

## Early Level 4 Fiction - Dive

It was hotter than the sauna at the Newmarket pool, and I stood on the bank, lost in a daze. My cousin Eddy waited on the opposite side, hands planted on hips. She was different from me, always joking round. Now she squinted in the sun and shook her head, amused. Rivulets of water dripped down her black-brown legs.

“Hurry up, cuz,” she called. “We’ll be late for the lovo – and I’m hungry. I want some kumala.”

The turquoise water was so bright and perfect it looked like a cartoon. Sticks and debris floated on the current. I imagined it carrying me away, too, out into the Pacific. Instead, I took a breath, took my phone from my pocket, and lowered myself into the cool river. I kicked my legs in wide arcs like I did at squad training, but it was an awkward one-handed breaststroke so I could hold my phone up, and soon I was panting. Water sloshed into my mouth, and I turned my head. That’s when I saw something moving below me – something long and black and white.

“What’s that stripy thing?” I shouted at Eddy.

“Sea snake. It won’t hurt you.”

“What? No way!” The snake came towards me, and I shrieked and swam hard for the other side. I hauled myself onto the hot sand and sat there, crying. “I dropped my phone!” I wailed to Eddy.