



# Australia



In 1939, weeks before the start of World War II, Lady Sarah Ashley of England travels to Australia to force her philandering husband to sell his faltering cattle station, Faraway Downs. The huge station straddles Western Australia and the Northern Territory, reaching north to the Timor Sea. Her husband sends an independent cattle drover, called "The Drover," to transport her to Faraway Downs.

Lady Sarah's husband is murdered before she arrives; the authorities tell her the killer is an Aboriginal elder nicknamed "King George." The station's manager, Neil Fletcher, secretly tries to gain control of Faraway Downs in order to sell it to meat tycoon Lesley 'King' Carney, thereby creating a complete cattle monopoly. Meanwhile, at Darwin, Australian Army logistics officer Captain Dutton negotiates beef prices with Carney on behalf of the Allies.

The childless Lady Sarah is captivated by the boy Nullah, who has an Aboriginal mother and a white father. Nullah, who has been spying on Fletcher, reveals his plan to Lady Sarah. She fires

Fletcher and runs the cattle station with the help of her remaining staff. The next day, policemen arrive to take Nullah away to Mission Island as they have with other half-Aboriginal children. While evading them, Nullah's mother Daisy drowns when she hides with him in a water tower. Lady Sarah comforts Nullah by singing the song "Over the Rainbow." Nullah tells her that "King George" is his grandfather, and that like the Wizard of Oz, he too is a "magic man".

Lady Sarah persuades Drover to take the cattle to Darwin for sale. Drover leads a team of seven riders, including his Aboriginal brother-in-law Magarri, Goolaj, Nullah, Lady Sarah, Bandy, and the station's accountant Kipling Flynn, to drive the 1,500 cattle to Darwin. They encounter various obstacles along the way, including a fire set by Carney's men that scares the cattle, resulting in the death of Flynn when the group rushes to stop the cattle from stampeding over a cliff. Lady Sarah and Drover fall in love, and she gains an appreciation for the Australian territory. The two share a romantic moment under a tree, where he reveals that he was once married to an Aboriginal woman who died after being refused medical treatment in a white hospital. As a result of being friendly with the Aboriginals, he is shunned by many of the other whites in the territory. Lady Sarah reveals she is unable to have biological children. Over the next few days, the team drives the cattle through the treacherous Never Never desert. Upon finally arriving at Darwin, the group races to load the cattle onto the ship before Carney's cattle in order to secure payment.

Lady Sarah, Nullah, and Drover happily live together at Faraway Downs for two years. Meanwhile, Fletcher manages to take over Carney's cattle empire after orchestrating Carney's death in an accident and marrying his daughter, Catherine Carney. He returns to Faraway Downs and threatens Nullah's safety unless Lady Sarah sells her cattle station. Fletcher intimidates her, revealing that he was the actual murderer of Lady Sarah's husband (not "King George") and that he is also Nullah's father.

Nullah intends to go on a walkabout with "King George," much to Lady Sarah's dismay. She and Drover argue about what is best for Nullah, after which Drover leaves Faraway Downs. Nullah is apprehended by the authorities and sent to live on Mission Island. Lady Sarah, who has come to regard Nullah as her adopted son, vows to rescue him. As World War II escalates, she goes to work as a radio operator alongside Catherine. When the Japanese attack Mission Island and Darwin in 1942, Lady Sarah fears that Nullah has been killed.

Drover returns to Darwin after hearing about the attack. He learns of Nullah's abduction to Mission Island, and goes with Magarri, Ivan, and a young Christian brother to rescue him and the other children. During the rescue, Magarri sacrifices himself as a diversion so the others can flee. Meanwhile, Lady Sarah and the other townsfolk are being evacuated South by Captain Dutton. Drover and the children sail into port at Darwin as Nullah plays "Over the Rainbow" on his harmonica; Lady Sarah hears the music and the three are reunited. Fletcher, distraught at his financial ruin and Catherine's death during the Japanese attack, attempts to shoot Nullah with a soldier's rifle. As Lady Sarah and Drover rush to save Nullah, "King George" strikes Fletcher with a spear, killing him.

Lady Sarah, Drover, and Nullah return to the safety of the remote Faraway Downs. Some time later, "King George" calls out to Nullah, who returns to the Outback with his grandfather as Lady Sarah and Drover look on.



## Answer these questions

1. Why does Lady Sarah go to Australia?

2. How does she get to Faraway Downs?

3. What happens to her husband?

4. What is Neil Fletcher's plan?

5. How does Lady Sarah learn about Fletcher's plan?

6. How does Nullah become an orphan?

7. Why do Lady Sarah, Drover go to Darwin with other riders?

8. What happens during the journey?

9. How did Drover's wife die?

10. How does Fletcher take over Carney's cattle empire?

11. What does Fletcher reveal to Lady Sarah?

12. What kind of relationship does Lady Sarah develop with Nullah?

13. What does Lady Sarah do during World War II?

14. What does Fletcher attempt to do and what happens as a result?.

15. What does Nullah do in the end?

