

Crossing the river

‘Susie,’ says Alice. ‘Crocodiles come from eggs.’

‘Yes, they do,’ I say.

Alice is reading a book – *Australian Animals*. She is my cousin. Her mother is my Auntie Beth. Auntie Beth is my mother’s sister.

‘They come from eggs?’ asks her little brother, Jamie. ‘Like chickens?’

‘Yes,’ says Alice. ‘Like chickens.’ She closes her book. ‘But chickens have little eggs and crocodiles have BIG eggs – BIG eggs, BIG mouths and BIG teeth. Crocodiles have BIG teeth to eat you with!’

Alice laughs. Jamie hits her head.

‘Ouch! Don’t hit me!’ says Alice. ‘That hurts.’ She isn’t laughing now.

‘Stop it, you two,’ says Uncle Rob, their father. ‘I’m driving and you aren’t helping!’

‘Jamie, don’t be naughty,’ says Auntie Beth. ‘Don’t hit your sister.’

Jamie is always naughty. He is five and Alice is ten. Auntie Beth, Uncle Rob, Alice and Jamie are on holiday in Australia. They live in England. Mum and I live in Sydney, but now we are on holiday with them – in Far North Queensland. We are driving in a big car. We are going to a hotel near the Daintree River.

Uncle Rob stops the car. We are at a small river. The road goes across the river.

‘Can we go?’ says Jamie. ‘I’m hot.’



'I'm hot too,' says Uncle Rob, 'but we have to stop. There is water on the road.'

'It's okay,' says Mum. 'We can drive across the river in this car.'

'Is it dangerous, Meg?' Aunty Beth asks my mother.

'No,' Mum says. 'We are safe in this car.'

'Yes,' says Uncle Rob. 'We are very safe in this car.'

'Oooh, look!' says Alice. 'There's a crocodile!'

'Where?' says Jamie. He looks out of the window.

'There,' says Alice. There is a sign beside the river. On the sign there is a picture of a crocodile.

'That's not a crocodile,' says Jamie. 'That's a picture.'

'Yes,' says Alice, 'but there *are* crocodiles in the river. It's dangerous in the river – DAN-GER-OUS!'

'Okay, let's go,' says Uncle Rob. 'Close the windows.'

We close the windows and Uncle Rob drives the car into the water. SPLASH!

'Ohhh!' says Jamie and he closes his eyes.

SPLASH! SPLASH! Water hits the window. Alice looks out of the window and laughs.

Uncle Rob drives the car across the river. 'This is a good car,' he says. 'We are safe now.'

Jamie opens his eyes. 'It's okay, Jamie. We're safe now,' says Aunty Beth.