



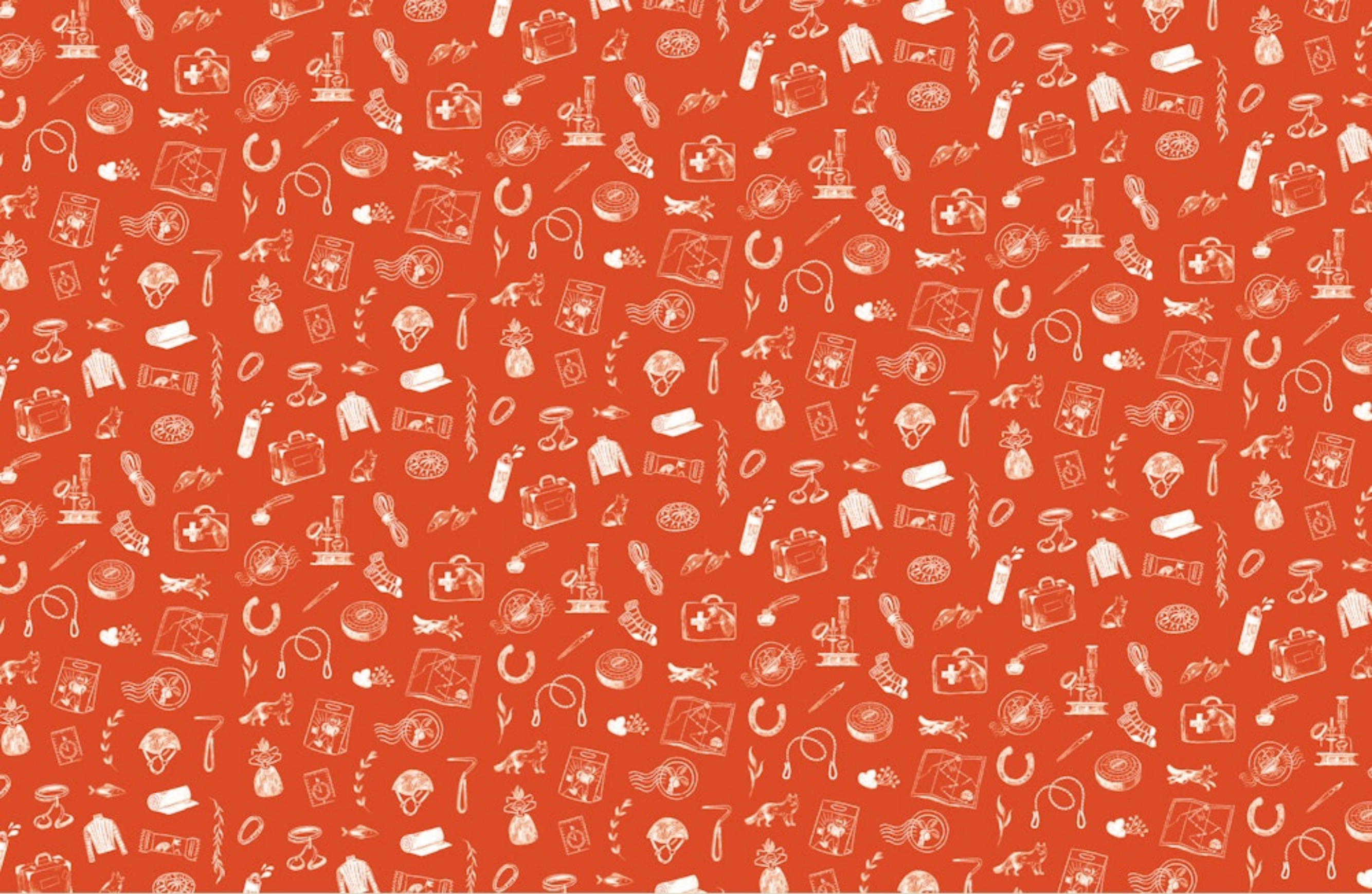
Alastair Humphreys

AGAINST THE ODDS

The incredible struggles of
20 GREAT ADVENTURERS

FROM THE AUTHOR OF
**GREAT
ADVENTURERS**
WINNER OF THE
Edward Stanford
Travel Writing
Award 2019
CHILDREN'S TRAVEL BOOK OF THE YEAR

Illustrated by
Pola Mai



For Freddie and Harvey - *A.H.*



For my beloved Matik, the best
companion on life's adventure - *P.M.*



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AGAINST THE ODDS



Alastair Humphreys
Illustrated by Pola Mai



MEET THE ADVENTURERS



ALASTAIR HUMPHREYS: P.8
A National Geographic Adventurer of the Year, and also the author of this book!



MATTHEW HENSON: P.46
An explorer who undertook many Arctic expeditions.



THE VAN BURENS: P.50
Sisters who rode motorbikes across America to show what could be done.



ZHENG HE: P.54
A mariner and explorer who commanded the great treasure voyages.



JEANNE BARET: P.10
Travelled around the world in disguise.



GÖRAN KROPP: P.14
Cycled from his home to Everest, then climbed the mountain.



ROBERT SMALLS: P.18
Commanded a warship in a heroic bid for freedom.



BERNARD MOITESSIER: P.58
Around-the-world sailor who realised that winning is not everything.



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A curious, food-loving, book-writing world traveller.



FRANK WILD: P.66
A polar explorer and an inspiring leader.



JACK SWIGERT: P.22
An astronaut who narrowly escaped disaster.



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Travelled by horse from South America to New York City.



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A young runner who inspired a nation.



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An ocean-loving scientist and campaigner.



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A bold climber who faced a desperate survival struggle.



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Embarked on a five year running adventure around the world.



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The first woman to climb the Seven Summits.



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Two friends living under an oppressive regime who travelled the world.



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An adventurous cyclist and Paralympian gold medalist.



ADVENTURER UNKNOWN: P.92
This young explorer-in-the-making with a world of opportunities before them.

A LIFE OF ADVENTURE

Everybody loves going on adventures. They are fun and more exciting than normal days. We get to see wild, beautiful places and enjoy being in nature. Adventures teach us about the world and ourselves.

Many of us also enjoy reading about other people's epic journeys that astound, entertain and make us dream. From their stories, we learn the importance of proper preparation, and how to succeed.

Except when you don't...



Because sometimes adventures, like life, don't work out as you want them to do. Stuff goes wrong or takes a funny turn. Now and again, you simply fail. These things can happen for many reasons. Even well-organised, determined explorers make mistakes. Bad luck conspires against you. Or terrible weather, unforeseen events or accidents. Sometimes adventures go wrong through no fault of your own.

"So not all adventures succeed. Or at least they don't always go to plan. Because the common factor in all the stories you're about to read is that when you battle against the odds, success comes in many forms."



In this book, you will read of expeditions that went desperately wrong and turned into near-death struggles for survival. And from those same people, you will learn about friendship, kindness and hope.

Many other adventurers had to fight for their right to succeed in the face of discrimination or setbacks that threatened to squash their dreams. The courage, determination and positivity shown in overcoming prejudice in these stories will inspire you.



There are many adventures, too, that haven't made it into this book. Some stories are lost to time, deliberately omitted from history, or forgotten. Remember all those voices not heard and be sure to seek out your own inspiration.



We often hold a very narrow idea of what 'success' means. We think that if we don't reach a certain outcome, then we've failed and wasted our time. But in these chapters, you are going to read of changed plans leading to greater happiness, of personal disaster opening the door to wonderful experiences, of the lessons learned from compromising, and even occasions when mere survival is triumph enough.

I have loved adventure for most of my life. As a child, I enjoyed camping and swimming and climbing hills. As a grown-up, I've cycled around the world, rowed across an ocean, walked across countries, and run marathons through boiling deserts. The most rewarding parts of these journeys were often when things didn't turn out

as I had expected, and I was forced to use my imagination and initiative to overcome surprising challenges. This is annoying or difficult or worrying at the time. But when I look back later, from the warm comfort of my home, those memories are some of the best ones.

On your own journeys, you too will discover that you are capable of more than you realise, and that an important part of living adventurously is to keep going against the odds. I hope you find the characters in this book to be as inspiring and awesome as I do. I hope you see some of yourself in their stories, and that their challenges and achievements will encourage you to go on many brilliant adventures of your own.



Good luck!

Alastair Humphreys



JEANNE BARET

Jeanne Barét undertook a journey full of adventure and discovered many plants that were new to science. But her route into exploration was not easy. In the 18th century, women were forbidden to travel on French naval ships, so Jeanne had many difficulties to overcome — even before setting sail for the first time.



Jeanne Barét was born in rural France in 1740. Her father, who died when Jeanne was 15, was an illiterate labourer and her mother died when she was just a baby. Growing up in the countryside, Jeanne became skilful at identifying plants and local remedies. As a young adult, she began working as a housekeeper for a botanist called Philibert Commerçon.

A MAN IN DISGUISE

In 1766, two ships, *La Boudeuse* and *L'Étoile*, set sail under the command of explorer Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, attempting to be the first French expedition to sail around the world. Commerçon was invited to join the expedition as a specialist scientist. He was unsure about accepting because he was in poor health and needed Jeanne to help him. But the offer was too good to turn down.

In those days, only men were allowed on naval expeditions, so Commerçon and Jeanne hatched a plot in which she would dress as a man — introducing herself as 'Jean' — and offer her services just before the ship set sail. This was a crazy idea. If Jeanne's secret was discovered she would be in serious trouble, or even danger. But their plan worked and they set sail. Commerçon had so much scientific equipment on board that he and 'Jean' were given a large private cabin. This helped Jeanne keep her secret from all the other men on the ship.



INTO THE WILDERNESS

Jeanne and Commerçon's task was to find natural resources like plants, minerals and spices that would be useful for France. When the expedition reached its first stop, Uruguay in South America, the pair headed inland to collect plants. During the long voyage, Commerçon's health got much worse, so Jeanne had to do much of the heavy work in search of discoveries. Near Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil, they discovered a wonderful pink-flowering vine. They named it *Bougainvillea* in honour of the expedition commander.

