The final ingredient!
Is beyond the weaving?

And what's this?

Hmmmmmm...

One way to find out...

NATHAN.
I know how to brew my teas already.
I'm just making sure, ok?

The last few weeks you've been burning it.
I most certainly have NOT!

Well then, what do you call it?

'Steeping' it?

Thank you, AMANDA!
Morning.

I have NOT been steeping my teas. OK OK, but let's be honest here. They have been -

-pretty gross.

Like really really gross.

Remember the tea that made Amanda vomit?

Yeah...

Gross.

There's nothing stopping you from brewing your own teas, Nathan.

Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha

I can make a pretty good pot of tea, if I do say so myself.

Elder Boronia said I've mastered four of the primes. Soon I'll start on the SECONDARIES!

I said, soon I'll start on the SECONDARIES!

THE SECONDARIES!
IT'S READY!
Who wants to try it?

M-m-ME!
I'll drink it!

No way am I wasting my tea on you, Nathan!

Amanda?
I'm kinda busy right now, so...

Ben?

BEN! QUICK!
Get your mug ready.

QUICK!
Uh, really?

QUICK!
QUICK!

EWWW...

QUICK!

AH HHKR...
That's a lot of tea...

Well?

Ok.

Here goes...

Huh?
Go on! Don't be shy.

Is it supposed to change colour like that?

It's actually... Not bad...

HA!

But MY tea is going to put all of yours to shame!

Oooooh...

WHAT?

Oh yeah, this festival belongs to me!

Say that again!

I double-dare you!

Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha.

You going?

Hey dork faces!

This stupid tea party is nothing!

Every day you lot are either doing your dumb chores, or-

Wasting your time brewing tea and giggling like a buncha babies!

I feel like I'm the only one actually trying to get us home!
I dunno, David, this Tea Festival is gonna be pretty awesome.

Ugh! No one cares, dingle-berry!

This festival has NOTHING to do with us.

We get Amanda's sceptre.

We get these Lizards.

We get home.

How many times have we ever even seen these Lizards, huh?

Not once!

I don't even think they're real...

This whole thing is a joke!

After breakfast I'm gonna tell Melaleuca he's gotta send us back.

Where are you going?

To work on my tea!

I've got a festival to win.

Oohh, can I come with?

Sorry, Lil - gotta keep my brew a secret.

I just need this one last ingredient...
Don't think he's going to be happy about it though.

'spose I'd better warn Mal...

Maybe I should wait until —

COME IN!

Come in.

Come in.

You can't sneak up on me like that, Ben. The plants tell me everything.

Now settle yourself in. I have a mosting important question to ask of you.
I don't know if you're aware, but it's coming up on two months since you arrived on our shores!

Yeah, Amanda has been pretty vocal in keeping track...

Well, I feel like you know me well enough now to advise me on something...

A most delicate and importificate matter indeed...

This is of the greatest secrecy.

Uh, ok...

I trust that you are capable of being a discreet bee regarding what I am about to reveal to you...

Sure...

Alright...

Which do you prefer?

That one?

This one?

Yeah, that one...
Well that's a relief.

I've been worrying about this for weeks.

So I'm glad to be done with it...

Choice is a strange thing.

That's if you believe it exists at all.

Are you any closer to retrieving the Sky Spirit's sceptre?

NAH, we've been to the island a few times, but it's so high up in that tree we can't...

It's driving David crazy.

He's coming down to see you today.

He wants to go home.

Well then, today will be like every other day.

I suppose a certain amount of restlessness is in his nature.
And how’s your tea for the Festival coming along?

Well... You know your secret!

Oh yes, your Elder told me EVERYTHING.

How hard you’ve been working on your tea! And how you won’t even share a taste!

Oh! I am much looking forward to the big reveal.

The tea...

Some teas can ease an ache or calm a worried heart.

While others can send a Peach to sleep for a year, or make one live as if in a dream.

I wonder what you are brewing. What change you will bring about in others.

Are we going home soon?

You don’t really sound like you want to...
There we are...

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen.

A fifteen second gap...

fifteen.

GO!

UFEFFF...
How many surrealists does it take?

Where have you gotten to?
There you go, little fellas...

Wasn't so bad.

Just a little adventure.

Nothing like a bit of adventure!

Ooff!

-Hup-

Ha Ha Ha!
Uhhhh...

Ha ha ha ha ha...

Heh.
Heh...

Be seeing you.
You've been gone all day!

How did your 'Super-Secret' tea go, then?

That's a super-secret, obviously...

Hey.

Hey.

How'd it go with Melaleuca?

Ugh.

Nothing! He's such a jerk.

Hey.

There's dinner here if you're hungry...

BEN!

We missed you at the hot pools today.

Where you been?

Oh, here and there.
You're not going to eat?
Nah, I'm not hungry.
Nobody knew where you went today.
We had some sapphire drop lollies at lunch.
They were amaze.

