

# Bourne toWrite...

creative writing  
workshops

## Outcast

by Malcolm Walker

Rebellion meant a look in the eyes, an inflection of the voice, an occasional whisper. At any rate that appeared to her to be the case with her youngest. Even at six weeks old his aggression manifested itself all too readily when he sought to argue the unarguable, dispute the indisputable and question the unquestionable. Oh yes there were squeaks and squawks, yelps and howls aplenty. Not that unusual you might think in one so young.

It was true that many thought the breed to be as cantankerous as a bear with a sore tooth, and there was good reason for it too. Even a casual glance at their recent history afforded substantial evidence of a trigger for pugnacious belligerence.

She had given birth to seven of them, but with only four nipples, the odds were stacked against some. Garth was a law unto himself, shoving, pushing, gripping, spitting, fighting to be first. Brooking no half measures he even bit his mother if she favoured a sibling.

It would have been gratifying if he had displayed a sense of fun or even a sense of humour. Any trace of sympathy for his brothers or sisters would be hard to detect. Only lassitude or apathy would preclude him from taking what was available even after he had been satiated.

Not an animal of great beauty, Garth had a white stripe on his chest, an oversized head housing a cavernous, muscular jaw capable of biting the top off a beer bottle.

No snake, bird, fish, insect or carrion was safe from Garth. A carnivore, he would eat almost anything. Most days he would spend alone in a cave or hollow log, only emerging at night to feed.

So it was that one fine day in the Australian outback, Garth found himself looking into the rabid eyes of a dingo. Garth growled menacingly and rose to his full height. The dingo didn't move. Garth spotted blood on its front paws and quickly determined that the dingo's incapacity might just save him. All too often in his short life Garth had seen at first hand the consequences of the proliferation of dingos. Bad enough with these wretched humans.

"Look we can either treat each other with the proper respect and walk away unscathed. Or we can fight to the death. I don't fancy your chances."

"You wont stand a chance in your state," replied Garth.

"Try me," snapped the dingo. "Let's face it you don't belong here any more. I'll give you one chance, get back to Tasmania now or you're a dead duck.

I cannot be sure but Garth was one of the last Tasmanian Devil's to be forcibly repatriated.