


MY NEW ZEALAND STORY

# CANTERBURY QUAKE



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SCHOLASTIC

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## SUNDAY, 8 AUGUST 2010

I've been dropping hints for ages. Heaps and heaps! I've left pictures of cell phones all over the place. I've stuck them on the fridge and even on the back of the toilet door. Tessa tells me I'm wasting my time. She says I'm not going to get a cell phone until I'm thirteen. She had to wait until then so I should too. Then she deliberately texted her friends in front of me, just to make her point.

Well, I don't care what Tessa says. Thirteen is too far away and I am not going to give up. If everyone else at school has a cell phone, then I want one too! Even my best friend Laura has one, so I desperately need one. How am I supposed to know what everyone is up to if I don't have my own phone?

## TUESDAY, 10 AUGUST

Only three more days until my eleventh birthday. I can hardly wait. Surely turning 11 is a good enough reason to get a cell phone? I rang Aunty Beth tonight and begged her to help. Mum always listens to her sister, even if she is younger than Mum.

"Yes! Maddy, I'll try. I promise," she said. "But you know your mum. If she says no, she means no."

I know Aunty Beth is probably right, but I really want a phone soooo bad. Why can't Mum see that? Everyone at



school has one. I'm going to Intermediate next year and I just **have** to have one. I'll have to think of another way to convince her.

## FRIDAY, 13 AUGUST

### My birthday!

I woke up early and was all excited and hopeful. I mean, who wouldn't wake up early on their birthday? But my hopefulness didn't last long. No cell phone. I can't believe it. It's so not fair. In fact, it sucks.

The day wasn't a total waste though. Actually everyone was pretty nice. Even Tessa made me a card and gave me some new pens and paper. And we did have pizza for dinner. Home-delivered pizza, not the awful stuff from the supermarket that comes frozen in a box. Mum and Dad gave me a set of beads to make friendship bracelets, a box of chocolates, and a book voucher from my favourite bookshop and promised me we would go shopping tomorrow. I hope the shop has the new vampire book I've been waiting for.



## SATURDAY, 14 AUGUST

Saturday – and money to spend. Woohoo! We all piled into Dad's car and parked around the back of the shops. I love going to the bookshop in Victoria Street. There are so many books to choose from. Jackson spent all his time playing with the trains in the corner, while I spent ages looking at books, even though I found the one I wanted straight away.

Then we were allowed to choose a cupcake from the cupcake parlour across the road. Dad's was chocolate with chocolate icing and chocolate sprinkles. Talk about chocolate overkill. And of course Jackson wanted one like Dad's, too. Mum chose a raspberry one. Tessa and I both went for cupcakes with heaps and heaps of pink icing and strawberries on top. After buying the cupcakes we went to the cheese shop and bought fresh baked bread and yummy cheese. I don't know how Mum and Dad can eat the blue cheese they bought. Ugh! Looks mouldy and I bet it tastes mouldy too. That's one thing Tessa and I agree on. Probably the only thing. Mouldy cheese is not for us.

We then walked a bit further in to Victoria Square and sat by the Avon River and just enjoyed a bit of time out. It was a good day, even if I didn't get a cell phone. I won't give up though. I still want one. My mission will not be over until I get a cell phone!



## SUNDAY, 15 AUGUST

Laura came over so we spent the day just hanging out. We tried making our own cupcakes but got more icing over the floor than on the cakes. Jackson was just being a pain, following us everywhere. And he never stops talking. Laura got a text from her Mum to say she was allowed to stay longer because her Mum and Dad were still out shopping and would pick her up at about half-past four.

“See, Mum!” I said. “There’s a good reason to have a cell phone. Laura’s Mum can contact her if plans change.”

Mum just ignored me. Tessa, who happened to be in the room, grinned and texted her friend. She did it deliberately, like she always does. I hate her sometimes.

Laura stuck a candle in one of the cupcakes and sang happy birthday to me and then gave me a birthday present. It was a CD she’d made of our favourite songs. Cool! We played it over and over until her parents came and picked her up.

## MONDAY, 16 AUGUST

We had choir practice today. I think it went well. I just love singing so much. We are learning a heap of new songs. Laura and I are trying out for the duet for the final assembly at Christmas. She’s much better than I am and



is heaps more confident, but when we sing together it makes me feel as though I'm singing okay, too. And I have more fun singing with her. The intermediate school we are going to next year has a big focus on music and drama. That's mostly why we're going there. The drama and music teachers from the intermediate come and check out the performances at our end of year assembly. They do it every year to get an idea of what we are all like. I guess they do it so they know what they are going to get the following year. I will be terrified and excited at the same time. I so want us to get the final duet. I sooo want to get in the music and drama classes next year.

## THURSDAY, 19 AUGUST

It was my day to do library duty at lunchtime, and we got to stamp the new books. It's a good chance to see the new books before anyone else. We even get to reserve them before all the other kids get a chance to see them. It's one of the reasons I like doing library. Plus it's warm inside in winter. Like today, the library was really busy at lunch because it was so cold outside. But it gets so noisy. Sometimes I am sure my brain hurts because of all the noise, as half the school is squashed into the library trying to stay warm. It's okay for the teachers because they can go into the staffroom for lunch, while we have to walk around outside in winter. So not fair!



When I got home, there was a flyer in the letterbox advertising cell phones on special. I left it by Mum's bed. She used it to light the fire. Typical! I know she did it on purpose. I can't win with her. She just won't budge. Being 11 is a whole 2 years away from 13. I'll be so old by then, that by the time I get one, they'll be obsolete. We'll be talking to each other with just our thoughts and won't need any technological stuff. Actually, that could be kind of freaky. We'd never be able to have any secrets. On second thoughts, I don't think I would like that at all.