WAH! What happened to your jumper?
Oh, that-

All our clothes are getting so trashed.
Lilly keeps getting hers repaired by the Peaches.

And Nathan is wearing more and more Peach clothing.

If we stay here much longer, you might not have a choice.
Gnight.

Gotcha.
night swimming at the hot pools

Nathan and me got totally lost in the swamp.

Amanda learning some new spells.

Secret map knowledge.

my first perfect baked pink jelly doughnut.

rainbow birth play.

we went out to get Amanda's scepter.

my hedge!
The entire Village of the Peaches has been created by the Whispering Guild without cutting, sawing, or building any structures. Instead, they ask the plants to grow into the shapes that are needed.

**NOTABLE STRUCTURES**

- Whispering Guild
- Rotunda
- Amphitheatre
- Silent Tent
- Baking Guild
- Swing Set
- Welcome Arch
- Tea Room
- The Three Star Poles

**WHISPERING**

Most Peaches cannot talk to plants directly, they have to go through a small plant called a Whispering Sap that translates their requests.

**TRAINING A WHISPERING SAP**

From a seed, the Whispering Sap must be spoken to constantly. This is so that it grows with the language of the Peaches woven into its very roots. The first word that every Sap learns is SUN—this is because it is easy for the Sap to identify the presence and absence of light and is of such great importance to the plant. Over time, it will begin to learn the shapes and sounds of other ideas and be able to translate them.

(example of a growth request being fulfilled)
NEGOTIATIONS

There is always a degree of negotiation involved when asking a plant to grow into a certain form. Some plants are known for their general eagerness to help. These are often used by beginner Whisperers and for common purposes. Other plants are notorious for their reluctance to assist and sometimes even will grow in strange formations simply out of spite for the Peaches.

COLLABORATIONS

The vast majority of Peach structures are collaborations between multiple plants. This requires a number of deliberate negotiations to take place. Sometimes the use of certain plants means that other plants cannot be used due to existing animosities. It is the Whisperers' responsibility to manage these conflicts to ensure harmony.

TREE BASE

TYPICAL DWELLING

digestive core tree

suspended seed-pod beds

star-berries for lighting

mossy flooring

vine door covering

REBELIONS TO ORDER

Bottle-top shack

UNFORTUNATELY there are times when for one reason or another a plant grows in an undesirable manner. This might be due to malice, miscommunication or illness. Handling of these situations is delicate and best left to the DAWN COLLECTIVE of Whisperers.

First Tree, the prime growth from which all the village originated, fell victim to a strange rot that could not be cured.

BRIDGES

pose unique challenges for negotiations as they require agreement between groups of plants that may have developed a fondness for being apart. Bridging smaller, newer gaps should prove no problem. The challenge increases with the size and age of the gap, along with the natural temperament of the plant species involved.
SONG-OF-THE-EVENING

I can light a candle
I can light a star

both of them are wonderful shining where they are
Dear Diary,

Amanda still doesn’t have her sceptre, David tried to get us all to go past her island again to try and get it but we ran off to the hot pools instead. It’s driving him crazy. I think he went by himself to try, but it’s just too high up. He thinks once we get it back we can defeat the lizards and go home.

Nathan was being such a pervert clown at the pools, he can be so gross sometimes. I got told that he’s going to ask me out in the future. Yuck! That same ‘person’ also gave me the recipe for a secret tea ingredient. I can’t say who though, that’s my biggest secret!

Ben, David, Amanda, Nathan

The last time we went to the island the tree is actually waaaay taller + DEAD!
Another awesome day, coming my way.

A little drink for you.

And for me...

The most unforgettable day of my life.
Ha Ha Ha.

Peach all day and then Peach all night.

Cool-cool beat and I'm feeling alright.

Morning, guys, any Ruby Pockets this morning?

There are a few. Let's go.

GREAT! You wanna stay for tea? I'm gonna brew a pot of Morning Rise.

-00H4H- Yes please!

Thank you, Dear Spirit, but not this morning.

What?

We are FAR too busy with deliveries and other such duties and things.

Well, ok. Tomorrow then, guys?

Book me in!

Bye.
NOM  NOM  NOM  

s'good.

Hmmm...

Looks interesting.

WHAT?

NOTHING!

I didn't say you were doing anything.

I wasn't doing anything.

I said it looks interesting.

Have they changed the recipe of the Starry Buns?

Ha Ha Ha WHAT?

Yeah... do you, uh, want a cup of tea?

I made a pot of Morning Rise.

Your brew? No thanks.

Gotta get in some practice for the Festival, eh?

No.

My tea-chnique is perfect, Nathan.

Per-fect.
Alright, here goes...

Hey Lilly, I've been thinking - like, maybe we're supposed to be here.

I know David and Amanda are trying their hardest to get back... but I think this is our destiny.

The Peaches are right. Why else would we be here otherwise?

