

# ROBYN DAVIDSON

Robyn Davidson knew nothing about camels, deserts or expeditions. She only knew she wanted an adventure in the Australian Outback. Robyn moved to Alice Springs and spent two years learning how to handle camels and survive in the desert. Only then did she feel prepared to begin her trek across the desert.



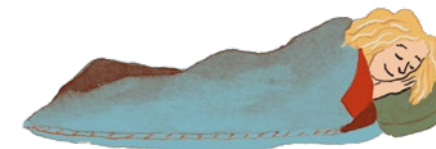
**T**wo years after arriving in Alice Springs with just a suitcase of unsuitable clothes, \$6 and her dog, Robyn was ready to set out on an incredible journey across the desert. Camels have a ferocious bite and kick, so learning how to handle them was hard work. She also had to overcome many doubters who did not believe she would survive.

Bone dry and unimaginably vast, the Australian Outback is a daunting place for an inexperienced traveller, but it is also beautiful with breathtaking landscapes and wildlife such as kangaroos and cockatoos. Robyn took more than six months to cover the 2,700 km to the ocean. The adventure pushed her to her mental and physical limits.

## LONG DAYS

Robyn mostly travelled with only her four camels (Dookie, Bub, Zeleika and her calf Goliath) and her beloved dog, Diggity, for company. Each morning, Robyn woke early, boiled tea, packed the gear and saddled the camels. At night, the camels roamed to search for food so Robyn had to find them in the morning by following the sound of their bells. One of her most frightening experiences was the day she thought they had all run away. Without the camels, Robyn would certainly have died before reaching safety. What would you have done in that situation?

“The two important things that I did learn were that you are as strong as you allow yourself to be, and that the most difficult part of any endeavour is taking the first step.”



## NEW FRIEND

One night Robyn dreamed that an old Aboriginal man befriended her and helped with her adventure. Later on the journey, when she was feeling lonely, a Pitjantjatjara man called Mr Eddie appeared from nowhere. He travelled with Robyn for the next 300 km. Mr Eddie could not speak English but he and Robyn communicated by miming and acting, laughing happily at each other.



## A WONDERFUL SIGHT

When Robyn eventually reached the Pacific Ocean, after six long, hard months, her camels were very confused. They had never seen so much water before and were disappointed that they could not drink the salty water. But Robyn managed to persuade her beloved animals to wade into the sea so that they could all celebrate together. I bet that felt amazing after trekking in the scorching heat!





## KIT

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1 barrels of water                            | 7 rope               |
| 2 sleeping mat                                | 8 compass            |
| 3 shackles (for hobbling the camels at night) | 9 change of clothes  |
| 4 food  | 10 sheepskin rug     |
| 5 dog food                                    | 11 muzzle for camels |
| 6 swag (a portable bedroll)                   | 12 blanket           |
|   | 13 map               |

### ROBYN'S GOLDEN RULE

Robyn's golden rule when camping was to always care for the camels before herself. They were the most important part of the adventure. After a long day, Robyn removed their loads and saddles, then hobbled them so that they could search for food without straying too far. Only after she had done that would she build a camp fire and cook her own dinner (usually a tin of stew). Finally, she climbed into her sleeping bag, called a swag, and fell asleep. She often slept beside the fire because the desert nights were cold – temperatures could drop to less than 5°C.

### Why Robyn Davidson Inspired Me

Robyn knew nothing about camels or expeditions but she did not let that stop her. It would have been easier to say "people like me don't go on adventures like this," but Robyn persevered until she was almost competent enough to begin. The rest she learned along the way. I have always wanted an adventure in the Outback. Robyn's brilliant book, *Tracks*, with its beautiful photography, adds to that dream.

### DEEP IN THE AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK...





# FELICE BENUZZI

During World War II, Italian Felice Benuzzi was captured in Kenya. He was placed in a prisoner-of-war camp overlooking the peaks of Mount Kenya. The boredom of prison life, combined with the tantalising view of the mountain, made Felice yearn for freedom and adventure. Although it's not easy for someone locked in prison to climb a mountain, Felice dared to dream big!



