

Rainbow Durbin



Table of contents

Table of contents	2
List of Authors.....	3
Copyright.....	4
Acknowledgements	5
Prologue.....	6
Chapter 1	7
Chapter 2	8
Chapter 3	10
Chapter 4	11
Chapter 5	13
Chapter 6	15
Epilogue.....	17

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PARAMETERS

Primary Character 1:	Clothes Designer
Primary Character 2:	Street Busker
Non-Human Character:	Talking Parrot
Setting:	Movie Set
Issue:	Dieting

Random Words which must appear at least once somewhere in the story:

Nurse
Heart
Joy-ride
Underground
Sneeze

Copyright

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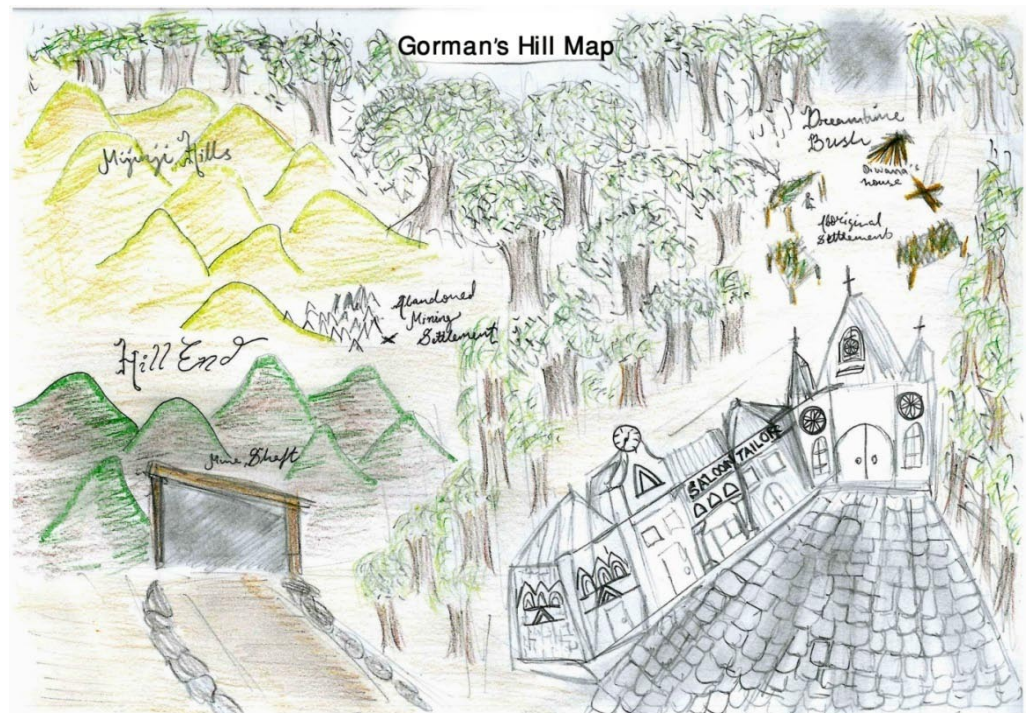
This book is in dedication to the Yeti, and the devoted Joey's library staff for all their time and effort.

All proceeds of this book will be going to the discovery and preservation of the Yeti.

Prologue

Long, long ago, before the Earth was shaped, there lived a Rainbow Serpent. A magnificent snake, the largest being of all the dreamtime creatures. It moulded the Earth with its body, carved the trenches that became the rivers and ocean, heaved the rocks, created mountains and landforms. It was all powerful. But the Serpent did not carve the world from sheer power of size. It possessed a mystic power, a strength that radiated from the colours in its skin. But the power never stayed strong. For the Serpent possessed a trait that all snakes share. It would shed its skin. But only once every Millennium. When this would happen, the skin would be sought by all, for the skin still possessed enough power to make any mortal being immortal, immune to the weapons of man. As a result of this known power great wars were fought and many lives lost. The Rainbow Serpent saw what was happening as a result of its shedding. It gathered up the skin and hid it far beyond the reaches of human hands. But the spiritual elders saw what damage was being caused by the Serpent's carelessness, and banished him to a human form, destined to roam the land until the skin had been found and power had to be balanced.

