



5 years have now passed from the time we walked through the Gisborne Girls ' High School gates with full school-bags, nicely pleated skirts that fell past our knees, nervous smiles full of braces, awkward side fringes, and a high level of stress to get our colourful posters in on time!... to the most recent times of valiantly fighting 'senioritis'.... a common illness that is often picked up in the final terms of Year 13, symptoms to watch out for include a slight drop in motivation, tiredness that sleep can't quite cure and increased noise within the class-room which seems to disrupt academic progress!

Throughout our years at school we develop treasured friendships and create some lasting memories as I look back on the years I think of the girls with cracker dance moves courageously put on public display at the school ball, I acknowledge those world class meme creators, I smile at thoughts of those beer pong champions and I agree that these girls are, using Mr Harrison's words Pure Gizzy Gold!

To treasure friends so much is to know, and accept, their story - the experiences that have shaped them, the trials and turning points that have tested them.

All of us have a story.

As authors we get to set the theme of our story - the central point and purpose.

As authors we decide which characters we want to include, will they add to our story or take it somewhere we don't want it to go?

As authors we choose what sources to use, reliable sources that ensure we get the best out of our story, or, unreliable sources, those that are less-than-responsible and sometimes trouble-making, not naming names Mr Langford.

As authors we are the only ones that can determine how one chapter ends and the next chapter starts. No matter which chapter, paragraph or sentence you're up to, they were never designed to be told in isolation - your story affects my story and mine yours.

We all have the power to write our own story, so make yours a best seller! Let your story be shaped by the decisions and choices you make, not by the ones you don't. Create, anticipate, live, enjoy.

As we flip to the final pages of this chapter, and pick up our pens to write the next, I will leave you with the wise words of Winnie the Pooh, "how lucky am I to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard, but when you see someone putting on their Big Boots, you can be pretty sure an adventure is about to begin."

Naku te rourou Nau te rourou Ka ora ai te iwi With your basket and my basket the people will thrive.

