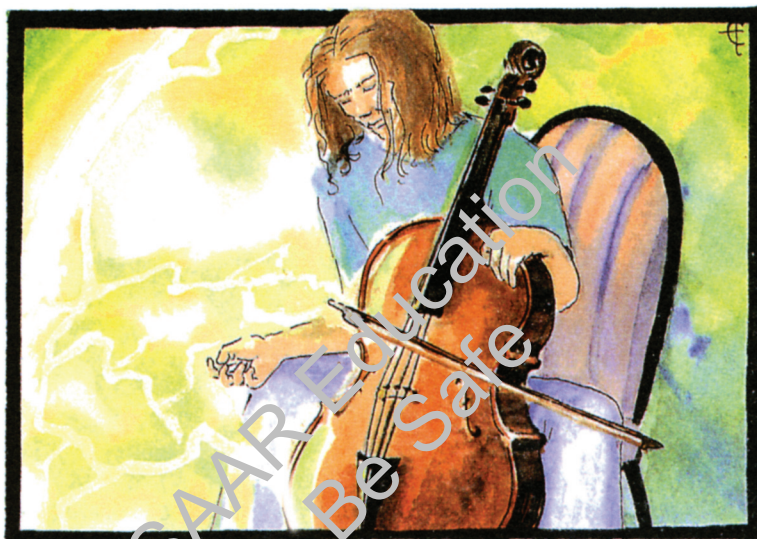


Then it started. He gradually became conscious that an area across the room was turning a shade of yellow-green. As he watched, the yellow-green light got stronger. It formed into the shape of a cylinder. This was most peculiar. Then the strange light weaved its way across the room towards him, slowly but decisively. Chris was scared. He felt his heart beating against his rib cage. His head felt tight and he could feel the pulse in his temples thumping. He heard his breathing coming in short gasps.



Chris tried to stand up, but the yellow-green seemed to hold him down onto his chair. He wanted to call out, but no sound came. He became aware that his cello had kept playing by itself. It was playing his piece – the one in the difficult style – but this time it was played just right! Even in his panic, Chris could recognise the heavenly sound of a cello composition played just as the composer had intended.

Chris felt himself slowly relax, charmed and entranced. Although he knew that he was imprisoned in the mysterious yellow-green, he now felt at peace.



It went through his mind that perhaps he was dead, perhaps he was on his way to an after-life. He'd heard about heavenly choirs of angels, and angels with harps. Perhaps there were cellos in heaven too. He listened, spellbound, to the exquisite melody rising forth from the cello. "Yes," he vowed, "I'll practise until I get it to sound just like that!"

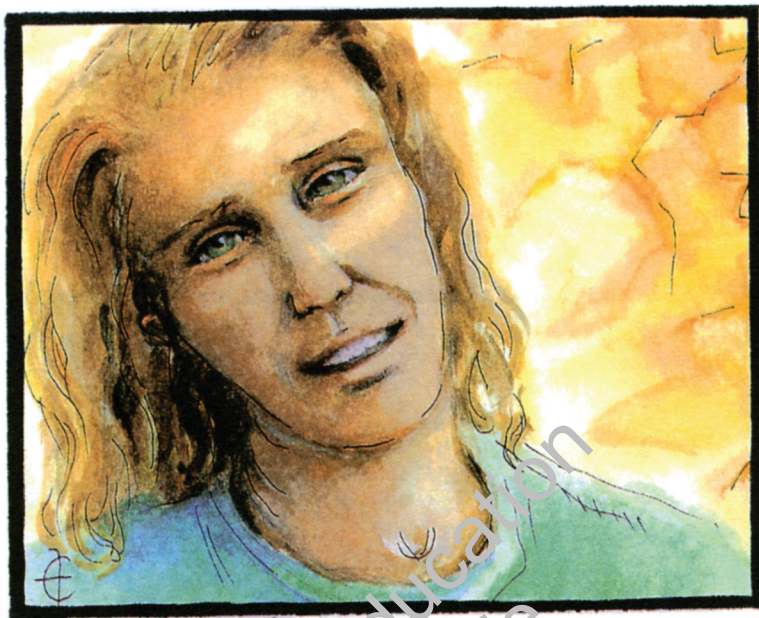


The yellow-green cylinder enclosing him began to spin, but in his entranced state, Chris didn't panic at all. He had the eerie sensation of watching things happening to him as if from outside his body. The cylinder began to move — with him inside! It was in fact a kind of capsule.

