



## Storytelling Competition 2021

### PRIMARY CATEGORY

#### ***The Guardian Tree* by Elijah Clarke**

The white men rounded my people up, yelling insults in that strange language of theirs. I had run away into the surrounding forest when they began to take some of us prisoner. I watched from the trees as my tribe was taken by the invaders, looking on with disbelief and dismay. I waited and watched until they were gone, and then I went out to the Guardian Tree, and fell in front of it, weeping for my friends and family, wishing I could have done something to stop them being taken.

After my tribe was taken away by the white men, the Guardian Tree became my only friend. I slept by the Tree day and night for a long time, until I had the strength to get up. The tree kept me warm at night and shaded me during the day. I began to lead a solitary life, hiding from the white ghosts, gathering and hunting for food. I rarely lit a fire because of the fear of the invaders seeing the smoke. I heard and saw strange things in the area, and sometimes came upon an abandoned campfire. I had an inkling that those fires had been made by the invaders.

I began to understand the Tree and its ways of life the more time I spent in its presence. I could see its connections with the plants and animals of the land.

It was the centre of all life in the area, the intersection between all nature.

I was an old man when the Tree, after its long and fruitful life, finally withered and died, but in its place, a young seedling appeared, slowly growing to a small sapling. When I eventually knew what that small sapling meant, I smiled to myself, knowing what was in store for the future of my people.



## ***The Guardian Tree* by Tully H Leonard**

The tree sits at the top of Meadow View hill, stretching her long twisted branches, sprouting in every direction. She watches over everyone and everything, from her place, on that very tall hill, decorated with lush green grass. You can see her enormous roots, running their way across the hilltop.

Her leaves rustle in the wind, telling a story with their mystical sound. The trunk is old and jagged, showing memories of the past with all its scars and scratches.

In Summer, the leaves show green, wallabies and possums, young and old, play about in those twisted branches. They run around in that delightful shade that the tree has provided, leaping over the gigantic roots.

As Autumn follows, the leaves turn bright autumn colours, withering as they slowly sway, falling onto the lush green grass. It is a time when the children come and play in the pile of leaves from the beautiful tree.

When winter arrives, she settles in as a light layer of snow rests on her. The icy winds blow, the cold wombats burrow in the safety of her roots, the frost covers her.

As spring comes into view, the tree starts blossoming beautiful white flowers, filling the air with an irresistible scent. The bees and butterflies delightedly pollinate the plants, giving them another chance for next year.

And the old tree still stands, hoping to exist for a few more centuries. Helping the animals live and forests grow. Letting the children play, giving birds a branch or two, to make a nest for their young.

All year long, that beautiful guardian tree still tells stories about the past. And if you listen closely enough, you'll hear one of your own.



## ***Untitled Lily Sproule***

Out the back of my house stands a big old Guardian tree that's 4 metres wide all round and 4,000 feet high. This guardian tree is my quiet, safe place where if I'm upset, afraid or sad you will find me there. It helps me with my problems and gives solutions which is easier than keeping problems to myself.

Up high in its big long wavy branches is a little platform that I can see the whole of Cambewarra Mountain from. I have 5 little toddler siblings and this is a place where I can get away from my screaming house of dinosaurs for some peace and quiet and to look at the nice view.

But across the creek is a big snake pit where the guardian stands. Mum's constantly telling me, "Brown snakes are so aggressive and dangerous Ella, stop going down to that silly old tree of yours! You will get hurt!" Hearing it over and over I still choose not to listen and I know that this tree will keep me safe because that's what it's done to all my ancestors.

It was the end of the day on Tuesday and I came down to see if my roof in the tree had stayed up all day. When I noticed the snakes had slithered in front of the tree and I couldn't get up to the platform. I started to throw sticks and they started to chase me. I ran as fast as I could but the guardian tree had dropped one of the biggest branches onto the snakes and crushed them flat. The guardian tree had taught me to never be too brave when it comes to brown snakes. So now, here I sit in the tree, smiling happily while watching the birds fly in the breeze reminding myself, I will always be protected by my guardian tree.



## ***Untitled* by Evie Starkey**

One day there was a small village called Leafville, named after the sacred tree in the middle of the village called the Guardian Tree. Its magical leaves protect the village from the evil dragons. Anyone who leaves Leafville will instantly be eaten by the evil dragons.

