

خوش آموز



Starman

PHILLIP BURROWS
AND MARK FOSTER



OXFORD BOOKWORMS

STARTER



STAR MAN

The sun is hot, hot, hot – you are driving along a long, long road in the centre of Australia.

Suddenly you see a man standing in the middle of the road. He is wearing an expensive suit and nice shoes, but he doesn't speak – not one word.

You have a gun in your car – what do you do? You must be careful! But you can't leave him here – there is nothing for hundreds of kilometres around – no water or food in this hot, empty place.

But there is something else out there – a very white light in the sky near Wollalonga.



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OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS



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Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide in

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Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in

Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece
Guatemala Hungary Italy Japan Poland Portugal Singapore
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First published in Oxford Bookworms 2002

4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3

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ISBN: 978 0 19 423427 6

A complete recording of this Bookworms edition of
Starman is available on audio CD. ISBN 978 0 19 423409 2

Printed in China

Word count (main text): 1660

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STARMAN



A big red car drives on a long, long road. In the car is a farmer, Bill. He is hot and tired. He wants to go home and have a bath.

Bill listens to the radio in his car and he sings. Bill likes singing. Sometimes people like Bill's singing – but not very often.

The song he is singing is called *Hot, hot, hot*.



There is a sign on the side of the road. Bill reads it: Goondiwindi, 72 kilometres. Dirranbandi 136 kilometres. Bill must drive for a long time. His home is about a hundred kilometres away.

He rubs his eyes. The sun is very hot and the road is long. Bill does not want to go to sleep so he sings some more. A kangaroo hears him and jumps away. Bill laughs, then rubs his eyes again.





Just then Bill sees something. Suddenly he is not tired and he is not laughing. The hair on his head stands up. There is something on the road.

He stops the car and gets out. The thing is a long way in front of Bill. He cannot see what it is – but he does not like it.

Bill gets back in his car and drives slowly. The thing is moving – it is alive.

‘What the . . .’ Bill says quietly. ‘It’s a man! What’s a man doing here?’

He thinks, ‘There must be something wrong.’