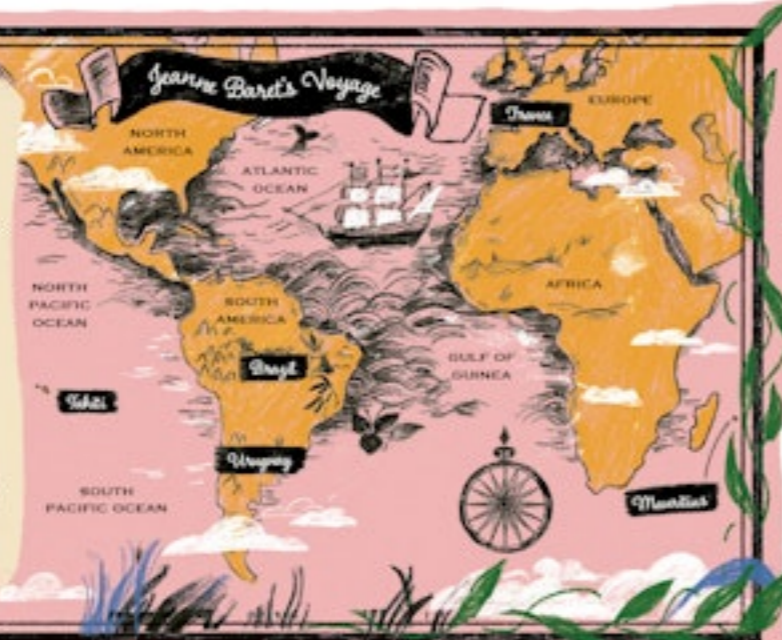


- 1 flower press
- 2 forceps
- 3 microscope
- 4 specimen containers
- 5 pressed samples
- 6 rock hammer
- 7 pruning scissors
- 8 art supplies

A HUGE SCANDAL

By now, the expedition had been sailing for over a year. As they crossed the vast, uncharted Pacific Ocean, they grew desperately short of food.

At some point – probably while docked at the island of Tahiti, although nobody knows for sure – Jeanne's secret was discovered. Both Jeanne and Commerçon decided to leave the expedition in Mauritius. The two ships, *La Boudeuse* and *L'Étoile*, sailed away and left the two scientists thousands of miles from home...



JEANNE BARET'S LEGACY

Jeanne married a French soldier in Mauritius, and they made their way back home to live in France. And so, about nine years after setting out in search of adventure, Jeanne became the first woman to travel around the world. Her contribution to the world of science was of great importance. The 6,000 specimens that she and Commerçon collected had been seized by the French authorities in Mauritius, but they were eventually shipped back to France. They are now housed in the National Museum of Natural History in Paris. In 1785, the French government recognised Jeanne's important contribution.

A FITTING TRIBUTE

Jeanne died in 1807 at the age of 67. There were few fitting tributes to her adventures until 2012, when scientist Eric Tepe named a new plant species in her honour, more than 200 years after her death: *Solanum baretiae*.



"An unwitting explorer who risked life and limb for love of botany and, in doing so, became the first woman to circumnavigate the world." – Eric Tepe

Jeanne Baret, by means of a disguise, circumnavigated the globe on one of the vessels commanded by Mr de Bougainville. She devoted herself in particular to assisting Mr de Commerçon, doctor and botanist, and shared with great courage the labours and dangers of this savant.



Why Jeanne Baret Inspired Me

Jeanne Baret's route to an adventurous life was hard. She grew up at a time when being a woman and being poor meant staying home and working hard for little reward. She had to create her own opportunities. But with bravery, imagination, curiosity and determination, Jeanne became the first woman to sail around the world, and returned home a wealthy woman to create a new life for herself and her family.

Go! We do not allow women on any of our French Navy ships!

Jeanne and Commerçon's dreams of adventure were dashed...

But there was still so much to discover!



So the pair remained in Mauritius and continued to learn about different plants on the island.

Jeanne used her savings and started a successful bar in the port, becoming a wealthy woman.



Sadly, Commerçon's health worsened, and he died in 1773.

APPROACHING THE SUMMIT

After climbing the difficult and enormous icy slopes of Mount Everest, Göran left his tiny tent at 2am on what he hoped would be summit day.



He headed out into the windy darkness to continue climbing. By daybreak he was creeping along a narrow ridge with a massive 3,000 metre drop on either side.

The snow was waist-deep, the temperatures freezing, and it was difficult to breathe at such a high altitude.



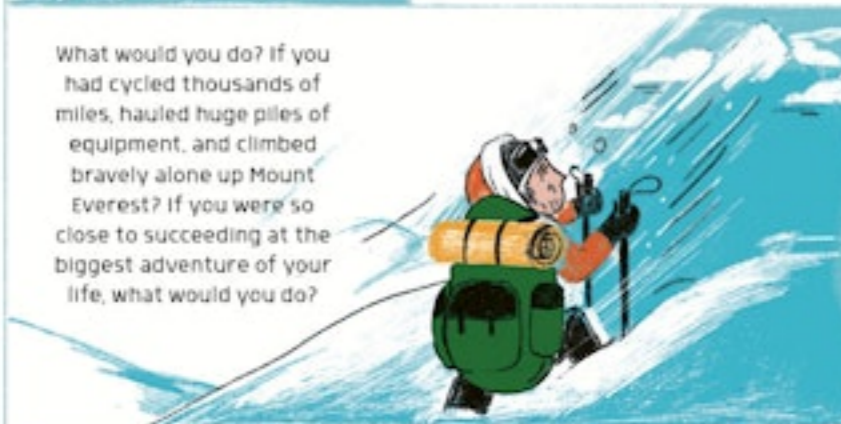
Unlike most climbers, Göran wasn't using bottled oxygen to help him breathe, and he didn't use fixed ropes or have local guides, called Sherpas, to help him.



So, when turnaround time arrived – the time set to climb back down to safety – Göran had not yet reached the top. BUT he was only a hundred metres from the summit...



What would you do? If you had cycled thousands of miles, hauled huge piles of equipment, and climbed bravely alone up Mount Everest? If you were so close to succeeding at the biggest adventure of your life, what would you do?



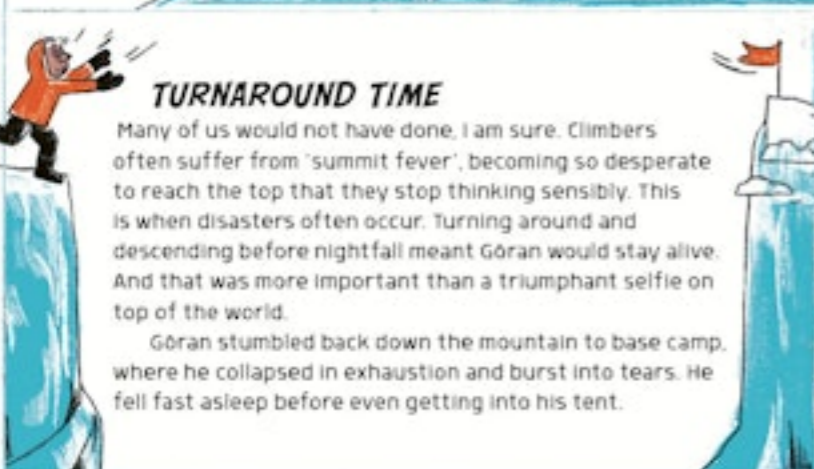
Göran turned around.



TURNAROUND TIME

Many of us would not have done, I am sure. Climbers often suffer from 'summit fever', becoming so desperate to reach the top that they stop thinking sensibly. This is when disasters often occur. Turning around and descending before nightfall meant Göran would stay alive. And that was more important than a triumphant selfie on top of the world.

Göran stumbled back down the mountain to base camp, where he collapsed in exhaustion and burst into tears. He fell fast asleep before even getting into his tent.



SUCCESS AT LAST

Over the next few days, a terrifying storm whipped across the mountain, the deadliest Everest had ever known. It seemed like madness that an exhausted Göran would even consider having another try. But he was a very determined adventurer and did not want to give up easily.

So, after the storm, the brave Swede headed back up the icy slopes, sunburned and with a nasty cough. Setting off at 1am, and without an oxygen mask, Göran realised he might not be thinking clearly. He tested himself over and over again, 'What's three times three? What's six plus seven? Yes! I can still think...' And so he could! This time Göran was successful. He finally made it to the very highest point on the planet.

After safely descending Everest, the exhausted Göran still needed to get home. Incredibly, he cycled most of the way back to Sweden, taking only one short train ride since he wasn't allowed to pedal through Iran and part of Russia. A year to the day since leaving home, Göran kissed the ground beside Stockholm harbour.



Why Göran Kropp Inspired Me

Göran Kropp was one of my early adventure heroes. I loved that he was tough, determined, and drawn to simple but not easy adventures. After such a momentous journey, he failed to reach the mountain top he had dreamed of and worked towards for so long. But Göran knew that setbacks and failures were a part of adventures and of life. He did not give up, but bravely returned to the mountain, tried again, and succeeded.

ROBERT SMALLS

Robert Smalls was born into slavery in 19th-century America, deep in the South. He was desperate for his family to escape to a better life. But the outbreak of the American Civil War seemed certain to end his hopes of freedom and safety.



As a child, Robert Smalls worked as an enslaved cotton picker on a plantation.

When he was 12, he was sent to Charleston as a labourer, working in a hotel and then as a lamplighter.

As a teen, he worked on the docks. He got to know the ships well and became a helmsman, in charge of steering the boat.

At 17, Robert got married and was desperate to buy his family's freedom. But for every \$15 he earned as an enslaved man, he was only allowed to keep a single dollar. This made it impossible to save the \$800 he needed. Robert was trapped, as his people had been for centuries, and he knew that if he wanted to be free, he would need to come up with a spectacular plan.



DREAMS OF FREEDOM

The American Civil War began in 1861, between the Southern States (the Confederacy), who wanted to keep slavery, and the Northern States (the Union), who did not.

In 1861, Robert was forced into service on a transport ship for the Confederate Army called the CSS Planter, delivering ammunition and supplies up and down the coast. The ship was led by Captain Relyea, with two other white officers and a crew of enslaved Black men.

The Captain always wore a wide-brimmed straw hat to protect his head from the bright southern sun. This gave Robert the first glimmering of an idea...



A CLEVER DISGUISE

One night, Captain Reilyea and the white crew members went ashore for a party.



This is our opportunity to escape!



It is a risk but you and I, and our little ones, must be free.

At 2am, Robert gathered his wife, Hannah, their children, and all the others on the boat. This was their chance!



Robert put on the Captain's jacket and hat, and set sail. He knew the routes perfectly, as well as the checkpoints, code words and signals along the river.



He stood on the deck exactly as Captain Reilyea always did - hat on, arms folded and looking confident. They sailed slowly and calmly through the checkpoints.



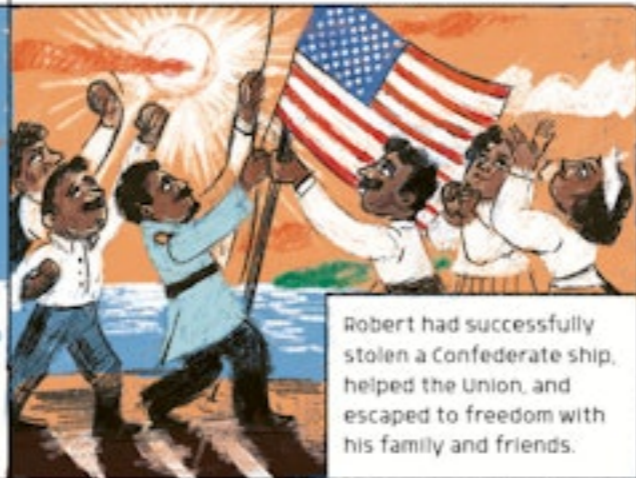
Finally, when they had sailed into Union waters, they hauled down the Confederate flag and raised a white bed sheet to signal peace.



