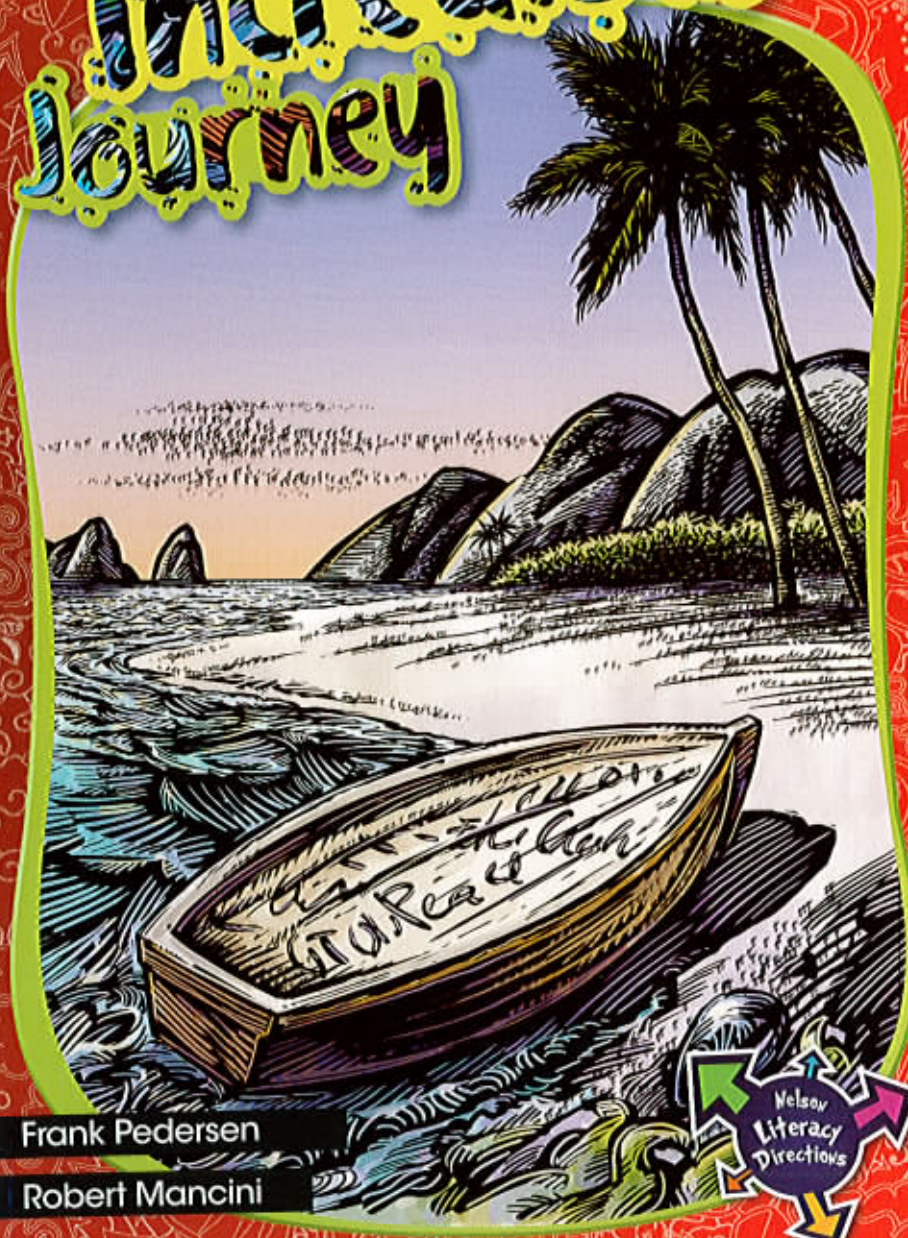
The Incredible Journey



Frank Pedersen

Robert Mancini

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CENGAGE Learning

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Cengage Learning Australia
Level 7, 80 Dorcas Street
South Melbourne, Victoria Australia 3205
Phone: 1300 790 853

Cengage Learning New Zealand
Unit 4B Rosedale Office Park
331 Rosedale Road, Albany, North Shore NZ 0632
Phone: 0800 449 725

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Written by Frank Pedersen
Illustrated by Robert Mancini

Contents

1 The Journey Begins 4
2 Fifteen Years Later ... 8
3 Fifteen Years Later ... 13
4 Fifteen Years Later ... 20
5 Fifteen Years Later ... 27

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Meet the Characters



Sambula

A young African soldier.



