



Anu was waiting for his mother. She was buying sausages. Next door to the butcher's shop was an old building Anu had never noticed before. Its wonky windows blinked in the sunlight. The sign above the crooked door read "The Memory Bank".

Anu walked up to the door. It flew open with a bang. Inside the shop, bits of paper rose up and swirled about. One piece of paper drifted out and landed at Anu's feet. He picked it up. "Remember" was stamped at the top. Underneath, someone had scrawled *Keep the memory notes safe.*

Anu put the note in his pocket and went into the shop. An old man was picking up the other pieces of paper.

"Close the door," he said. "Quickly – the wind plays havoc with the memory notes."

Anu shut the door and looked around. He could see lots of shelves, all filled with small boxes. Each box was neatly labelled with a person's name.

"Is this really a memory bank?" Anu asked.

"Yes," said the old man, "and I'm the banker. This is where people store the important things that they want to remember."

The door banged open again. A woman strode in pulling a big shopping bag on wheels.

"Angela!" said the old man. "Is there something you need to remember?"

"Yes, indeed," said the woman. She took a piece of paper. Underneath "Remember" she wrote *Eat liver on Thursday*. She handed the note to the banker. He looked at the boxes on the shelves.

"There it is," said Anu, pointing to a box labelled "Angela" on the top shelf.

"Good spotting," said the banker. "I thought you looked useful." He slid the note into the box, where it settled with a tiny sigh.



Anu was fascinated. Every few minutes, the door banged and another customer walked in.

There was a man with a poodle, which growled when Anu tried to pat it. *Take the dog to be groomed*, the man wrote on his piece of paper.

Next came a dreamy lady, who wrote *Beach at sunset, waves turning pink*. "Best days of my life," she said to the banker as she handed him the note.

Then came a tall man carrying a present. He wrote *Make Cheryl a cake*. "For my daughter," he explained. "She's turning seven."

"That's important!" said the banker. He turned to Anu. "Only things that are important to remember can be stored in the bank."

"What about Angela?" said Anu. "Her note was about liver. Liver's not important. It's disgusting."

"I agree," said the banker. "But liver is her husband's favourite food. She makes it every Thursday to show how much she loves him. That's why it's important."



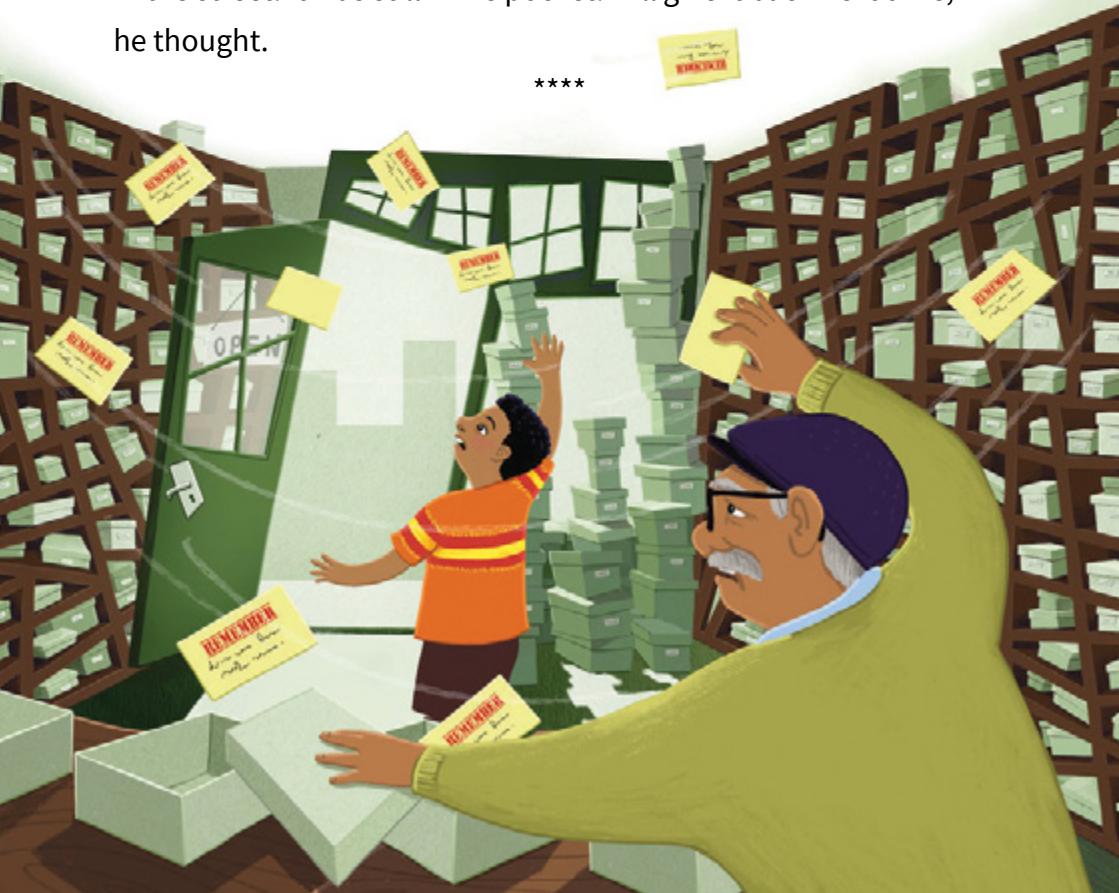
"Can I bank something?" asked Anu.