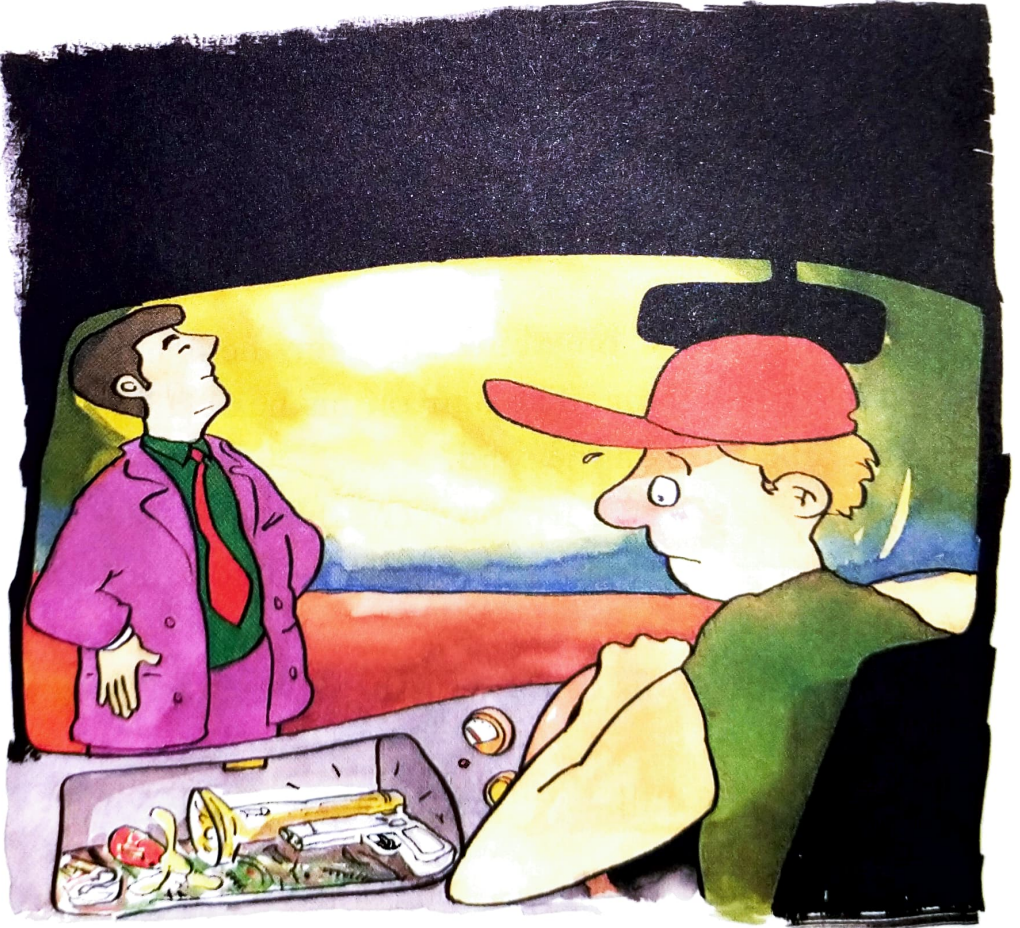


Bill stops his car ten metres from the man and looks out.

'Hello,' says Bill. 'Are you OK? Are you looking for something?'

The man does not move or speak. He is looking at the sky and smiling unhappily. Bill looks up too. He can see nothing.

There is a gun in Bill's car. He looks at it. 'I must be careful,' he thinks.





Bill drives five more metres. He can see that the man is about forty years old. He is wearing a good suit – but it is old.

‘Hey! Are you OK?’ Bill asks again. ‘Can I help you?’

The man moves his head slowly to look at Bill. He says nothing then begins to walk. Bill watches him for a minute. He thinks: ‘I must do something.’





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‘Where are you going?’ shouts Bill. ‘There’s nothing on that road. Do you have any water? The sun’s very hot. Can you hear me?’

Bill does not know what to do. He cannot leave the man here. ‘What is wrong with him?’ he thinks. ‘Is he ill?’

A lizard runs across the road. A big bird flies near the man. It looks down, hungrily. Near the road are some bones – a dead kangaroo.





Bill is afraid – but he cannot drive away and leave the man.

The man looks very tired so Bill drives two more metres. ‘Do you want to die out here?’ There is no answer. ‘Get in! I’m taking you home,’ says Bill.

He opens the car door and gets out. He moves very slowly and talks very quietly. ‘It’s okay. You can come with me. Get in the car and sit down. I have some water in the car.’

Bill helps the man and he gets into the car. He is very dirty and tired. Bill gives him a drink. The man is thirsty and drinks a lot of water. ‘Stop!’ says Bill. ‘Don’t drink all the water. A little now, then more later.’



The car drives fast on the long, straight road. The two men sit and say nothing.

Bill listens to the news on the radio. There is rain in Adelaide. A man in Sydney is 125 years old today. A kangaroo is learning to talk. And a very white light is in the sky near Wolalonga.

Bill likes the news. Next to him, the man sleeps.

Bill looks at him. The man wears an expensive suit and nice shoes. Why is he out here in the sun, without a hat?

They drive for an hour before they get to Bill's house.



Bill leaves the man asleep in the car. He goes into the house and tells his wife, Emily, about the man. Emily always knows what to do. 'We must find out who he is then phone his home,' she says. 'Let's look in his pockets. Perhaps there is something with his name on it.'

Bill and Emily go to the car. They find a wallet in the man's pocket. There is a name – John Phillips – and a telephone number. There is also some money.

'This money is twenty-five years old!' says Bill to Emily. 'Why has he got old money?'

'John Phillips,' says Emily to the man. 'You're very interesting.' John suddenly opens his eyes and looks at her, smiling.





‘Can you walk?’ Emily asks John. He gets up slowly. ‘You’re ill. Let’s put you into a bed.’ Carefully, they help John out of the car.

Bill’s dog sees John and is afraid. He runs away and sits under a tree. Bill and Emily help John upstairs and onto a bed. Ten minutes later he is sleeping again.



