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Introduction

Well, after interviewing a big growly tiger and a massive bitey shark for the first two books in this series, I decided to go for something a bit more friendly and bouncy this time. You can't get a beast with much more **BOING** than a kangaroo, and so that is where I started!

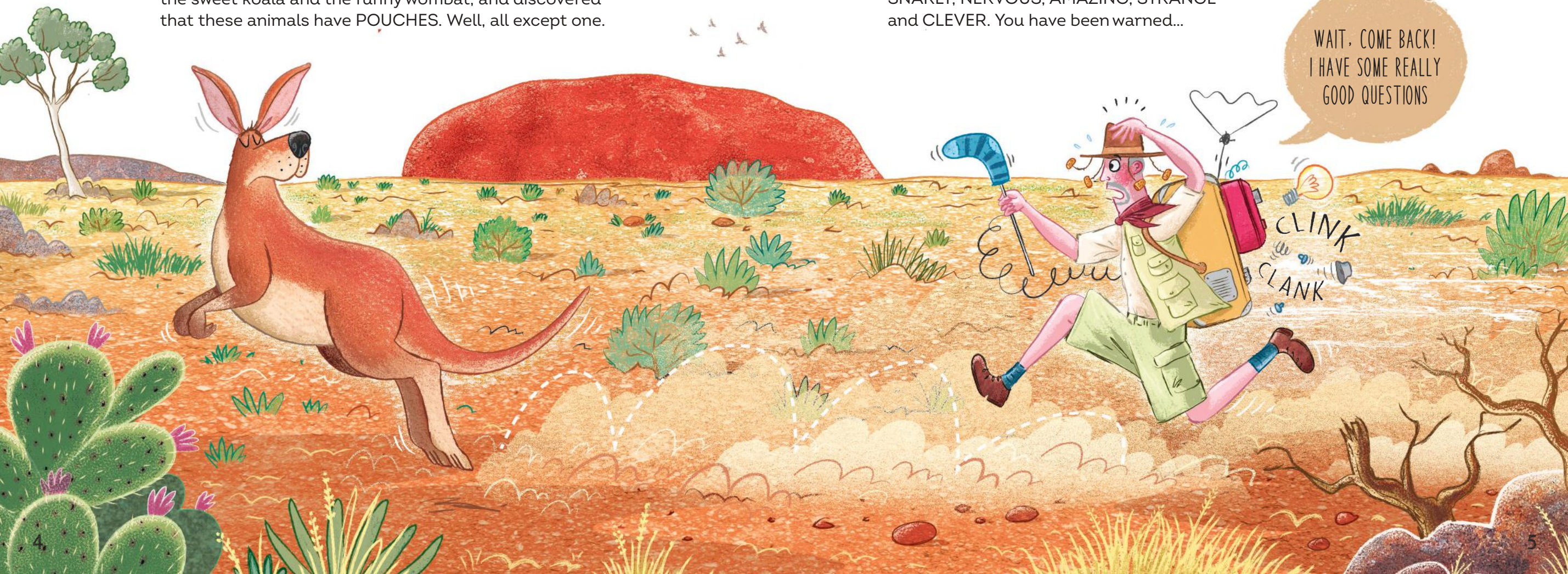
I also wanted to talk to something **CUTE** and **CUDDLY**. And that's when I discovered that Australia is full of these gorgeous animals called **MARSUPIALS**. So, I talked to the sweet koala and the funny wombat, and discovered that these animals have **POUCHES**. Well, all except one.

But then I interviewed some more marsupials and found out that they don't all live in Australia, either! And lots of them have really wacky names like 'quokka' and 'bandicoot' and 'cuscus'! Plus, not all marsupials are gentle and cuddly – there's a thing called the Tasmanian devil. Do not ask for one of those as a pet! (well, unless your sister is **REALLY** annoying).

Oh wait, hang on, you want to know how I can talk to animals? Well, easy! I invented the **TRANIMALATOR** – a machine to turn yaps, squawks and howls into words. Ha, clever me!

So, only read this book if you can put up with animals which are sometimes **RUDE**, **SILLY**, **SNARLY**, **NERVOUS**, **AMAZING**, **STRANGE** and **CLEVER**. You have been warned...

WAIT, COME BACK!
I HAVE SOME REALLY
GOOD QUESTIONS



Interview with a Wombat

My next interview is with a cuddly creature who has little legs, a big bottom and lots of surprises. It's the wacky and wonderful... WOMBAT!

Q: If you could sum up what it's like to be a wombat in one word, what would it be?

A: Pardon.

Q: If you could sum up- oh, hang on, was 'pardon' your word?

A: Yes, we say it a lot. Mainly because we have, er, quite a lot of erm, wind.

Q: Oh, right, I thought it was a door creaking somewhere... anyway, can you tell me a few other things about yourself?

A: We live in the forests and hills of Australia. We are strong, quite fast and very good diggers.

Q: So, did you make all these burrows with your claws?

A: That's right, over fifty metres of tunnels and chambers. Not bad, eh?

Q: Wow, there must be room for loads of wombats in there!

A: No, just me - we mostly spend time on our own.

Q: I thought you lived in groups?

A: No, no, no. You're thinking of hairy-nosed wombats. I'm a bare-nosed wombat, see?

Q: OK, I see, you do have a bare nose - and big teeth too. What are they for?

A: Amazingly, they are for eating.

Q: Haha, whoops, of course. What do you eat?

A: A lot of grass, but bark and roots too. You need tough teeth for those.

Q: And someone told me you have a tough backside too. Is that true?

A: Sure is. A big strong bot like this helps defend us against dingoes - those horrid wild dogs.

CHOMP
CHOMP



Q: Oh wow, there seems to be, well, a HEAD sticking out of your bum too!

A: That's not my BUM, that's my POUCH.
And she's my little baby. Hmphhh.

**Q: OH, you're a MUM, I see.... But why is your pouch at the back?
A kangaroo's is at the front.**

A: Easy – to stop it filling with soil when we dig.
The kid doesn't want a load of dirt in his mush!

**Q: I see – very clever! And on the subject of rear ends – sorry –
is it true that wombats do square poos?**

A: I was waiting for that question. Yes, it's true... dice-
shaped droppings, cubic doo-doo, square squits,
perpendicular plops, blocky botty-bombs – IT'S TRUE!

Q: Right, OK! Why?

A: Simple: they don't roll away. We leave piles of
them to mark our territory and keep other wombats
away. I do about 100 smelly cubes a night.

**Q: Woah, but let's talk about something else...
what do you think of human beings?**

A: Let's face it, you're ANNOYING. You take up too much space,
so we have less room to live and find food. And we're scared
of you. That's why we sometimes knock you over or bite.

Q: Ooh, sorry. Our bad. You won't bite me, will you?

A: It depends if you annoy me in another way.

Q: Like what?

A: Like by telling that REALLY BAD wombat joke.

Q: What, you mean, 'What's a wombat for?'

A: YES! Grrrrrrrr!

**Q: Sorry, sorry, sorry, it slipped out. Do
you think we should tell them?**

A: Who?

Q: The readers – tell them what a wombat is for?

A: Oh alright. It's for playing wom. Hil-ar-i-ous.

Q: I think I might just go now. Bye!

A: Good riddance.