We are forest spirits. Not exactly the ones they want, but close enough.

I feel like this place is right and that I can be me and that's ok.

And you being here as well is right, and we're right together.

I was hoping, maybe we can take a few Thunder Birds and a picnic out beyond the wall today.

SURE!

WHAT?

Yeah sure, let's go!

David?

I'm sick of waiting around...

 Those Peaches are keeping secrets from us!

I heard Ben has been sneaking out behind the wall!

Let's find out what they're hiding!

....
Where'd Lilly go?

Didn't she say something about having to be at the hatchery this morning?

Let's pack our bags, grab the best food and get outta here!

What about the others?

Shouldn't we get them?

**NO WAY!** Like you said, just us two!

Lilly has already gone for the day. Ben's gone out before anyway, and Amanda would NEVER come.

She doesn't even like leaving the TREE-HOUSE!

That's not fair, Amanda is just —

**COMpletely USELESS!**

Why is it up to ME to get her sceptre down from that stupid tree?

Nobody else seems to even be trying to get home!

I'm FED UP, man. It's time to BUST OUT, and get some answers!

I'll go get my stuff.

Meet you back down here in five.

We'll leave the fire rocks behind for maximum sneak.

AWWW CRAP...
Don't Thunder Birds guard the wall? Storming up and down the track.

Lilly says they RIP apart ANY animal that gets caught in the weaving. Just like, tear their GUTS right out.

Have you SEEN the claws on them? Vicious. Savage. Nasty!

WONDEROUS!

Oh yeah, 'WONDEROUS'.

I don't get why we're not allowed through. They think we're the Spirits of the Forest, but won't let us into the actual forest?
We should go through here.
Check the fields by the river. Maybe even that Stone Forest we saw on the map.

Look at all this. How did Ben even get through here?
I asked him to take me with him next time he goes.
He said he didn't know what I was talking about.

However, I've got a plan, something I've been practicing.

Well I've got a sword!
No!
You idiot.

The bells will go off if you so much as touch the weaving.
Uh...

Then the birds will come and eat you alive.

You sure?
Choppy! Choppy!

Just watch.

Alright then, little plant...
Yes?

Well?

My sword would have been quicker.
I've been whispering to the weaving almost since we got here.

It wouldn't even listen to me at first.

It was grown to protect the village. It takes its job PRETTY seriously.

You're talking to it?

But now, I think we're friends. It trusts me.

I think we can come out here whenever we want.

It sure is MESSY out here.

There are no Fire-Rocks out here to clean up the leaf-litter.

-BLAAHH-

It's like, as soon as the weaving stops, the Peaches stop caring!

-PUFFT-

That's way harsh, David.

People only say that when it's way true.

How's your tea going for the Festival?

Laurence?

I keep asking around the village but no one can give me a clear answer on where he is.

Hey! What's that?

I can't believe your STUPID tree-talking stuff actually works!

We can come out here whenever we want, looking for Laurence.
There are so many animals out here that I've never even seen before...

All sorts of things...

The wall must do a pretty good job of keeping them out.

Those ones look like tiny kangaroos or...

**SOMETHING!**

Wagh! Oh! Argh!

**GIANT KANGAROOS?**

Where ARE we?

We're right where we started...
Since we got here... I mean... when we first got here, I noticed the stars.

WHAT? YEAH...

The stars here are all exactly flipped versions of the ones back home!

SOOOOO...

So it means problem: we can't just walk ourselves home. And that means people can't just walk to us!

We're not just on the same planet we were before, but were at the exact same coordinates...

You can't figure all that out!

I CAN and I DID!

NAH, that doesn't make any sense, David.

You gotta relax, man!

You're just trying to make it fit into your dorky science world.

Take a look around you...

It's not like that.

OH WHAT?

So you can talk to trees but I can't track the stars?

Well you're wrong! You can't possibly be seeing all that!

WELL I'M RIGHT! And that's not all I can see.

Your banana slug is hanging out of your pants!

WHAT?

ARRGH!

Yeah... sorry 'bout that.
Why are you even wearing those Peach clothes? Where are your real clothes?

What do you mean? Lilly and Ben wear Peach clothes all the time. It's just YOU and Amanda and even...

It's not right!

-SH HH HH HH-

Did you hear that?

Don't try to change the subject!

SHHH!

OOF!

GET IN!

Well, he's not going to put up with their Chitty-Chitty ways anymore...

Are you serious? Maleleuca is going to be SO Fire-Stone when...

When WHAT? When he finds out? We'll be HEROES when he finds out.

'HEROES'? DEAD heroes, if it all goes to rot.

You two poor delicate petals. Ya just need some more salt in ya.

Come listen to what they have to say. You'll see!

They're not allowed out past the weaving!

It looks like they have 0% care for that rule...
What are they doing out here?

Nathan... what the flip is that?

It's a [superimposed word] Pyramid.

David.

Idiot!