Robert sailed towards the Union ships out at sea, desperately hoping that they would not attack his boat. Luckily, they noticed their flag!



When they realised they were safe, everyone on the boat began to dance and sing.



Robert had successfully stolen a Confederate ship, helped the Union, and escaped to freedom with his family and friends.



A NEW LIFE

The states of the Union celebrated Robert's bold escape. They gave him \$1500 and an invitation to meet President Lincoln. Robert became a civil rights activist, lobbying to allow Black men to fight for the Union Army. He joined the US Navy himself and rose to the rank of captain.

Robert later became a politician and, when he returned to his hometown, bought the house where he had been a slave, setting it up as one of the first schools for Black children in the region. He also campaigned for laws to improve the lives of Black people in the United States.



Why Robert Smalls Inspired Me

Robert's seamanship, boldness and bravery won freedom for himself and his family. Despite being born in a land that declared he could be owned by another person, Robert Smalls went on to become a successful businessman and politician, campaigning tirelessly on the long battle towards racial equality in his country.



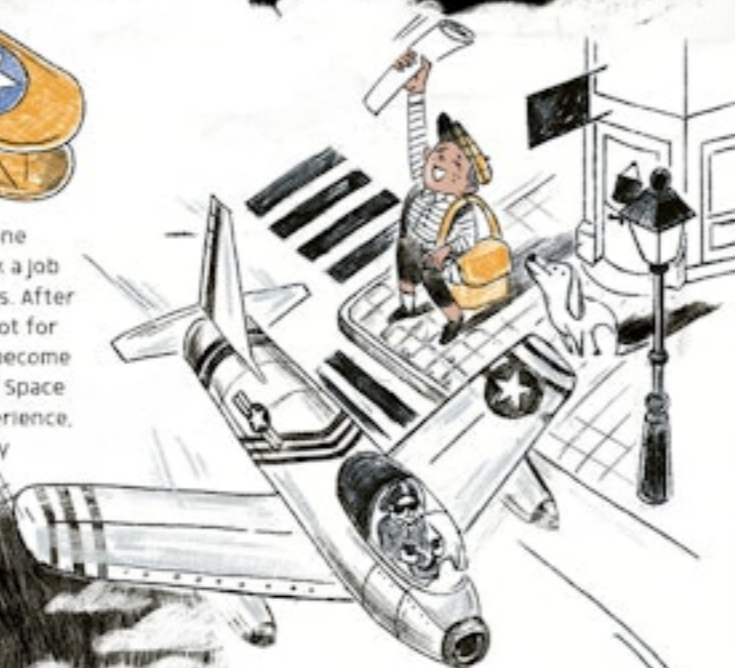
JACK SWIGERT

Jack Swigert was an American astronaut on Apollo 13 – the USA's third mission to land humans on the Moon. But two days into the journey, one of the spacecraft's giant oxygen tanks exploded – hundreds of thousands of kilometres from safety. Suddenly, survival was all that they cared about.

As a boy, Jack Swigert was fascinated by aeroplanes. He loved to watch them and hoped that, one day, he would fly through the sky. He took a job as a newspaper boy to save up for flying lessons. After studying engineering, Jack became a fighter pilot for the United States Air Force. He then applied to become an astronaut with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Yet even with all his experience, they rejected him twice. Undeterred, Jack finally joined the NASA Astronaut Corps in 1966.

ONE GIANT LEAP...

A year after Neil Armstrong first landed on the Moon, NASA launched another mission. It was called Apollo 13. Some people thought the number was unlucky, and for astronaut Thomas Mattingly it was: just three days before launch he came into contact with German measles and had to be removed from the crew. His bad luck was Jack's good fortune though, as he replaced Thomas on the flight to the Moon.



3 2 1 BLAST OFF!

On 11 April 1970, astronauts Jack Swigert, Jim Lovell and Fred Haise launched into space.

The lunar module was called *Aquarius*. It would be used for landing on the Moon and then flying back up to the command module.

The massive rocket that propelled the crew into space fell away after lift-off.

On their journey to and from the Moon, the astronauts lived in a command module called *Odyssey*.

Ok guys, it's 13:13 – time for BLAST OFF!

The astronauts were two days into the 382,500km flight to the Moon. It was 13 April.

Suddenly they heard "a pretty loud bang" and alarms rang.

A faulty oxygen tank had exploded.

A leak like this is seriously bad news!

There was only one mission that mattered now: survival.

We need to return to Earth as quickly as possible!

Okay, Houston, we have a problem here.

MASTER ALARM

LIFE IN AQUARIUS

All dreams of walking on the Moon ended with the explosion. Aborting the mission and getting home before they ran out of oxygen was all that mattered now. But how were they going

to do that? The crew left the damaged module and climbed through the connecting tunnel into Aquarius, the lunar module. This emergency 'lifeboat' was small, cramped and not designed for this job. The men sat in the cold darkness, thinking desperately.



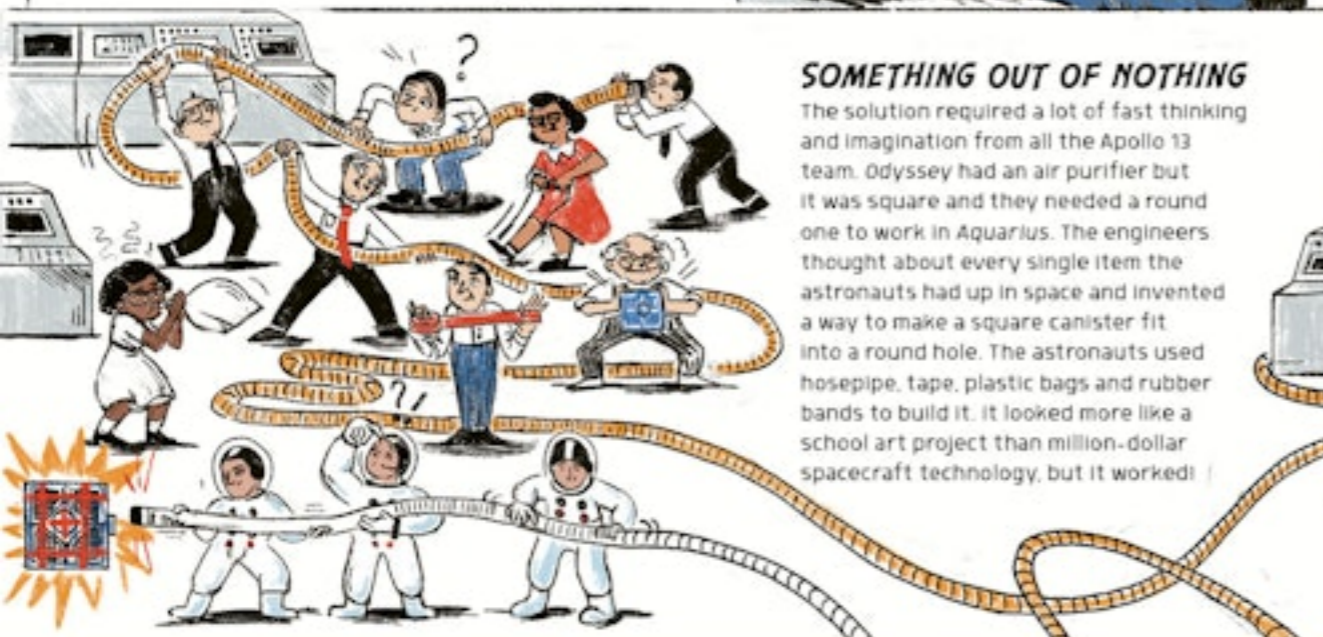
TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

Down on Earth, the scientists and experts in Mission Control leaped into action. Time was precious and they had to come up with a plan – quickly – that might have a chance of saving the astronauts' lives.

The biggest problem was that Aquarius only carried enough oxygen for the Moon landing. It would last two men for two days. But it would take longer than that for the crew to get back to Earth, and there were now three men needing fresh air to breathe.

Let's solve the problem, people. Let's not make things worse by guessing.

Failure is not an option!



SOMETHING OUT OF NOTHING

The solution required a lot of fast thinking and imagination from all the Apollo 13 team. Odyssey had an air purifier but it was square and they needed a round one to work in Aquarius. The engineers thought about every single item the astronauts had up in space and invented a way to make a square canister fit into a round hole. The astronauts used hosepipe, tape, plastic bags and rubber bands to build it. It looked more like a school art project than million-dollar spacecraft technology, but it worked!

GET ME OUTTA HERE

Now that the astronauts had enough air to breathe, the scientists tried to figure out how to blast the spacecraft back towards Earth with its damaged engines. They decided to use the booster rockets on Aquarius to change their course slightly and then slingshot the astronauts round the back of the Moon. The astronauts had to fire their engines for exactly the right length of time when they reached precisely the right location. Any mistakes and the returning spacecraft would miss Earth altogether...

"Our mission was a failure but I like to think it was a successful failure."

— Jim Lovell



HOME SWEET HOME

In the final few hours of the mission, the astronauts climbed back into the command module Odyssey. Its heatproof shield protected the module as it re-entered the Earth's atmosphere. As millions of people watched the drama unfold on TV, the spacecraft splashed down safely in the Pacific Ocean close to the rescue ship that had been sent to collect them.

Fellows, we're home.

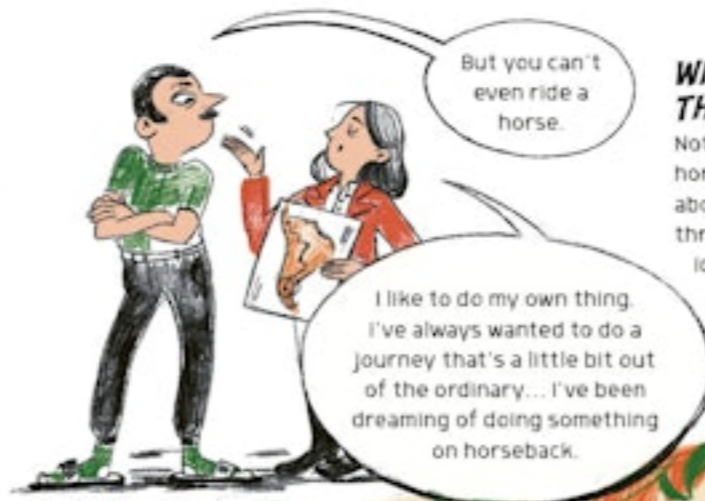
Why Jack Swigert Inspired Me

Before the mission, the only success the astronauts imagined was landing on the Moon. But the explosion on the spacecraft changed everything. Success now meant returning safely to Earth. Indeed, far from being a failure, many who worked at NASA consider the Apollo 13 mission to be one of their proudest achievements.