In the kitchen, Emily says: 'I don't understand this . . . It's not right. He's different . . . It's . . . Oh, I don't know . . .'

'I don't want him in our house. I am afraid of him,' says Bill.

'I know. I'm afraid, too. Let's call the Flying Doctor,' says Emily. 'Then we must talk to his family.'





Bill picks up the telephone and calls the doctor. He tells the doctor about John Phillips. 'I think he's ill. He's very tired and doesn't talk. He doesn't know who he is. Can you come quickly?'

The doctor lives about two hundred kilometres away. He must fly a plane to visit Bill. 'I'm coming now,' he says. 'Look out for me in half an hour.'





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Bill puts the phone down. 'Okay. Let me talk to his wife,' says Emily. She takes the phone and calls the number. Somebody answers and Emily talks for a long time.



Bill hears her say: 'But he *is* here . . . No, it *is* John Phillips. We have his wallet – his name is in it . . . Hello! Hello! Are you there? . . . Oh. What? When? . . . I don't understand . . . Okay. Thank you. Goodbye.' When she stops talking, her face is white.

She looks at Bill and says: 'This is all wrong. "John Phillips is missing," his wife says.'

'For how long?' says Bill.

'Thirty years,' says Emily. 'His wife has a new husband now. They have three children!'



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The Flying Doctor is late. After an hour he arrives in his plane.

'I'm sorry,' he says. 'This is a new plane – but sometimes it doesn't go very well. I must take it to a mechanic. But it doesn't matter now. I'm here.'

Bill tells him everything. The doctor asks a lot of questions, then goes to see the man. John Phillips is looking at the plane through the window.

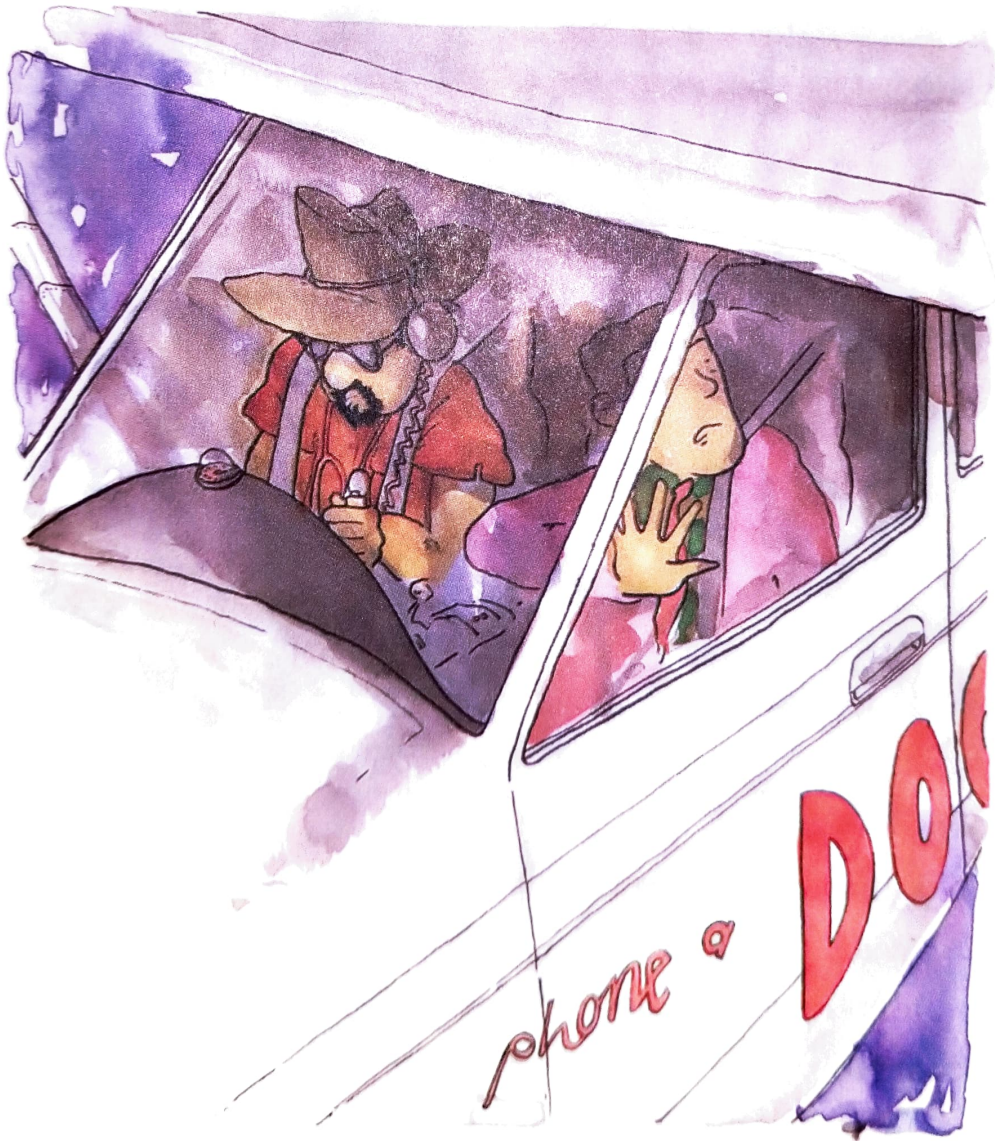
'Hello, John,' says the doctor. 'I'm a doctor and I need to ask you some questions. Can you remember your name? Can you remember where you live?' John does not answer.