I know it's a pyramid! But who built it?

The Peaches sure don't have glass or metal or...

This is AWESOME!

You're not listening...

SHHHH - I'm trying to listen.
It's not enough that we go it alone—

—although some of you might be thinking that is the best of plans.

It's crotchety

**RIVER ELDER!**

What in the Hundred Acres?

We need to send these **FALSE SPIRITS** back to the bottom of the river where they came from!

I have never seen them perform a single miracle.

OR tell me a single thing I didn't already know myself.
Some of you might be looking with milk-stained eyes.

Fools!

Their minds still half-on the vine.

But ME and YOU, we see the REAL in the matter!

The Weaving might save us from the Lizards, but we already have an enemy within our homes.

And Maleluca would have us sway, like grass in the wind, to suit EVERYONE's needs but our OWN!

The WEAVING isn't for us. We River Peaches sail beyond it EVERY DAY. Those rules and laws aren't for us!

Maleluca is a weak fool who would have us live like SAPLINGS!

It's time for us to RECLAIM this forest, this ENTIRE forest!

We will turn out all the Spirits and Lizards and Tall-Fellas and grow WILD and PROUD!

They're planning on -

SHHHHH!

They're planning on sending us HOME!

They're planning on KILLING us.
Send us back. He said they wanted to help.

Are you kidding me?
Did you hear a word of -

We need to go and talk to them!

STOP! Are you crazy?

Stay still!
Ow!
Stop shouting!
Let go of me you jerk.

Can someone go see what that is please!

They're gonna hear you!
Get off me!

Hey! Who's there?

Come out come out.

We gotta get outta here now!

Fly you fool!
Don't be SHY!
We just want to PLAY!

Slow down, woitcha?

HA HA HA HA HA!

Come back!

FASTER!

Keep a PEEP open.

Don't lose it!

WA-HOOO!

Quick-sticks!

We got you NOW!

HA Ha Ha

Now it's FUN TIME!

RUN RU
Ohhh dear...
You're in the WETLANDS now...
Nowhere left to RUN to...
Nowhere left to HIDE...

Ohhh no...
Maybe they're not really trying to help us out...

We're gonna catch you.

—and peel you like an EGG.

Ha Ha Ha

I can cut them down. I can do it I can...

SHHHHHH...
Why not?
Cmon.

I'll be quick!
The sword is so sharp it'll-

SHHHHH.

AH AH AH

Just a quick little game.
YOU lost it! Elder will be criss-cross with you.

No Way!

Lost it.

It's gotta be here somewhere.

You really lost it.

What about in here?

I wasn't even seeing it anyway.

I was just following you two!

Nothing.

I did not.

Really?

I wasn't seeing anything either.

There was something.

Elder saw it.

I don't know what though.

We better get back. It's not safe this close to the stone forest.

Probably just a roo, caught in the ivy.

Gives me the creeps.

Ha Ha Ha.

You wuss.
But... The Peaches don't kill anything...
It's all tea, meditation and craft fairs.
That was crazy!

This is SECRET-PLLOT CENTRAL!
Remember in that episode of FABRIC ROBOTS where Tech-Swan was betrayed by the engineers even though the whole time you thought they were on the same team? The engineers had been building him every episode but really they were replacing his gears with PLASTIC ONES so that he would fall apart during his big battle with the Towering Bell. And then the big battle happened and they finally revealed they were actually SPIES for the Towering Bell squadron the WHOLE TIME!

We need to tell Maleleuca.

Tell him what?
Oh, by the way, Mal, we snuck out past the Weaving and saw some CRAZY Peaches plotting to KILL us and all the Lizards and—

Then we ran into the Stone Forest...
The what?

And we saw all the olden days buildings.

Huh?
This is **AWESOME**!

This is **INSANE**!

Why didn't they tell us this was all here?

There might be clues to help us get home!

These same constellations, the old **buildings**... is the river the same? All those old socks and bottle-tops...?

We could set up a **SECRET BASE** out here! I could grow all the food we need.
I just, there’s just not... I don’t feel like anything.
I can’t really remember much from back there.
Are you serious?

I remember things, I just don’t remember everything. Not all of it.

But before you know it, you’re eating breakfast and getting ready and with each second you’re forgetting more and more.

And you think, Oh, if I could just get a grip on it. I could pull the whole dream back.

But then, it stops being so important, and by lunchtime...

...you’ve forgotten you ever had a dream at all.

I can’t not remember.

Who’s your best friend?

But I’m here with all my favourite people and my best friend and...

Oh yeah!

You too, I was just messing with your head-brain. HaHa ha...
I don't think Laurence fell in the river with us.

No way, the Peaches SAID they saw him. Maleleuca SAID he might be out here for all we know.

He didn't fall in.

No, David, I remember seeing him on the bridge.

WHO KNOWS what those Peaches actually know. We could TOTALLY live here.