Both climbing a 5,000-m mountain and escaping from a prisoner-of-war camp are risky undertakings. Although seemingly impossible, that is exactly what Felice dreamed of doing!

Felice found two friends willing to join his adventure and others who would help their secret preparations. It took imagination and cunning to make ice axes, crampons and other equipment from items they could find or steal in the prison without getting caught by the guards. The preparations took eight months. Felice planned their route from the only map they had: a drawing of Mount Kenya on a tin of Oxo cubes! Before they could even set foot on the mountain, they first had to escape from their prison camp. Then they had to climb a very difficult mountain. Finally, they planned to then break back into the prison camp!

The inmates were on such slim rations that they were only able to collect a few spare raisins here and there as extra food on the trip. Do you think they would fill you up after a huge mountain climb?



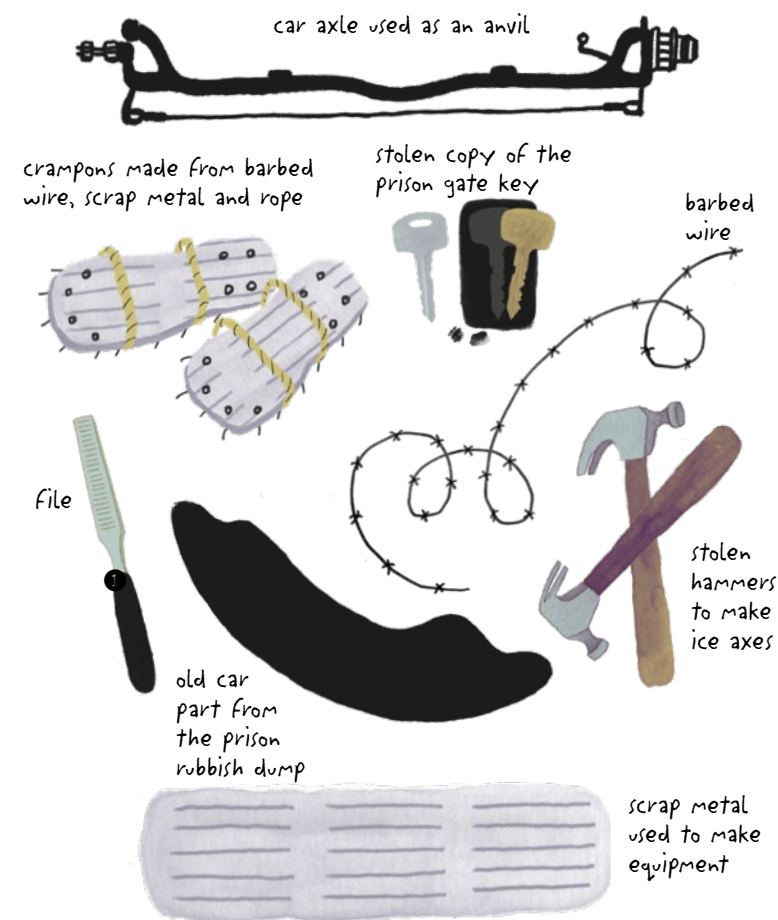
“The more I considered the idea of escape, the more I realised the magnitude of the task I had set myself.”

## Why Felice Benuzzi Inspired Me

I love the joy of this adventure: hatching plans with your friends, the beauty of Africa and the challenge of attempting something difficult in the mountains. It was made all the more complicated by being a prisoner!

Felice's determination that even war and prison would not stop his dreams is inspiring. It reminds us that if you are determined enough, then you can make adventures happen.

## KIT THEY HAD



## KIT THEY SHOULD HAVE HAD!





WHEN MOUNT KENYA CALLED, THEY NEEDED...