## **FRIDAY, 20 AUGUST**

Yay! No homework for the weekend. Plenty of time to hang out with Laura and sing, eat and watch DVDs. Our all time favourite is the DVD of *Glee* with all the high school students singing in class. It's a little bit geeky and the actors are way older than what they are pretending to be, but the singing is fantastic. I could watch it over and over again.

## **SATURDAY, 21 AUGUST**

Laura came over for lunch so we could practise our song. I kept forgetting the words halfway through. I don't think Laura was impressed after about our 10th attempt. She



just gave me one of her ‘not again’ looks. I told her she looked like my mother when she did that and we both burst out laughing. Lucky I remembered on the next go and we sang it all the way through without any stopping or wrong words. We really need to do well with the duet if we want to get in to the music and drama class next year and be part of the school productions. First, though, we have to pass the auditions to get to do the final assembly duet. Both of us have had times when we have led the choir into a major song so there is always hope. Mind you, Zoe and Bettina – two other girls from Year 6 – could be trouble for us. Especially Zoe. Sometimes she is so mean to me. It’s like she is bullying me, but on the sly so that the teachers don’t notice. I know it was her foot that tripped me up in PE the other day. And I KNOW it was deliberate.

## **SUNDAY, 22 AUGUST**

Today I went to Laura’s place for lunch. I love going to Laura’s house. Her house is on Avonside Drive overlooking the Avon River and it is so pretty. It’s full of nooks and crannies and all these antique things. Her parents collect things from everywhere they go and they went to heaps of countries before Laura was born so they have all these weird souvenirs. Everything is so random but so awesome. Her Dad is cool and very funny





– he makes all sorts of faces every time Laura turns her back on him.

We made chocolate mud cake . . . and another mess. We are pretty good at making messes. I think we would be top of the class for making a mess. Today it was mostly the icing that was messy. Her Dad said the mess was the biggest he had ever seen. He said the kitchen looked like something from the bottom of the sea, “all sludgy and brown.” Then he pulled the silliest face when he thought Laura wasn’t looking but she saw him and started chasing him around the kitchen trying to flick him with the tea towel. He grabbed a tea towel too and they had a flick fight. Laura’s parents are so much fun. I’m sure it’s because she has no brothers or sisters. Sometimes I wish I was an only kid, especially when Tessa is being bossy and Jackson is following me around. But only sometimes!

## **WEDNESDAY, 25 AUGUST**

We were given so much homework today. Our teacher, Miss Higgins, always goes overboard, giving us maths, spelling and current events as well as heaps more. Laura calls her ‘Miss Overboard’, but not to her face of course. The teacher must think we don’t have any sort of life other than just doing her homework. We get a week to do it but I like to get it done early so I don’t have any to do on



the weekend. I rang Laura when I got stuck on the book review because I'd left the book at school and couldn't remember the author's name or any other books she had written, and we weren't allowed to use the computer for this part of the homework. Mum wanted the phone so I couldn't talk long and now I probably won't get a good mark on the homework sheet. I pointed out to Mum that if I had a cell phone I could text Laura for help. All I got was another blank stare. She is sooo stubborn. Mind you, she says I'm stubborn – and persistent too. Hmmm. Maybe there's hope then, if I keep trying.

## SATURDAY, 28 AUGUST

I wanted to spend today with Laura but we had to visit Gran. Dad mowed her lawns and Mum made us all do chores. Gran is okay – in fact she is pretty cool for an old person – but I really wished I could've been at Laura's. We know all our words off by heart now for our duet but I still want to practise. I wish I didn't get so nervous. I don't know how Laura can stand up there so calmly.

“Take long, slow breaths,” she says.

If I took a long, slow breath I would end up with hiccups – or I'd pass out. Then I would never be able to sing.



## SUNDAY, 29 AUGUST

Today was movie day. Laura and I went to the Hoyts movie place next to Science Alive in town. Tessa and her friend Rosie came too. I don't think Mum trusts us by ourselves. Sometimes she is so overprotective it drives me nuts. At least we didn't have to take Jackson. Dragging a 5-year-old around would be too much and it wouldn't be fair. The movie was okay but not the best we had seen. It was more fun playing at Time Out after. I beat Tessa at air hockey three times. Yes! Yes! And yes! Any chance to beat Tessa and I am in.

## MONDAY, 30 AUGUST

Miss Finch, the choir teacher, pulled Laura and me aside after practice today. I thought we were in trouble but she just wanted to let us know she thought we were doing fine. She asked us if we wanted do a song for assembly on the 24th of September. That's the last day of term. It will be like a sort of try-out for the end of year assembly. We just looked at each other and said, "Do we?" at the same time and then got the giggles.

"I'll take that as a yes," she said, laughing. Then she said Zoe and Bettina were also going to do a song and suddenly I didn't feel so excited any more. They are really



good singers. They're our competition so we will have to practise even more.

## TUESDAY, 31 AUGUST

We spent all lunchtime going through CDs and listening to songs we might want to sing. Laura wanted something jazzy and I wanted something a bit more pop. We just ended up arguing, so in the end Miss Finch made the decision for us. We're going to sing 'Daydream Believer', which is an old song from the 1960s, but we can do it like they did on *Glee*. It was just brilliant.

## WEDNESDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER

Practise, practise, practise! Sing, sing, sing! Roll on Saturday, and a chance to get it right.

## SATURDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER

### EARTHQUAKE!!!! 4.35 a.m.

I think I am in shock and I'm almost too scared to write in my diary because then it would mean what happened today was true and I don't want it to be true. I don't want it to have happened at all, but I need to write it down because it is just so horrendous.

