

Dear students,

You do not know me and may never have heard of me. I earn my living researching and writing other people's stories from all over the world.

A recent article I wrote for *The Weekend Herald* has prompted me to share a story of my own; a story about a terrible environmental disaster from my childhood. It involved two friends and myself, and took place when we were your age. I confess I have never been able to forget or forgive myself. I suspect my friends feel the same.

We cared deeply about our place, but there were so many things we didn't know or understand. Please learn from us. What occurred should never have happened and it must never happen again. Each letter I send to you will reveal an important piece of this story puzzle. I invite you to work together to gather information, research and make sense of it all. You will understand why I have chosen you.

If you take on this challenge, please remember that this incident greatly saddened the three of us, but ultimately shaped the adults we became.

With kindest regards,

P.S.

(writing also on behalf of J.G. and L.G.)