

*For Elmie for her sunny smile,  
her compassion and her way of  
making everyone feel safe and cared for  
when she is around.*

## CHAPTER 1



In the Dreaming, all of the elements needed for creation were formed. Everything was being made ready for the beginning of life. Ancestral spirits laid down the patterns of life for the lands, rivers, sky, animals and peoples. Each was of equal value and interconnected as it should be for eternity. This was part of the Dreamtime, a timeless and fluid space where past, present and future coexist.

As the earth grew, special places from the Dreaming were created, sacred places in the landscape that ensured survival. After the earth started to flourish, most of these places disappeared as they were no longer needed, but some remained just in case life was ever under threat. These sacred places went to sleep and would only awaken if needed once more.

As the people and the animals were born from the lands, they took up their rightful place in the landscape. Mother Earth welcomed all her children and watched over them. They each had their own place, and everything was in balance. The people, animals, land, sky and water cared for each other, making sure everything and everyone was looked after. They were all family.

Mother Earth rejoiced as each new

generation filled the world with joy and renewed hope for the future. Each new generation learnt that life is meant to be a perpetual celebration of the wonder of creation. They learnt that when life is abundant and in balance, future generations can thrive. This was the most important lesson to learn.

The earth had many different landscapes. In one area, there were groups of people and animals living near each other.

On one side of the hill was dingo country, where large clans of dingoes roamed the countryside and reared their pups.

On the other side of the hill were the people who were born from the land, the first peoples. They knew all of the places, songs, languages, stories and ways of their homelands.

Over time, the dingoes and the first peoples formed connections. The two groups became stronger and stronger together as their friendships grew. They spent time playing, exploring and sharing food together and watched the generations thrive.

There was a young girl called Calla who loved the dingoes. The Elders could see from the moment Calla was born that she had a great affinity for the dingoes. She was born from an ancestry that had always had dingoes in their family and Calla would now follow in their footsteps.

Calla's family also shared a very special gift. The people and the dingoes had not only shared food together, they had also shared their languages. The dingoes and the people

had learnt how to speak to each other and could communicate in many different ways. They had built up a trust and connection that would last forever.

That's why Calla was given the dingo as her totem, and she was proud to care for them. The giving of the totem was an important part of growing up. Caring about others in the natural world helped to build strong relationships that would allow Calla to feel safe and connected wherever she wandered.

Calla's grandmother told her, 'We are connected to everything around us. Always be kind and help others. You never know, they might be family, and we always look after family – including the dingoes!'

Calla had to learn all the ways of the dingoes and know how to look after them.

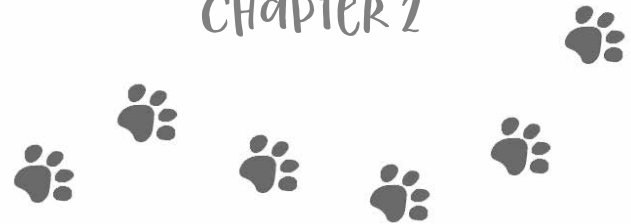
This was to be her special role in life and, in turn, this would also provide her with strength and courage ... as well as a very large extended family!

The dingoes were part of Calla's life, and she relished every moment with them. She always made sure the pregnant dingo mums had enough food and often watched over the pups if the mum went hunting.

Calla was also a great explorer and loved walking through the bush with the dingoes. They often taught each other about things in the landscape and how to respect country. Calla knew all the places the dingoes went to and where they found the best food. Calla was happiest when looking after the dingoes and always felt safe and connected with a dingo by her side.

In one of the dingo clans was a little dingo pup that loved running around the countryside with his family. He was a cheeky little pup and sometimes he would go off exploring with Calla. Calla called the little pup Chichi because he was so cheeky. Together they felt brave and invincible. The land was happy, the animals were happy and the people were happy. The countryside was abundant with life, and life was good. Mother Earth was happy and felt proud of her family.

## CHAPTER 2



However, things can change, and change they did. Other people from elsewhere took over the lands and brought different ways with them. They wanted all the land for themselves and kept all the food as well. Suffering and despair spread across the landscape. The first peoples were taken away from the land, and some of the children were stolen. It would be many years before the first peoples and the

stolen children were free to make their way back to their homelands. Some could not find their way home.

Like many others, Calla and her family were removed from their homeland and taken to a place far, far away. Calla was heartbroken and worried about who would look after the dingoes. She felt a great loss from being separated from them and no longer felt safe in the world. Calla cried and cried and cried. Her human family tried to comfort her, but they too were grieving for their country.

Different sorts of people and animals kept coming to the lands. They did not seem to understand that the first peoples, land, animals, sky and water were family. Instead, trees were cut down, animals were hunted mercilessly or fenced out, and rivers were blocked to make

dams. Everything was changing very fast, and the hope and joy that made life possible was rapidly diminishing.