Inspired by Aimé Schiffrin's famous horseback journey from Argentina to New York in the 1920s, Marianne du Toit challenged herself to retrace the bold adventurer's footsteps. She adored horses but was also secretly terrified of them. This was but one of the many obstacles she would need to overcome on a journey many thousands of miles long.



Marianne du Toit had a thirst for adventure. As a teenager, she read about independent women who had gone on amazing excitement to explore the unknown. After reading a book about his horseback adventure, she decided to face her fears and try to ride her horse through Argentina, through South and Central America, to New York, on the east coast of the USA.



Not only did Marianne have little experience of horses, she didn't speak Spanish or know much about the continent she was planning to ride through alone. When she told her dad about her idea, he told her she was ill-equipped to take on such a mammoth expedition.

Marianne had made up her mind. She secured sponsorship for the trip and decided to use her journey to raise money in support of therapeutic riding facilities in Ireland where she lived.



With her new horses, Mise and Tusa, by her side, Marianne set off from Buenos Aires in June 2002. She quickly learned that travelling by horse was slow and hard work. The conditions were tough: the fierce heat was exhausting, the roads wore down the horses' shoes and flies tormented Mise and Tusa. At the end of each day, when all Marianne wanted to do was fall asleep, she first had to take care of the horses, arranging their food and shelter before her own.



CRIOLLO HORSES

Almé Tschiffely had used Criollo horses on his journey, so Marianne did the same. They have great stamina and will work hard on a long journey. They need little care, adapt to different temperatures, and are tough and resilient. But it's not only their endurance abilities that make Criollos special – they are also intelligent, willing and sensible, making them the perfect package!

- 1 veterinary supplies for the horses
- 1 Irish tin whistle
- 1 hoof pick
- 1 Spanish phrasebook
- 1 horse shoe and hammer
- 1 flask
- 1 torch
- 1 horse soap



A LONELY ROAD

Maybe even more difficult than tending to the horses was the challenge of being completely alone. Marianne didn't know anyone in the countries along her route, and people told her that many places would be dangerous for a woman to travel. Although the language barrier was tricky, she made many friends along the way by entertaining people with her Irish whistle. Many kind local people offered her food and places to stay, and Marianne realised she wasn't as alone on the journey as she had first feared.



BY HOOF, PLANE, BOAT AND FOOT

Marianne and the horses had to cope with tough conditions every day. But on top of that, some roads and even entire countries proved to be impassable. So Marianne had to make other arrangements as she went, such as travelling down the Amazon River in Brazil by cargo boat and having her horses flown from Venezuela to Costa Rica to avoid conflict in Colombia.



THE BIG APPLE

After 21 difficult months and nine countries, Marianne arrived in New York. Even on the last leg of her journey, Marianne was told she couldn't ride her horses over the George Washington Bridge. But never giving up on her goal, she had her horses transported to Central Park, where she rode them proudly to complete her epic expedition.

Why Marianne du Toit Inspired Me

Even though Marianne had little experience before she began, she showed that you can overcome the impossible if you are determined and positive. A bit of humour, taking each day as it comes, and a 'can do' attitude go a long way in achieving your goals.



TERRY FOX

Terry Fox was a keen athlete who loved sports, but at age 18, he found out he had cancer and had to have his right leg amputated. Not one to let anything stop him, Terry hatched a plan to run across Canada - completing a marathon every day - raising money for cancer research along the way.



Growing up in Canada, Terry Fox loved athletics and basketball. It was a terrible shock when he was diagnosed with cancer. The night before his operation, Terry read an article about the first amputee to run a marathon, and an idea began to form. As soon as he had recovered, Terry continued running with a prosthetic leg. He told his parents that he was training to run a marathon, but secretly he was dreaming much bigger...



A MARATHON A DAY WHAT A FEAT!



MARATHON OF HOPE

Terry began his 'Marathon of Hope' on 12 April 1980. He planned to run a marathon a day (42km) across Canada, from St. John's in the east to Victoria, British Columbia, in the west. At first, nobody knew what he was attempting. But as the challenge progressed, donations began to roll in, with local and national media covering his run. Terry became a celebrity, and his determination inspired others to join him, with hundreds of well-wishers running alongside him on the way.

ALL TOGETHER NOW

Terry persevered through many challenges - dangerous roads, gale-force winds, heavy rain and even a snowstorm. His prosthetic leg caused blisters and bruises, and he was often running from 4.30am until 7pm. To save money, he slept in a van on the roadside. But as his story spread across Canada, more and more people reached out to help.

JUNE 22 1980



Terry was a third of the way through his journey when a luxury hotel company offered Terry free food and accommodation at all their hotels. They also pledged \$2/ mile, encouraging thousands of others to do the same.

JUNE 28 1980



The city of Ontario welcomed Terry with a brass band and a cheering crowd.

JULY 1 1980

He was even the guest of honour at a Canadian football match.

Terry met one of his heroes, the famous ice hockey player Bobby Orr, who donated a whopping \$25,000.

JULY 31 1980



"Today was a long humid day. I felt very wobbly and weary. I managed to make it 6 miles past Parry Sound. It was great running through here. We met the Orrs and went to their house and saw Bobby's trophies. They gave me Bobby's Canada Cup jersey which is unbelievable."

"I went to the Ottawa-Saskatchewan football game where I kicked off the opening ball to a standing ovation."



GONE TOO SOON

Unfortunately, on 1 September, at Thunder Bay, Ontario, 143 days and 5,373km from his starting point, Terry was forced to end his run. His cancer had returned, only this time it had spread to his lungs. Understanding there was no way he could continue, Terry asked his friend Doug to drive him to the hospital, where he sadly died a few months later.

"Dreams are made possible if you try."

— Terry Fox

A NATIONAL HERO

Terry's run was not in vain. He became a national hero in Canada, with many buildings and streets named after him and statues remembering his legacy. Even today, four decades after his untimely death, annual Terry Fox runs and events are held across Canada, inspiring people to challenge themselves, get fit and raise money and awareness for cancer research.



Why Terry Fox Inspired Me

Terry dearly wanted to complete his run, even if he had to "crawl every last mile". But sometimes things don't work out as we plan, no matter how determined we are. Although Terry did not complete his Marathon of Hope, he accomplished something far greater. His efforts continue to inspire people all over the world, and the Terry Fox Foundation has raised over \$850 million dollars.



JUNKO TABEL

Junko Tabei was the first woman to climb Mount Everest and the first woman to climb the highest mountain on each continent — the legendary Seven Summits. Growing up in the poverty of post-war Japan, Junko was a frail and small girl. To achieve her dreams, she had to overcome society's belief back then that women should be homemakers and nothing more.



Junko Tabei grew up with her six siblings in the small town of Miharu, among the green mountains and rice fields of northern Japan.



It was just after the Second World War and times were tough. People did not have enough food to eat.

Do not give up. Keep on your quest.



Junko loved nature, and was very determined.

She climbed her first mountain when she was still at primary school and was immediately hooked by the adventure and beauty of it all.

As a young adult, Junko joined a climbing club. Usually, she was the only woman on climbing trips or at club meetings.



The men were not welcoming to female mountaineers, and many would not even climb with her.



So, in 1969, Junko founded a women's mountaineering club whose motto was:

LET'S GO ON AN OVERSEAS EXPEDITION BY OURSELVES.



Soon after, the 'Japanese Women's Everest Expedition' was launched. Junko found a team of enthusiastic female climbers and they got to work making plans.



The women struggled to find sponsors to pay for their adventure because, in those days, many people thought that women should stay at home and take care of the children.



Junko disagreed: she believed in work, family and adventure. Junko taught piano lessons in her spare time to raise extra money for the climb.



She even made some of her own equipment, including sewing trousers from a pair of curtains!



Eventually, the team of 15 women were ready to depart for Everest.



Despite the attitude against female adventurers, Junko's husband was very supportive. He cared for their young daughter as Junko and her team headed for the Himalayas.



BERNARD MOITTESSIER

Bernard Moitessier was a French sailor who loved making long voyages. In 1968, *The Sunday Times* newspaper launched the first single-handed, around the world, non-stop Golden Globe Race. Could this be the perfect opportunity for Bernard to prove he was the best yachtsmen in the world?



Bernard Moitessier was an experienced sailor who loved the sea. When he was 27 years old, he bought a battered old junk (a type of Chinese boat) and sailed from Indonesia to France. On his first solo voyage, he had to plug a leak by diving beneath the boat in the middle of the Indian Ocean. But his adventure ended when

he finally ran aground on some reefs. Luckily, he was picked up by a supply ship and taken to Mauritius, where he spent three years building a new boat. Many adventures later, Bernard met his wife and they began sailing the world's oceans together. But when he heard about the launch of the Golden Globe Race, it was a challenge too great to resist...



THE GOLDEN GLOBE RACE

The Golden Globe Race was a ferocious challenge. Although sailors had single-handedly circumnavigated the globe before, nobody had done it non-stop. The prize was £5,000 for the fastest time. Nine boats entered the race but only one would go on to finish. Soon after the race began, Bernard ran into

difficulties. He crashed into the back of a ship and then, a couple of days later, was almost capsized by a breaking wave. But despite these setbacks, the worst was when nothing happened at all... Periods of calm, known as the doldrums, with very little wind, can be extremely frustrating for sailors, especially if they are in a race!



DOWN IN THE DOLDRUMS

Bernard practised yoga on board the boat to try to keep his spirits up, but during a long, becalmed period in the Indian Ocean, he began to think about leaving the race. He had no interest in the celebrity life of a champion and hated the thought of having to abandon his life at sea. He preferred the company of the dolphins that danced beside his boat and the sea birds who landed on deck for a rest.



But Bernard kept on sailing – that was what he loved to do, after all. He safely passed Cape Horn at the foot of South America – the most feared spot on Earth for sailors. The waves smashed over the portholes of his small boat and the phosphorescence shone. As he marvelled at the glowing lights of the Aurora Australis in the night sky, he completed the hardest leg of the journey.



HAPPY AT SEA

All Bernard needed to do now was to turn north and sail for the finish line. He was on course to win the race, claim the record, and become a star. Finding it difficult to decide, Bernard looked around for a sign. Perhaps the winds would blow him northwards, pushing him on to the finish? Or perhaps they would send him eastwards, urging him to keep sailing and forfeit the race?

I am continuing non-stop towards the Pacific Islands because I am happy at sea, and perhaps also to save my soul.

In the end, he made up his own mind. Bernard sailed close to a passing ship and, using a catapult, fired a message announcing his decision. And with that, he sailed on his way towards, not fame and fortune, but a small tropical paradise and a quiet life doing what he loved most.



"You do not ask a seagull why it needs to disappear from time to time towards the open sea. It goes, that's all, and it is as simple as a ray of sunshine, as normal as the blue of the sky."

