### *To Climb a Mountain: CAROL ROJO*

I always loved walking and walked most nights after work. I also bush walked regularly, and it was my dream to trek in the Himalayas. One Sunday morning I decided to go for a long walk.

When I returned, a little fatigued, my husband and my brother were ready to go out. We had organised to visit my father, who was ill in hospital. My brother called his little Jack Russell to him; she was just a pup and typically very disobedient. She wouldn't go to him. I was standing behind the car and decided to kneel down and call her. At the same time, my husband started the car. I thought he knew I was there.

It all happened very quickly, with the car reversing over me. I heard my neck crack and felt the excruciating pain in my arms immediately. I screamed in pain. Panicking, my husband moved the car and phoned for an ambulance. I just wanted the pain to go. The ambulance officers put a neck brace on me and gave me some pethidine, which helped a little. I was taken to the nearest hospital where they did X-rays.

I lay there waiting, not able to move my neck and in a lot of pain. I thought about my arms and legs -everything flashed before me. Eventually they came and told me that I was to be flown by helicopter to the Austin Hospital. This was a fine way of getting a helicopter ride.

My husband had the long five-hour drive to the Austin and I remember feeling worried - it would be the longest drive of his life. After many tests I was wheeled into the theatre at 12.30 a.m. on Monday morning. I woke in intensive care with John standing next to me crying. I couldn't move or talk; I was on morphine and wasn't ling much pain. I wanted him to know that everything was going be all right, so with my swollen hands I managed to write “1 love you” on a piece of scrap paper. It was barely tangible, but to this day he still has that note.

After intensive care you progress down to ward and then to a rehabilitation centre. On my first day at rehab I was determined to go for a walk with my husband and daughter. I was very wobbly. I walked. At first, just a few steps exhausted me, but I continued this routine every day and twelve months down the track with physio and rehabilitation I have made incredible progress.

I am back at work part-time and every day I make sure I walk. My husband and I have had along and rich journey where the experience has strengthened and changed our lives forever. I still dream of my Himalaya trek and will achieve this when I am stronger.

*Carol Rojo lives in the Tarra Valley just near the Tarra-BuIga National Park. She moved to the country twenty years ago to bring up her three children in a clean, safe environment. Now that her children are grown up, she has returned to work part-time and is looking forward to living her life to the full.*

### *Say (Yes):* EDDIE MCGUIRE

When you are a kid growing up, most of the time people tell you what you can't do. Don't touch that. Don't say that. Don't do that. Not many people ever tell you what you can do. It takes courage to say 'yes'. It takes very little thought to say 'no'.

When you say the word 'yes' you are taking on the responsibility of making something happen. 'Can you open the door?' 'No.' Then you sit down and continue what you are doing. 'Can you open the door?' 'YES.' Then you have to go to the trouble of getting up and dealing with whoever is there. But who knows what might be waiting.

I had a saying when I was a young reporter that you never get a story sitting at home. You have to get involved, make thing! happen. I have always thrown myself into projects with passion bu1 also with optimism. Problems are challenges. Successes are spring' boards to bigger things.

I was lucky when I was a boy. I grew up in Broadmeadows and my parents constantly gave me positive reinforcement and took an interest in all areas of my development from sport to music to education -everything that I did. As a family we were all intimately interested in what each other was doing and we actively supported, barracked for and protected each other. Despite all this, like every- one else, peer group pressure takes its toll.

When people outside your family circle are telling you that you can't achieve, that you shouldn't do extra training, that you were mad for doing your homework, that you had to know someone to get anywhere in life, it wears on you. When you start to achieve but receive criticism instead of praise you question yourself as to what it's all about. Luckily for me I attended a pie night at the St Dominic's Under- 11 football club when I was nine years of age. The guest speaker was a man I didn't know much about until it was explained to me that Alan Killigrew was a former North Melbourne and St. Kilda football coach, that he had been wounded in the war, that despite being small m stature he was a rugged rover when he played, and that he was best known for his rousing addresses. Naturally, to a boy aged nine, any man who had played football was a god. That he'd also coached took him, in my eyes, to an even higher plane.

When this bent old man stood up to speak I didn't see a bloke past his prime with a curved spine, nor that his head was cocked at a strange angle I saw two eyes that burned with enthusiasm and life. I saw a man who had seen plenty in his time but still had a love of life. His body may have been world weary but his soul was young.

He launched into a rousing speech, and his salient point is as profound to me today as it was back in 1974. Killigrew said, 'Whatever you do in life, try and be the best at it. It doesn't matter that you don't ultimately achieve your goal but that your goal is to be the best and that you do everything in your power to achieve it. It doesn't matter whether it is studying, playing sport, being with your family or sailing paper boats down the gutter after a downpour, always try to be the best you can be.'