The countryside became altered almost beyond recognition and life started to disappear. Some life was now extinct, and everything was out of balance. No longer was abundance assured, as the desire of the newcomers for wealth and power grew and grew and grew. Everyone and everything were starving, except for the few who controlled the world. What would be left for the future generations?


Life was difficult, and no-one knew what was going to happen in the future. Mother Earth was worried and looked on with despair. Her children were hurting, and she could not help them.

Calla and her family never forgot about their country. Sometime after their removal, they escaped and made their way back. They reunited in a special place out bush near their homeland. This place had been a gathering site for the first peoples of the land that the newcomers did not know about. Calla and her family called it the old bush camp.

Calla's family stayed hidden there for a long time. They knew how to live with the land and animals so everyone was safe.

It was too dangerous to go back to their old hill near dingo country, but Calla's family still tried to protect the dingoes as best they could. Sometimes, at great risk, they snuck back to dingo country to leave food in secret places only the dingoes knew about. But they could never be sure if it was the dingoes that found it.

## CHAPTER 3

A decorative graphic for Chapter 3 featuring the text 'CHAPTER 3' in a light grey, sans-serif font. The text is centered and surrounded by seven dark grey paw prints of varying sizes and orientations, arranged in a loose, circular pattern around the text.

Chichi the cheeky dingo pup was very sad when Calla disappeared, as were all the dingoes. No-one seemed to know what had happened to Calla and her family and the dingoes did not feel safe without them.

In the evening, the dingoes would gather and call to Calla and her family. They would sing a gentle, mournful song about missing

their loved ones and hope for their safe journey back home.

Little did they know that Calla would sit out in the evening to listen to their song. Even though she couldn't return, she still felt the love and warmth of the dingoes' song as it swirled around in the evening mist.

Mother Dingo was worried for her pups and wasn't sure how to protect them. She tried to keep them close, but Chichi was always running off somewhere.

'Don't forget to listen out for my voice,' Chichi's mum often said. 'I might need to tell you something important.'

'Yes, Mum,' said Chichi. 'You know I always listen out for your call.'

Chichi still went exploring, but it wasn't the

same without Calla. He didn't feel as brave by himself and didn't stay out for long.

Mother Dingo had heard stories from other dingo clans about dingoes disappearing. The first peoples of the land had already disappeared, and things were continuing to change for the worse. Mother Dingo feared for her pups and began preparing them just in case something should happen. She took them hunting and showed them how to find food and water. She showed them how to hide, and how to fight to protect themselves. She told them to always look after each other. She knew the day would come when they would not be safe in dingo country anymore.

She called all of her pups together one day to teach them the final lesson.



‘When I give the howl to run, you must stop what you are doing and run away as fast as you can. Get as far away from our home as possible and when you start to feel tired, take a big breath and keep running. And most important, do not look back. You must keep going and create a new home to grow up in. This is the one time you must look after yourself.’

The pups felt sad and a little scared.

‘Can’t we help you fight all together?’ asked one of the pups.

‘No,’ said Mother Dingo, ‘you are too small and too young to fight. It is up to us big dingoes to give you a head start to escape so you can have a future. I have taught you as much as I can. It will be up to you all to find your way in the world.’

The pups looked around at each other and huddled together for comfort.

‘Maybe we can find Calla,’ said Chichi hopefully. ‘I just know, somehow, she has been listening to our song. She will look after us.’

‘Maybe,’ said Mother Dingo. ‘Maybe Calla will come back to help us. Now time for bed.’ The pups were restless and took ages to settle.

‘I know Calla is out there somewhere,’ said Chichi to himself. ‘I can still feel her in my heart.’

Things continued to get worse. Food was becoming scarce, and the dingo mothers were worried about having enough food for their pups. They had no-one to look after them and keep them safe.

One morning, Chichi ventured out to a secret place where he and Calla used to play. To his surprise, someone had left food there. He quickly took the food back to the dingo den for everyone to share. The pups were so hungry they were fighting over the food scraps.

‘Someone is trying to help us,’ said Mother Dingo. ‘Maybe Calla hasn’t completely gone after all.’

‘I knew it,’ said Chichi. ‘Calla is still looking after us!’

*Maybe there is still hope for a rescue after all, Mother Dingo thought. I just hope Calla makes it back in time!*

## CHAPTER 4



One morning, Chichi wandered off on his own chasing lizards. He stopped to rest at the riverbank when he heard some strange noises. It sounded like a pack of horses galloping, and there were loud banging and whizzing sounds. Then came the warning bark.

‘RUN, RUN, RUN,’ called Mother Dingo. ‘RUN AS FAST AS YOU CAN!’

*This is it, thought Chichi. Mum is telling all of us to go.*