"Is it important?" asked the banker.

"I'm not sure yet," said Anu. He took a piece of paper and wrote *Return to the Memory Bank*. The banker wrote Anu's name on a box and placed the note inside. The note also gave a tiny sigh. "Must be important," said the banker.

Just then, a gust of wind blew the door open. The lids of the boxes flew off, and pieces of paper sailed out through the door. They soared high into the air. The banker scrambled after them. "I must remember to fix that door," he cried.

Later, at home, Anu found the piece of paper he'd picked up in the street. It was still in his pocket. "I'll give it back next time," he thought.



On Friday, Anu had band practice.

Saturday was football; Monday a test. It wasn't until Thursday that Anu remembered the Memory Bank. "I've got to go back," he said.

When he got there, the banker was eating a large plate of liver.

"You hate liver," said Anu.

"I know," said the banker, taking another piece. "But it's Thursday. I must eat liver on Thursday."

The door banged and in came Angela, dragging a very grumpy cat. The cat had been shaved all over, except for two large tufts – one on its head and one on its tail.

"What happened?" asked Anu.

"I had to take the dog to be groomed," said Angela. "But I don't have a dog. So I took the cat instead."

The door banged again. In came the dreamy lady. She was carrying an enormous sparkly cake.

"Are you Cheryl?" she asked Anu.

"No," said Anu.

"Drat," said the lady. "I've been carrying this cake for days. My arms are getting sore."



"This stuff is disgusting," said the banker, helping himself to another piece of liver.

The door banged and in came the man with the poodle. Its hair had been dyed bright pink and styled into waves.

"Is there a beach around here?" the poodle owner asked.

Anu shook his head. The bank was getting quite crowded.

"I think I'm going to be sick," said the banker. "Liver anyone?"

"Liver?" said Angela. "My husband loves liver."

"That's it!" shouted Anu. "I know what's happened." He pulled the piece of paper out of his pocket. "I think this might be yours," he said, handing it to the banker.

"Ah," said the banker, smiling. "The most important thing of all – keeping all the notes safe."

Anu spent the afternoon sorting the notes into their right boxes.

"I'm sorry I caused such a muddle," he said.

"You helped sort it out, too," said the banker.

Before he left, Anu took a "Remember" note and wrote on it *Fix the bank door.*

He gave it to the banker.

"Thank you," said the banker. "I'll fix it before your next visit."

"When will that be?" asked Anu.

The banker smiled. "When your memory reminds you."



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The Memory Bank

by Sarah Johnson

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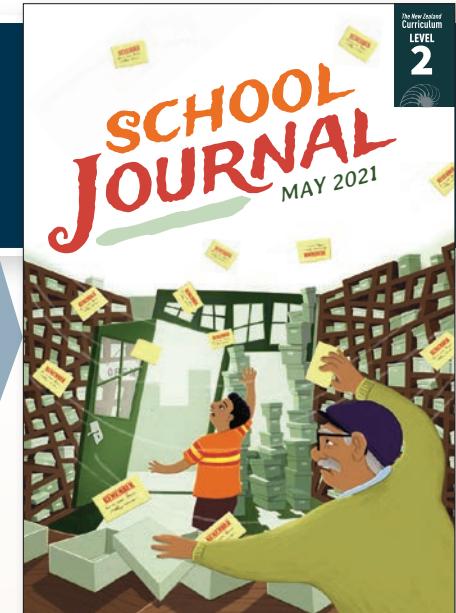
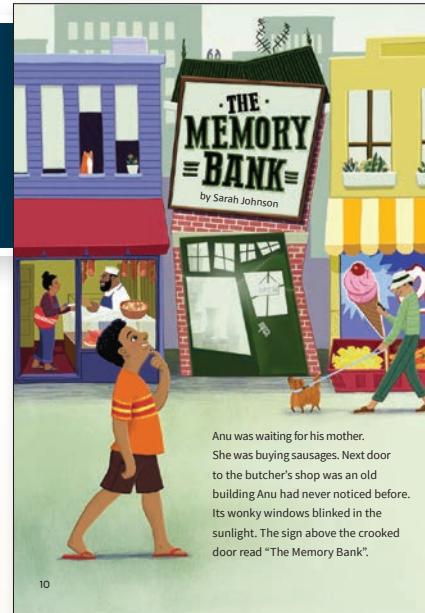
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