Chris's capsule glided through the wall of his house as though no wall existed. Then up and away: the city swirled underneath him and was gone!



Chris felt a slight bump and, without requiring an explanation, he understood that he had docked with, yes, what had to be, the mother ship. After what seemed only seconds, dazzling crystals temporarily blinded him and he was forced to lower his gaze. Chris now realised that he was involved in a close encounter with aliens.



Chris had long been a keen reader of science-fiction stories and he'd made sure he'd seen every new sci-fi movie when it came out. "I'm supposed to be feeling terrified and doing something about defending myself," he thought, "but I've never felt as safe as I do right now." Meanwhile his cello was triumphantly playing one of his favourites, Beethoven's *Song of Joy*. Chris knew some words to go with it:

*Let us sing a song of joy
And love and understanding*

Chris was caught up in the spirit of celebration. He grabbed his cello. He wanted to play the notes himself:

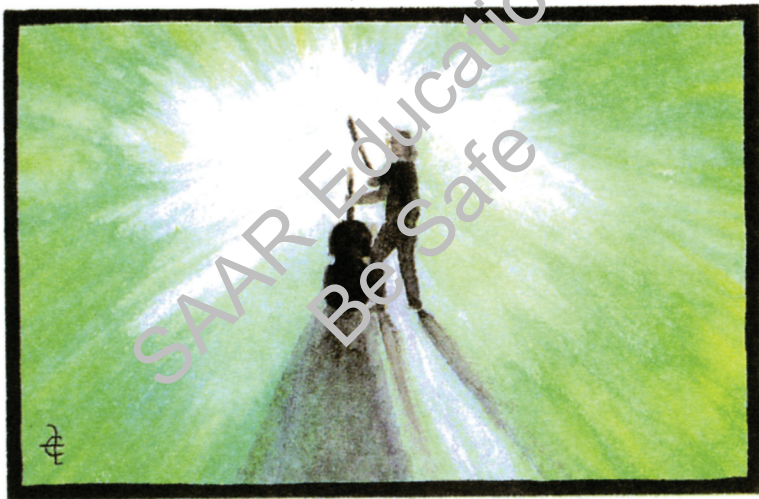
Let us sing...

How perfect this felt! Chris could hardly believe that he, Chris the skater, Chris the half-back, was shouting, “Fantastic!” at the top of his voice.



Then all sound suddenly ceased, the silence a startling contrast to the triumphant music. Fear again began to envelop Chris. He could hardly breathe.

The absolute stillness paralysed him. His mind searched for an explanation. “Something happen.... please let something happen,” he almost moaned. A feeling of enormous anticipation, of something about to happen, built up inside him. Still the oppressive silence weighed heavily upon him. Chris yearned for the stillness to be broken. His breath was being squeezed from him.



Then suddenly:

*Let us sing a song of joy
And love and understanding*

A thunderous peal of symphonic notes burst forth, harmoniously, joyfully. Chris felt transported. A feeling of warmth and celebration wrapped itself around him.