— Bernard Moitessier

HOW GOES IT, OLD MAN?

Although Bernard abandoned the race and didn't win the trophy, he actually sailed much further than all the other competitors. He went round the world and then almost two-thirds of the way around it again before making landfall in Tahiti. He had been at sea for 10 months, sailing 37,455 nautical miles – most of which were in 'the roaring forties' (40 degrees south of the Equator) where the winds are ferocious. As he sailed into the calm, beautiful bay at Tahiti, there were no crowds or fanfare. There was just the sunshine, the water and the quietest of friendly welcomes. And that was enough.



Why Bernard Moitessier Inspired Me

Bernard did not finish the race he set out to complete. He did not become a celebrity or break a world record. He did not win £5,000. Instead, he decided not to race for the finish line because he was happy simply being at sea. Winning and success meant different things to Bernard. He is buried in northern France and visitors to his grave often leave a catapult there as a mark of respect for a man who chose freedom and to sail his own course.

JUANITA HARRISON

Juanita Harrison was an American woman who travelled solo around the world in the 1930s. We know almost nothing about Juanita except what she tells us in the pages of her book, *My Great, Wide, Beautiful World*. Despite the discrimination of her day towards people of colour, Juanita had the courage and determination to seek out adventure.



Juanita Harrison was born in 1891 in Mississippi, USA. At the young age of 10, Juanita started work as a maid, which she described as "an endless round of cooking, washing and ironing". But Juanita dreamed of more for herself. She had seen a magazine filled with pictures of interesting and foreign lands, and made herself a promise that, one day, she would sail away to a far-off place.

For years, Juanita saved as much of her small weekly earnings as possible. Her plan was to travel around the world, working in different countries to pay for her keep. But when Juanita had finally saved enough to begin her new life, her bank failed, and she lost all her money. Poor Juanita had to start saving all over again. At long last, in her thirties, Juanita quit her job and set sail for adventure.



MY GREAT, WIDE, BEAUTIFUL WORLD

Juanita's adventure began on board the SS Sierra Ventana, sailing out of New York in 1927. She had packed two suitcases, one of which held two blue dresses and two white dresses, as well as the aprons and references she needed for working along her journey.



The only record we have of Juanita's travels comes from her book *My Great, Wide, Beautiful World*. Her writing is beautifully descriptive but, as Juanita had little schooling, also full of spelling 'mistakes'. However, she insisted that her book should be published the way she wrote it, mistakes and all.

Juanita could speak French and Spanish as well as English. This helped her to find work in different countries along the way. When asked where her favourite place was, she always replied, "Can't but help love the last place best." She enjoyed everywhere she went and was excited by ordinary life in extraordinary places. But after a few weeks or months of work, she would get itchy feet and move on again.



CULINARY DELIGHTS

Two things are very clear about the way that Juanita travelled: she was always cheerfully optimistic, and she loved trying new food. Her book is filled with endless descriptions of the meals she enjoyed.



In Syria, "the cafes are always open ... the meat broiling and smelling so good you hear stringed music and in front of the restaurants women doing their shopping in the Bazzars."



In Germany she fell "in love with Bonn am just around the corner from Beethoven's Birthplace ... grapes are so cheap I am taking the grape cure by eating a bunch every morning."

In Copenhagen you get nearly a 1/2 roast spring chicken here for what a stamp cost ... ice cream and chicken are my daily diet."



A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Juanita eventually sailed back to Europe. After a few months, she took an eight-day train journey east from Moscow, eventually making her way to Japan where she loved the kimonos, hot baths and temples.

Next, Juanita set sail for China and feasted well on the ship. She enjoyed delicacies such as stewed cat and Canton fruit. After her time in China, she moved on to the Philippines and still she kept on exploring.

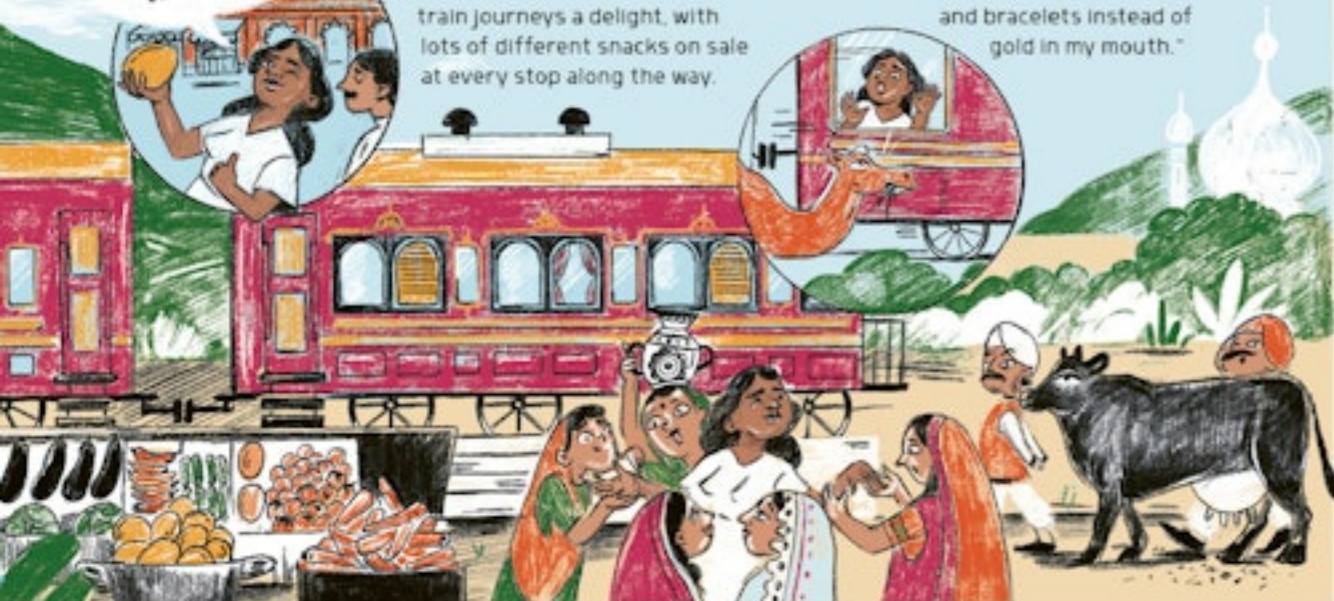
Eventually, Juanita decided to settle down in beautiful Hawaii. In her book, she wrote that she would buy a surfboard and take some Hula dance lessons. After a hard start to life, and so many adventures around the world, Juanita had finally found her "first and only Home".



A mango - the size of a melon! Sweet as sugar

After crossing Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, Juanita sailed from Port Said in Egypt to Colombo in Sri Lanka. Moving on to India, she found the train journeys a delight, with lots of different snacks on sale at every stop along the way.

The people in India were fascinated by this American woman passing through their lives. "They wanted to know Why I didn't wear anklets and bracelets instead of gold in my mouth."



Why Juanita Harrison Inspired Me

Juanita travelled around the world, overcoming barriers, prejudice, and the expectations of her era. Over a period of eight years, she explored 22 different countries. This would be an exciting and unusual way for anyone to live, but for a Black woman of her time, it was a truly extraordinary thing to do.

Juanita was not setting world records like some of our other adventurers, but she overcame great challenges to get the life she wanted. She chose to break the mould and live adventurously every day. This is the reason I love Juanita's story - because her spirit is something we can all be inspired by.



FRANK WILD

Frank Wild is the unsung hero of Antarctic exploration. A key player in five major polar expeditions with the famous explorers Scott, Shackleton and Mewson, Frank's story has rarely been told. Yet Frank was second-in-command on one of the most infamous polar expeditions in history — one which went terribly wrong.



Frank Wild was 27 years old when he applied for his first polar expedition: a scientific research voyage to Antarctica. He didn't believe he would be selected, thinking that only large, strong men would be chosen. But, in fact, he was picked out from more than 3,000 applicants and stood out for his calm and collected manner.



A MOST CHALLENGING VOYAGE

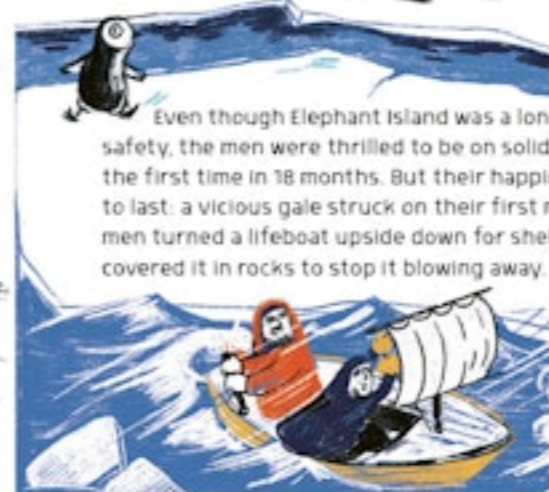
In 1914, Frank joined Ernest Shackleton on a polar expedition which turned into an incredible journey of resilience and determination. Their ship, *Endurance*, became trapped in sea ice before reaching Antarctica. There were no radios in those days and no way to call for help. They were thousands of miles from safety and simply had to wait, in bitterly cold conditions, hoping that the ice would shift and release the ship. Instead, the ice crushed the ship until it split and sank. The expedition now faced disaster. The crew were stranded in freezing conditions on an expanse of sea ice on top of the most dangerous ocean on the planet.



Anticipating the ship's sinking, the men had removed the lifeboats, equipment and supplies onto the sea ice. The crew now had to haul the heavy lifeboats across the ice towards open water if they were to have any chance of escape. It was tough work, and in seven long days, they only covered 11km! When they eventually reached the open ocean, they faced a perilous 320km crossing to the nearest land — the deserted and inhospitable Elephant Island.



Even though Elephant Island was a long way from safety, the men were thrilled to be on solid land for the first time in 18 months. But their happiness wasn't to last: a vicious gale struck on their first night. The men turned a lifeboat upside down for shelter and covered it in rocks to stop it blowing away.



Shackleton and five other men set off for help. The rest of the crew, under Frank's command, remained behind on the island to wait and hope for rescue.

THE SNUGGERY

There was no shelter on the island so the men built a rough shack out of their remaining two lifeboats and old sails. They turned the boats upside down on low stone walls and built themselves a little home. Frank and his men plugged up holes in the shelter with snow and rocks to try to keep out the freezing wind.

The men gave this damp, uncomfortable and cold construction the cheerful name of 'the Snuggery'. They hunted seals and used their blubber as oil for lamps, using an old biscuit tin for a chimney. At night they slept on the hard floor, huddled together to try and keep warm.



DESPERATE MEASURES

For food, the men hunted penguins and seals, and gathered limpets and seaweed from the seashore. Sometimes the penguins had undigested fish in their stomachs, which felt like a bonus feast to these desperate men. They also had some supplies remaining from the *Endurance* such as milk powder, biscuits and dried peas. Frank would give out treats – tiny mouthfuls of the nicer foods – to cheer people up.