RUBBISH RAIDS!

SECRET DEALS!

# The Great ESCAPE PLAN

STARRING...

FELICE BENUZZI

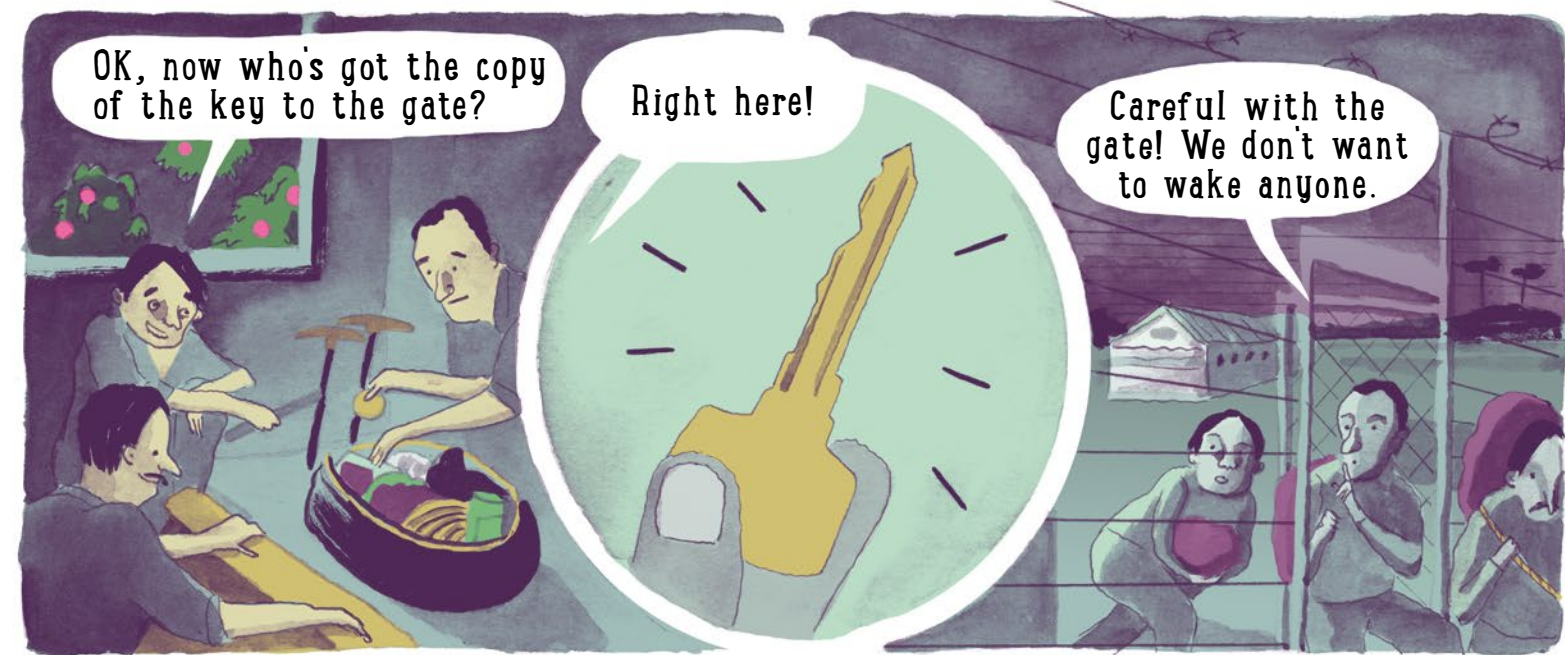
VINCENZO BARSOTTI

GIOVANNI BALLETO



STOLEN EQUIPMENT!

KIT HIDDEN IN THE TOMATOES!



OK, now who's got the copy of the key to the gate?

Right here!

Careful with the gate! We don't want to wake anyone.



Please tell me that was just your stomach growling?