Look at ALL this CRAZY they've kept under lock and key.

We're NOT living here. We're NOT living with the Peaches either. We're waiting. Waiting until they send us back or we find a way to escape. "Escape"?

HOLD ON.

You don't want to go home... do you?

I just don't think we need to be MISERABLE while we ARE here.

You REALLY think we ARE Spirits!? ARE YOU KIDDING!?

This has been an AWESOME day of adventure. That's how I'd like it remembered.

My mind has NO IDEA what those words even mean.

Officially.

On the record.

NO IDEA!

OFFICIALLY!
I guess we'd better get back.

Before it gets dark.

I can't believe we didn't find a single person here.

Tell Mal?

David, uh, WAIT! What, what if he's in on it? RIGHT?

In on WHAT?
The River-Elder said he was going.

DAVID!

Who knows who we can trust.

RIGHT?

I mean, maybe they're hiding ALL KINDS of things from us! Maybe they're ALL in it together!

Until we can be sure, we'd better just keep all this to ourselves.

In fact, we better just keep it between you and me. We can't even be sure we can trust the others to keep quiet!

The 'others'?

The other Spirits.
I guess you're right...

You and me, we gotta stick together, David.

Remember, not a word to anyone.

Geez, I'm glad I can at least trust you, Nathan.
Dear Diary,

Happy Crackling Sunday! When all the baby Thunder Birds hatch for the year, it was pretty gross when they first came out, but once they're dry they're *SOOO CUTE.*

I tried to get Amanda to come but she barely leaves her seed pod let alone our tree house any more.

I spent most of the afternoon thinking about Mum and Dad. Amanda and David are always talking about home. I miss it and everything but... I don't think about it as much as them.

Dad

Mum

I guess seeing all the baby birds and their parents made me think of this...
FULL-MOON TEA FESTIVAL

On the full moon of the fifth month, the Peaches hold their largest celebration of the year. While festivals and ceremonies are held on nearly a weekly basis, the FULL-MOON FESTIVAL is of greatest importance as it is in honour of the pouring of tea. Each Guild is responsible for presenting a new tea, which is judged by all the Guild Elders. Traditionally, creatures from outside the village are included, such as the Lizards.

CELESTIAL SIGNS

It is believed that the waxing and waning of the moon represents the filling and emptying of a tea cup.

THE GREAT POURING

Peaches claim to be able to see the shape of a pouring teapot in the patterns on the moon. I find that a little challenging.

TEA POTS

Come in all shapes, sizes and adornments. While the GUILD OF MUD craft a great many tea pots, most Peaches prefer to sculpt their own pots. It is a source of pride and yet another opportunity for them to express their creativity and personalities.

Different cups and pot styles are often associated with specific teas. This is very complicated and difficult to keep track of.

BREWING

Teas are brewed over a FIRE-ROCK in special cradles. Brew time, flame intensity and brew pots vary greatly between different tea blends. FIRE-ROCKS are very skilled at maintaining a consistent temperature and knowing when a tea is ready.

RING-BANG-BO

When young Peaches begin to ripen, they start preparations for leaving home. This is known as the great Bing-Bang-Bo, which occurs at the beginning of the new year. These Peaches are expected to make their first tea set as a ritual. It is often looked back on with great humour and affection in later life.
Peach tea culture is deep and long. Brews are linked closely to events, times of the day and of the year. Ingredients are all believed to have their own individual meanings, stories and relationships with one another.

This chart covers FOUR TIERs of teas. PRIMARIES being single ingredient teas, SECONDARIES, with one extra ingredient, TERTIARIES a third and then finally QUATERNARIES a fourth. Each tea is slightly more complex than the last to prepare. Brewing time is in minutes.

SWEETIES
nectar
sap
honey

can be added to almost any tea. Some Peaches prefer a much sweeter tea while others believe it can hide the real flavour of the ingredients.

FORBIDDEN FRUITS

While almost anything can be brewed into tea, there are ingredients that are expressly banned for casual use. The list following is some of the more common ones but is not exhaustive.

NIGHT VISION
season-long sleeping

STONE
FRUIT
full body paralysis

FARE WELLS
complete memory loss

DAY DREAM
hallucinations

SPICY

VOICE TAKER
coughing fits & loss of voice.

DARK TREMBLES
violent fits and sweats
the grumpiest peach in all the village

thunderbird flamingo (lilyworn)

Chilliu like a villain

Amanda's birthday (I made the cake)

Sky kite festival

me and Blaze

Spirit fans dressed up as us!

Alright ghost fans!
SONG-OF-THE-MORNING

Blessings on the blossoms

Blessings on the fruits

Blessings on the leaves & stems &

Blessings on the roots
Good morning, you two.
Fruit market.

Water jugs.

New plans.

Drowned tea.

Don't even start nagging me until I'm dressed, Pepu.

NO nonsense today.

I've got a lot to concentrate on already.