KEEPING CHEERFUL

The crew had no idea if Shackleton had survived the sea crossing to summon help or whether they had been abandoned to their fate. It was a harsh, cold and frightening existence. The men slept in their wet sleeping bags and were always hungry. In order to keep people optimistic, Frank would begin every day by calling out:



RESCUE AT LAST

One day, after four and a half long months, the lookout shouted, "There's a ship!" The men were rescued at last!

And so ended one of the most spectacular expeditions of all time, with not a single man lost despite being stranded thousands of miles from home.



The crew also put on a concert every Saturday night. Frank was a fine singer and one man played the banjo. But as the weeks dragged on, the men worried more and more. Food supplies were running low, and they were down to one hot meal a day due to a lack of fuel.

Frank tried to keep people busy. Someone was on lookout for the rescue ship at all times. They shared out cooking and cleaning duties, and organised hunting trips. Frank also gathered the men to admire the golden sunsets over the beautiful blue glaciers.



Why Frank Wild Inspired Me

Among all the stories of Antarctic exploration, the failure of the *Endurance* expedition stands out. It is an adventure of unimaginable hardship and determination. While Shackleton went for help (an epic story in itself), Frank had to remain on an inhospitable island and demonstrate determination, patience, optimism and kindness to set an example to the frightened, desperate men he was in charge of.



SYLVIA EARLE

Some queens may be called 'Her Highness', but American explorer and conservationist Dr Sylvia Earle has earned the nickname 'Her Deepness' after decades of ocean expeditions. Sylvia has dived in all five of the world's oceans, despite being rejected from some of the early expeditions she applied for.



Sylvia Earle's first memory of the sea was being flattened by a wave as a toddler. But it didn't scare her away from the sea: she stood back up, dug her toes into the sand and felt so excited by the power and mystery of the ocean.

She loved nature too, often spending hours dipping in a pond for tadpoles, and jotting notes in a book.

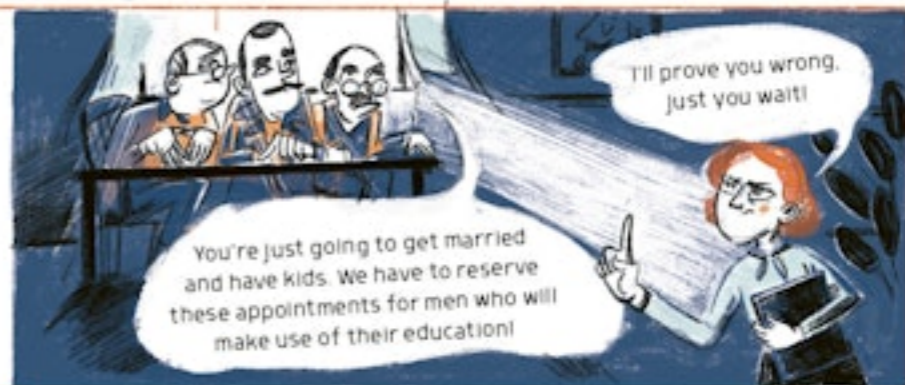


She chose to study science at university, paying her way by working in laboratories.

Her family moved to live near the ocean when she was 12, and from the moment she first tried scuba diving, she was entranced by the feeling of weightlessness, the spiky sea urchins and the tiny seahorses.

FINDING HER FINS

Sylvia grew up in the 1950s, and not many women became scientists in those days. When she applied for a teaching job, they told her....



Then, in 1969, after working as a scientist for several years, Sylvia applied to join the Tektite I Project which aimed to use underwater study to investigate

how humans would cope on the Moon. Despite having more diving experience than any other scientist who applied, she was still rejected for being a woman!

ONE YEAR LATER!

But her skills were too strong to ignore, and she went on to lead Tektite II the next year, on an all-female expedition.



Sylvia and four other scientists dived 15m underwater to a small laboratory where they lived for two weeks.



When she surfaced again, Sylvia found herself a celebrity! The team were even invited to the White House for a party.



More importantly, Sylvia realised that she could use this fame to inspire women to become scientists.



When I was a girl, you could be the stewardess, not the pilot. You could be a nurse, not a doctor. You could be the secretary, not the CEO. That was reality. Now you can.

A PARADISE LOST?

When Sylvia first began exploring the oceans, people weren't fully aware of the devastating impact humans were having on the planet. It was only in the 1970s that new technology and undersea exploration revealed the damage that was being done. This led to a change in marine conservation and a shift in attitudes regarding the need to protect and restore our oceans.

When I began exploring the ocean, no one imagined that we could do any harm by what we put into it or by what we took out of it. It seemed, at that time, to be a sea of Eden, but now we know, and now we are facing paradise lost.

THE STURGEON GENERAL

Sylvia began working hard to protect the oceans, providing research that would give evidence of how humans and big corporations are impacting our seas. In 1990, Sylvia became the first female chief scientist at the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, where she was responsible for monitoring the health of the ocean, earning her the nickname 'The Sturgeon General' [sturgeon is a species of fish]. Sylvia has designed research submarines, spent over 7,000 hours underwater, and led over a hundred expeditions.

HER DEEPNESS

In 1979, Sylvia walked along the floor of the Pacific Ocean in a special diving suit, called a JIM Suit, earning the nickname 'Her Deepness'. At over 380m deep, this broke the world record for the deepest untethered dive. She saw an abundance of life, including sharks with bright green eyes, light-emitting fish and a forest of corals.

MISSION BLUE

In her 60 years of adventures, Sylvia has seen the oceans destroyed by overfishing and pollution. So, in 2008, Sylvia founded Mission Blue, a conservation organisation. Only 7% of the world's oceans are in marine protected areas (MPAs) where restrictions are in place to care for ocean life. Mission Blue's vision is to achieve 30% protection of the ocean by 2030 through newly protected areas called 'Hope Spots'. Anyone can nominate a Hope Spot which will hopefully drive a global wave of community support to protect our oceans.

No ocean: no life.
No ocean: no us.
We must protect nature as if
our lives depend on it.

HOW TO BUILD A HOPE SPOT

- 1 Where do you want to protect and why?
- 2 Who needs to be involved?
- 3 What issues need to be tackled? What needs to happen?
- 4 Which authorities do you need to connect with?
- 5 What funding might you need?
- 6 Create an action plan!

Why Sylvia Earle Inspired Me

Sylvia fought hard to overcome prejudice as a female scientist, but perhaps her biggest struggle has been trying to persuade greedy businesses and uninterested governments that we need to act fast to save the world's greatest resource. Mission Blue is a global movement that invites everyone to get involved and become curious explorers, as once you spend time in wild places you are more likely to care for them.

OCEAN FACT FILE

- Oceans are crucial for life on Earth, covering around 71% of the planet and producing 50-80% of the Earth's oxygen.
- A healthy ocean absorbs 90% of the Earth's heat and distributes it around the globe. It also absorbs around 25% of the carbon dioxide emissions we produce - all super important in the fight against climate change.
- Pollution contaminates the ocean, ruining habitats, destroying species and ecosystems. If the rate of pollution continues, there will be more plastic than fish in our oceans by 2050.

JOE SIMPSON

Joe Simpson was an ambitious and talented young climber who made a difficult first ascent in the Peruvian Andes with his friend Simon Yates. But disaster struck shortly after celebrating on top of the mountain. Joe and Simon were suddenly thrust into a desperate fight for survival...

It should have been a glorious celebration between two friends on an epic adventure in South America. Other expeditions had failed to accomplish what they had just done. But after successfully reaching the summit of Siula Grande, Joe slipped and fell on the descent, breaking his right leg.

OUT OF CONTROL

Beyond reach of rescue, Joe and Simon needed to descend quickly if they were to survive. They were hit by a storm so conditions were terrible. It was freezing cold and visibility was poor. The pair had already run out of fuel for their stove so could not melt ice for drinking water. This meant that they could not afford to shelter from the storm for a day or two. They had lost control of the situation.

DESPERATE MEASURES

Simon began lowering Joe down at the end of a long rope. In the mountains you are responsible not only for your own safety, but your partner's too.

When he ran out of rope, Simon would climb down to Joe and then lower him once again. It was a desperate, brave struggle to try to save his friend's life.

But then Simon accidentally lowered Joe off a cliff. Dangling in the air on the end of the rope, Joe couldn't climb back up and Simon couldn't pull him up, despite using all his strength. They were stuck...

A HOPELESS SITUATION

The friends were too far apart to be able to hear each other. They both just hung on to the rope. Eventually the snow beneath Simon started to give way and he began to slip. Simon knew they were both about to be pulled to their deaths. He was left with only one horrible option: to cut the rope and drop Joe off the cliff, but save his own life.

LEFT FOR DEAD

Joe plummeted 45m into a deep crevasse in agony. Exhausted and heartbroken, Simon descended the mountain all alone, certain that his friend was dead.



It was up to Joe to save himself. He was inside a crevasse, high in the mountains, with a broken leg. There was no way he could climb back up. So Joe was forced to make the terrifying decision to lower himself further down into the crevasse, hoping to reach the bottom before the rope ran out, and hoping too that he could then, somehow, find a different way to escape.



Unbelievably, Joe did manage to find a way out of the crevasse. He was so relieved that he giggled wildly to himself. But he was still 13km from base camp and had to reach it before Simon packed up and went home.

But Joe was not dead. After such a run of terrible events and bad luck, he had landed on a small snow ledge inside the crevasse which broke his fall. Looking at the sliced end of the rope, Joe understood what his friend had been forced to do. He knew Simon would assume that he was dead and nobody would come to help him. He shouted at the top of his voice, but there was no reply. Joe was all alone.



