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GO AWAY, JAMEY.

ELL, this chap Tony is sitting in his bedroom writing. He's sitting in his bedroom because it's the only place he can find peace and quiet, and he's writing a story of childhood. He's sucking the top of his ball pen and peering -----

within him to capture the elusive essence of childhood.

By Dennis McEldowney because Phyllis has arrived. Jamey because he knows

that to capture the essence of childhood and as the plastic bones reach the is to capture the essence of existence. He sucks his ball pen some more and then he uses it to write with. The boy lay on his stomach, pressing his

The boy lay on his stomach, pressing his legs and elbows into the cold sand. He was glad to find in all the wide beach no other person than he. The grey sea complained before him: above, the plaintive seagulls circled faint against the dull sky.

Tony's eyes hurt him as he writes. The bedroom door opens and Jamey looks in, Jamey his nephew.

"Can I come in, Tony?"

"Didn't I tell you I had some work to do?" Tony says, his voice rising with every word 'I'll be out to play with you later; go away!"

The bedroom door closes. Tony has now to suck harder than before because his memories have been interrupted, but soon they come flowing again.

Do those seaguils feel as sad as they sound, the boy wondered, scooping a handful of sand and marvelling at each tiny grain. Do the seaguils have their their brothers as they circle the wide sky? Or is their brothers as they circle the wide sky? Or is their real sadness kept within them as I keep mine?

Tony finds his eyesight growing dim and looks up to clear it. Jamey stands by the dressing-table dipping his fingers in the hair-oil and plastering his head.

'Jamey, I told you I had writing to do.'

"I thought you'd be finished by now." "Jamey, go away."

"Can't I draw?" "Not with that fountain pen; give it to me, you'll ruin the nib!" shouts Tony

in a desperate voice.
"You're using the other pen."

"If I let you draw with it will you promise me to keep quiet?"

"I'll draw a jeep," Jamey says, 'where's some paper?'

Tony sucks the end of the fountain

"I've drawn a jeep."

"Then draw a train, a train with a lot of carriages, an immense lot of carriages."

The boy sprang up and raced down the beach. He was thinking again. He must not think, must put all thoughts from his mind, all wondering, all questioning. But why, why was this burden his to carry?

Jamey is standing by the dressingtable again, running the safety-razor reflectively across his cheek. Tony picks up his pad and his pen, olutches Jamey by his pullover, marches him outside, and sits beneath the peach tree.

"What do we do here?" Jamey asks. "You may do what you wish. I'm going to write."

"Then play knucklebones." Jamey goes to fetch them. Tonv sucks his pen.

Under the cliffs were rocks, and pools lay among them. And in the pools tiny creatures walked and swam. This was where the boy stopped, and he gazed into a pool until his sharp grief turned to a melancholy which ached only a little.

The knucklebones have become noisy throws his jockey

ground Phyllis grabs a couple of them.
"You're not to do that, Phyllis,"
Jamey says, snatching them back and

moving a few yards away. He throws them up and Phyllis follows with a look in her eye and grabs again.
"I'll tell on you," Jamey

"I'll tell on you," Jamey says, and snatches them back. He throws them in



"How can I capture the truth of childhood with all those kids milling around?"

the air. "I warned you," he says, and slaps Phyllis in the face. Phyllis howls. "Why must you be so nasty to your

little sister," cries his big sister Mary, running out and smacking Jamey about the legs, "Now go inside at once!" and Jamey runs screaming. Mary takes over the knucklebones.

"Have a game, Tony."

"I'm busy."

"Be a sport."

"There is writing to do."

"It's because you're no good. You don't want to be beaten."

"I can beat you any day. But not

It was a tiny insect hovering just above the water the boy was watching now, throbbing in tune with the fluttering of its wings. But one of the larger fishes in the pool lesped at that moment and devoured the fly. Yes, the boy thought, turning away, that's what it's always like, that's how everything ends, that's life. Why did Dad do it?

Tony has to ask Mary to stop singing the Doggie in the Window quite so loudly because he can't hear himself think. He's only just begun thinking again when Phyllis snatches one of Mary's knucklebones. In the commotion no one sees him go inside to pack his bags. He's going to accept John's invitation to use his bach at Paraparaumu. He will be there all by himself.

"For how," Tony moans, "how can I capture the truth of childhood with all

those kids milling around?"