I'm not in the mood for any of your antics.
Amanda BETTER NOT be sleeping in...

Probably got her BUTT in the air, snoring away...

I TOLD her we had to be up early. Is she on her way?

Shell be down in a few seconds, you say?

That's the FIRST straight answer I've gotten out of you ALL MONTH!

And now, what about today?

Are you going to tell me exactly how it's all going to happen?

How WHAT'S going to happen?
The Festival?
Did I hear you talking about-
YAAAAW...
N O T H I N G ,
sleepy-head.
Are you ready?
RE A D Y ?
NO.
WHY did you want me up sooooo early?

G O O D .
LE T S G O !
BREAKFAST!
I packed it already.
AWWW...

You can be so much like your stupid brother sometimes.
Have you noticed how cold it's getting in the mornings?

Have you?

Have I what?

Nothing...

Did you hear that Ben has been sneaking out past the Woven Wall?

We're totally not allowed to do that!

Who told you that?

My Elder, they heard it from one of the Bakers who was –

Your Elder should stop gossiping.

Why didn't you tell me?

I only found out yesterday.

I didn't have a chance...

What's he doing out there?

Is he getting secret ingredients for his tea as well?

...never tell me anything useful...
Have you seen David’s book that he’s been working on? It’s really -
Excuse me, are you Bessie?
Yes.
Great, can you organise fifty buckets of water to be arranged around the main stage for tonight?
Forty?
Do you know that Peach?
Anything you say, Dear Spirit.
No.
Oh, and have you seen what Nathan has been growing in the -
Amanda, STOP.
Just, STOP.
No boys. Remember?
SOZ.
We’ve got a lot of work to do for the Festival.
I just want to have a great day with you.
Ok?

Are you ok, Lil?
I mean, apart from being stuck in this forest...
Lil?
Just one good day, while we still can.
What can I give you for the Sunset Fruit Cuts?
Give me? I couldn't possibly.

Please.
Let me at least give you this.

A FOOT POUCH?
Dear Spirit, you're much too kind!

Thanks, Dew Dew.
See you at the tea festival tonight?

Hey... Betcha blossom you will!

What's Nathan growing over there? A maypole or something...
Yes yes. It's a MAYpole. He's very clever. But no boys.

Sorry... I forgot.

So, how's your tea recipe coming along?

Uh...
I, uh, well... I haven't exactly really started.

AMANDA!
The Peaches are expecting you to have a tertiary tea.
You've had weeks!

'scuse me.

Can you give these to Nathan please?

They're the new plans for the maypole.

Sure thing.
UH, Lil.

let's go a different way...

Are YOU wanting to step your rancid milk-stained feet on MY BEACH?

Hello there.

Can we go another way?
pleeease?

I don't know WHO you're used to talking to like THAT, but it's NOT ME.

Stand in my way again and I'll have the river crabs EAT YOU ALIVE while you're sleeping.

You don't have that power.

You're not a REAL SPIRIT!

Aren't I?
Hold this, would you?
Ok.
If he comes back, just throw rocks at him.
Lil, what are you doing? It's so cold.

LILLY!

LILLY!
That water is FREEZING, Lily. Put your cloak back on!
Have a look. It's for my tea.
Juice-plums steeped in salted river water for one moon cycle.
It STINKS! No one's gonna drink that.
I found the secret recipe one day while helping in the hatchery.
A mother-bird had used the recipe scroll to pad out her nest.

Y'know, it was here that they pulled us out.

Right here.
WHAT? NONE of us remember that. Even YOU said so!
I remember the water, after the bridge broke.

Filling my lungs. So cold.

Sometimes...
Sometimes it, the blackness, the cold...
I didn't know...

How are we gonna get your sceptre?

I dunno.

Do you even care?

Of course!

It sort of doesn't seem like you really care.

I just want to go home.

I'm so tired.

I just want David to -

David's not going to get us home.

Geez, weird!

Why would you even SAY such a RANDOM thing?

HA HA HA

Heh heh heh...

He's not your boyfriend, either.
You can see it from here...

When the sun hits it right.

I've stood here and wondered about it.

WHY is your sceptre all the way up THERE?

I mean, they told us it fell from the sky during a big storm...

But really, why?

Sometimes it feels like all this, EVERYTHING is nothing but make-believe.

Do you want to go home?

It's been six months now.

Well, do you?
I don't want to play this stupid game anymore!

I just want to go home and watch TV, Lil.

I'm tired of pretending. I'm tired of how dirty everything is and how cold it is and how hot it is and how all the days are sooooo boring...

Relaxing.

And we're all so scared...

Not everyone is scared, Amanda.

I mean...

I KNOW what you mean.

It's just, you're all so into it. You all act like you LOVE this place. Catching fish and roasting things and weaving stuff and...

I don't know how much longer I can do this for...
We've been gone for so long. My mum...
Give me a hand.

She probably thinks I'm dead!

