

Years 3 & 4

1st Place: Tanvika Shyju Nair

Year 4, North Harrisdale Primary School

The Slow Sails of Sadness

I'm Charlotte, a ship that carries many convicts that feel hopeless, unwanted and those who feel that tragedy is approaching in their timeline of life nearby. I wish I could help, but what can I say? I'm just an old, creaky sail ship that's good for absolutely nothing. I wish I'll be better than I am one day, we can only hope now though.

13th May 1787

It was time to leave Britain. It had come to my surprise that there were more convicts aboard my back, bigger than I had expected. When we started to sail, I pondered deeply. "Imagine these poor convicts, cramped with crowds of people who they couldn't even trust. Isn't that what's happening right now? It shouldn't be like this!" Suddenly I realised I was in so deep thought that I had wondered off to somewhere that is not Tenerife. Now all I did was make the journey twice as long! I wish I could tell the truth, but I have no mouth. Like I said, I am just an old creaky sail ship that is good for absolutely nothing. Captain still thinks that there is something wrong with the helm, but child convicts thought it was ghosts.

20th May 1787

We finally worked our way to Tenerife. Lots of scurvy, tuberculosis, influenza, measles, and smallpox was occurring quite quickly. I got quite shocked. I saw lots of people giving out berries to each other. I tried not to think too deeply, not after what happened seven days ago. Lots of babies were getting born, forty-eight deaths occurred, and convicts had gotten intense jobs and hurtful punishments. Fresh water, vegetables and meat were brought on board. Even after a relaxing meal, I still heard a lot of whinging and whining but there was only one person who didn't do any of that. In fact, she looked quite happy and optimistic. I heard that her name was Lila Thomas, the only happy convict aboard. Even after the intense duties they were giving her and how much slaps she has gotten? How strange . . .

7th August 1787

We had reached Rio de Janeiro. The ships were cleaned, and old clothes were burned to get rid of lice and fleas. Lila, she is still happy, unlike the others. I heard one yell today, "I want to go home, I feel uncomfortable here!" while sweeping. The guard got ready to give out a slap, but the little kid just ran away in horror. I can't blame the kid. Even I feel uncomfortable here, even though I am not a convict.

13th October 1787

We are on our way to Cape Town, but I feel rather tired carrying everyone. I see Lila creeping up to the very edge of me. "Don't do this, it's dangerous out here!" I tried to say but I didn't have a mouth, so I couldn't speak up. "Like I said, I am just an old, creaky sail ship that's good for absolutely –" something interrupted my thought. Lila

sighed as she sat and looked further into the deep blue sea. "You may be creaky and loud, but you helped us get here." She knelt on one knee and then slowly stood up on the other. That was when I couldn't bear to watch. What if she slipped? Suddenly, she spoke again. "And we love you." That was the moment I realised she was talking to me!

Years and years of delivering convicts, I knew what my mistake was. All day long I thought so bad about myself but all I do is my job, and I do it quite well. Having no mouth, no nose, or no eyes is a reason why I am a special object because all I need is the ability to feel people and I might be the only one in every ship that *does* have an ability like that. One day, when I sink, I know I'll be remembered. Especially by the little girl who walked on the edge and changed my life.

The End