

Years 11 & 12

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Year 11, Carey Baptist College Harrisdale

### **The Retired Toy Maker**

The bedroom was silent, and outside the street was empty with silence and the street lamps dimly lit the road. The old man sat in his rocking chair listening, listening to anything and everything wanting to be heard, but there was nothing. He rocked back and forth, without making a creak, and looked at his one single shelf and the old wooden clock. On the shelf and beside the clock, small wooden toys were lined and were layered with a thick sheet of dust. He went to pick up his glasses but they weren't where he thought he left them and he couldn't remember where they were. He called out to his wife and she didn't reply, and then he remembered why she didn't answer. As tears came rolling down his wrinkled face, all he could remember was that there was nobody here, and it was far too quiet.

He sat at his workbench and surrounding him were shelves lined with wooden toys, and pots of paint and planks of timber filled nearby cupboards. The man slowly cut the pieces of wood and when they were done placed them in a box on the workbench. He reached for a different box and began assembling the toy, slotting and gluing the pieces together. A satisfied grin spread across his face when it was complete and went to find the colours of paint he was going to use. His wife called his name from the store counter, which was just in the other room, with the shelves and toys for all the customers to see. The man put down the pots on his workbench and headed towards the direction of her voice. In the room besides himself was his wife and a boy and his mother, who were looking for a gift. After making a few suggestions, the boy and his mother finally settled on a set of building blocks ranging in all colours. They made the purchase and said thank you and left the store quietly closing the door behind them. The man warmly smiled at his wife and she smiled back and he went back to the workshop and she returned to the counter. Aside from the sounds of people walking up and down the path, the street made little sound as the man started to paint. Outside, the birds sang softly and the people walked in a rhythm and a beat.

He had searched everywhere and it was quite simply nowhere. He looked in every room and every cupboard and every drawer and every nook and cranny, and yet his glasses were still hidden somewhere in the house. He went to search the house for a third time but stopped and looked at a very dusty frame. His thumb wiped away a thick coating of dust and the image behind revealed a man and a woman. They stood in front of the store and workshop and smiled through the glass and though he did not know why, standing in the silence the old man smiled back.