The skin had not been found in millions of years, but an unsuspecting Englishmen's life would be changed forever.



Chapter 1

It was a fine morning in Hill End. The sun was just slipping over the horizon and the smell of damper was thick in the air as the Chinese Miners, seeking riches and fortune, rose from their makeshift homes, tents and shacks. A steady line was forming as white miners joined the cue on the dusty road towards the mines. But rise was not so early for Henry Dawson. A man who had fled from the boisterous streets of central London in search of something more, to the land of opportunity, Australia. But Henry had found something that was far better than he had expected. Love. A simple Australian girl, daughter of a wheat farmer from Nyngan. Elizabeth was her name and it was love at first sight. They were married a mere 5 months after Henry had settled and had been happy ever since. Henry had opened a Tailors Shop with his new wife and lived off the income ever since. It was a modest income though, and Henry wanted more.

The gentle morning quiet was broken by a smash and a scream of frustration, followed by a woman storming out onto the street, hair looking static and a distraught expression lingering on her face. She was followed by a man who was dressed in a waist coat and white apron. Any person who had seen this couple a short 4 years ago would not believe it was the same people. Elizabeth was different. Her face was lined, bags under her eyes destroyed what was once a beautiful face and there was a certain distain about her that was not there 4 years ago. She seemed to have gotten very old very fast. And Henry was the same. His once smooth hands were now rugged and marked from the jabs of pins and his once well groomed face was un-kept and hadn't been shaved for weeks. Shaving was the last thing on Henry's mind at this point in time. He and Elizabeth had been fighting for over six months on whether they should migrate the shop to a larger town, where business would be stronger. "I don't want to leave! I can't leave!" screamed Elizabeth one night, during what had become somewhat of a daily ritual of bickering. "All my friends, my family... just no Henry...No." and as usual, Henry would come back with the same rebut, "But Elizabeth... we aren't making any money here, soon the gold rush will be over and all the miners will move away and we will be left with nothing." And again, as usual, Elizabeth pulled out a loaf of bread and started to eat her worries away. "Please stop eating Elizabeth, you're destroying yourself..." "You can't tell me what to do anymore Henry; I've lost all respect for you." And with that, Elizabeth left Henry, close to tears, supporting himself on the kitchen bench.

Henry left the kitchen in a daze. What was happening to his marriage? What was happening to his love? What was happening to himself...? He reached the front door and opened it, the cool night air easing his emotions. He looked warily into the distance, at the flickering lights of the fires coming from the mining camps, and wished for something more. And with that, he turned, locked up shop and padded up stairs to the bedroom and into sleeps dark embrace.

Chapter 2

Henry Dawson was a proud man. He had pride in his appearance and shop. Even though Henry had only just made the treacherous and arduous migration from England merely 5 years before, Henry had pride in his new found country. Although he would not show it, he was still not happy. Henry wanted to seek out adventure and riches that would catapult him into high society. But life was hard for all people of this time in Australia. Many people like Henry relied on their meagre pay to provide the basic needs.

The next day, Henry was awoken early in the morning by a mystical sound. This sound was so utterly foreign to the great European sonatas that Henry familiar with. Henry being a curious man let his body be drawn towards the source of the music, like a hungry dog drawn to the scent of raw meat. Henry crept down the old wooden stairs ever so lightly so as not to wake his sleeping wife. The music continued to be played beyond the latched front door. As Henry made his way outside he was met by fresh country air, while dew gradually melted on the glistening land as the sun arose over the horizon of Hill End. This blissful scenery complemented the mysterious music which was luring Henry into the unknown. Out of the corner of his eye Henry saw an arcane figure which seemed to be the source of the majestic music. The instinct which was leading Henry toward the music seemed too hasten as he gradually neared his destiny. Henry could now identify the mysterious source of music as an old Aboriginal man. However Henry did not recognise the instrument with which this man was playing. It seemed to be a large piece of hollow wood and yet this man was able to conjure various sounds of native animals.