The doctor talks to Bill and Emily. He says: 'John hasn't got any broken bones . . . but I'm not happy about him. I want to take him to hospital.'



They put John in the plane next to the doctor. 'Phone us,' says Emily when the doctor gets in the plane. 'Phone us from the hospital.' Soon the doctor and John Phillips are high in the sky.

Suddenly John speaks for the first time. He talks slowly: 'I don't want to be here. I want to be with my friends. They are looking for me.'





John stands up in the plane.

‘Wait, you can’t do that,’ says the doctor. ‘Sit down!’

John opens the door and says to the doctor: ‘You can come too. Do you want to?’

‘What?’ shouts the doctor.

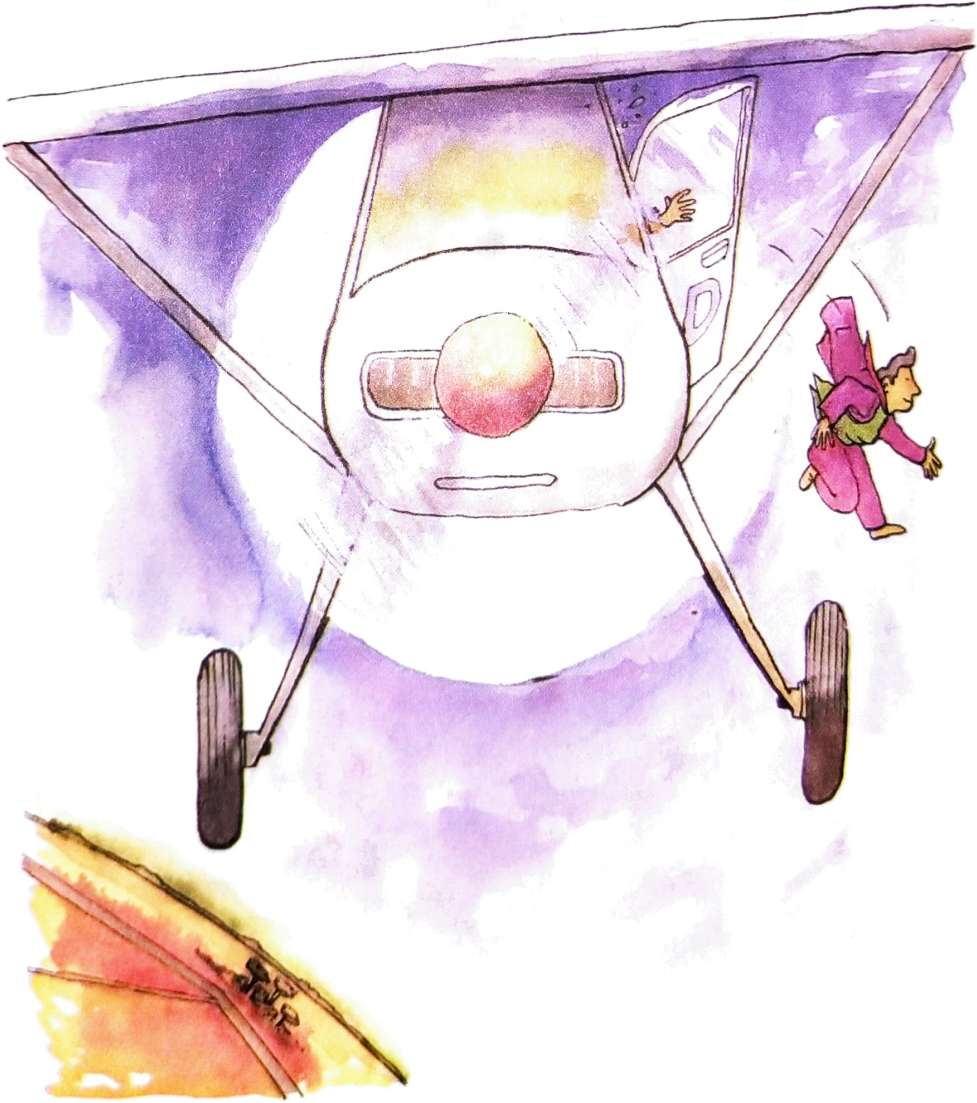


Starman

John looks into the doctor's eyes. The doctor cannot move. He cannot look away. It is cold in the plane but the doctor is hot. John's eyes are looking straight through him.

'Come with me. It's a good place. It's better than here.'

'How can I?' says the doctor quietly. Then John jumps.





The doctor looks out of the window. John is falling – down, down, down. But the doctor can see a smile on his face.

‘He isn’t going to die,’ thinks the doctor. ‘He knows that.’

There are small trees below the plane. Cars drive on a long road. Kangaroos jump all around. John is very small now and he is falling fast.





John is twenty metres above the trees. A kangaroo looks up, but John is not falling any more. A beam of light stops him and takes him away. Up, up, up.

The doctor closes his eyes. The light is very, very white. When he opens his eyes the light is not there. John is not there. The doctor sees something in the sky. Then there is nothing.