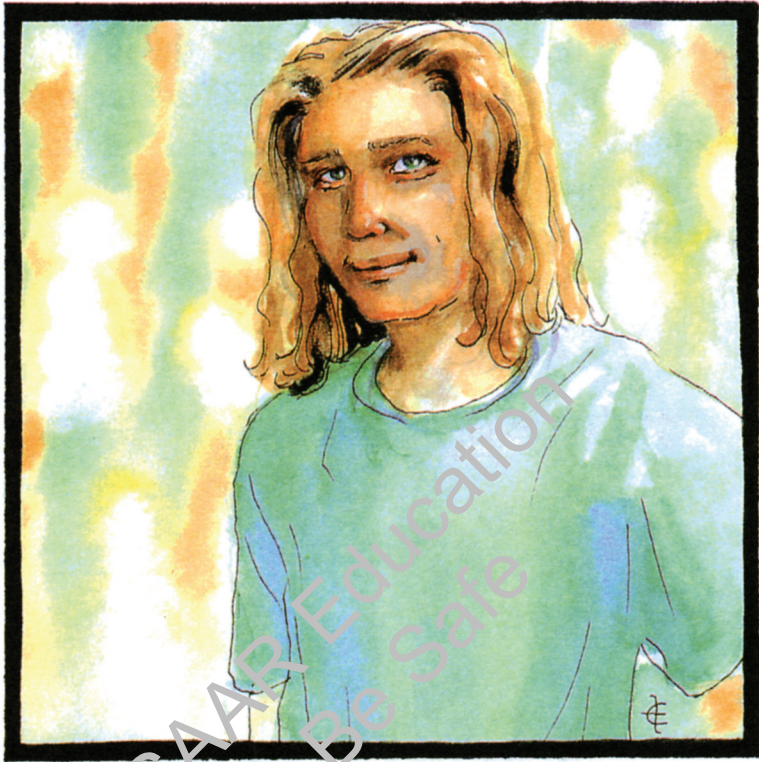


“More!” he heard his voice yelling applause. Then, as if in response, the alien orchestra took up his new cello piece — the one he couldn’t yet play. Tears of delight rolled down Chris’ cheeks. Before this morning, he would have died rather than cry. Indeed this thought flashed through his mind and he was amazed at himself.

How long this feast of sound lasted, Chris never knew. Divine melody supported by exquisite harmony. Chris felt a powerful sense of togetherness. Togetherness with what? There was a spirit here — of this Chris was certain. The energy, the beauty, the magnificence vibrated all around him.



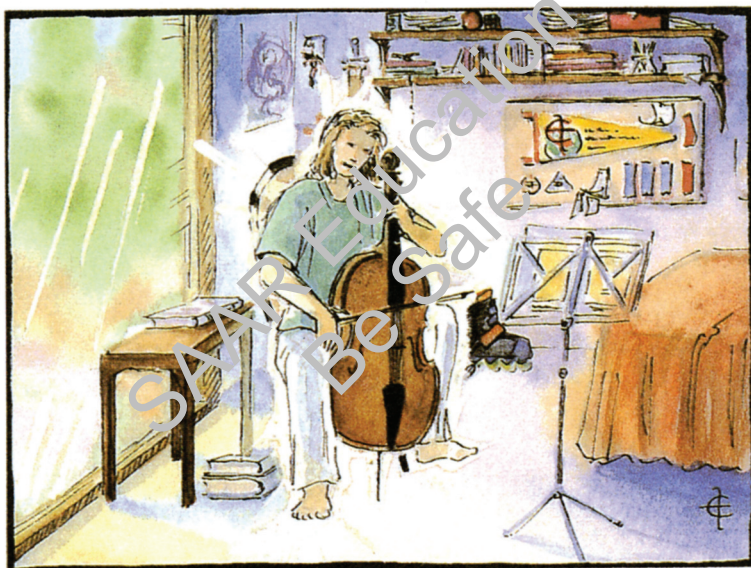
An idea, an understanding, a realisation was taking form in his mind. It had something to do with the love and peace he felt. He couldn't bear the thought that this feeling of joy, of oneness and harmony might leave him.



Immediately, Chris understood why all this was happening. He knew, as clearly as he knew that one plus one equals two, that he was being invited to accept a mission. Although he couldn't see the other members of this "team", he felt their presence – their energy – all around him. He belonged with this team, he knew it. He felt strong. He understood that his life had a purpose.

The power of the music he had heard, the joy it gave him, the feeling of peace and unity, these feelings were not meant to be for him alone. He and his team must work to inspire others. He pulled his cello to him and played:

*Let us sing a song of joy
And love and understanding*



Chris found himself back in his practice room. Everything looked remarkably normal. But he felt a new courage. He would never be the same again. Yes, his task would be to bring harmony into the lives of the people around him.

THE END

STORY 55

words we've used

rehearse	heard
yearn	earth
search	beautiful
buildings	colours
vapour	decisively
capsule	celebration
system	crystal
rhythm	symbol
sympathy	symphony
typical	mystery
cylinder	science

some new words

unity	unify
mythical	earthly
research	colourful
vaporise	decision
celebrated	gymnastics
syllable	symptom

STORY 55

read aloud

ENGLISH EXPRESSIONS

WORD — PHRASE — SENTENCE

search a thorough search

They made a thorough search for the lost child.

symphony symphony orchestra

We need a bigger hall for a symphony orchestra.

sympathy deepest sympathy

Please accept our deepest sympathy for the loss of your grandmother.

decisively act decisively

We must act decisively in this crisis.

celebration New Year celebration

The entire staff attended the New Year celebration.