“Sir, could I ask who you are and what that large wooden instrument you are playing?” Henry inquired

“This suh’, some call it a didgeridoo and I am Jagort Durrin an elder of the Wiradjuri tribe” the elderly man replied in a raspy voice.

“That music you’re playing sounds so enchanting and almost mystical”, Henry said his voice fading with wonder.

“These are the songs of long ago when mysterious and powerful beings walked the land”, the old man told Henry, looking him in the eye.

Jargon Durrin saw the desire of adventure in Henry’s eyes and felt compelled to tell him the mystical story of the Rainbow Serpent. Henry was eager to listen to the story however he was still intrigued by the ‘didgeridoo’, but when Henry heard Jargon Durrin speak of magic snake skin he became fixated on learning more.

“I can feel that you have good intentions and heart, let me lead you on a journey that will change your life forever”, Jargon gave Henry the opportunity he had always dreamed of.

“But where are we going sir?” Henry asked bewildered as he still hadn’t come to grips with the strange events of the last day.

Morning had completely arrived by now, with the smell of burning damper and freshly brewed tea. The town was now starting to swing into full gear and start another day of work whilst Henry was being lead to towards a mysterious destination.

“Over the Mijinji Hills and past the sacred tree, there lies the final resting place of the Rainbow Serpents Skin.”, Jargon Durrin blew Henry away with this amazing story.

Chapter 3

This was the moment Henry had been waiting for all his life. Jargort Durrin and Henry took over two hours to reach the mysterious destination of the Snakes Skin. Jargort Durrin told Henry that the skin contained magical powers that gave the owner of it great fortune and protection from any mortal weapon. The walk was hard and Henry was full of excitement, even if they didn't find any mysterious snake skin, this was the most fun he had had in the last five years.

"Just under that rock there" Jargon pointed in the direction of a large moss engulfed boulder.

Henry began to rummage through leaves near the boulder until he felt a position where he could heave the boulder out of the way. As Henry moved the boulder he saw a large majestic silky looking material. Henry gasped as he realised that this material, this godsend was exactly what he was seeking, exactly what he needed to improve the quality of his and his wife's life.

"There is a price young Henry.....those who bear the magic snakes skin can suffer greatly if they use it for evil", Jargort Durrin told Henry quite seriously.

Henry didn't listen to what Jargort Durrin said; instead he was mesmerized by the texture of the ancient snakeskin. Henry took a small piece of the snake skin and he and Jargort Durrin began to make their way back to society.

Over the course of the next month Henry experience great fortune and great business in his tailor shop. People from all over New South Wales came to Henry's shop for highest quality tailored suits. Henry finally felt comfortable, respected and happy with his new found life in Australia. It was almost like the snake skin was a good luck charm rather than an ancient weapon of war.

Henry, however was disappointed that he was not able to find Jargort Durrin anywhere, not even at the resting site of the ancient snake skin. Although it seemed to be a good luck charm Henry would find out later how much this 'godsend' would prove to be exactly the opposite.

