



Pitch Examples – Branching Narratives

By Ben Crisp (The Adelaide Time Travel Caper) and Kahli Scott (Curse of the Bramble Spirit)

The Adelaide Time Travel Caper – Ben Crisp

Give a short summary/pitch of your story

Tag-line: You've been sent hurtling back and forth through Adelaide's exciting past, now it's up to you find your way home before it's too late!

You are standing outside the Adelaide Town Hall with your friend and boss, the mad physicist Professor Bragg, who is tinkering with his latest crackpot invention. Before you can ask what it is, you notice the hands of the clock tower start moving: backwards! Next thing you know, the cars have been replaced by horses and carts and there are gas lamps where the electric lights once were: you have travelled back in time.



To make matters worse, Professor Bragg's time machine is broken: every new place you go, you find yourself jumping forwards and backwards to different periods of Adelaide's history! To fix the machine, you'll need to work with the Professor to collect replacement parts, but you'll need the help of the locals in different eras: an 1870 fishmonger in the Central Market, a team of 1915 police women in Hindley Street, a 1939 soldier at the War Memorial, an 1840s Afghan camelman at the Adelaide Mosque, or a pre-colonisation Kurna tribe in Victoria Square, to name a few!

If you're lucky, you might just make it back to the present in one piece, and meet a few famous historical Adelaide figures on the way. But don't think it's going to be easy! As a stranger out of time, you might end up being mistaken for an escaped convict, or trampled in a riot, or bundled off to war. In fact, you might not make it back at all!

The fun of the story is the challenges the adventurer faces in their efforts to navigate the past as the time machine glitches: they might decide the best way to fix the machine in 1925 is to travel to Victoria Square to meet a motor mechanic at a parade, only to find themselves launched a thousand years back in time to before Adelaide was even founded!

The Professor's crazy machine needs a few funny components to work: fish oil, camel hair, celluloid film, ochre, etc. The hunt for these components drives the choices the adventurer makes when they meet the story's characters and are forced to split up with the Professor or run from danger.

Depending on the target audience, this adventure could be tailored to incorporate more or less mature themes. For adults, the realities of historical issues such as political, medical and cultural conflicts could be emphasised to increase the dramatic and educational value.

Note several locations the story may be set

1. Town Hall
2. Facade of the Former Marine and Harbours Building
3. Reconciliation Plaza (Victoria Square)
4. Darling House
5. Central Market
6. Statue of Catherine Helen Spence in Light Square
7. Beehive Corner
8. Parliament House
9. Queens Theatre
10. Hindley Street
11. Elder Conservatorium
12. Adelaide Mosque
13. Edmund Wright House
14. Train Station
15. Edinburgh Castle Hotel

What is your connection to your city?

Having lived in Adelaide my whole life, I have fallen in love with its vibrancy and multiculturalism. As a writer, I have always imagined Adelaide's history as a fertile source of stories, with its inspirational characters ranging from Catherine Helen Spence and Officer Kate Cocks, to Sir Douglas Mawson and the Braggs.

The Curse of the Bramble Spirit – Kahli Scott

Give a short summary/pitch of your story

Tagline: A ghost ship has been sighted sailing around Bramble Bay. Discover the secrets of its doomed fate and save Sandgate from inheriting its curse.

A ghost ship known as the *Bramble Spirit* has been spotted sailing around Bramble Bay. As legend tells, the ship is doomed to sail the waters for eternity because of a curse placed on its Captain. Whoever has the misfortune of seeing the ship is also said to be marked with the curse. Since the ship has been sighted, strange things have begun to happen around the seaside village of Sandgate.

You're a known ghost investigator, having recently solved the mystery of the spectre in the Sandgate Town Hall. This is your new case. Discover the reason behind *Bramble Spirit's* curse and save it from its doom...and Sandgate from inheriting the curse.

