

Let the Fun Begin!

THIS WAS IT! D-day—better known as departure day. The camper van was packed and within minutes we'd be on our way. Mum stood looking at the house. "Security locks in place?"

"Check," answered Dad.

"Garden timers set?"

"Check," Dad repeated.

"What about fish food for Goldie?"

"Check," said Dad yet again.

"Has Mad Max been taken care of?" Dad frowned.

"Not checked..." I replied.

They both swung to face me.

“Will, did you make arrangements for Mad Max?” Mum asked.

I pretended to be fixing the zipper on my bag. “Check...” No-one noticed my cheeks turn red. And I hadn’t told a lie. Not exactly. Mum had only asked if I’d made arrangements—and I had!

When I had asked Mum if I could bring Mad Max—my guinea pig—she hadn’t said “no”. She’d said “I don’t think so.” So, the fact that he was in my pocket about to take a trip wasn’t *exactly* breaking the rules...



I peeked up to see Mum and Dad checking something else. They'd forgotten about Mad Max already! No-one suspected a thing!

At last Dad clapped his hands together. "Alright! Let's get this trip on the road! Last one in is a rotten egg!"

This was great! The trip of a lifetime—right around Australia! How lucky were we? Dad was smiling. Mum was smiling. I was smiling. My sister, "scary" Scarlet, was... uh-oh... not smiling.



Scarlet was looking at me with mean eyes. Great. Twelve whole weeks of holidays with someone trying to spoil everyone's fun...especially mine!

For nine of my ten years of life, Scarlet had been there dobbling on me. And I could just tell she was getting ready to do it again.

Well, I wasn't going to give her a reason. No-one knew about Mad Max, and even if Scarlet suspected, I'd keep him such a secret that no-one would find out.