Your mum will be freaking out.

Remember your tenth birthday at Sizzler, when we made that three-tier dessert?

And when we were walking back to the table, we tripped cos we were laughing so hard and it fell in that baby-stroller!

Your MUM was squealing and called off the whole sleep-over and sent us all home.

Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha. Yeah, good times.

I guess...
It's just so...
It's all like a bad dream.

It's not a dream, Amanda.
You can't share a dream.
I remember this dream—

HA HA HA

No, wait, it wasn’t a dream, it was a TV show.

And there was an ocean, an ocean UNDER the ocean.

Right under there. It had TIDES and WAVES and FISH in there and EVERYTHING!

It was AMAZING!

A lake under the ocean?

YEAH!

Do you want some?

Fruit cuts. My favourite.

Hey! Save some for me!

Oh HI, Mal.

SAY, aren’t you supposed to be getting ready for the festival?

OM-NOM

NOM-NOM good

Oh, but I most certainly am.

Look at ME, standing here in preparation.

So VERY preparing.
Right here, I am checking the progress of your teas.

Ah, the unmistakable smell of moon-rot.

Could that be woven sea grass-beads?

How did you know?
And of course, roasted pep-seeds.

Is he right?

All classic ingredients. All good choices.

The REAL question is, what is your FOURTH ingredient?

NO CHANCE, Mal. It's a secret.

As it should be.

You're SO much like your brother.

You mean he's just like ME!
I was born forty minutes before him.

So much like him.

You in there, Maleleuca?

Oopsie-Daisy! I've been caught. Better get back.

Bye.

Seeya.
Tea's done!

ERR, OK...

Don't worry, you little bogey. I knew you hadn't been working on your tea.

I've put together a simple blend for you, back at the tree-house.
You tell me these STUPID things, like to drown the juice-plums.

You tell me these STUPID things, like we'll never go home.

That we gotta keep pretending.

That Nathan will do this.

And David will do that.

And I can't do ANYTHING about any of it.

What I want to know is if everything is going to be alright in the end.

That's tricky. You're being tricky again.

Tell me if everything is going to be alright in the middle.

As we go along.

IS AMANDA GOING TO BE ALRIGHT?

You tell me these THINGS and there's NOTHING I can do about it. IS THERE?
YOU WHITE DEVIL OF A THING!

YOU!

YOU!

You...

Is everything alright in there, Dear Spirit?

Yes, just...

I just need a minute.
At last!

Dear Spirit, you are looking the true embodiment of our forest friends.

Did you bring your tea?

Yes.

No, did you bring your tea?

Oh, YOUR tea had better watch out for MY tea.

BRILLIANTFUL, a bit of healthy competition.

Everyone is in eagerment to see your teas.

ONWARD into the night!
MY PEACHES RIPE!
MY PEACHES SOFT!
It is, again, the most magical of nights.
It has been a MOST difficult of years.

For the first of times in many many moons, we have had to close our border to the Greater Forest.

It is with a terrific heaviness that we celebrate this Festival without our old friends, the sun catchers, the Lizard Empire.

This full moon is a time for gazing inwardly.

Where we can see in ourselves the kindness and generosity that will allow us to REGROW!

Next year, I can see us TOGETHER again.

Drinking, laughing, trading and full of song.

SHHHHHHHH.

For we are all a part of this GREAT connection.


They are all us, and we in turn are all of them.

SHUT UP!

Are you ok?

SHUT UP! SHUT UP!

Yeah, his speeches can go on...

SHUTUP! SHUTUP!

He just won't shut up!
We've got to go.
What about the ceremony?

Your tea, you've been working on it for months...

I don't care.

I just want to have this night.

One perfect night.

With you.
We're gonna be in SO MUCH trouble!

We can't get in trouble, Amanda.

We're gods.

OMIGOD, Lilly, what did you brew? What IS it?

Hee hee hee.
I don't know.

Hold out your cup.

You're so funny.

It's so... LOOK at all the sparkles.

It's like a HOLOGRAM!

Tastes like burnt honey.
All tingly.

Lilly?
Where are you going?

Lilly, I feel all fizzy.

-LIL-LEE-
-Hee hee hee-
HA-Hee-Hee

Hee Hee har-kk.
Hee hee pffff-

SHHHHH
we can't let them hear us.
PRBPP

OOOPS!
SHHHHH

- YOU -

-TOTAL -

IDIOT!
Where the HEll have you been?

We thought you'd been KIDNAPPED!

Kidnapped?

The Lizards... they came to the Festival,
They set fire to everything.

All the tents and there were Peaches running around SCREAMING!

The WHOLE place went up in flames, luckily there were heaps of buckets of water just laying around that we used to fight the fire.

We chased them off, back down to the beach. They escaped through a hole in the weaving.
One of them almost got me, down there. Had his club up and everything.

But when he went to swing it down on me, Ben fly-kicked him into the water.