Genre: Mystery/Paranormal

Rating: PG

Themes:

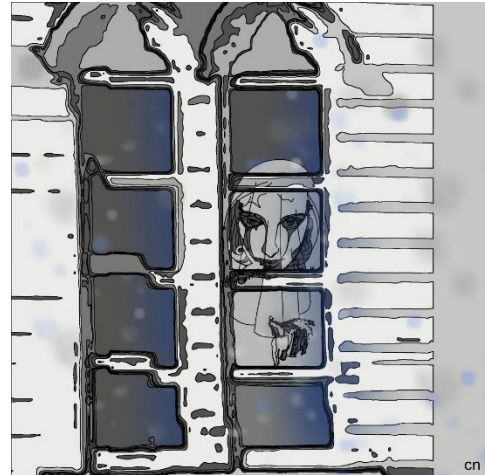
- Maritime – locations and characters will be heavily connected to the sea
- Superstition and paranormal lore

Characters:

- You – the village ghost investigator
- Your apprentice, Skip
- Captain William Ash – the ghostly captain of *Bramble Spirit*, said to have been a resident of Sandgate from the early 1900s
- The ghostly sailors of the *Bramble Spirit*
- Arthur Ash – Captain Ash's heir, still living in Sandgate
- Mary Moon – a white ghost whisperer, who communicates with good spirits
- Sibyl Shadow – a dark ghost whisperer, who communicates with dark spirits
- Old Tom – a retired sailor who wanders the mudflats and has been living in Sandgate for eighty years
- Freddy, Lisa and Jake – kite surfers who have regularly seen *The Bramble Spirit*
- Mrs Tallow – the village historian

Potential endings:

- Stolen Treasure: You discover Captain Ash's curse stems from gold he stole and buried in Sandgate. He planned on retrieving it upon his return, but was cursed to never collect his



treasure. You find the treasure buried in Arthur Davis Park and return it to its rightful owner, settling the debt. The curse is lifted and the ship fades into the night, onto a better place.

- Love: You trace the Captain's story to a romance—a young lover who drowned while Captain Ash was out at sea. Captain Ash, heartbroken, doomed himself to travel the seas for eternity in search of her. With Mary Moon's help, you reunite the haunted spirits with one another and help lead the ship safely into the afterlife.
- The Sirens: By piecing together clues based on certain artworks around Sandgate – the crab fountains, the shell statue, the wave sculpture – you discover that the legend of the *Bramble Spirit* goes hand in hand with the legend of the Sandgate Sirens: sinister mermaids who lulled the sailors to their demise with their ghostly songs. With Sibyl Shadow's help, you banish the sirens and lift the ship's curse.
- Ghost Town: The curse engulfs Sandgate—people disappear, fall ill, leave town due to persisting misfortune. The village becomes a ghost town, filled only with walking spectres...including you. You resign yourself to your fate and stand silent on the pier, waiting for the ship to come and take you to your doomed fate.
- The Ghost Whisperer War: Your investigations cause Mary Moon and Sibyl Shadow to start an all-out-war of the spirits against each other. In a final showdown, the two ghost whisperers hail both their ghostly armies and battle it out by the pale swamp of Dowse Lagoon.

Note several locations the story may be set

Locations:

- The Sandgate foreshore and mudflats – where sightings of *Bramble Spirit* take place, and conversations occur with locals.
- The Sandgate Town Hall and Post Office – heritage buildings where ghosts are regularly sighted.
- The three lagoons – Dowse, Einbunpin and Third – legend tells that these water bodies act like paranormal portals, and ghosts from *Bramble Spirit* have been sighted by the lagoons.
- The Sandgate War Memorial and Park – the 'centre' of the town; a gathering place.
- Heritage houses on the foreshore – large balconies lend themselves well to the vision of a ghostly woman looking out to sea, waiting for her long-lost sailor lover.
- 'The Secret Staircase' – a dark leafy staircase leading from Brighton Terrace down to Griffith Street. A private place to meet with ghost whisperers.
- 'The Goat Track' – a dirt track that runs down the cliff from Eagle Terrace to Cliff Street, often said to be haunted (in real life, and in the story).
- Artworks – crab fountains outside the shopfronts on Brighton Road, the shell statue outside the Town Hall Bakery, the wave sculpture on Cliff Street. These can be clues for the siren storyline.
- Arthur Davis Park, near the Sandgate Pool, where the treasure is buried in the treasure storyline.

What is your connection to your city?

After two years living in Canada, I returned to Brisbane in 2013 with a renewed appreciation for this city and its cultural promise. It is a young city on old land, a juxtaposition that screams for the creation and unearthing of untold stories.

I grew up in the seaside suburb of Sandgate, and my first primary school stories were inspired by the local landscapes – a ghostly tale about the Einbumpin lagoon monster, a moralistic play about sea pollution, a short story about mermaids. Sandgate was where I learnt to write, and a natural place to return to for this project.