Luiz

A poor Brazilian.



Rihanna

An American girl.



An Old Man

An African statesman.

Also Featuring

Mandawuy

An Australian fisherman.

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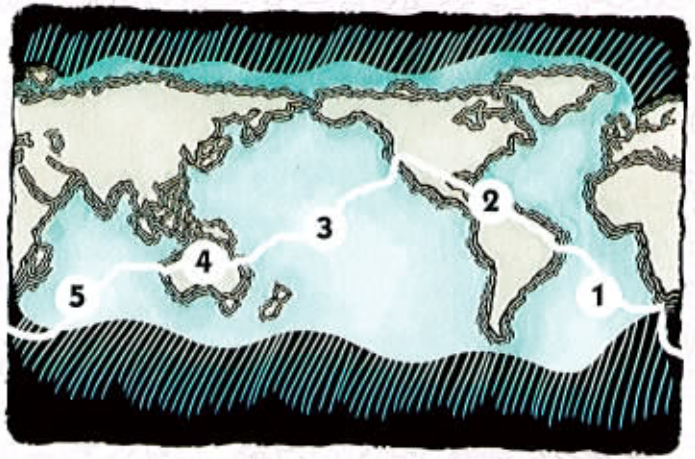
Dear Reader

We all share the same world – and every one of us is connected to each other. In this book, I wanted to tell the story of some people who never met but who were connected by something special, and whose lives were changed by the thoughts that they shared. I hope you enjoy it – and pass on the story to someone else!

Frank Pedersen

Author

The Incredible Journey



1. Africa to Brazil
2. Brazil to the USA
3. The USA to Australia
4. Australia
5. Australia to Africa

1 The Journey Begins



Above the thunderous crash of the waves on the deserted, moonlit African shore, the crackle of gunfire and the flat thump of explosions woke Sambula.

He sat up, instantly alert, his heart pounding. Through the darkness, there was another burst of gunfire – but Sambula breathed a sigh of relief. It was far off in the distance. Then the pain in his leg returned, a dull throbbing ache that brought back some terrible memories.

When the rebel soldiers had come to his village, they had gathered all the young boys together. The life of a child soldier, they had said, was one of adventure and endless excitement. Imagine how exciting it would be to fire real bullets from real guns. Imagine the freedom of having no rules.

The rebel soldiers smiled a lot. But all Sambula could think of was an old proverb his grandfather had once told him: "If you can see the teeth of a

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lion, he may not be smiling at you."

Sambula knew he had no choice. Behind their smiles, the rebel soldiers had hard, dangerous faces. If he refused to join them, terrible things might happen to his village. He went with the soldiers.

Later that fateful afternoon, on the dry, dusty road north, the rebel truck full of soldiers and children had struck a landmine.

Flung from the tangled wreckage, Sambula had been lucky to escape with only an injured left leg. After a few weeks, he was able to walk again. But late at night, the pain – and the memory of the terrible explosion – often kept him awake.

