

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

by Charlotte Williams,
Ross Intermediate

Winner of the Elsie
Locke Writing Prize
2012

Dear girls,

I'm doing it! This is the first time I'm emailing all on my own – indubitably due to you two showing me how to use a computer. What do you think of that? A great-grandmother emailing!

Heavens, it's completely hectic in Palmerston North at the moment. You know all those neighbours of mine who used to keep to themselves? Well, I'm now sharing a shelter with most of the people on my street. Who would ever have thought I'd cope with that! The only good thing that's actually come out of this devastating earthquake is the fact that it's brought us all closer together and we're helping each other get through it.

Yesterday, the mayor held a meeting about how to rebuild the city, and he's asking for submissions. I was thinking about how we used to sit around after supper, talking about how we'd change Palmerston if we could. I thought you girls had some wonderful ideas about creating a lake and making it an "enviro city".

Missing you. All my love,

Granny xxxx



Hi Granny,

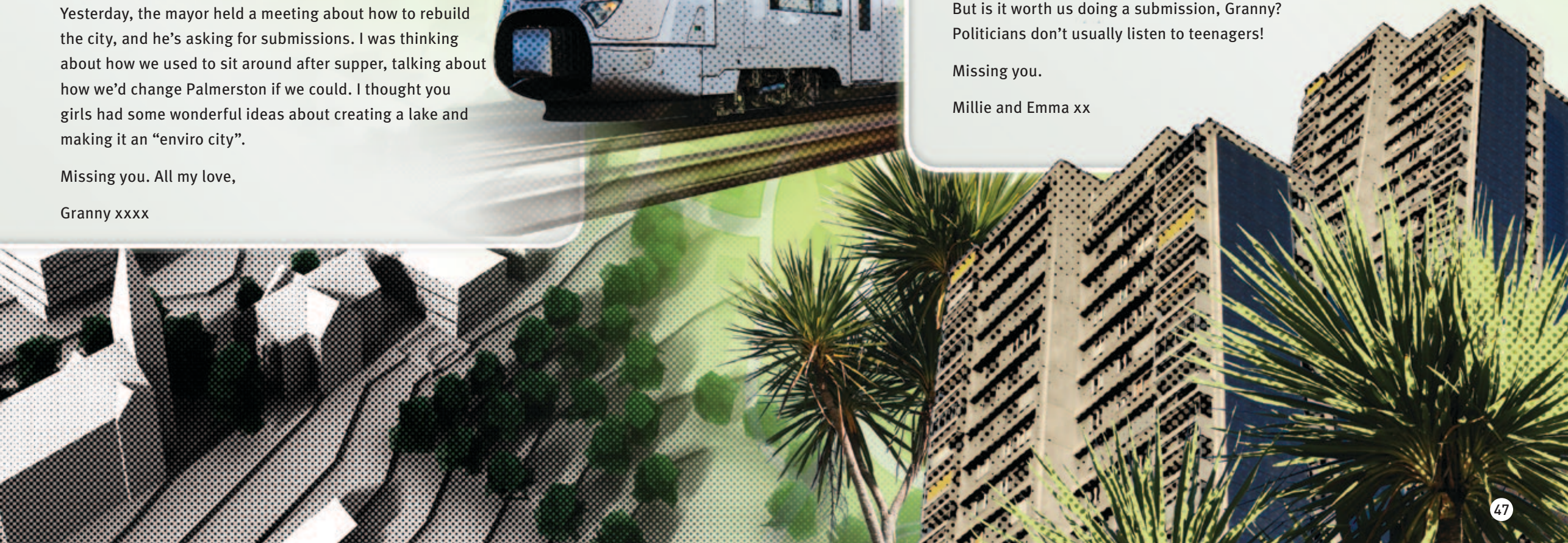
We're keen to come back (even though there's no home to come back to), but Mum and Dad are contemplating staying away for good. We're trying to convince them that if Palmerston North is rebuilt well, using all of today's knowledge and technology, it could become the greenest city in the world! A fantastic example of making positive changes to look after the environment and the future of our planet.

