Gerald Porter, storyteller

‘The Sunbird story belongs to me but it is for everybody.

‘This is one of our culture stories. It teaches about the maparntjarra (ma-barn-ja-rра) man—the magic man. In the story, the magic man is bad. When he gets put in the fire he gets a new body and a new life. The fire burns up all the bad things and he starts afresh as a good maparntjarra man.

‘The old people leave the stories behind for the next generation. We need to carry on those Dreamtime stories. It’s important to have them because it’s our belief and if we don’t teach our children, we’ve lost our culture. The stories make us strong, so we can have a strong identity.

‘It’s a good thing to put this story in a book because it’s very important that we tell everybody we’ve got our culture. Other people can share our story and get to know more about our culture; they can learn from that.’

maparntjarra—traditional healer or magic man

Dreamtime—in Aboriginal belief, this is the time long ago when special people, animals and spirits created the Country and all the things in it