At a time when I felt that so many people from mates, peers, teachers and the media were telling me, 'No, you can't do that,' here was a man who was telling me it was my duty to try hard. It was my duty to try to win, and there was no shame in defeat if beaten while giving of your all.

Later I came across a speech by the us president Teddy Roosevelt. It was known as the 'man in the arena' speech. It was not too different from what Killigrew was trying to say.

'It's not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.'

Theodore Roosevelt Citizenship in a Republic

Speech delivered at the Sorbonne, Paris, 23 Apri11910.

To me that says it all.

*Born in Melbourne in 1964 and educated at Christian Brothers College, Eddie McGuire began his media career in 1978 as a football statistician with the Herald newspaper. He has been a cricket writer for Australian Associated Press, a sports journalist, a presenter for Channel 10, and a media writer for the Sunday Observer and the Sunday Herald Sun.*

*Eddie has also written two bestsellers: Pants- the Darren Millane Story and Footy Show Screamers, and presents 'The Footy Show' and 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire' for the Nine Network. A devoted Collingwood fan since childhood, Eddie became the president of the club in September 1998.*

*Away from his professional commitments, Eddie spends time with his wife, Carla, and enjoys running, playing tennis and watching all spectator sports. In December 2000, Eddie and Carla welcomed their first child, Joseph.*

### The Art of Success: LES TWENTYMAN

Have you ever wondered what it is that makes someone a success? Is it by kicking the deciding goal in a tense AFL Grand Final? Is it by becoming a captain of industry and then engineering a company take- over that leaves 500 long-term employees out of a job, all in the name of global best practice? Is it by winning an Olympic gold medal, with John and Janette Howard sitting in the crowd cheering you on?

Let me tell you what I think makes you a success. I think you are a success when you are written off as worthless, and you come back and prove your denigrators wrong. You are a success when you are officially declared a nuisance and an outcast, and you bounce back and achieve more than most of your knockers ever dreamt about. In short, you are a success when you make something from nothing, when you turn a negative into a positive.

Danny was seventeen years old when I first met him. I was working for Sunshine Council then and, with a colleague Jim Markovski, came across this young bloke who was under police notice for 'wilful damage' to public property. Back then Danny was what some people would describe as a 'graffiti artist' and others would call a 'vandal'. He loved painting things, and, in the absence of canvas and art paper, he did his paintings anywhere he could, on trains, on walls, on the sides of bridges and buildings. For that was Danny's studio, he had no other. His paintings started appearing all over the western suburbs. If you have travelled through Footscray or Sunshine over the past ten years you would have seen them. By one of those weird coincidences that make life bearable, one of his pieces accidentally formed the background to a Toyota television commercial I was filmed in some years ago.

I'm not sure what it is about graffiti, but it manages to upset a lot of people. Despite the fact that a large percentage of the urban skyline is now covered with advertising hoardings of far less artistic merit than much of the graffiti you come across, many otherwise sensible people just lose their composure at the thought of it. Just the other day the entire Year 12 component of a Melbourne suburban secondary college was suspended, en masse, because a message, innocuous and totally inoffensive, was painted on the school roof. The sort of unjust collective punishment, generally the last resort of cowards, which they'd never dare try on adults.

Danny is one of the more gifted artists I have ever met. That, of course, cut no ice with the law and order system, and he ended up in all kinds of strife. Buildings and walls and trains are sacred, you see, at least until either the developers come along and knock them down or the government privatises them. They even locked him up for awhile, because they didn't know what to do with him. Around the time Jim and I met him, he was facing court again. We had Rob Stary, one of Melbourne's better criminal barristers, defending him, and we decided to let Danny's artwork speak for itself. There are some magistrates around, of course, who would have locked Danny away, on the grounds that it wasn't his first time. Lots of magistrates aren't very imaginative. But we were lucky. Julian Fitzgerald was sitting on the bench that day and we handed him a portfolio of Danny's artistic work. He spent several minutes looking through it, and then announced that he was deeply impressed. Jim and I both spoke on his behalf, and proposed that, with funding from the Twentieth Man Fund, Danny be enrolled in a fine arts course.

Danny has hardly looked back in the ten years since. His story attracted the notice of the television world, and 'Today Tonight' in Melbourne has featured two stories on him. He now has his own company, with people working for him, and is in constant demand because of the recognised quality of his work. He has done several display paintings at High Point West shopping centre, and is regularly invited to speak to students, including those hoping to pursue a similar career. He remains grateful to Jim and me for the direction we sent him in, and has been kind enough to state publicly, on more than one occasion, 'But for these two blokes, my life would have ended up very differently.'