Chapter 4

It was not until weeks later that Henry's luck began to change. One day Henry noticed that the cup in its saucer started to rattle. Henry's only thought was not that trouble could be approaching but that the cup and saucer, being of the finest china, might be damaged in the shaking. With a sigh he got up to stop the rattling and also to finish his tea when he heard a sound that filled him with dread. He could still hear echoing around the hills, it was a sound that he had become intimately familiar with in his lifetime. The unmistakable sound of a lever action Winchester rifle firing in all its glory had just echoed around the town. What the hell? He thought. It was the gold rush all over again, some kid probably thought he'd found gold and is doing anything to protect it. Then he heard more gunshots and this time screams. Holy crap, that sounded like it came from the Davies' place, he thought. Growing more anxious he crept toward the window and peered out into the gathering dusk. The scent of smoke crept up his nostrils and registered even before he saw the plumes of smoke scarring the sky along with the flames leaping eagerly after them. Running around the inferno were at least a dozen men on horses. Suddenly the door burst open and Mrs. Davies came running out, her back in flames. She didn't get very far as she was gunned down before even making it off the porch. He watched in horror as the two Davies children ran out after their mother only to be caught by the bandits and tied up. Suddenly there was an explosion from under the house which blew the whole house sky high. Henry guessed it would have had something to do with the enormous amounts of gelignite and gunpowder Mr. Davies kept in his basement to use in the mines. Ironically the very thing that could have helped get rich was now ending all his dreams of living a stable and long life.

Henry closed the curtain slowly lest they notice the movement; he need not have worried for they already knew of his wealth and of the peculiar material of which he was in possession of. The attack on the Davies place was just a distraction. Henry crept toward the back room to where he knew a rifle was always waiting, cocked and loaded for such a purpose. Thank God Elizabeth was upstairs, asleep due a tonic given to her by the doctor. He went into the back room, treading softly for he had no idea where they were. He retrieved the rifle and, after checking that it was loaded, started to head towards the safe where the pieces of the rainbow serpent skin resided, in a safe behind the picture of King Edward. He leant the rifle against the wall and was just about to open the safe when a blinding pain came over him and he collapsed against the wall. Standing over him was the most feared bandit in Australia, One Shot Splinter, leader of the Splinter Gang. "Where is the Skin?" he shouted. "Tell me where it is!" "Yo-yo-you'll never find it, n-n-not without a guide and the map." "Well I've got the guide here and if you don't give me the map your wife is gonna need one to get to heaven!" "I will give you the map, I will lead you to the skin and I will even make you clothes out of it! All I ask is that you leave now and leave this town alone forever." "How

do I know I can trust you?” “The clothes will be ready within three days, come back then and after that leave us alone.” “If they aren’t ready by then you’ll have to find a new wife hahahaha.” Then Splinter cracked over the head again and Henry was out for the count.

Chapter 5

For the next three days Henry worked as he'd never worked before. It was not only his life on the line but the whole towns and including that of the woman he loved and had sworn to protect when he'd married her. Elizabeth had been none the wiser when she woke up and Henry did not intend to trouble her with his problems only saying that there had been a fire at the Davies. So he worked with a zeal and fervour he never knew he had, worked day and night on a garment that could make a man invincible, the very same garment that he was giving to the one of the biggest criminals in Australia. Ned Kelly was made a hero for defying the law whereas the Splinter Gang just robbed and killed people. How had they found out about the Rainbow Serpent Skin? He had no idea but that did not matter because unless he finished the suit before tonight pretty much everyone he knew would be dead, on the other hand as soon as One Shot Splinter got the suit Henry was going to be a liability and liabilities need to be taken care of. Either way Henry really couldn't see a way out of dying tonight. However there was at least a small glimmer of hope that the Splinter Gang would stay true to their word if Henry gave them the suit. Even it wasn't even completely finished the suit looked brilliant, it shined with a thousand colours, Henry couldn't even put a name to what some of the colours were for he had never seen such brilliance in a material. And to think that it was only a portion of the entire skin he'd seen tucked away in that cavern. He was still taken back with the material and how it felt like silk when worn but could stop anything be it bullet, musket ball, cannon fire and blades. This was nothing compared to its other properties like that of immortality.