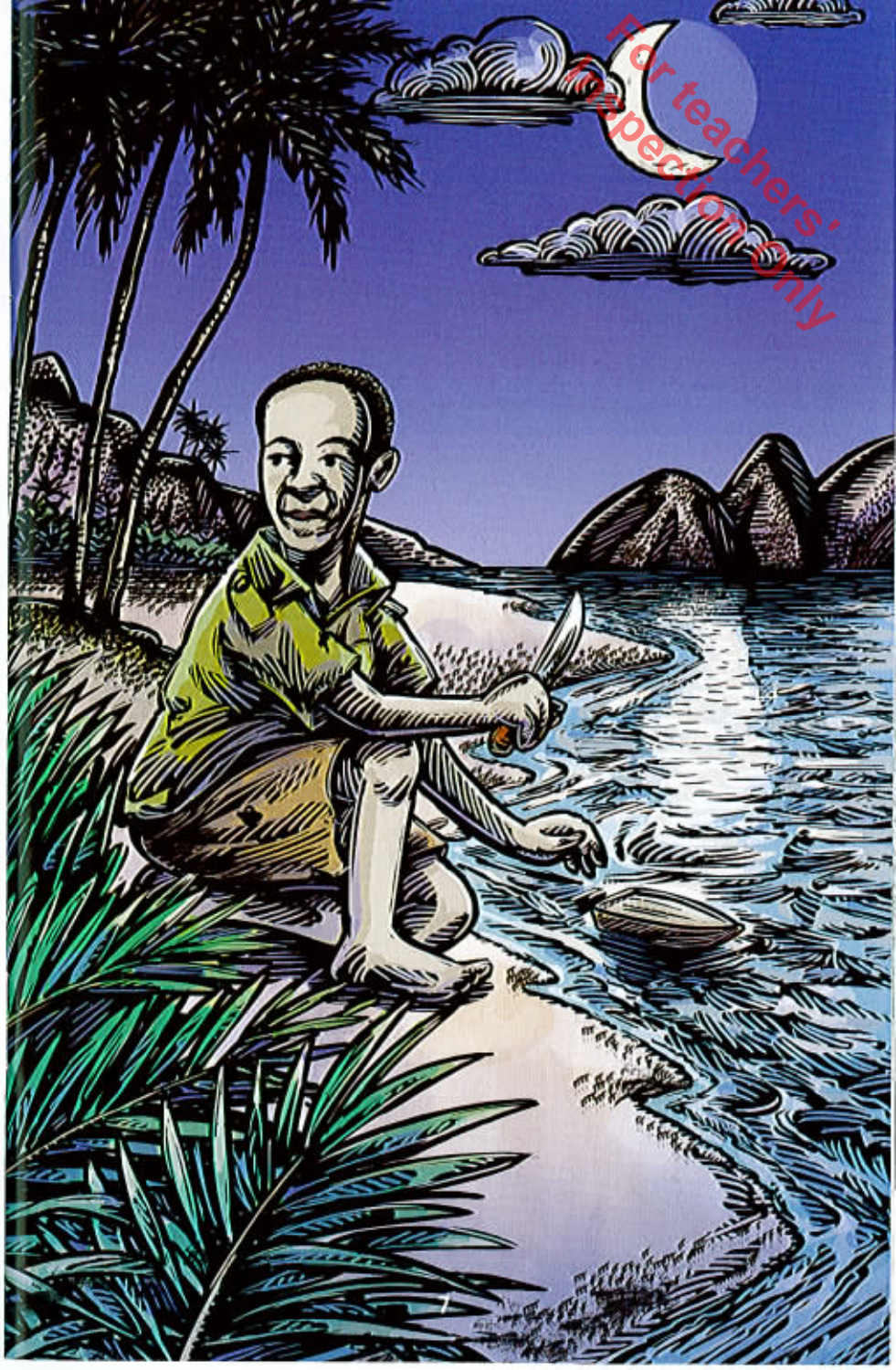
Sambula silently slipped past the sleeping sentries, and walked quietly down to the beach. From his belt, he drew the sharp knife that he always carried with him – and from the pocket of his tattered army shirt, he carefully took out a piece of wood.

The small, carved boat that he had been slowly shaping during the long, painful night hours was finally finished. He knew he could never escape the rebels. But tonight, he would set the boat free.

He limped down to where the waves hissed up onto the shore, and saw the calm stretch where he knew there was a dangerous rip, sucking the water out to the Atlantic Ocean. He was about to set the boat upon its journey, when he stopped suddenly.

As the moonlight cast an eerie glow on the waves and the beach, Sambula thought about what he most wanted. The crackle of gunfire, closer this time, floated over the waves. He missed his grandfather and he missed his peaceful life back in the village. He carefully cradled the boat in his hand and carved the words "go in peace" onto its deck before lowering it into the dark water.

The incredible journey had begun.



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