# SARAH OUTEN

Sarah Outen spent four years rowing, cycling and kayaking round the world. She was hit by a tropical storm on the Pacific Ocean and a hurricane whilst crossing the Atlantic. The journey definitely did not go to plan, but Sarah says that it was all the better for that in the long run.



Can you imagine taking a four-and-a-half-year journey around the world via land and sea? Well, that's exactly what Sarah Outen did!

After months of training, Sarah began her adventure by paddling out of London, UK, and across the English Channel, arriving in France nine hours later. She then jumped on her bicycle, Hercules, and rode east, covering more than 16,000 km across Europe, Central Asia and China. The journey was both gruelling and exhilarating, and Sarah learnt a lot on the way about herself and the kindness of people she met.

## HURRICANES AND STORMS

The biggest challenge Sarah faced was rowing across the oceans solo (although she rowed her first ocean when she was just 24). She capsized 20 times, was rescued after a tropical storm on the Pacific Ocean damaged her boat, and was also picked up on the Atlantic Ocean before a hurricane struck. For most people, these experiences would be enough to make them never return to the sea again, but Sarah found the motivation to continue her journey. It is a good reminder that adventurers must have perseverance, be positive and always be willing to try again. It is also a reminder of how fierce the natural world can be, and shows the risks that people are willing to take in pursuit of their adventurous dreams.

## SHARING THE ADVENTURE

Amidst the drama, Sarah's adventure was filled with plenty of wonderful moments, too. Whilst in China, Sarah met a young man called Gao who was fascinated by her adventure – he had never known it was possible to cycle across a whole country. Gao decided to cycle to Beijing with Sarah and bought a bike the very next day. Together they cycled 4,800 km across China. His spirit of adventure



## SARAH'S BOATS



Happy Socks



Nelson



Gulliver

was exactly what Sarah had hoped to inspire in people through her journey, and it might do the same for you, too.

## END OF THE WORLD

Touching land back in the UK at long last, Sarah was joined by friends and family as she cycled the final stretch. Her adventure finished by paddling under Tower Bridge in London, completing her 40,000 km journey. Despite all the challenges, Sarah had made it around the world!

“What's stopping you?  
It's you, isn't it?”

## Why Sarah Outen Inspired Me

Kayaking at sea is challenging. Ocean rowing requires many different skills and can be extremely dangerous. Cycling across a continent is tough. Sarah combined all these in her unique, fascinating journey. Traditionally, adventures have mostly been completed by men, but more women like Sarah are tackling epic challenges. She is a brilliant role model for girls dreaming of adventure.



## START



### SETTING OFF

Sarah took off from London, UK, kayaking across the English Channel towards France.



### PEDALLING EAST

From France, Sarah cycled to China on her bicycle, Hercules. Whilst there, she was joined by a young man for over 4,800 km.

**CROSSING TO JAPAN**  
Sarah kayaked over to Japan accompanied by her friend, Justine Curgenven.



### NORTH PACIFIC ROW

Sarah left Japan once more, in her new boat, Happy Socks. Four months in, after many weeks of stormy weather, she changed course for Alaska.



### RECOVERY & REBUILDING

She returned to the UK to recover before returning to Japan.



### PACIFIC ROW

Sarah started her solo row to Canada aboard Gulliver. But she was hit by a tropical storm and had to be rescued.



### NORTH AMERICA

Sarah cycled across North America through one of the worst winters on record, from the Pacific to the Atlantic.



### ALASKA

Justine joined Sarah once more, and they paddled together from Adak Island to Homer.



### THE FINISH LINE

Sarah kayaked down the River Thames and back under Tower Bridge to complete her four-and-a-half-year, 40,000-km expedition.

## FINISH



### ATLANTIC ROW

She rowed across the North Atlantic Ocean, but a hurricane meant she was forced to abandon Happy Socks at sea.

**THE UK HOME STRETCH**  
Sarah cycled from Falmouth to Oxford, UK, with friends, family and supporters.