In Leafville there was a boy named Minjarra. His job was to make sure the Guardian tree was safe and healthy. But one day Minjarra walked to the Guardian Tree to make sure it was healthy, and he realized something was wrong. Its leaves were dying, which means the evil dragons will be able to enter Leafville. "I have to do something!" Minjarra said.

It was forbidden to leave Leafville, but Minjarra had no choice. He walked towards the edge of town. Only Minjarra knew what to use to bring the tree back to life. The rare crystal water. Luckily, he knew where to look. It normally forms next to trees, in empty holes with gemstones in it.

He stood at the border of Leafville and looked around. He could see the red eyes of the dragons glaring at him, waiting for him to emerge. Then he saw some crystal water. Minjarra took a deep breath. Then he sprinted out of Leafville. He was getting closer to the crystal water. Then he bent down to scoop up some crystal water in his bucket. Then an evil dragon emerged from the bushes. It was huge. It's giant wings, its long tail, it's large talons, and its sharp teeth that could instantly rip Minjarra to shreds. It was about to eat him with its huge jaw opening wide. But then it froze. It started to back away. Minjarra realised that it was scared of the Guardian Tree's berries that were in his pocket. Minjarra kept on scooping up the water in a bucket and sprinted back home.

Minjarra quickly poured the crystal water on the Guardian Tree. He had done it. He had saved the whole village from the evil dragons. "I-I did it!" he said. And from then on, Minjarra was known as a hero.



## ***The Guardian Tree* by Matilda Wilde**

My blonde long wavy hair blew across my face, my feet moving in my shoes. The green lush small leaves blow across to another place another time another world. I stood taking in the breeze and the beautiful Earth I had once known. She focused on her hand touching the old oak tree - once alive. The wonderful tree created by nature lit up magically in the sad lonely girl's heart. It started at the roots... slowly spiraling up into the branches - and into the girls heart. This tree wasn't an ordinary tree, it was family, friends, and the world, I wished I was back in. But still my heart still glowed as bright as the stars. I always had memories and this is what will guide me, guide my life, and guide the people I love. I stood up feeling the lost piece in my heart - The Guardian Tree. I walked slowly to the rainbow bridge, a bridge that only people in heaven could see. I remembered what the Guardian Tree told me... that I will always have memories. I walked across this wonder of a bridge, slowly rose petals lifted me into another world. Heaven. I will always have the Guardian Tree my heart sang. I awoke with spirits surrounding me. There were tea parties, laughter and memories to be made. It looked like the Guardian Tree had helped these spirit people on a journey of hope. I was once lost too but not anymore. I lay down on the green lush grass and tears started to fall, now that my hearts healed all my emotional walls are crashing down but what made me persevere is that everyone I love will not want me to be sad. This is not the end, not now and not ever.



## ***The Sacred Tree* by Tully Williams**

“Catch me if you can!” Waru yelled as Jedda scrambled up the tree, hot on his heels. Even though they both knew it was strictly forbidden to play on the sacred Guardian Tree, they still disobeyed. Laughing, they chased one another through the thick, leafy branches.

“Let’s go down to the river, Jed,” Waru suggested.

“Ok, race you there!” Jedda yelled, as she leaped down like a jaguar.

As Waru jumped off, the branch cracked loudly before plummeting to the ground. The kids froze as they stared at the branch, horrified. They knew the consequences would be severe if they were found out.

“Let’s keep it between us,” Waru whispered, his voice shaky.

Jedda nodded, still shocked.

Weeks passed, then Jedda began to notice changes. Plants were dying, the river began drying up and the animals and people started getting ill. Jedda’s guilt burnt deep inside like a raging bonfire. She decided they must go to the Elders to confess.

“You know it’s FORBIDDEN!” Kiluri declared, her rage unmistakable.

A frown formed on her wrinkly face as she stared at the children.

“We know . . .” Waru and Jedda muttered in unison.

Kiluri sighed deeply, “Our people are in grave danger, you must restore balance.” He sternly told the children they would need to give the spirits an offering.



Jedda and Waru raced straight out to the Guardian Tree and placed small smooth stones in a circle around it and scattered dead leaves, as they recited the verse Kiluri had given them. The following day, Waru screamed in delight when they found the tree healthy once again, the river filled with water, and kangaroos happily hopping about.

They had both learnt a very valuable lesson, heed the rules of your tribe and always own up to your mistakes, no matter the consequences.