

A massive scorching hot island  
In the middle of the sea  
Off the coast of Papa New Guinea

15<sup>th</sup> September 1999

Dear Mum and Dad,

It's Michael. I am alive and safe. I fell off our boat whilst saving Stella (she didn't have her harness on and jumped in the water during a storm) and we both ended up washed up on a deserted island. Life here is hard but I'm managing. Someone gives me fresh food and water whilst I sleep but I'm yet to find out who it is. I'm okay but I can barely sleep as the mosquitos are driving me crazy and I'm haunted by the fact that I don't know if I will ever will see your faces again. Every day I think about our family and Eddie and being back home in England - I even miss the Peggy Sue! But most of all I think about you guys and if you are safe. I miss you so much and I wish I could tell you how much you mean to me.

Yesterday, I saw a ship and for a moment I thought it was you. I tried everything I could to get its attention but I was heartbroken to see it was sailing away. I screamed with anger and disappointment because I thought I could escape this island. I desperately tried to swim after the boat but I had to quickly return before I was stung by a jelly fish.

After that distraught moment, I soon discovered that I would have to try much harder if I wanted a big boat to notice such a small person like me on this deserted island. I've started listing down some ideas of how to make myself seen from far away: I'll build a beacon on watch hill (the highest point of the island) so I can light a fire so big it will send smoke high into the sky. I'll write massive messages in the sand – letters so huge you could see them from space. Whatever happens I'll never give up. The next time I see a ship, I'll be ready to give it my all. I haven't lost hope and I hope you haven't either.

Even though I feel so far away from you, I haven't forgotten you both. Every morning reminds me that one day I'll wake up and see you beside me, and that's what keeps me going, I promise that I will try everything to stay alive and get back to the Peggy Sue. Until that day comes, I'll never give up.

Love you lots,  
Michael.