He'd just finished making the last skitch when the back door crashed open and in strolled One Shot Splinter and his Gang. "Have you got the suit?" "Yes I just finished it. Remember our deal? About leaving me and this town alone?" "Yeah, yeah just gimme the suit before I decide to add some lead into the deal." "Alright I've got it here." Henry picked up the suit gingerly and passed it into the waiting hands of one of Splinters lieutenants who then just tossed it to Splinter. "I think I might try it on for size" he said softly, gazing in wonder at the myriad of colours coming from the remarkable material. "Oi, Henry, guess what? The deals been changed how about you give me the rest of the material and I don't kill you and your wife." "That wasn't the deal, I give you the suit you leave us alone!" Henry protested. "Well would you believe it? You, being a bloody fool and one of those trustworthy types, have just lost your only bargaining chip, so the deal has changed and I want the skin. NOW!" "No I won't give it to you." "Then you'll watch your beloved shop and town burn to the ground!" "NO!" But it wasn't enough. As much as he fought as his captors grip he couldn't get free and had to watch as his shop, his life was soaked in kerosene. "Shall we go outside?" said Splinter, nodding to the men holding him to take him outside. Once outside, Splinter nodded again to one of his men who simply tossed a match into the building which

went up in flames at once. All around him Henry saw the Splinter gang go about on its murderous rampage, burning the town he loved. All Henry could do was weep and beg for them to stop. “Give me the Skin!” shouted Splinter. “Okay just stop the violence.” “It won’t stop until you give me the skin!” “OK I give in!”

Chapter 6

The show down had come to pass. It was now or never for Henry to right the wrongs that he had committed in his past. It was his time now to help his friends and save his community from the outlaws and to save his beloved wife.

“Henry we must fight together, your people and my people must learn to share this wide brown land and we need to banish these bushrangers from my scared lands and right our wrongs to save both our souls.” Durrin said to Henry.

“But I haven’t ever done this and I don’t even know how to fire a gun let alone kill a man” Henry replied

“I will teach you and we will not need to kill them I have a plan to rid them from the town and to make them suffer for the rest of all eternity. I can heal your wife if you so choose to help me”

“The deals done I am at your total service no matter what”

With that Jargon and Henry walked solemnly to the back of the house where he had his secret store of armaments. Henry hit the circa 1780’s coat cupboard and the heavy oak doors open wide revealing a huge range of imported American civil war Winchesters as well as a number of handmade officers pistols all from the confederacy.

“Are you sure you have never fired a gun Henry??”

“Well I haven’t fired in anger in a long time... I have kept all of my father’s civil war weapons. He was a General of the confederacy during the war and afterwards gave me all the guns and the like he could find as presents.” Henry replied.

“oh ok then everything should be alright then get yourself equipped and then we’ll take this to the street outside the pub to finish this once and for all”

Henry selected two stout 45 magnum pistols with engraved ivory handles as well as his father’s own Winchester with the handmade stock and modified bolt action. He Strapped up and started to load his ammunition belt and hung them over his shoulders and across his chest with a small crucifix in between that Elizabeth had given him as keep sake. Henry began to walk slowly back through the shop slowly to meet Diwana out in the street. He was quietly praying and hoping that this fabled rainbow serpent skin would hold out and protect him. It had totally covered his body even in his hat and the bandana over his jaw line. He reached the front door, Durrin crouched down in the middle of the road, and lifted his left leg and brought it down hard on the doors dead lock, sending the door frame splintering across the road in a shower of debris. Henry strutted purposely through the shattered door frame and onto the road pulling the two 45’s out of there holsters and twirling them through his fingers like the gunslingers of the Wild West.

“Somebody must have had some practice!” Jagort Durrin Yelled to Henry as he joined him in waiting for the imminent clash of the outlaws and themselves.

"I may have had some experience in my younger, crazier days!" Henry shot back quickly.

Just then the ground began to shake and the sounds of wild hooves crashing filled the pairs ears in a deafening burst suddenly the bandits were in a tight circle around them on their valiant steeds with wild dingoes nipping at their heels. The leader of the Bandits, One Shot Splinter, leaned over slightly on his mount and said;

"If you two low life's want to take on me and me gang then fine we're here for a fight."