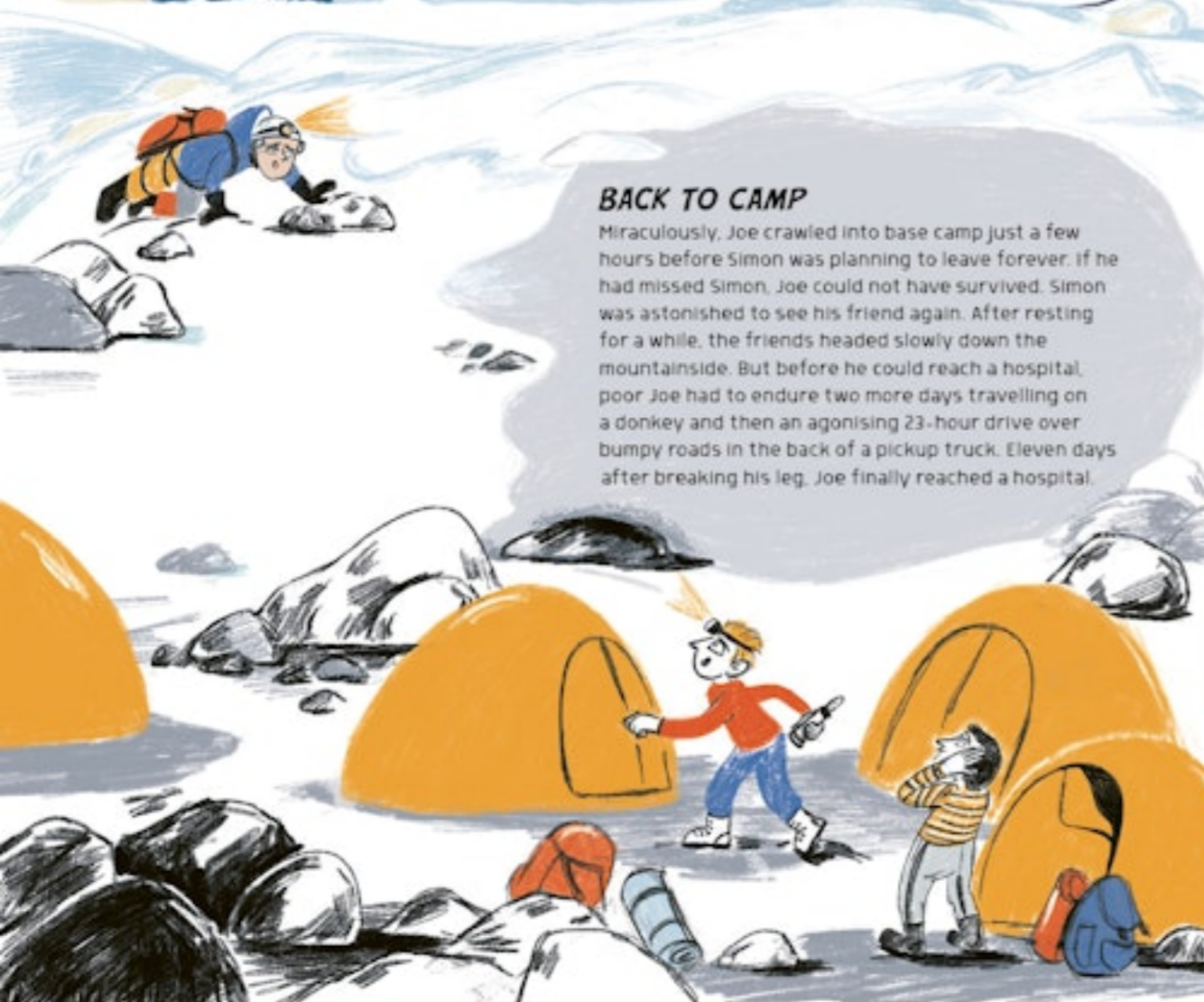
ONE ROCK AT A TIME

Joe faced about 2.5km of icy crevasses and glaciers to cross, then another 10.5km of rocky terrain. What would have been a simple stroll a few days earlier now turned into a marathon of agony. For three days and nights, Joe hopped and crawled in awful pain, with no food and very little water. Every metre he crept towards safety demanded an immense effort. He tried to minimise the task ahead by breaking it down to 20-minute stretches, creeping from one rock to the next.



BACK TO CAMP

Miraculously, Joe crawled into base camp just a few hours before Simon was planning to leave forever. If he had missed Simon, Joe could not have survived. Simon was astonished to see his friend again. After resting for a while, the friends headed slowly down the mountainside. But before he could reach a hospital, poor Joe had to endure two more days travelling on a donkey and then an agonising 23-hour drive over bumpy roads in the back of a pickup truck. Eleven days after breaking his leg, Joe finally reached a hospital.



TOUCHING THE VOID

Over the course of six operations, doctors told Joe that he would never walk properly again. But two years later, Joe was back climbing in the mountains. His story is one of the most frightening, painful, brave survival stories in the history of mountaineering. Joe's book, *Touching the Void*, became a successful film, play and a book studied for GCSE. He dedicated the book to his friend Simon, who had saved his life.

Life can deal you an amazing hand. Do you play it steady, bluff like crazy or go all in?



Why Joe Simpson Inspired Me

We go on adventures for excitement, to enjoy wild places and to challenge ourselves. We learn about perseverance, thoughtful risk taking, and working hard for our goals (with consequences for our mistakes). Joe and Simon reached the summit, but then things went very wrong. They had some bad luck and made mistakes. Joe almost died and Simon had to make a terrible, unavoidable decision. But through teamwork, trust, determination, courage and a refusal to give up, they made it back home alive and remained friends: two successful outcomes from a fun adventure that became a terrifying survival story.



ROSIE SWALE-POPE

Rosie Swale-Pope has had a lifetime of adventures, but her greatest journey did not begin until she was 57 years old. Rosie spent five years running around the world, relying upon the kindness of strangers and wearing through 50 pairs of running shoes!



6

It was a huge achievement at a time before GPS, with only nautical charts, a sextant and an old compass to guide their way.

7

Still hungry for adventure, Rosie sailed solo across the Atlantic in a tiny [17ft] sailing boat she found in a barn. It took her a record-breaking 70 days to sail to New York, navigating only by the stars and her wristwatch.



5 YEARS, 3 PACKS OF WOLVES AND 53 PAIRS OF SHOES LATER

Rosie's plan was to run around as much of the northern hemisphere as possible, with no support crew or sponsorship. It was the start of an ambitious journey crossing Europe, Russia, Asia, Alaska, North America, Greenland and Iceland, before finally returning to Scotland and running back to Wales.

Wolves tracked her journey for a week in Siberia.

On good days she ran an impressive 48km.

In Alaska, she nearly froze in her sleeping bag when temperatures dropped to -50°C .

She got frostbite on her foot during a blizzard in Canada.

On freezing days, she managed less than a kilometre, slogging through deep snow.

Rosie persevered and did it all with a celebratory attitude of loving life and feeling the triumph of every kilometre covered.

When Rosie eventually made it back to her front door in Wales, she was so exhausted that she had to limp along using crutches, but crowds of well-wishers spurred her on, celebrating their new local hero.

NEVER TOO OLD

At the age of 75, Rosie decided to take on a new challenge: running over 9,500km from Brighton all the way to Kathmandu in Nepal in support of PHASE Worldwide. What better way to show the world that age is not a barrier when it comes to achieving your goals?

ROSIE'S TIPS FOR A LIFE FULL OF ADVENTURE!



Choose an adventure that catches hold of your mind, drives you wild and makes your spine tingle.



Get the right equipment and information... and have the right mindset.



Problems and obstacles are not barriers. The problems are part of the pathway and need to be faced calmly, and can usually be overcome!



Finally, take your journey one step at a time...

Saying I can takes no more breath than saying I can't!

Life is the greatest, happiest and often toughest adventure of all!

PHASE
WORLDWIDE

Why Rosie Swale-Pope Inspired Me

Rosie began her journey out of loneliness, heartbreak and sadness over the death of her husband, Clive. She turned to adventure to find a way forward in her life again. Along the way, it became a journey about humanity due to the kindness of strangers she encountered along her run.

EMILE LERAY

When Emile Leray's car broke down in the middle of a desert, it could have been the end for this French adventurer's journey. With limited food and water, and only the tools and equipment he had with him, he was in serious danger! Even the chances of his very survival were now against the odds.



From a very young age, Emile had a passion for cars and mechanics. He loved stock-car and rally-cross racing and fell in love with a funny-looking but very special car – the Citroën 2CV. The 2CV (meaning deux chevaux or 'two horses') was produced in France as a cheap, robust vehicle that was designed to be driven on pot-holed and muddy roads, replacing the need for horse-drawn vehicles.



RIDING THE STEEL CAMEL

Always one for adventure, Emile decided to cross the desert in Morocco in his Citroën 2CV. The 2CV is not your usual adventure vehicle – although it is reliable, light and does not use much fuel. In Africa, it is sometimes known as a 'steel camel' because it can go anywhere. Less complimentary is the nickname of an 'umbrella on wheels'.



NO TURNING BACK

Emile set off on his adventure from Tan-Tan to drive 600km east to Zagora. However, a police checkpoint had closed the road because of an ongoing conflict with Western Sahara. Emile was ordered to turn around and return. But once he was out of sight, Emile decided to dodge round the checkpoint by driving off-road through the desert!



STRANDED

Unfortunately, Emile did not drive carefully enough, and damaged the car so badly on the rocky terrain that it was impossible to repair, even for a skilled mechanic like him. The situation was now extremely serious. He was in a hot desert with limited water and nobody knew where he was. Emile was stranded more than 30km from safety.

Author's Note: If I had been in Emile's situation I would have walked across the desert to find rescue. Perhaps Emile really hated walking, or perhaps he was secretly excited by the challenge ahead of him?



DIY MOTORBIKE

Emile decided to strip down all the parts of his car and build a motorbike from the bits that still worked. He needed to move quickly because he had limited rations, mostly water, tea, dates and oranges. Run out of water in a desert, and you will soon be dead. Luckily, he had a decent toolbox...

Emile thought it would take him three days to build his motorbike. In fact it took him 12. With only 10 days of water supply, he finished in the nick of time, with only half a litre remaining.

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 hacksaw | 1 ring wrenches | 1 large adhesive tape |
| 1 blades | 1 flat wrenches | 1 40l of spare fuel |
| 1 hammer | 1 ratchet pipe cutter | |
| 1 chisel | | |
| 1 files | | |



First of all, Emile removed the shell of the car. This would be his shelter to rest in while he built his contraption.



He turned a pair of socks into sleeves to protect his arms from sunburn, then got to work taking the car to pieces.



He slept inside the shell at night when the desert became very cold, and sheltered from sandstorms and the midday sun, too.



He turned the car's bumper into a seat to make his motorbike more comfortable to ride.