Danny is getting married soon to his best mate, Ivanka. Ivanka completes his success story. They are not asking many people to the wedding. After all, the reception is at the Sheraton, at over $100 a head. But they asked Jim and me to come along. I have had some great moments recently. I had a book published. I took part in the Olympic Torch Relay. But nothing will give me more pleasure and satisfaction than to be apart of Danny and Ivanka's wedding day. For that will be the day that Danny, the nuisance, the outcast, the vandal, completes his comeback. That will be the day that Danny will know the real meaning of success.

*Les Twentyman OAM, a full-time street worker with Open Family (which he joined in 1977), has had a long and notable history of assisting disadvantaged young people. As a secondary-school teacher for ten years, Les identified many problems with disadvantaged young people. In 1989 he developed the Back to School program, which provides textbooks to homeless children to keep them in school. In 1986 he established the Care for Kids program, which has been adopted by 200 primary schools throughout Victoria. High-profile footballers visit primary schools and act as teachers' aides to encourage children in the classroom. Many of these children live in dysfunctional family circumstances in which education is given low priority. However, the footballers reinforce the importance of education and are viewed as positive role models. Les has been honoured many times for his efforts and has established a number of innovative programs for excluded youth, most notably the Smorgon Twentieth Man Fund Youth Refuge in Sunshine, Victoria. The Youth Refuge now accommodates 200 young people a year. In February 2000, Les was nominated by AMP to carry the Olympic Torch in Melbourne.*

### Back on Track: JAMES HORSMAN

Life was sweet until I was fourteen years old. Mum and Dad were always there with my brother and me. They came to every baseball and rugby game I played and no matter what trouble I got into at school they were always there for me.

Then, one day, Mum asked me if my stereo worked. I asked her, “Why?” Her reply was, “Your Dad's moving out, so we need your stereo for the lounge room.”

After that life went bad. I started using hard-core drugs because it kept my mind off what was going on at home. Dad wasn't there any more and I couldn't handle it. I was too afraid to stay straight because it hurt too much that the family wasn't the same and never would be the same.

I stayed bent on tripping for two years. During that time I saw a lot of things that I hope no one else ever has to see. For example, I saw two mates on a train track dead; I saw one of them actually get hit by the train and I couldn't do anything to help. I have also seen four people die from overdoses with the needle still in their arm.

I was always 'ripped' at work because I hated it but managed to be straight for baseball training in the evenings.

It makes you wonder why you would want to do this when there is such a risk of dying from taking drugs. But when I tried to stop using drugs I couldn't. Dad didn't come back, and it is so hard to give up when you do it every day, like I did. And it was so easy to get my hands on drugs. No matter what I wanted, I knew someone who could get them for me.

During this time I was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), and a shrink told me that the drugs made me violent. When I drank I was a happy drunk, until someone upset me and then I had a very short fuse. One time I was on speed and drinking at the same time when a guy said the wrong thing, so I beat him up with a trolley pole until the cops came and dragged me off him. I was charged with assault and received a five-year good behaviour bond. Even this didn't make me snap out of it.

When I was about sixteen and a half, I started to listen to a family friend called Duncan Rogers. He invited me for a holiday to his small country town and I went. It was fun, so I asked if I could stay on and work on a farm as it was something I had always wanted to do. I worked for three months on a local farm. For the first few weeks I was trashed every day, as my brother would send up a quart a week and I would smoke about one gram a day.

One day I was talking to Duncan about school. I still don't quite know how it happened, but the next day he rang up a place called BRACE, a literacy testing place, and booked me in for a test. My score was really bad so we decided to look at going back to school. I needed help. Duncan arranged a meeting at the local high school with the principal. At my old high school I never actually went to any classes as I was always wagging with my mates.

Now I'm studying Maths, English and Metal and Agricultural Studies at a TAFE college in the next town. I also have a daily literacy tutor session at the high school and now I can read and write better. In the beginning Duncan was always there for me, to help with my homework or any problem that I was having. He supported me just like my Dad had done.

My future looks positive and I hope to have a fulfilling life. I owe it to my Mum and Dad for supporting me, but I mainly owe it to Duncan, who sadly died two months ago of a heart attack. He was, and still is, my inspiration. If it weren't for Duncan, I would probably still be on drugs. I have been straight for one and a half years now. This is my life story so far.

*James went back to school and passed Year 11. He has now moved back to Melbourne and still hasn't gone back to drugs, nor does he want to. He lost a few mates because he didn't want to do drugs anymore, but at the same time he has made more mates because he doesn't do drugs. The only thing he does now is smoke cigarettes and drink a fair bit of beer when he goes pubbing. He got his life on track when he went to stay with Donald. His life is still on track 'and that's the way it will stay'.*