"IF you're going to bring it I'm not going to stop you mate!" Henry spat back venomously pointing his revolvers squarely at the bandits' face. The other members of the gang backed away to cover up in preparation for the battle.

A single shot rang out across the valley and then there was a deathly silence.

Henry had shot one cold, hard warning shot, into the clean crisp air.

"I am giving you 30 seconds to run for cover, Splinter." Henry said calmly

Splinter sat high up on his horse and turned to gallop back down The Street. About a hundred yards away he turned to face Henry and Durrin again. Splinter raised his rifle and yelled ,

"You're not even going to live to regret this boy!"

AS soon as splinter had said that a cold lead slug left the rifles chamber and headed straight for Henry's mouth at 1300 feet per second. Then with a heavy thud the bullet hit Henry straight in his jaw where he had his bandana. The slug bounced off with a twang to the ground. The serpent skin had worked and stopped a rifle shot.

"You were right Durrin this stuff is the very best!"

Durrin was dancing in small circles on the ground in the middle of the street.

"What are you doing now Durrin?" Henry inquired while raise his Winchester to aim up Splinter.

"Henry you must shot all of the bandits at least once but don't kill them. I will do the rest." He replied coolly.

"Ok will do" yelled Henry as another shot rang out. This one however found its target and sunk deep into Splinters chest at the seam in the Rainbow Serpent Skin suit just above his heart.

"How do you like them apples you scoundrel!" Henry yelled

Splinter hit the ground hard as he fell off his mount and Henry ran out from behind his cover in front of the pub with his two revolvers blazing. Each time a bullet left the chamber another body dropped. Every slug landing in the same place as splinters-just above the heart- not enough to kill but enough to knock them out. Henry dragged the unconscious into a circle in the road for Durrin.

"Henry, thank you. You have no idea what this has done for me. It has set me free. Let me take care of the bandits now and I will come back to heal your wife." Durrin said as Henry walked off to tend to his wife.

Epilogue

A short time later once Henry had returned home to his wife and shed himself of his weapons and serpent skin suit he went to comfort his darling wife Elizabeth in her final hours. As he was kneeling next to her on her death bed Durrin appeared in the room.

“Durrin why are you here??” Henry inquired in-between sobs.

“Henry I am here with my Totem, the Kookaburra, to help you and your wife.”

“How can you help her? It too late..” said Henry.

The kookaburra left Durrin’s hand and landed on Elizabeth’s face and began to cry. The tears ran down the face of the Kookaburra and into the eyes of Elizabeth. She awoke instantly and stood up. When she arose she was a changed woman. She had lost all of the extra weight that had been the problem affecting her health.

“But Durrin it’s a miracle!!” Henry yelled

“No its not. What you did to save the town and help me was a miracle. What you did no other man would. You have helped me find myself and become one with the land. I am once again whole. Now if you want to use this skin again I will give you free access to limitless supplies.” Durrin replied.

“No I don’t want it. I realised what i really want and that’s my wife and our health. They are the things that are really important to me. Here Durrin take the skin.”

With that Durrin took the skin and with a puff of smoke he turned back into the serpent and disappeared.

“I love you Elizabeth”

Henry Dawson



Henry Dawson



In the 1800s, the Australian outback was a harsh place. Dreamtime magic fills the air and bushrangers rule the land. Henry Dawson is a modest tailor whom supplies 'One-shot Splinter' and the Splinter Gang with enchanted suites, making them invulnerable to harm.

When Henry Dawson's wife Elizabeth takes a turn for the worse with her sickness, Dawson looks to the great Shaman for answers. Henry Dawson must make the ultimate sacrifice to save his wife and restore the legend of the Dreamtime, much to the frustration of the Splinter Gang. Henry Dawson must strive for the greater good and stand up to injustice, but the burning question is, will he be too late?

Recommended for 12 – 14 years of age