WEEK 8

Write a piece that is characteristically ‘Australian’ either in setting, voice, character, theme or plot.

**H**ot this summer. One thing that never changes, that, and the dirt, rust and blisters on his hands from the iron bar he used to break up the hard earth at his feet. Putting up fences can take its toll on the body. “Work is never over,” he tells himself as he powers on through the heat, resting only briefly on the back of his ute, humming to Slim Dusty songs from the radio. Parked in the shade of a tree to drink lukewarm water from his tinny. It, like him, has seen better days. Battered and dinted, he works through sweltering heat and pouring rain, often cursing “fuck the rain”. This is how he was raised. Raised on blood, sweat and tears; a true blue Australian through and through.

His age is fifty-five yet he felt much older. He wears each scar and injury as a badge of pride. Even the scar on his chest from open heart surgery and few scars on his legs from when he fell into a mine shaft. Giving up when things get to tough or giving in a hard yakka is like giving a bloke an analog clock in a digital world. He wipes the sweat and rain water from his forehead and looks back along the line of posts already set. “Bloody beautiful!” he smiles. This man has had a tough life with a few mistakes. But then again, nothing and no one can be perfect.

He doesn’t care too much for politics or ‘big smoke’ sort of towns. Here in the country is where he stays; toiling on the land, with cattle to make ends meet with a passion he has had since a child ‘till now lifting his Akubra and looking for the sun. The day is almost done but there is still so much more work to be done. Into the night he will remain working hard as hell to keep all his life stock safe and well. And once he is finished for the night, he will sit down and drink his fill of cold, cool, refreshing rum and coke and think about what comes next.