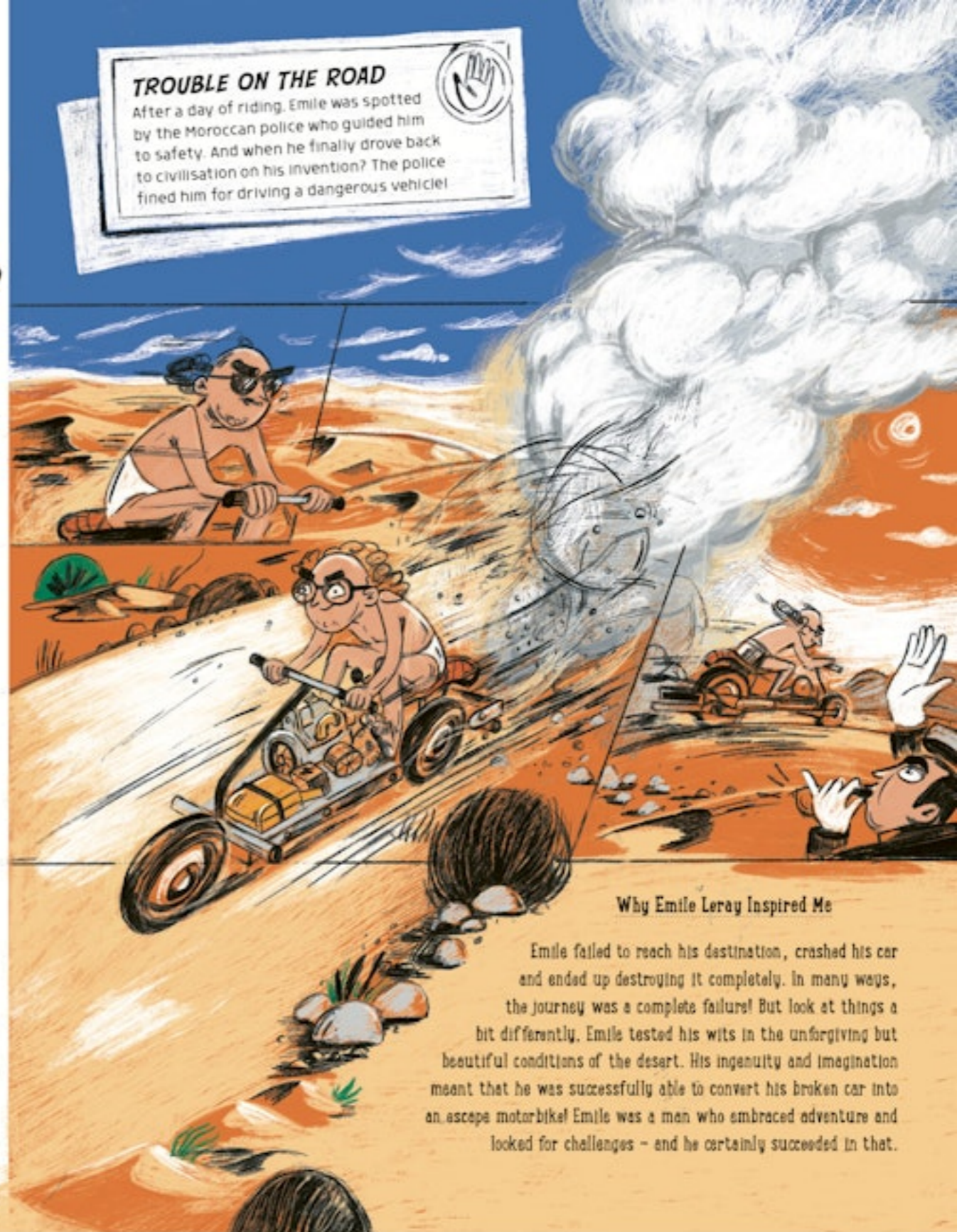


Finally, he screwed the licence plate onto his wild-looking motorbike and roared off through the desert.



TROUBLE ON THE ROAD

After a day of riding, Emile was spotted by the Moroccan police who guided him to safety. And when he finally drove back to civilisation on his invention? The police fined him for driving a dangerous vehicle!



Why Emile Leray Inspired Me

Emile failed to reach his destination, crashed his car and ended up destroying it completely. In many ways, the journey was a complete failure! But look at things a bit differently. Emile tested his wits in the unforgiving but beautiful conditions of the desert. His ingenuity and imagination meant that he was successfully able to convert his broken car into an escape motorbike! Emile was a man who embraced adventure and looked for challenges - and he certainly succeeded in that.

KAREN DARKE

Karen's love for science and adventure inspired her career as a geologist. But one day, when she was just 21, Karen went sea cliff climbing and had a terrible fall which paralysed her from the chest down. Karen now had to overcome physical and emotional barriers to find new and creative ways to accomplish extraordinary feats.

Four years after her accident, Karen Darke cycled the Silk Route from Kazakhstan to Pakistan on a modified tandem bicycle, pedalling by hand while her partner used their legs. They strapped to the bike all the camping equipment, supplies and spare parts needed to cross the rugged mountainous terrain.

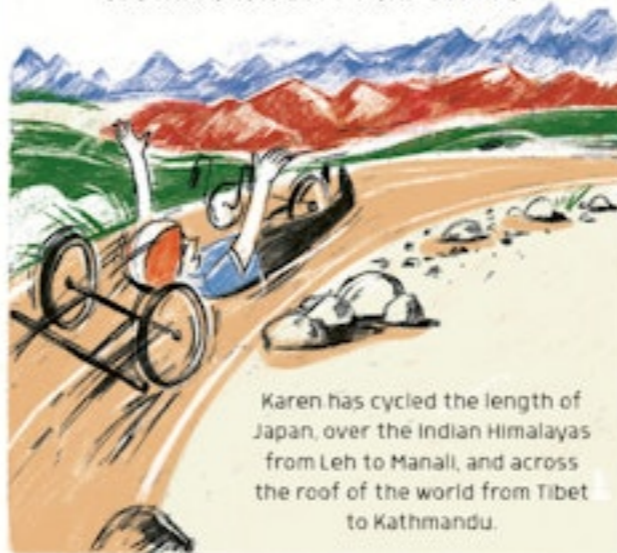


THE LIFE OF AN ADVENTURER

Eager to focus on the opportunities available to her rather than feeling sad about those things she could no longer do, Karen found ingenious ways to adventure around the world:

HAND-BIKING

ACROSS SOME OF THE HIGHEST, ROUGHEST ROADS ON THE PLANET



Karen has cycled the length of Japan, over the Indian Himalayas from Leh to Manali, and across the roof of the world from Tibet to Kathmandu.

KAYAKING

THE 'INSIDE PASSAGE' FROM VANCOUVER, CANADA, TO JUNEAU, ALASKA



Karen spent three months sea-kayaking over 1,600km up the beautiful, wild Inside Passage of the Pacific Ocean from Canada to Alaska.

SIT-SKIING

ACROSS THE GREENLAND ICE CAP



Karen and her team spent a month crossing the frozen, remote Greenland ice cap by sit-ski, using her arms and poles to propel herself over 598km. She was the first paraplegic woman to achieve this.

CLIMBING

EL CAPITAN, YOSEMITE



El Capitan is a world-famous, 1000m vertical rock face in Yosemite National Park, USA. Partnering with an able-bodied mountaineer, Karen climbed El Capitan by hauling herself up a climbing rope, using a technique known as jumaring in this week-long challenge.

GOING FOR GOLD

Pushing hard comes naturally to Karen and she raced for Great Britain in the paracycling team for 10 years, winning a gold and a silver Paralympic medal. She also broke the land speed record for arm-power cycling, reaching a speedy 67.37kph!



THE BEST AWARD OF ALL

Karen's most famous race, however, ended without a medal. Approaching the end of the Olympic Road Race in London, Karen was competing against her friend and teammate for the bronze medal. Just before the finish, the two friends decided to hold hands, cross the line together, and share the result. The Olympic organisers did not like that and decided that Karen's bike had been fractionally behind and therefore she came fourth.

Apparently that is not what we are 'supposed' to do at Olympic level ... But I like things outside the norm.



QUEST 79

Number 79 is the atomic number for gold. Karen's journey has always been about finding the "piece of gold inside of you". So she launched Quest 79 to invite thousands of people around the world to seek their inner gold, to connect with others and embrace the environment. Over 22 countries are now participating - what will your Quest 79 be?

DOING 79 BURPEES
A DAY FOR 79 DAYS



PICKING UP LITTER
FOR 79 DAYS



READING FOR 79
MINUTES A DAY



7.9KM CYCLING
CHALLENGE



WRITING 79 THANK
YOU MESSAGES

PLANTING
79 TREES



"I live life as a modern-day alchemist, passionate about turning challenge into opportunity and transforming the difficult stuff into gold."

- Karen Darke

Why Karen Darke Inspired Me

Becoming wheelchair-bound at the age of just 21 was heartbreaking for Karen, who loves adventures in wild places. But Karen knows that her life has been special and interesting since her accident. She's a firm believer that we create happiness from the inside out. Karen works to inspire other people to find their 'inner gold' and step out of their comfort zones to discover their passion and purpose - and for that she is a truly inspiring adventurer.

AN ADVENTURER'S PACKING LIST

An explorer must plan carefully before heading off on an adventure. You need to prepare a list so that you can tick off your sleeping bag, hiking boots and toothbrush. But even more important than what you carry in your rucksack, is the packing list of what you must carry in your heart.



COURAGE

Adventures are often scary. But that is sort of the point. If it is all easy and fun, then it's not an adventure: it's a holiday. Frank must have feared that rescue from Elephant Island would never come. Göran was afraid when he was all alone near the summit of Everest. Adventurers know it is OK to be scared, but that facing the unknown and being bold is what gets you to the top of the mountain.



INSPIRATION

Most adventurers get their first inspiration from other people's stories. Like Marianne reading about earlier adventurers, everyone needs to fire their soul from somewhere. Seek it from nature and the landscape, from a book or a smile. Inspiration shines all around us.



SWEAT

We have to work hard to stay mentally, physically, emotionally and economically healthy. It takes commitment and consistent practice to get good at anything. Work hard at your dreams, starting today, as procrastination will get you nowhere. Terry's heroic run came about by taking one small step over and over again.



CURIOSITY

If you are filled with curiosity, then you will never be bored again. Everywhere is interesting and everything is fascinating. Curiosity is a vital characteristic of adventurers. It is at the heart of human exploration of space, like the Apollo 13 crew, or for those driven to learn more about science, like Jeanne.



LOVE

Love is so important in life. It comes from many places: from family or friends, and from within ourselves. Adventurers must take care and not be too hard on themselves. This is vital on remote journeys like Bernard's sail around the world. Radiating love and kindness to other people is also an important quality when travelling. Juanita's joyous adventure was fuelled by the goodwill she showed to everyone, as was Beth's decision to stop her challenge and focus her love on her son.



GRIT

No adventurers are brilliant at what they do when they begin. There is a lot to learn. They know that along the way there will be struggles and failures, and the way through them is to grit your teeth and get on with it. Joe's survival depended upon grit, but so too did the Van Buren sisters' determination not to be stopped by prejudice. Adventurers believe they will improve and do better if they keep going.



PURPOSE

When there is something that you truly believe in, you can find the determination and the energy to see it through, no matter how hard the obstacles are. Robert's belief in freedom, Zheng He's drive to explore new lands, and Sylvia's lifelong quest to protect the oceans were all driven by a combined sense of adventure plus purpose.



SENSE OF HUMOUR

Adventures are hard. You are often too cold or too hot, tired, scared, uncomfortable and hungry. A lot of those things are out of your control. But the one thing you are always in charge of, in every adventure you ever do, is your attitude. You can always choose how to approach a situation. And the best thing to do when you are cold or hungry or uncomfortable is to laugh about it. Every adventure improves with a smile or a good laugh!



Where will your next adventure take you?