He is very unhappy – more unhappy than ever. ‘I want to go too!’ he says.





Roy Cole is a mechanic and he works in an airport. Today he is happy. The sun is nice and warm. Tomorrow is Saturday, and this weekend Roy is buying a new car. He is excited.

He is eating a sandwich when he hears the plane. He looks up and sees it in the sky. The plane is coming to the airport. It gets very near. In the plane, Roy can see a man.

'Who is this?' thinks Roy. 'I don't know this plane.' He puts his sandwich in his pocket.





The plane stops at the airport and a man gets out. Roy begins to walk across to him.

The man stands still and looks at the sky. There is a small smile on his face. His suit is dirty and he looks tired.

‘Oh dear!’ thinks Roy. ‘What’s the matter with him?’



Roy likes to talk to people. He smiles, then talks to the man. 'Perhaps I can help him,' he thinks.

'Hi, I'm Roy. Who are you?' Roy puts his hand out but the man does not move. Roy puts his hand in his pocket and looks at the plane.



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Roy says to the man, 'Wow! What a wonderful plane. It's more than thirty years old. It's an old Flying Doctor's plane, isn't it?'

Suddenly the man looks at Roy and says: 'Flying Doctor. Yes, that's right. I'm a Flying Doctor.'

'A Flying Doctor? Of course you are,' says Roy with a smile. 'Where do you live? Where do you want to go?'





The doctor begins to get into the plane again. Then he stops and looks into Roy's eyes. Roy hears him say: 'I live a long way away now. I must go back. Do you want to come with me?'

Suddenly Roy feels hot. The doctor's eyes are looking straight through him. 'How can I?' says Roy.
'I can help you. Get in my plane,' says the doctor.