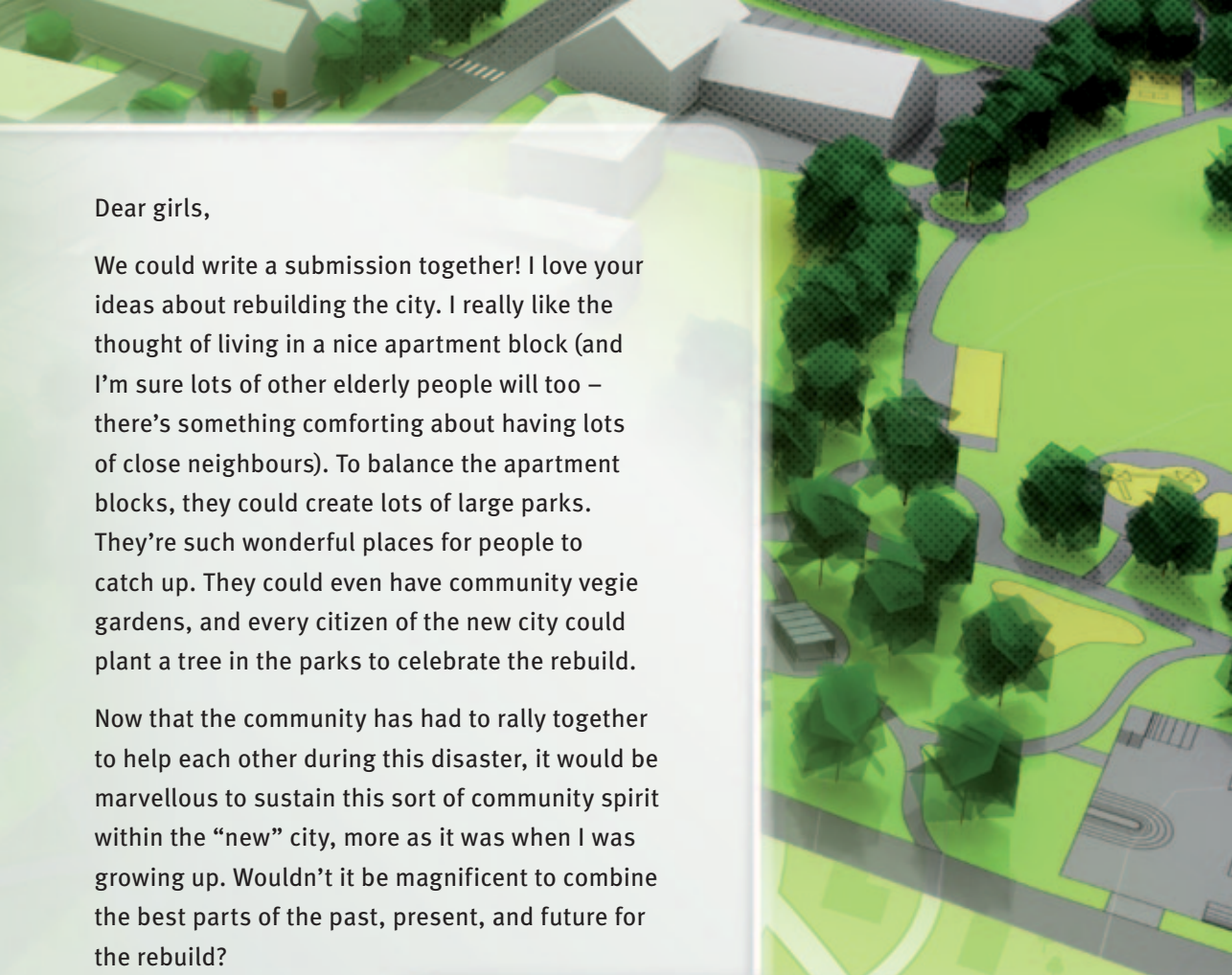
Imagine being able to walk through a clean, pedestrianised central city, with amazing public buildings – a huge library that really is the living room of the city, a town hall, theatres, an art centre, a museum ... Beside the city centre is a beautiful artificial lake, lined with restaurants and full of fish. An efficient electric train system loops around the central city and lake, sending spokes off to the suburbs. Well-insulated and solar-powered apartment blocks (built to withstand earthquakes!) rise many storeys upwards rather than the city continuing to devour the surrounding countryside. In one of the suburbs, there's an enormous sports complex with awesome facilities for all sports in one place ...

But is it worth us doing a submission, Granny?
Politicians don't usually listen to teenagers!

Missing you.

Millie and Emma xx





Dear girls,

We could write a submission together! I love your ideas about rebuilding the city. I really like the thought of living in a nice apartment block (and I'm sure lots of other elderly people will too – there's something comforting about having lots of close neighbours). To balance the apartment blocks, they could create lots of large parks. They're such wonderful places for people to catch up. They could even have community vegie gardens, and every citizen of the new city could plant a tree in the parks to celebrate the rebuild.

Now that the community has had to rally together to help each other during this disaster, it would be marvellous to sustain this sort of community spirit within the "new" city, more as it was when I was growing up. Wouldn't it be magnificent to combine the best parts of the past, present, and future for the rebuild?

Love,

Granny

Hi Granny,

You've always told us that girls can do anything and encouraged us to do something that will make a difference. We'd love to do a submission with you – we'll get Mum involved, too. Surely they have to listen to three generations of headstrong women! At least then we've tried.

After all, there's nothing like a dream to create the future.

Love you.

Millie and Emma

The **Elsie Locke
Memorial Trust**

For information on the Elsie Locke Writing Prize for 2013, including the topic and how to enter, see learningmedia.co.nz or elsielocketrust.org.nz