Oh, Nathan.

Ben is still with him, we've got to go.

Go WHERE?

To see if he's alright!

Who?

David!

He's at the FIRST TREE.

He was BURNTAUGE—haven't you been listening to me?

You.

David...

You LIED to me.

I did everything to stop it, but this... this was what was going to happen all along. was it?

You told me AMANDA would be burnt.
Let me through. PLEASE.

Please, I just need to...
Lilly, I don't think you should. He's really badly hurt.

The mystics are saying he might not...

Lilly
Ughhh-haghah...

OH, Lilly...

He’s so badly burnt, Lilly...

WHAT are we gonna do?

I have a plan.
THE VILLAGE OF THE PEACHES

is perched upon the highest point along the valley. It provides for the Peaches, and in turn the Peaches provide for it.

The soil is cared for so that it can provide enough food for all the villagers. The river is fished from, just enough, to nourish everyone. Much time is spent in celebration, dancing, performing and eating. When there is an oversupply of resources or goods, they are gifted or traded during open festivals with other groups living in the Other Lands.

EVER-FLOWING

The water-ways are fished and tended to by the River Peaches. GUILD members will spend the majority of their lives on the water, from Sapling through to full Ripening. When Peaches finally succumb to the Bruising, the River Peaches take them to the Crystal Lands beyond the sea and plant them to rest.

OTHER LANDS

Most Peaches will spend their entire lives never leaving their village. Because of this the other lands of the forest are simply referred to as the Other Lands.

Plant languages on the other side of the river are remarkably different to the languages spoken in the village, so communication across the wind is difficult.

The few Peaches who do journey beyond the village are often viewed with a mix of suspicion and awe.
THE STONE FOREST

While this area is on the same side of land as the Village, the Peaches have sectioned it off and designated it as being forever forbidden. The shifting nature of its stone trees, appearing and disappearing without notice, means it is nearly impossible to map and incredibly dangerous to visit.
Nathen went fishing Griss!

The march of seasons

Check out this weed tapestry

The weary

Boat race festival

Caught this butterfly netting

A water bug stuck into the village
Dear Diary,

I have a plan.
A way to get us all home.
If I catch Pepu again I'm going to throw him in the river.
I'm going to brew some more tea and see what I can see then tell everyone the plan.
David is going to be ok.
We are all going home.

I don't know what to believe anymore.
SONG-OF-WATER

Two little boats sail on the sea, all is as calm as calm can be.

Gently the wind begins to blow, two little boats rock to and fro.

Loudly the wind begins to shout, two little boats are tossed about. Gone is the wind, the storm, the rain, two little boats sail on again.
END OF BOOK ONE
Campbell Whyte was born in Perth, Western Australia, wedged between a restless ocean and an endless desert.

He began making things not long after his birth, and today that rich tradition continues.

Home Time combines his love of the wild, video games, comics and art history into one great big adventure.

When not making comics, Campbell runs the children’s art school Milktooth with his wife, son and their hairless dog.

thanks to:
Mum + Dad + family for always supporting me. Tina, for unending enthusiasm. Nazario, for his patience while I worked on this book. Liz, for sharing a dream with me. Nicki, for mentoring me and encouraging this strange work. Shaun, for setting an impossibly high bar + daring me to try. Briony, for always being up for a squiggle. Chris, for taking a chance. Fred, Harry, James, for adventures. Elizabeth, for letting me into the CAW family. CAW family, for filling my heart to bursting. Alaina, for advice on paper matters. Pat, for giving me the country on the page. Luke, for registering me for the portfolio review. Ted, for taking the time to visit Perth. Leigh, for patiently combing the book. Jess, Suzanne, Robert + Luke for helping plot a course. Comics Maker Network, for boosting my morale. Apologies to everyone I forgot...<br>

Home Time would not have been possible without the generous support of the following organisations:
The last school bell has rung and it's finally HOME TIME!

Even though they're twins, Lilly and David don't agree on much... except that the last summer before high school is the perfect time for relaxing with friends.

But their plans for sleepovers, fantasy games, and romance are thrown out the window when the whole gang falls into a river and wakes up in a village of fantastic creatures.

Hailed as magical spirits, threatened by lizards, and trained in the mysterious arts of tea-brewing, these kids must find their way home — if they don't throttle each other first.

With a kaleidoscope of art styles, graphic novelist Campbell Whyte makes his spectacular debut, loosely but lovingly inspired by the fantasy worlds of the 80s and 90s.

"CUTE, FUNNY, SCARY, EXCITING, and cleverly constructed. The drawings are always a pleasure, each new art style blending seamlessly into the whole. I'm looking forward to the thrilling conclusion!"

- Bryan Lee O'Malley -

"Beautifully realised, funny, smart, weird and surprisingly epic, Home Time is also JUST PLAIN BRILLIANT."

- Shaun Tan -

Top Shelf Productions