GLOSSARY

- bath** this is full of water and you can wash in it
- broken** in more than one piece
- doctor** a person who works with people who are ill
- farmer** a person who works on the land
- gun** you can shoot people with this
- hospital** a place where you take people who are ill
- husband** the man who a woman marries
- jump** to move quickly through the air
- mechanic** a person who works with machines
- missing** nobody knows where he or she is
- news** you read this in the newspaper or watch it on the TV
- pocket** a place in your shirt or trousers where you can put things
- rub** to move your hands over
- shout** to speak loudly
- song** music that you sing
- straight** in a line
- suit** trousers and jacket
- unhappy** not happy



ACTIVITIES

Before Reading

1 Look at the front and back cover of the book. Now answer these questions.

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Where does the story happen? | | |
| a In the mountains. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b In the city. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c In a hot country. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 What sort of book is it? | | |
| a An amusing story. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b A love story. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c A science fiction story. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 A man is lost in the desert. What does he need? | | |
| a A hat. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b Some water. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c A hair dryer. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d Food. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 What do you think happens to the man? | | |
| a He dies and a kangaroo eats him. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b A farmer rescues him and takes him home. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c He finds a horse and rides to a town. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



ACTIVITIES

While Reading

1 Read pages 1–6 and then answer these questions.

- 1 What song is Bill singing?
- 2 How far is it from Goondiwindi to Dirranbandi?
- 3 What does Bill see on page 3?
- 4 What animal's bones are on page 6?

2 Read pages 7–12 and then answer these questions.

- 1 What does Bill give to John?
- 2 How old is the man in Sydney?
- 3 Put these sentences in the correct order.

Number them 1-4.

- a ☐ Bill goes in the house.
 - b ☐ Bill phones the doctor.
 - c ☐ Emily looks in John's pockets.
 - d ☐ Bill and Emily help John into bed.
- 4 How does the Doctor get to his patients?
 - 5 What does the dog do when he sees John?

3 Read pages 13–18. Who says these words?

- 1 'Okay. Let me talk to his wife.'
- 2 'This is a new plane – but sometimes it doesn't go very well.'



ACTIVITIES: While Reading

- 3 'I want to be with my friends. They are looking for me.'
- 4 'Phone us from the hospital.'
- 5 'He isn't going to die.'

4 Look at pages 19–24 and answer these questions about John.

- 1 What colour is his suit?
- 2 Why is he falling from the plane?
- 3 Why doesn't he fall to the ground?



5 Look at pages 19–24 and answer these questions about the doctor.

- 1 Why does the Doctor close his eyes on page 19?
- 2 Where does the Doctor say he lives?
- 3 What type of Doctor is he?



6 Look at pages 19–24 and answer these questions about Roy.

- 1 Where does he work?
- 2 Why is he happy on page 20?
- 3 Why does he feel hot?



1 John is thirsty because . . .

2 Emily takes John upstairs because . . .

3 John's wife is surprised because . . .

4 The Doctor takes John to hospital because . . .

2 Imagine John meets his wife after thirty years. What does he say to her. Include these words: *desert hot light children home sky afraid friends*



3 Match the beginnings and endings of these sentences.

- 1 Bill is a farmer and . . .
- 2 After the plane lands . . .
- 3 Emily picks up the phone . . .
- 4 As they drive, John falls asleep . . .
- 5 John jumps out of the plane . . .

- 6 . . . but does not hit the ground.
- 7 . . . because he is very tired.
- 8 . . . Roy walks towards to the Doctor.
- 9 . . . and talks to John's wife.
- 10 . . . he drives a red car.



Starman



The empty centre of Australia. The sun is hot and there are not many people. And when Bill meets a man, alone, standing on an empty road a long way from anywhere, he is surprised and worried.

And Bill is right to be worried. Because there is something strange about the man he meets. Very strange . . .

[Word count 1,600]



- ◀ STAGE 6
- ◀ STAGE 5
- ◀ STAGE 4
- ◀ STAGE 3
- ◀ STAGE 2
- ◀ STAGE 1
- ◀ **STARTER**

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ISBN 978-0-19-423427-6



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